THE NECESSITY OF TEACHING ESP COURSE TO THE IRANIAN SEMINARY STUDENTS OF HAWZA ILMIYYA

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ABSTRACT
The present study was an attempt to investigate the necessity of teaching Iranian seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya (traditional Shi’a centre, in which clerics are trained by studying classic texts in their original language), English for a specific purpose (ESP) course. Today the world is interested in English. Thus with the emergence of English as lingua franca of technology, education and research in global society, the demand for studying ESP course is increasingly necessary. One of the usages of English language teaching (ELT) is in Islamic seminary schools when they decide to go to other countries to preach Islamic thoughts. In this qualitative and quantitative study, the participants were selected based on the random sampling in Iran. Then the needs of teaching ESP course to 1000 seminary students were investigated by means of questionnaires. Analysis of the results showed that it was necessary to teach ESP to seminary students in order to communicate with the communities and to preach Islamic principals.

KEYWORDS: ESP, Seminary students, Hawza Ilmiyya

INTRODUCTION
The most important and widespread language used in the world in international academic conferences to news reports is English. It is used for communication among native as well as nonnative speakers. Even though it does not have the greatest number of speakers in the world, it is the most widely used language in the world, and it will be used by more people in the future (kitao, 1996).

Background of the Problem
Today, as a result of development in technology, computer and internet, the necessity of teaching English is more tangible. For example the internet is used all over the world as a useful source of information. People use internet in order to gain answers to their questions.
Since the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. Its development is reflected in the increasing number of universities offering an MA (master of art) in ESP (e.g. The University of Birmingham, and Aston University in The UK) and a number of ESP courses offered for overseas students in English speaking countries (Anthony, 1998).

As for a broader definition of ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) theorize, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p. 19).

Tsao (2011) states:

The demand for ESP has led some higher education authorities and administrators in Taiwan to claim that ESP should replace EGP, the long-existing practice of English language teaching in Taiwan's universities, and thus become the mainstream of college English education. The rationale behind their claim is presumably as follows: EGP is basic language learning to be studied before, but not during college; College English should be more advanced, more specialized, and match students’ majors of study, particularly in technological universities where students are trained to perform on-the-job; and finally, compared with EGP, ESP is more effective in increasing students’ learning motivation because it relates to their fields of study and caters to their needs.(p.127)

There are many types of ESP. English for the student of Hawza Ilmiyya is one branch of ESP which is necessary to be taught and be available among seminary students. In this case it is suffice to say that although the importance of English is widespread in the world and English is a language of communication and transferring culture, this important issue was ignored in some societies and schools. Islamic schools are one of the institutes where there is a lack of ESP which is of great importance and consideration for their students. There were some investigations in this area. Ratnaawati (2005) referred to English and Islam as two absolutely different ways of looking at the world, and ELT, as Kermani (2005) pointed is effective in the political relations among countries. In line with Kermani, Aliakbari (2004), pointed to the culturally poor educational materials as the major reasons for weakness of ELT among Iranian high school students or theology schools and seminaries. Thus, these studies concluded that religion as a subdivision of culture doesn’t have great influence on English as a foreign (FL) or second language (SL).

The purpose of this study is that Muslim students are required to know English in order to comprehend Islamic English texts without any need to translate them in Persian or Arabic. Also the ability of learning English is an aid for better functioning in responding to Islamic issues. Apart from these purposes, there is another advantage that Muslim students will be able to travel to overseas countries, to convey the message of Islam. As a result, the seminary students are required to know English and to develop the four language skills in order to preach Islamic culture.
The result of this research showed the necessity of teaching ESP courses based on the ESP purposes for seminary students by means of needs analysis of them. This study might be a beginning point for compiling an ESP book for seminary students.

As a result this study is useful for policy makers, teachers and theology institutions in order to compile ESP books in this area and also to prepare a specific methodology to instruct these courses. This study is useful for Islamic schools like Hawza Ilmiyya too. An important point is that today the necessity of learning English language is obvious in all fields of study. After Islamic revolution, teaching and preaching Islamic massages are more than before and Islamic issues need to be international in all over the world. So this research may produce a motivation for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawza Ilmiyya.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**The Importance of English**

Talebinezhad and Aliakbari (2011) state that nowadays the necessity of English language teaching is obvious because world has a great interest in English, thus this new orientation made English an International Language (EIL). To overcome the inadequacies of the previous models of language teaching and to meet the needs of the learners, EIL opened new avenues for research and investigation.

Nur Nina (1996) states that English language has an important role as a conveyer of knowledge about Islam to the international community, indicating that there is a vital relationship between the English language and Islam.

**Teaching English for Specific Purposes**

English for specific purposes is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular career (like law, medicine) or for business in general. This term became popular, when there was an expansion in scientific, technical and economic activities. In this case, Simion (2012) states that since 20 years ago, course designers paid much attention to teaching English for Academic purposes. When communicational technology and business were developed, their attitudes changed to teaching for more specialized purposes embodied in courses called English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In fact this development comes from this fact that English has changed from simply being a foreign language into becoming a universal medium of communication in all walks of life.

Robinson (1991) states that English as a specific purpose is as a type of ELT (English Language Teaching), and as a “goal-oriented language learning” implies that the students have to achieve a specific goal in the process of learning. He also adds that in ESP teaching, needs-analysis and the learners’ communication based on their fields of study should be considered.

Helsvig and kolegija (1990) indicate that the aim of Teaching ESP is improving students’ skills of professional communication in English based on the area of their professional field. This type of teaching refers to the students’ particular specialization.
Teaching English in Islamic countries

Although the importance of English is widespread in the world and English is a language of communication and transferring culture, this important issue was ignored in some societies and schools. Islamic schools are also the institutes where there was rather lack of ELT which is required vitally for the students. In fact peoples' religions should not hinder them from learning a foreign language. There are some investigations in this case. Alonzo( 2011) states:

Not only is there a scarcity of teaching and learning materials like books and manuals in teaching English for Theology but there is also a lack of developed curricula and syllabi specially designed for teaching English to seminary students. Most seminaries in the country do not have a curriculum that meets the demands of their growing number of students in need of English proficiency training. (p.51)

There are four elements that are essential in producing teaching and learning materials in English for Theology. It is necessary to consider these elements prior to the production of the ESP material (Alonzo, 2011). He states that these elements are "(1) The problematic theological concepts for Asian seminary students; (2) the common language problems that Asian seminary students may encounter; (3) the language skill/s an Asian seminary student needs for his/her theological training; and (4) the help that an English program can offer to the seminary" (p.68-69).

Moreover he suggests that Asian theological students had difficulty in comprehending theological concepts. It was because the students had language problems in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English. In fact the language skills that theological student needed for his/her seminary training was mostly found in the academic use of the English language.

Some Muslims believe that teaching English in their countries equals ignoring Islam (Pennycook, 1994). The establishment of a study in this case has an evidence to reject this claim. In fact a total of a 2000 studies conducted by 409 Kuwaiti undergraduates indicated that, Kuwaiti Muslim students well took positive attitudes toward learning English (Noori, 2012). AL-Seghayer (2011) states "Teaching English as a foreign language in our public schools in Saudi Arabia is an important step to increase our global understanding and competitiveness in an increasingly interdependent and competitive world"(p.1).

Rohmah (2012) suggests that integrating Islamic messages in the English teaching material might prevent students from feeling bewildered and might reduce their tension. Basthomi’s (2011) states that it is possible to change the attitudes toward English and we should help students to have better attitude toward English and use English materials with Islamic themes or the lives of the Muslims in English speaking countries. Therefore the main issue is in fact material selection. According to the advice from some Islamic School communities in Indonesia, English language training should be pure, and there should be no interference with the Western values because they have some shortages in moral foundation and the teaching materials should be appropriate to an Islamic educational environment (Indonesia Australia Language Foundation, 2007).
Therefore, (Phillipson, 1992) claims that writers and teachers need to modify English which is an imperialistic language into an instrumental language. As a result, Teachers in Islamic schools can include the Islamic messages in their teaching materials while helping the students to master the targeted English language skills and components.

There is a struggle between the English language and Islam. Harris (1991, p. 90) refers to this struggle as follows "English is not just a language, any more than Islam is just a religion. The names of English and Islam, whatever else they may be, are names of two very big battalions when it comes to the international power struggle for control of the Middle East."

Farouqi (1986) is one of the scholars who adopt the idea of Islamization of English. Farouqi (1986, p. 7) investigates the development of Islamic English and defines Islamic English as “the language modified to carry Islamic proper nouns and meanings without distortion and thus, to serve the linguistic needs of Muslim users of the English language". In fact it is evident that Farouqi’s Islamic English is a method of reappropriating English in order to serve Muslim needs.

**ELT and It's Necessity in Iran**

Since English is considered as a dominant language all over the world, it is used for foreign trade, international conferences and the like. It is a means of communication. Today the necessity of teaching English is obvious for all the nations and Iran is no exception. Noori (2012) states that the necessity of English in the outer world is beyond the mind, because English is the dominant language of foreign trade, international conferences, for air traffic in international airports, and sea navigation. Therefore, governments have a policy in order to promote the export of non-oil products. In this case they make companies and exporters take advantage of this medium to introduce their goods and products to the world market. So far, English seems to have found its way right into the heart of Iranian society. The Iranian national TV has started broadcasting authentic foreign programs." Iran’s cooperation with UN, Islamic conference relations, ECO, OPEC, and other regional and world organizations has made English an important thing" (Aliakbari, 2004, P.1-14). Moreover Iran has some relationship with English-speaking Countries such as US and UK.

Today the necessity of learning English language is obvious in all fields of study. After Islamic revolution, teaching and preaching Islamic massages are more than before and Islamic dogma need to be international in all over the world. So this research may produce a motivation for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawsa Ilmiyya.

As a result teaching English is required in all nations especially in Iran that need to cooperate with other countries and also to attend in Islamic conferences.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Do seminary students need ESP courses?
2. What are the needs of the seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya in studying an ESP course?
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The present study was a qualitative and quantitative one. The method of this research is descriptive. In this study one type of a questionnaire was prepared based on the ESP purposes, the seminary students' needs, the idea of the people who worked in Hawza Ilmiyya and the experienced teachers of Hawza that they are familiar with the Islamic contexts teaching, and was given to three groups in order to analyze their needs. The groups under study included seminary students, their professors, and the people working in Hawza Ilmiyya. They were selected by random sampling. Also five Hawza Ilmiyya in Iran were chosen by random sampling as follow: that of Mashhad, that of Qom, that of Jahrom, that of Tehran and that of Esfahan. The researcher managed to analyze the needs of these groups to find out the necessity of teaching ESP courses in Hawza Ilmiyya.

Participants

In this research a random sampling technique was applied. The total samples were 100 seminary students from Iran. It is obvious that Iran has many cities and each one has many Hawses in it. First, the researcher selected five city of Iran based on random sampling. Second, she selected the main Hawza from each five city, and then she chose 20 seminary students from each of these five Hawses. So the total number reached 100 seminary students.

Instruments

The instrument used in this research was the questionnaires in collecting the data about the needs of the students. These questionnaires were prepared based on the seminary students' needs and the idea of the people who worked in Hawza. In this case, the researcher consulted with the experienced teachers of Hawza that they are familiar with the Islamic contexts teaching, then according to their guidance, the nature and contents of the questionnaires were prepared. The teachers were also proficient in English language. They were as missionaries to preach the Islamic messages and they wrote Islamic books in English for other countries in this regard. In the next section there are some points about checking the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

Procedures

English teaching tailored for the seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya is one branch of ESP. In fact seminary students required to know English to be able to convey the messages of Islam directly. As a result the researcher provided questionnaires to find out the necessity of teaching English in Islamic schools.

In this case, the researcher consulted with the people who were affiliated to the Islamic schools like the teachers, the people who work there and the seminary students. She spoke with the experienced teachers and professors of Islamic schools especially those who had PHD degrees. The researcher gathered their opinions and suggestions and examined them. In addition she used the idea of two groups of males and females, because the attitudes of these two groups toward this issue were different. Also she considered the idea of the people who did not know English
but they had a great knowledge in this case. The researcher also studied ESP texts and used their main points for this purpose.

According to the obtained information from ESP books and the opinions of the think tanks, the researcher prepared a number of points about ESP. Then she selected some of them as the questions of the questionnaires. The selected questions contained all the necessary points of this study.

Being prepared, the questionnaires were given to one group of students as pilot study. Then the results of piloting were analyzed using SPSS and a kind of reliability, Cronbach's alpha was obtained. As a result it was concluded which questions were suitable and good and which ones weren't. Also it was realized which one was difficult and had to be omitted.

For validating the questionnaires it was better to consider the answers of the questionnaires after piloting, as a result it was concluded that if these answers covered the purpose of the research or not. And if these questions were expressive of the main purposes of the research, it would show the necessity of teaching ESP for seminary students.

When the reliability and validity of the questionnaires were computed, it was the time of distributing the questionnaires in five cities of Iran: Qum, Esfehan, Tehran, Jahrom and Mashhad. The participants from these cities selected based on random sampling. The cities were themselves selected based on random sampling too. After selecting the participants, the researcher distributed the questionnaires. So they were given to the seminary students, their teachers and the people who work in Hawza. Finally, the researcher analyzed the needs of the students based on their answers by means of SPSS. So the researcher found out whether teaching ESP is needed in Hawza Ilmiyya or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analysis of the questionnaire

Reliability

Table 1 show the reliability of the items. Reliability is about consistency in the results of the measurement.

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<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
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Table 1 demonstrates that in this study, cronbach alpha is .94. This result shows a good reliability and no item was decided to be deleted.
Validity

In this study the researcher used content validity and construct validity. Content validity of the items is distinguished based on the opinion of the specialists in the ESP courses, also ESP books and theories in this case help the researcher to provide a suitable and appropriate items. Construct validity is distinguished by applying factor analysis.

Factor Analysis results

Table 2: statistical factor analysis of the questionnaire: Rotated component matrix

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Table 2 shows the rotated component matrix which is a matrix of the factor loadings for each variable on to each factor. In fact rotation is a method used to simplify interpretation of a factor analysis. Numbers in this table show the degree of relationship between factors and their variables. The high degree of these numbers like .9 and .8 indicate the high relationship between the variable and its factor.

There are several things to consider about the format of this matrix. First, factor loadings less than .6 have not been displayed because we asked for these loadings to be suppressed. Second, the variables are listed in the order of size of their factor loadings. Before rotation, most variables loaded highly on to the first factor and the remaining factors didn't really get a look in. However the rotation of the factor structure has clarified things considerably: there are six factors and variables loaded very highly on to only one factor.

The next step is to look at the content of the items (questions) that load onto the same factor to try to identify common themes. Factor 1 contains p13, p14, p15, p16, p18 and p30.they are related to the same theme as" the needs of the seminary students to learn English", that it has shown by h1. Factor 2 contains p1, p6, p7, p11, and p12. It indicates "the necessity of teaching English in Hawza Ilmiyya" and it is shown by h2. Factor 3 contains p8, p9, p.10 and p21 that refer to "the importance of learning English in preaching Islamic culture". It is showed by h3. Factor 4(h4) contains p9, p19, p20, p.22 and p34 that refer to "the importance of the students' needs analysis in teaching and compiling an ESP book". Factor 5 (h5) contains p2, p3, p.5, p.26, p.27 and p36 that refer to "the importance of the relationship between the materials of the ESP books and the students' needs and interests". Factor 6 (h6) contains p23, p28, and p33 that refer to "the importance of the syllabus in learning English".

In fact all the questions in each factor are related to each other and also to their factors. These factors are the main purposes of this study. According to these factors and analyzing their components that how these questions are answered by the participants and also what their frequencies are, it is concluded that most of the participants agree with these factors and have positive attitudes about them. So the research questions are answered.

**Chi-square**
This table shows the result of chi-square in SPSS for the items of the questionnaire.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>568.715a</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>559.841</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>13.079</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>3700</td>
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</table>

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 27.59.
Table 3 show a list of assorted chi-square tests, most of which are of no interest to us. The one we should pay attention to is the first one, i.e., the Pearson Chi-Square statistic. Reading across that row show that the chi-square value is 568.7 with 36 degree of freedom. The next column notes that the probability of getting this sort of result on the basis of chance variation alone is 0 (p-value = 0). In this column, Asymp. sig (2-sided) show that how these two variables are dependent. When p-value is zero, as a result the hypothesis "Teaching ESP course for the Iranian seminary students of Hawza ilmiyya is not necessary" is rejected and also two variables are related. As a result, significance reported by the statistics is less than .05; we can reject the null hypothesis and accept that the difference between items is not accidental.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion
According to the results of the present study it is concluded that today teaching English is necessary and this course is of a great importance all over the world. Based on the results of the study and analyzing the answers to the questions showed that these Islamic schools have a great need to syllabus for teaching English language. Also they need to prepare some ESP books in this case and a good method of teaching for seminary students.

Pedagogical Implications
Based on the findings of this study and the review of literature, we find out the importance of teaching ESP in Islamic schools. Now, the necessity of teaching this course is obvious considering the scope of ESP teaching and learning expanding all over the world. As the present research is a novel study that indicated the necessity of teaching ESP in Islamic schools to the seminary students to communicate with other communities and to preach Islamic principles. Hopefully this research may produce a motivation especially for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawsa Ilmiyya.

Moreover these courses should be compiled under the supervision of EFL specialists in cooperation with the Islamic schools' principals. An important point is that this course should be a compulsory course in Hawsa Ilmiyya. In fact seminary students should study in this course the same as their other courses in Hawsa Ilmiyya and the ESP teachers are needed to be trained to teach in Hawsa.

Suggestions for further studies
Based on the results of the study, the following are recommended:
(1.) Today other societies also need religious and they feel this need obviously. As a matter of fact, seminary students should themselves be aware this necessity. So, when they get aware of this requirement among the western societies, they will try to teach their language and culture to communicate with them and convey the massages of Islam. For this purpose they themselves should follow ESP. Also they should follow the main purpose of ESP that is teaching speaking, listening, writing, and reading.
(2.) Include English for seminary students as a field in itself and make it a part of the ESP categorization.
(3.) Researchers should investigate upon developing teacher training affairs and specialization in ESP issues.

(4.) More teaching English materials for seminary students should be developed. These should be culturally considered and relevant to the multicultural classes in seminaries. Writers of such manuals or books should endeavor to create teaching materials in English for seminary students that are culturally relevant, transferable, reproducible, publishable and affordable in the Asian context.

(5.) It would be useful to have some investigations in preparing a special syllabus for this group of students.

(6.) It is necessary to instruct some teachers for teaching ESP course for this group of students.

(7.) It is better to compile an ESP book for seminary students and if these ESP books exist in the market, it will be necessary to do some investigations whether they are suitable for this group or not.

**Limitations**
The study has several limitations. First, the participants were dispersed in all the cities of Iran, consequently the researcher didn't have access to all of them because of the long distance and it was also difficult to gather all the participants in one place in order to give them the questionnaires. For this purpose, the researcher decided to provide a situation and divided the participants into some groups. Then she gave the questionnaires to one group of participants, which was chosen randomly, from Islamic schools of Qum. Also she sent the questionnaires to the second group of participants in Mashhad by mail. The third group answered the questionnaires by means of e-mail. Another problem that hindered the researcher was that the Islamic schools had different attitudes toward these questionnaires and most of them were reluctant to fill out the questionnaires fearing their belief would be attacked by western diverted cultures. As a result it was necessary to discuss with their administrators and refer them to the speeches of some prominent Islamic leaders such as Imam Khomeini. In convincing them, the researcher suffered a lot and finally they accepted to cooperate and filled questionnaire.

**REFERENCES**


THE IMPACT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT VIA SKYPE ON IRANIAN AUTONOMOUS/NON-AUTONOMOUS EFL LEARNERS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT
This article investigates learner autonomy, foreign language learning, Web 2.0 technology and sociocultural theory (SCT) proposed by Vygotsky (1978). More specifically, the article seeks to examine the development of listening proficiency through dynamic assessment via Skype in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous English as a foreign language (EFL) learner at elementary level. The article showcases that online dynamic assessment (DA) informs the instructional process regarding specific areas where learners need improvement and in so doing allows for appropriate intervention to help learners overcome these problems. The results of the study indicate that DA via Skype permits to establish not only the actual level of learners' listening ability but also to examine the potential level of their listening development. The results also prove that both autonomous and non-autonomous learners equally benefit from DA via Skype.

Keywords: learner autonomy, dynamic assessment, listening comprehension, Skype

INTRODUCTION
Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a process-oriented/interactive approach to conducting assessments that is based on the Vygotskyan principles of mediation and assistance in the zone of proximal development. DA offers learners assistance whenever necessary during the performance of the assessment task through collaborative dialogue. At the heart of Vygotskyan and sociocultural approaches to language learning and DA are the concepts of mediation and social learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). These key components of DA have taken on special relevance with the advent of social networks and online communities through web 2.0 technologies that include an increased emphasis on user generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort.

Traditional assessment offers no scaffolding or social support for learning. Data from DA, by contrast, represents both the process and product of students' learning. DA is administered by an examiner who provides scaffolding, social support for learning, and intervention when a student fails. In other words, whereas traditional assessment measures independent performance (i.e.,
product), DA measures both independent performance and assisted performance (i.e., process). Independent performance is what the student can achieve alone; assisted performance is what the student can achieve with the help of the examiner.

DA, an interactive, test–intervene–retest model of psychological and psycho-educational assessment, gives the examiner the chance to form a closer relationship with the student that will foster learning. In DA, the examiner not only gives performance-contingent feedback, but offers instruction in response to student failure to alter or enhance student achievement.

**Learner Autonomy**

Learner Autonomy has been a buzz word in foreign language education in the past decades, especially in relation to lifelong learning skills. For a definition of autonomy, we might quote Holec (1981: 3, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 1) who describes it as "the ability to take charge of one's learning." On a general note, the term autonomy has come to be used in at least five ways (Benson & Voller, 1997: 2):

- for situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
- for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- for the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning;
- for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

One of the key aspects to consider in defining Learner Autonomy is whether we view it as a means to an end (learning a foreign language) or as an end in itself (making people autonomous learners). These two options are not mutually exclusive, both of them can be part of our views towards language learning or learning in general. As Lacey (2007) puts it, principles of learner autonomy could be:

- Autonomy means moving the focus from teaching to learning.
- Autonomy affords maximum possible influence to the learners.
- Autonomy encourages and needs peer support and cooperation.
- Autonomy means making use of self/peer assessment.
- Autonomy requires and ensures 100% differentiation.
- Autonomy can only be practiced with student logbooks which are a documentation of learning and a tool of reflection.
- The role of the teacher as supporting scaffolding and creating room for the development of autonomy is very demanding and very important.
- Autonomy means empowering students, yet the classroom can be restrictive, so are the rules of chess or tennis, but the use of technology can take students outside of the structures of the classroom, and the students can take the outside world into the classroom.

Language teaching is now seen as language learning and it has placed the learner as the center of our attention in language learning education. As the result of such considerations, the researcher considers Learner Autonomy as a variable to see how autonomous and non-autonomous learners differ from each other with respect to DA via Skype.
Theoretical Framework

Scholars assert that DA was originally inspired by Vygotsky's writings, in particular his thinking on the Zone of Proximal Development (e.g. Stenberg & Grigorenko, 2002; Feuerstein, Rand, Jensen, Kaniel & Tzuriel, 1987). Given that this study is conceptualized within the sociocultural theory (hereafter SCT) framework, the following section is exclusively confined to DA grounded in Vygotsky's theory.

Vygotsky regards development as an evolutionary as well as revolutionary process which is not linear and involves both progression and regression. He argued that even if development might contain some regression, it still contributes to general movement forward (Vygotsky, 1978; 1997a), i.e. development is a process that is always pushing individuals forward even if at times it needs to step backward (Lantolf, 2009).

Significance and Purpose of the Study

Despite the fact that the development of listening proficiency has been generally recognized as a crucial component of foreign language learning and teaching, many scholars contend that listening comprehension is often treated as a Cinderella skill of L2 instruction (e.g. Nunan, 1997; Vandergrift, 1997) and that research in this area is still in its infancy (Omaggio-Hadley, 2000:184). Furthermore, a lack of L2 listening studies has been repeatedly emphasized in many reviews of scholarship on the subject over the years (e.g. Ur, 1984; Rubin, 1994; Vandergrift, 2007). As a result, this study aims to apply DA via Skype to L2 listening instruction and takes a further step to investigate how differently autonomous and non-autonomous learners respond to DA via Skype. In fact this study is an attempt to give learners more chance of social learning by active engagement in exploring the web through dialogic collaboration. In other words, the main objective of the study is to make it possible to observe students' potential level of development and obtain a richer and more complete understanding of students' microgenetic listening development in DA.

Statement of the Problem

The L2 listening studies that have been conducted to date focus mainly on product-oriented investigations of listening comprehension that typically measure listening ability using quantitative research methods (e.g. Field, 2008; Rubin, 1994; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift, 1998, 2007). In this respect, Vandergrift (2007) remarks that quantitative approaches are able to tell us something about the product, i.e. the level of listening success, but they tell us nothing about the process; i.e. how listeners arrive at the right answer or why comprehension breaks down (p. 192). For this reason, Vandergrift claims that there is a pressing need for studies exploring listening processes through qualitative methods. As Vandergrift (2007) cogently puts it: "[…] listening processes are complex and they interact with different knowledge sources, human characteristics and other contextual factors in complex ways. These processes and their interactions need to be explored using in-depth qualitative methods to better understand how L2 listeners attain successful comprehension" (p. 206).

At the level of assessment, there has been published a relatively small number of studies that consider the assessment of listening ability (e.g. Ur, 1984, Buck, 2003; Flowerdew & Miller,
While discussing the purposes and the types of L2 listening tests (e.g. achievement, placement tests), Buck (2003) as well as Alderson (2005) articulate the acute need for the creation of new diagnostic listening assessments that will identify specific areas where learners need improvement, and in so doing will better inform the instructional process regarding learners' listening abilities.

Thus, the present study intends to address the afore-mentioned concerns articulated in recent L2 research by applying DA to listening instruction. That is, the study seeks to investigate the effect of DA-based instruction on the development of listening ability in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous learners at elementary level. What is noteworthy is that due to its reliance on mediated dialogue during the testing procedure, DA permits not only the diagnosis of specific sources of difficulty but also provides insights into the process of listening and promotes listening ability by tracking its development through microgenetic analysis, a specific qualitative method, proposed by sociocultural theory.

2. Review of Literature

Sociocultural theory (SCT) understands humans as "fundamentally socially organized entities" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) who learn to become autonomous by being social. For this reason the SCT paradigm "rejects the encapsulated and autonomous individual privileged in information processing and innatist theories" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) that do not take account of the fundamental role the sociocultural environment plays in human development. Within the SCT framework, it is argued that the development of humans "is mediated by others, whether they are immediately present as in the case of parents guiding children or teachers guiding students, or displaced in time and space, as when we read texts produced by others or participate in activities such as work, organized in specific ways by a culture" (Lantolf, 2007: 32).

As Lantolf and Thorne (2006) point out, the SCT framework understands mediation as "the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (p.79). Thus, from the perspective of SCT, humans do not interact directly with the world and the environment in which they live instead, they use culturally constructed artifacts "created by human culture(s) over time and [...] made available to succeeding generations, which can modify these artifacts before passing them on to future generations" (Lantolf, 2000:1). Culturally constructed artifacts include physical tools (e.g. technology, means of transportation, domestic utensils etc.) and symbolic tools (e.g. literacy, mathematics, language, etc.). Physical tools reinforce the power of humans' physical bodies whereas symbolic tools, primarily language, amplify humans' ability "to organize and communicate information and knowledge" while at the same time they "may influence, or regulate in some way, those who are the objects of [their] speaking" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006: 60). Haywood and Lidz (2007: 42) explain that "mediation is what good teachers and parents do when they promote high levels of mental functioning in their children [and learners]." Thus,
mediation in itself is a simple concept but has tremendous consequences for individuals' intellectual development, which has its beginning in the ZPD. For this reason, the SCT-oriented DA regards the ZPD as the arena of development and places the ZPD at the core of teaching/learning as well as socialization processes.

Indeed, as Haywood and Lidz (2007:74) observe, "nowhere in the field of human endeavors is Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development more relevant than in education." Vygotsky maintained that the driving motor of intellectual development is learning which creates the ZPD and which in turn triggers internal processes of development. In his writings, Vygotsky repeatedly highlighted the idea that instruction would not be necessary if it were not the source of intellectual development (e.g. Vygotsky, 1986, 1987). He claimed that instruction is good only when it promotes development and when it stimulates a range of functions that are ripening within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1987) and therefore, instruction should be adjusted to the ZPD rather than to the actual level of development (Vygotsky, 1991). Thus, for Vygotsky and his followers, it has always been important to understand how instruction, a socially constructed phenomenon, influences development; what type of instruction can be considered to be positive instruction; and to what extent instruction might promote development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The primary goal of this study is to investigate the role of DA in diagnosing and promoting the development of listening comprehension in a foreign language via Skype. This goal is realized through the following research questions:

Q1. To what extent can online dynamic assessment via Skype enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level?
Q2. To what extent can online dynamic assessment via Skype enhance the listening ability in non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level?
Q3. To what extent does the effect of online dynamic assessment via Skype differ with learner autonomy?

As a result, the hypothesis of this study is stated below:
H1. Online dynamic assessment via Skype will not enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level.
H2. Online dynamic assessment via Skype will not enhance the listening ability in non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level.
H3. The effect of online dynamic assessment via Skype does not differ with learner autonomy.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants, their age ranging between 11 and 15, were selected from among Iranian EFL learners at an English language institute in Tehran, Iran. The present study took in sixty elementary participants. In order to control the participants' proficiency level, an OPT and a
demographic information questionnaire were administered. In this study, two groups of participants were involved, autonomous and non-autonomous groups. The participants, taking the learner autonomy scale, were assigned to the autonomous and non-autonomous groups. Then both groups were taught through DA via Skype.

**Instruments**

*Oxford Placement Test (OPT)*

The OPT designed and developed by Allen (2004) was used to determine the participants' proficiency levels. It consists of listening and grammar sections. The listening section consists of 100 items. It took approximately forty minutes to complete the listening test. The grammar section consists of 100 items. Fifty minutes were allotted for completion.

*Autonomous Learning Scale*

Autonomous learning was measured by using Autonomous Learning Scale developed by Macaskill and Taylor (2010). The scale is a 12-item measure with two subscales measuring Independence of Learning, *I tend to be motivated to work by assessment deadlines*, [item 10] and Study habits, *I frequently find excuses for not getting down to work*, [item 2]. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) with higher scores indicating greater levels of autonomy, more independence and more positive attitudes to learning. For the purpose of clarification, the autonomous learning scale used in this study was translated into Persian.

**The Design of the Study**

The present investigation has a pre-test/enrichment program/post-test design. The specific procedure followed in this study is: first, the learners carry out the recall independently (e.g. NDA sessions) and then they repeat it but with mediation (e.g. DA sessions). In effect, during DA and NDA sessions there are two opportunities to assess microgenetic listening development: independent listening performance and mediated listening performance. The quantitative analysis of independent recall of the propositional content of the selected texts and the qualitative analysis of the mediational process through which the students and the mediator negotiate understanding of the relevant texts are carried out. Through this process the mediator is able to formulate fine-grained diagnosis of learner abilities, including most importantly, their problem areas with regard to listening comprehension. On the basis of the diagnosis obtained through mediated interaction, the enrichment session is organized. The design of the study is outlined in Table 1.
Table 1: Experiment design: assessment and enrichment Program sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
<th>TASK DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>MEDIATION OFFERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test : NDA 1</td>
<td>1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2</td>
<td>Text 1 : An authentic segment (audio format)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test: DA 1</td>
<td>1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2</td>
<td>Text 2 : An authentic segment (audio format)</td>
<td>Flexible interaction with the mediator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment program: 4 weeks (two tutoring sessions per week)</td>
<td>3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation</td>
<td>Flexible interaction with the mediator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test: NDA2</td>
<td>1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2</td>
<td>Text 3 : An authentic segment (audio format)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test: DA 2</td>
<td>1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2</td>
<td>Text 4 : An authentic segment (audio format)</td>
<td>Flexible interaction with the mediator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Poehner (2005)

Mediation or Flexible interactions involved researcher's leading questions, implicit and explicit hints, prompts, explanations.

**Dialogs as listening materials**

In order to provide listening materials that would correspond to the study requirements, it was decided to collect audio dialogs by English native speakers. L2 research regards dialogs as a valuable genre to be used in listening instruction because they represent "one of the few natural conversations conducted for the benefit of non-participants" (Buck, 2003:167). In this respect, the dialogs allow teachers to provide situations in which learners can pick up conversational rules and learn how to carry out conversational interactions.

**Text Comprehension Measurement**

To measure comprehension, this study implemented immediate oral text recalls. The participants were asked to recall in English as much as they could of what they were listening to with a special focus on the main ideas of the text. Then, the researcher identified the relationship between propositions (idea units) of the original text and the texts of participants' recall. In this fashion, propositions from students' immediate oral recalls that were closely related to propositions from the original text were counted and scored against the list of idea units designated independently by the raters before the study. The number of recalled idea units was viewed as evidence of text comprehension.
Oral Recalls Scoring and Analysis
The oral recalls of the learners were analyzed by the researcher for the total number of idea units (IU) accurately produced and subsequently for the number of main IUs, supporting IUs and details recalled. The recalls were scored against the list of IUs and only the information explicitly stated in the aural text was counted.

Data Analysis
To compare participants' performance on the pre-test and post-test a series of paired sample t-tests was run. An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In this section, a descriptive analysis of the data for the hypothesis has been presented; then, the inferential analysis of the data has also been provided using tables and diagrams. The descriptive analysis of this study consists of a discussion of the mean, standard deviation and the standard error of measurement. Similarly, the inferential analysis of the data in this study consists of calculating the paired-sample t value between the pretest and the posttest of each group. An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups.

Descriptive Analysis of the Data
Findings for Different Groups of the Study
The descriptive analysis of the data for different groups of the study has been summarized below. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the data of before-enrichment and after-enrichment scores for the autonomous group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the data for autonomous learners (Paired Samples Statistics)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA Before Enrichment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (2) indicates, the mean for autonomous learners before enrichment is 19.37 ($\bar{X}=19.37$) while the mean for autonomous learners after enrichment is 26.07 ($\bar{X}=26.07$). The higher standard deviation of before-enrichment group indicates more variety among the scores from the mean. Finally, the amount of standard error is lower in the after-enrichment group scores.

Table 3 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the data of pre-test and post-test scores for the non-autonomous group:
Table 3: Descriptive analysis of the data for non-autonomous group
(Paired Samples Statistics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 Non-autonomous Group DA Pre-test</td>
<td>18.83</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.590</td>
<td>1.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DA Post-test</td>
<td>24.73</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (3) indicates, the mean for non-autonomous group before enrichment is 18.83 ($X^\prime=18.83$) while the mean for non-autonomous group after enrichment is 24.73 ($X^\prime=24.73$). The higher standard deviation of before-enrichment group indicates more variety among the scores from the mean. Finally, the amount of standard error is lower in the after-enrichment group scores.

**Inferential Analysis of the Data**

**Findings of the Hypotheses of the Study**

The first hypothesis of this study targeted the extent to which online dynamic assessment via Skype will enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level. The inferential analysis of the data for this hypothesis has been summarized in the tables below.

Table 4 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of before-enrichment and after-enrichment scores for the autonomous group:

Table 4: Paired-sample t value for the autonomous group (H1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Group DA Before Enrichment – Autonomous Group DA After Enrichment</td>
<td>6.700</td>
<td>4.669</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td><strong>7.859</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (4) indicates, the observed t value for autonomous learners before and after enrichment is 7.859 ($t_{obs}=7.859$) which is much higher than the critical t value ($t_{crit}=2.045$ with the level of significance of 0.05 and degree of freedom of 29 df =29). This rejected the first null hypothesis of the study which meant that the enhancement of Iranian autonomous EFL learners’ listening ability was affected by online dynamic assessment via Skype.

Table 5 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of pre-test and post-test scores for the non-autonomous group (H2):
Table 5: Paired-sample t value for non-autonomous group (H2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-autonomous Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA Before Enrichment</td>
<td>5.900</td>
<td>4.172</td>
<td>.762</td>
<td>7.746</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-autonomous DA</td>
<td>After Enrichment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (5) indicates, the observed t value for non-autonomous learners before and after enrichment is 7.746 (tobs=7.746) which is much higher than the critical t value (tcrit=2.045 with the level of significance of 0.05 and degree of freedom of 29 df =29). This rejected the second null hypothesis of the study which meant that the enhancement of Iranian non-autonomous EFL learners' listening ability was affected by online dynamic assessment via Skype. Table 6 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups (H3):

Table 6: Independent samples test for autonomous/non-autonomous learners (H3)

<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. t df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the after-enrichment scores (post-test) for autonomous and non-autonomous learners. The sig. value for Levene's test for equality of variances was more than .05 which meant that equal variances were assumed. The value in the sig. (2-tailed) column was .383 which meant there was no significant difference in scores for autonomous (M = 26.07, SD = 6.335) and non-autonomous learners (M = 24.73, SD = 5.382). The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small (eta squared = .01).

CONCLUSION
The results considering the autonomous and non-autonomous groups presented a significant difference between the degree of the development of listening ability in these groups before and after the enrichment program. Therefore, DA via Skype as a catalyst to facilitate the development of listening ability in elementary EFL learners could be regarded as beneficial. Accordingly, the effectiveness of such a treatment and the facilitative role it played in the development of L2 listening ability could be theoretically inspired by sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978, 1986). As Lantolf (2007) suggests SCT understands humans as "fundamentally socially organized entities" who learn to become autonomous by being social. For this reason the SCT paradigm "rejects the encapsulated and autonomous individual privileged in information processing and innatist theories" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) that do not take account of
the fundamental role the sociocultural environment plays in human development. Within the SCT framework, it is argued that the development of humans "is mediated by others, whether they are immediately present as in the case of parents guiding children or teachers guiding students, or displaced in time and space, as when we read texts produced by others or participate in activities such as work, organized in specific ways by a culture" (Lantolf, 2007: 32). Dynamic Assessment which is a process-oriented, interactive approach to assessment is grounded on the Vygotskyan principles of mediation and assistance in the zone of proximal development. DA provides learners with assistance every time needed during the performance of the assessment task through collaborative dialogue. At the heart of Vygotskyan and sociocultural approaches to language learning and DA are the concepts of mediation and social learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). These key components of DA have taken on special relevance with the arrival of social networks and online communities through web 2.0 technologies that embrace an amplified emphasis on user generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort.

In brief, this article illustrates how listening comprehension can be diagnosed and further development promoted through online DA via Skype within the ZPD. According to the results of the analysis shown in Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5, the hypotheses of the study are rejected. In other words, online DA via Skype led to the development of listening comprehension in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level. This is, to a great extent, in line with Vygotsky's ZPD and SCT. The results also showcased that autonomous and non-autonomous learners equally responded to DA.

**Limitations of the Study**

There are several limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed with respect to the present study. The limitations described below may also be regarded as orientation for potential future L2 DA research and/or L2 listening. The first limitation concerns the length of the study. Despite the microgenetic nature of the present study, the development of learners' listening ability was tracked only within two-month period of time. The collection of data ended when the learners barely began to showcase some improvements in listening comprehension. Accordingly, further investigation that would track development of listening ability over longer periods would offer more insights and refine our understanding of L2 listening comprehension processes. The second limitation has to do with the extent to which the findings can be generalized to EFL learners. The number of learners participating in this study is rather limited for broad generalizations. Therefore, further empirical evaluations are needed to replicate the findings in different contexts. The future investigations can potentially replicate the design of the present study.

**REFERENCES**


THE EFFECT OF PRE-READING ACTIVITIES ON THE READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE OF ILAMI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
The present study was conducted for two purposes: (1) to compare the learners’ comprehension ability before and after the implementation of two types of pre-reading activities, guessing reading content from asking pre-reading questions and vocabulary definition, (2) to investigate the learners’ attitudes towards the implementation of two pre-reading activities. Research participants consisted of 60 grade-10 students studying at Omol Habibeh high school in Ilam, Iran. A test of reading comprehension ability was administered to assign the subjects into two groups. The two groups were given different pre-reading activity, guessing reading content from asking pre-reading questions and vocabulary definition, respectively. The research instrument consisted of reading comprehension test (used as pre- and post-tests). The experiment using the two pre-reading activities were carried out for 5 weeks two sessions a week. The data was analyzed statistically to identify means, standard deviation, and t-value. It was found that after implementation of the 2 pre-reading activities the subjects performed better in the post-test, at significant level of .05. When compared the results of the 2 pre-reading activities, it was found that the group receiving guessing meaning from pre-reading questions performed better that their counterpart who experienced vocabulary definitions, at.05. It was also found that both groups were satisfied with the activity they experienced. The following implications can be drawn for reading instruction depending on the finding of the study: 1. prior to implementing any pre-reading activity to the reading comprehension class, the teacher are suggested to analyze the curriculum, learners’ language proficiency level in order to make a right choice of the type of pre-reading activities. and 2. To make the learner more interested in the reading activity, teachers are advised to select the reading texts that were in the range of interest, or topics related to their everyday life.
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY
Reading as a major skill was ignored by pedagogues and researchers for a long period of time. Most of focus was placed on oral skills (listening and speaking). For example, the Audio lingual method which was developed in the United States during world war II when there was a need for people to learn foreign language rapidly for military purposes emphasized the oral skills, ignoring reading and considering it a passive skill which was given no emphasis at all.

When the Audio lingual Method failed in fulfilling its mission, other teaching methods were devised and put to use. The Cognitive Method in the united states and the communicative Approach in Britain came into being during the late 1960s. Equal attention has been given to the four skills together (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Pedagogues and researchers started to put more emphasis on reading comprehension as a major skill for students of English all over the world.

Reading, the mother of all study skills, is a basic tool of learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life (Fry, 1997, p.9). As a matter of fact, nearly all children begin school with the expectation they will learn to read, and one of the most important things a child is asked to do is to read. Trelease (1989), perhaps the United States best-known advocate of reading aloud, indicated that by booking a child with reading, you influence not only his future health and financial circumstances, but also those of the next generation.

Nowadays English learning is essential because English is the international communication medium. The language is necessary for different activities, including education, politics, and socio-economics (Medgyes, 1994; Mckay, 2002). Its importance is well recognized in Iran. It is the need for curriculum and teaching process revision in order to prepare student for real life application in the information age. The teaching should accommodate the learners’ development of the 4 language skills. Reading skill, in particular, is the most important skill in second or foreign language learning (Carrell, 1988). Sookchotirat (2005) suggested that reading skill is the most important skill as it is the basis of all the success in one’s life. Good readers can gain more knowledge of any kind from reading. Reading makes the reader more knowledgeable, have wider perspectives and vision. Reading helps the reader get new ideas leading to cognitive development. When the readers transfer what they read to apply with their own idea a new perspective or idea is created. However, there have been problems in English teaching in all educational levels in Iran, including secondary and university level. Graduates of each educational level do not have reading ability they should have. Generally, it can be claimed that the problem was caused by the inadequacy of teaching and learning time. Teaching reading is a continuing process; it should be given continuously from the first to the highest educational level. Teaching reading to learners at very young age is, therefore, the basis for the higher level (Noysangsri, 1988). Chiramanee (1992) indicated that Iranian learners’ reading ability was at a low level. It could be resulted from inappropriate teaching method, using outdated teaching techniques, which failed to help the learners understand the content of the reading materials.
Chandavimol (1998) suggested that in general practice of teaching reading, the learners would be assigned a reading task to read by themselves and do the post-reading exercises. In such reading activity, the teacher did not provide any activities that could motivate the reader or achieve better comprehension. Chatwirote (2003) suggested that the teachers could provide reading promoting activities, such as the activities that interest the learners. The activities should contain the reading objectives that suit the learners and teacher’s interest. Reading the process of teaching reading, the teacher should have suitable steps of teaching reading. There should be a pre-reading step to prepare the reader before they read the whole material. The instructor should provide them with the pre-reading the learners did not have any background knowledge it would be the teachers’ responsibility to provide the background knowledge to the learners in order that they could achieve the most comprehension from the reading. The teachers should provide the learners with various pre-reading activities that help them have certain amount of background knowledge about the reading text because the schema would help the reader get better comprehension (Graves, Watts & Graves,1994), as shown in the following studies.

Yeeding (2007) investigated the effects of pre-reading activities on learners’ motivation and reading comprehension ability. Results showed that the activities subjects were highly motivated, enthusiastic to read. After the experiment, they scored significantly higher. In another experimental study Tagliieber, Johnson, and Yarbrough (1988) provided the experiment subjects with 3 pre-reading activities: guessing reading content from pictures, learning vocabulary before reading, and pre-reading question. The control group did not receive any of the 3 pre-reading activities. A pre-test and post-test were administered to both groups. It was found that the experimental subject performed better than the control group. In addition, the reading scores from the reading with guessing reading content from pictures, and pre-reading questioning were better than the reading with learning vocabulary before reading.

Statement of the Problem

Learning English as a foreign language is, undoubtedly, a complex and difficult process. Comprehension is the ultimate goal of teaching reading. However, experience of that most students of the 10th grade are poor readers despite their exposure to English instruction for 4 years. Students, obstacles in reading comprehension may be partially attributed to non-linguistic factors such as lack of motivation and interest. Williams (1984) indicated that a teacher who starts the reading lesson by asking his students to read the passage on page sound so and then to answer the questions is hardly likely to motivate them. But a teacher who starts his reading lesson by giving his students a reason to read and providing them with some preparation can certainly arouse their interest in the topic.

Despite the importance and relevance of the pre reading stage in reading comprehension, it is often ignored in traditional reading instruction. Ciclo de estudos (2012) claimed that the following practical preceding activities may help address these problems: 1. Pre-questioning 2. Vocabulary Pre-teaching.

Results from the studies reviewed above made the researcher of the present study realize the significance of applying pre-reading activities in teaching reading comprehension. The present
research, therefore, was aimed at comparing the effects of 2 pre-reading activities—guessing reading content from learning vocabulary before reading, and pre-reading questioning. In other words, the study would investigate whether the 2 pre-reading activities help the learners get better comprehension and to determine the extent of the effect on the learners’ comprehension. It was expected that the results from the present study could be used to improve the learners’ reading comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Can and to what extent guessing reading content from pre-questioning, and vocabulary activities help learners improve their reading ability?
2. Which among the two pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-questioning, learning vocabulary before reading) can best improve the learners’ reading comprehension ability?

METHODOLOGY
The present study was conducted to compare the learners’ reading comprehension before and after the treatment, i.e. learning reading comprehension with 2 pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-reading questioning and vocabulary definitions). It was also aimed to determine the learners’ reading comprehension ability improved from experiencing teaching with guessing reading content from vocabulary compared with that gained from learning with pre-reading questioning activities. The learners’ attitude and satisfaction towards the 2 pre-reading activities were also determined. The following research elements procedure was included in carrying out to obtain the research objectives.

Design
Among several designs, the one which seemed to fit best for the purpose of the present research was two phase tests for two experimental groups. The statistical procedure used in the study is that of Match T-Test (In fact two Match T-Tests are used: one for pre-reading questioning group and the other for vocabulary group and then results are compared). The Design of this study is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G1</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>T2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>T2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G1 = pre–reading questioning group
G2 = vocabulary pre-teaching group

The subjects were selected after results of the Proficiency test and they were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Participants were given pre-reading activities and the reading comprehension test in their regular English lesson with their regular English teacher. In total there were two classes and a teacher, and then the post test was administered after the treatment.
Participants
The participant in this study were 60 females tenth graders belonging age 15-16 years old Students. The study was conducted in one of the public school of Ilam. A Michigan test is used, and 60 qualified students were selected to be classified randomly into two experimental groups because of their homogeneity and qualification for complementation of the research administration. Unqualified students which acquired very different marks omitted. The scores sought from the pre-test were statistically analyzed using T-test for independent samples. The researcher, then, performed the experiment following the research design, one group were taking the reading comprehension with guessing reading content from pre-reading vocabulary definition, and the other taking the course with pre-reading questioning activities.

Instrument
Multiple choice tests and one sentence answer questions and True and False from English book 1, were given to students. Four choices were given for each test of multiple choice. The test items were written based on 5 reading texts. The test was administered to measure the subject’s reading comprehension ability twice, before and after the treatment, i.e., once as pre-test and the other as post-test, respectively. In addition to the test of reading comprehension, a questionnaire was constructed to test the learner’s satisfaction and attitude. It consisted of 17 test items which were in 5-point likert scale. All the test were designed to tap the subjects opinion and attitudes towards the treatment.

Data Collection Procedures
At the first step, the researcher took a proficient-test and chose the qualified students to participating in the research and assigned them to two groups as experimental groups. As mentioned before, the subjects were female gender.

For both the experimental and groups, the teacher instructed the groups, which lasted for five weeks, two sessions a week and 60 minutes per session. For G1, the teacher distributed the handouts which included questions for different kinds attached to the reading passage, then asked some general questions in order to their students infer the main idea of the assigned reading. For G2, they introduced the key words and their definition, or using translation when it was necessary to clarify the meaning.

The pre-test and post-test were designed in the same forms for both groups. Each lesson started with a pre-reading activity which lasted approximately 10 minutes and was carried out immediately before the reading task. After the pre-reading activity all participants read independently without advice or help from the teacher and then proceeded with a reading comprehension test which included explicit and implicit (inferential) items. There was no time limit for reading the text or doing the test because the researcher did not consider reading speed a factor in determining the effects of pre-reading activities in this study. After taking a reading comprehension test, a questionnaire gives the information about the subject opinion and satisfaction toward the implementation of 2 pre-reading activities.
Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data was quantitatively analyzed. The statistical analysis was performed on two sets of data, as described below, comprehension test taken before and after the treatment, the pre-test and post-test scores, were computed to determine means, standard deviation, percentages, and difference between means or pre-and post-tests of each group. The difference between means of the first group was further compared with those of the second group to determine the significance difference between the two groups. Like the scores on reading comprehension test, the scores obtained from the questionnaire administered to the two subject groups were statistically analyzed to determine means, SD, percentages, differences between means between the two subject groups. The values obtained were subsequently interpreted for their satisfaction level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results related to reading comprehension before and after treatment

The reading comprehension test was administered to the two groups before and after the treatment. Group one received a type of pre-reading activity and group two the other type of pre-reading activity as described earlier. The results are presented in Table (1) and Table (2).

Table 1: Reading comprehension ability before and after treatment with guessing content from pre-reading questioning activity (N= 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Total score</th>
<th>Highest score</th>
<th>Lowest score</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre- treatment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8667</td>
<td>1.81437</td>
<td>7.681</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-treatment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.9000</td>
<td>1.15520</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (1) shows that the lowest, highest, and means scores on reading comprehension after the implementation post-test. The obtained results of post-test were found to be significantly higher than their pre-test scores, at sig level=0.05. It can be concluded that the pre-reading activity had positive effects on the subjects’ reading comprehension. They scored statistically higher in the post-test than the pre-test.

Table 2: Reading comprehension ability before and after treatment with pre-reading vocabulary activity (N =30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Total score</th>
<th>Highest score</th>
<th>Lowest score</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-treatment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3000</td>
<td>1.48904</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-treatment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.4667</td>
<td>1.33218</td>
<td>4.958</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (2) shows that the lowest, highest, and means scores on reading comprehension after the implementation post-test. The obtained results of post-test were found to be significantly higher
than the obtained from the pre-test, at sig=0.05. It can be concluded that the subjects achieved significantly higher scores in the post-test than the pre-test meaning that their reading comprehension ability was better after they had experienced the pre-reading activity. Considering Table 1 and Table 2, it can be concluded that the subjects performed statistically significantly better in the reading comprehension test after they had given the two pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-questioning, and vocabulary activities), at 0.05. In other words, they had significantly higher level ability in reading comprehension. Results related to the effectiveness of guessing reading content from questioning activity and vocabulary activity

Besides investigating the effect of each pre-reading activity on the subjects’ reading ability, the present study examined the difference in effectiveness of the 2 pre-reading activities on the subjects’ reading comprehension ability. Table (3) shows the results of the comparison between the means scores of the pre-test and post-test of the 2 pre-reading activities.

Table 3: Effectiveness of guessing reading content from questioning activity and vocabulary activity.

| Group 1 Difference between means of the pre-test and post-test after receiving guessing reading content from questioning activity | Group 2 Difference between means of the pre-test and post-test after receiving pre-reading vocabulary activity | T    | sig     |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| x | S.D. | X | S.D. | 2.447 | .017 |
| 2.0333 | 1.44993 | 1.1667 | 1.28877 |

Table (3) shows that the difference between the means scores of the pre-test and post-test of the subjects experiencing the guessing reading content from questioning activity was 2.0333. The difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test of the subjects experiencing the pre-reading vocabulary activity was 1.1667. In other words, the students who received reading comprehension instruction with the guessing reading content from questioning activity gained more reading comprehension ability than the students who received the same reading comprehension instruction, but with the pre-reading vocabulary activity. Therefore, it can be concluded from the results that guessing reading content from questioning pre-reading activity was more effective in increasing learners’ reading comprehension ability than vocabulary activity.

Discussion
The actual observations gained from treatment and statistical operation show that the difference between the performances of experimental groups in pre-test and post-test is meaningful. This discussion explains the results of two hypotheses of the study.

• The first hypothesis says that there are no significant difference in students’ achievement between first and second applications for the pre-reading activities. Analysis of results provided evidence for rejection of the first hypothesis, and revealed that the use of the pre-reading activities while teaching Tenth Grade students reading comprehension texts
did lead to higher rate of comprehension, because the means of the experimental groups have significantly changed, for pre-questioning group in pre-test (x=6.8, SD=1.81) changed to (x=8.9 ,SD=1.15) in post-test. For vocabulary group in pre-test (x=6.30, SD=1.48) changed to (x=48, SD=1.33). Having compared the pretest and posttest scores of both groups, an increase in the post-test mean score of the experimental groups is noted. It can be concluded that the use of pre-reading activities is a valuable gift which teachers can give to their students as an efficient means for improving the students’ achievement in reading comprehension texts.

- The second hypothesis states that pre-reading questioning activity does not facilitate reading comprehension better than vocabulary definitions.

The obtained results show that there is significant difference between mean of the two groups. Mean of post-test for G1 (x=2.03, SD=1.44) and for G2 (x=1.16, SD=1.28) show that pre-reading questioning was more effective in increasing learners’ reading comprehension than vocabulary activity. This finding is consistent with the results of Gebhard (1987) whose study showed that by providing background knowledge on a reading selection, teachers can facilitate successful reading comprehension. It also provides opportunities to gain knowledge as well as recall already existing knowledge, which adds up to their reading experience. Carrell (1984, p. 335) points out that teaching new vocabulary is only effective if it is “integrated with both the student’s preexisting knowledge and other pre-reading activities designed to build background knowledge”. In addition to this, Carrell (1988, p.244) believes that vocabulary and schemata should be developed by “preteaching vocabulary and background knowledge concurrently”. It is possible that if one group received vocabulary pre-teaching and pre-questioning simultaneously, more significant results might emerge. Further research will be needed to clarify this point.

Accordingly, a number of suggestions for teaching reading comprehension are presented based on the above discussion:

- Prior to implementing any pre-reading activity to the reading comprehension class, the teacher are suggested to analyze the curriculum, learners’ language proficiency level in order to make a right choice of the type of pre-reading activities.
- To make the learner more interested in the reading activity, teachers are advised to select the reading texts that were in the range of interest, or topics related to their everyday life.
- In conducting the reading class, teachers are suggested to give a clear explanation before starting to do each step of the reading comprehension activity.
- In order to incorporate the 2 pre-reading activities into the reading comprehension, the teachers are advised to be cautious with time allocation. The pre-reading activities should not take too much of the class time; rather a larger portion of the class time should be sacrificed to the main reading activities. Also a portion of the time should be allocated to post reading activities.

CONCLUSION
Reading comprehension was more significantly facilitated when reading was preceded by a discussion of the text topic than when reading was preceded by explanation of unfamiliar words to be encountered in the text. In this respect, Gebhard (1987) asserted that “short class discussions before students read can be directed at activating students’ existing knowledge and increasing sensitivity to the content of the reading material” (p. 23). Pre-reading questioning do not only provide an opportunity for students to consider their own experience in relation to the topic of reading, but will also help students “to develop a context in which to read and to develop expectations about what they will find” (Silberstein, 1994, p. 43). Furthermore, students will feel free to voice out their opinions without constraints. This finding is noteworthy because it runs parallel to some empirical evidence in favor of the differential effect of pre-reading activities on reading comprehension (Hudson, 1982; Johnson, 1982; Langer, 1984; Taglieber, Johnson & Yarbrough, 1988; Webb, 2009). This is in accordance with the schema-theoretic view of reading which holds that comprehension depends on readers’ background knowledge of the topic of a given text. Thus, if these readers are faced with highly unfamiliar content, especially materials with many culturally loaded concepts, comprehension will be difficult, if not impossible, due to the readers’ lack of appropriate background knowledge. Particularly, the studies incorporating vocabulary definitions as a pre-reading activity (Hudson, 1982; Taglieber et al, 1988) yielded similar results to those obtained in the present study. In fact, even though Hudson’s vocabulary activity included a prediction component, it did not surpass performance of those who did a read-test/reread-retest activity or a pictorial prediction activity. Furthermore, Taglieber et al. (1988) explains that the poor performance of the vocabulary group might be due to the fact that the words were not related to the content of the reading selections. In contrast, the definitions of words presented in the pre-reading activity examined in the present study were those appropriate to their use in the reading text. Nonetheless, it seems to be no better than Taglieber et al’s pre-teaching vocabulary activity. One possible interpretation of such findings is that although knowledge of these words meanings was essential for adequate comprehension to occur, heightened background knowledge from the class discussion pre-reading activity made students more able to use context to arrive at a satisfactory meaning of the text even if they are not familiar with certain words in the text. Stanovich (1980), in his discussion of his interactive compensatory model of reading, cites evidence to support the view that contextual information may help readers compensate for poor word recognition. A second possible interpretation of the finding that vocabulary definitions was less effective than the class discussion may be the inadequacy of the set of words explained in the pre-reading activity. It is possible that the nine items presented before reading were not the only unfamiliar words likely to cause difficulty for students to understand the text. More importantly, the emphasis on vocabulary words for this group may have encouraged word-by-word reading, which may consequently have prevented students from using their background knowledge and context to predict the meaning of unfamiliar words and of the text in general, even though they performed better than the pre-test. A third possible interpretation may be found in students’ reactions to each of the two pre-reading treatments. The class discussion appeared to produce higher motivation and a more active involvement of the students in the activity. On the other hand, vocabulary definitions did not seem to be as appealing to students, most probably because it is a familiar technique to them, and also because it did not lend itself to much involvement on their part. Such
findings seem to back up Carrell’s (1984) conclusion that “simply teaching lists of words or even words in context is not going to help students relate the new concepts to their old knowledge and to integrate the new words into their vocabularies” (p. 340). Although in the present study, the definitions of words presented prior to reading referred to the meanings intended by the context in which they occurred in the text, they seem not to have improved students comprehension as effectively as the prereading questioning.

In this regard, Hudson (1982) holds that even when words taught in a pre-reading activity are evocative of the content of a passage and may help students make predictions about it, there is no guarantee that this will surpass direct knowledge of the task at hand. In light of this, the vocabulary definitions activity, employed in the present study, could have been more effective if it had included a background knowledge component (Maghsoudi, 2012). In fact, Carrell (1984, 1988) proposed that instead of pre-teaching vocabulary for single reading passages, teachers should be pre-teaching vocabulary and background knowledge concurrently. Similarly, Beck et al. (1982) and Stevens (1982) both suggested that words should be taught in semantically and topically related sets so that word meaning and background knowledge develop concurrently. In contrast to the vocabulary definitions, the class discussion seemed to have had a more facilitating effect on students’ comprehension of the text. A plausible explanation is that the information generated by the class discussion may have helped students either create or activate schemata that helped them understand the text. Thus, the discussion was beneficial both to students who already had some knowledge about the topic, in that it raised their awareness of such knowledge, and to students who had no prior knowledge, in that it helped them build awareness of new concepts. In both cases, class discussion seemed to have aroused subjects’ interest and motivation through linking the topic of the text to their existing background knowledge. The present study supports Hudson’s (1982) and Hammadou’s (1991) contention that students may use their background knowledge about a reading selection to override problems they are having with the language. The success of the class discussion condition in the present study adds weight to Carrell’s (1984) contention that for a pre-reading activity to be effective, it has to accomplish two main goals: providing background knowledge as well as evoking pre-existing knowledge. It also supports the view of schema theory asserting that activating or building readers’ background knowledge prior to reading would improve reading comprehension. In this view, reading is the result of a two-way communication between the reader and the text, achieved through simultaneous interaction of bottom-up information processing and top-down processing. Meaning does not just reside in the text; it is rather constructed out of the interaction between the reader’s background knowledge and the text itself. The construction of meaning suffers if a reader does not make effective use of his/her background knowledge base.

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CROSS CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF HEDGES IN PERSIAN AND ENGLISH EDITORIAL COLUMNS

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ABSTRACT
Hedging is the most important aspect of the linguistic behavior of academic genres. The present study tends to investigate this phenomenon in journalistic language, a discourse type in which hedges occur commonly. The aim of this study is examining English and Persian social, economic and political newspaper editorials to consider the similarities and differences in the frequency of hedging devices in the two languages. 30 news articles, 15 in each language, were randomly selected from the social, Economic and political sections of the leading newspapers published in 2006-2012 in Iran and the United states. The result disclosed that English newspaper editorial use more hedges than Persian ones. English political editorials were more hedged than the economic and social ones, whereas, Persian economic editorials were more hedged than political and social ones. Students can benefit from courses in which they have opportunity to investigate the appropriateness of hedging roles and they will be familiar with the conceptual, cultural, social and psychological factors underlying them. Students who are studying English as specific purpose (ESP), and English as academic purpose (EAP) also will benefit from writing and reading courses if they consider textual hedging devices across various topics.

KEYWORDS: Hedging, contrastive analysis, economic, political and social editorial

INTRODUCTION
Hedging is a basic feature in academic discourse (Rounds, 2002) that enables academic writers to indicate their certainty and doubt towards their statements to show the amount of confidence they put on their claim, and to start a dialog with their readers. Hedging is also used to show the lack of certainty in truth value of the proposition stated by the writers. Through using hedges, writers leave some room for their readers to judge the truth value of an assertion. Hedges are defined as "the means by which writers can present a proposition as an opinion rather than a fact:
Items are only hedges in their epistemic sense, and only when they mark uncertainty" (Hyland 2002, p. 5) the research has provided various definitions for "hedging" or "hedges". Zuck and Zuck (2000) define hedges as "the process whereby the author reduces the strength of what he is writing" in case the reported news turn out not to be true (p. 172) Brown and Levinson (2004), define hedges as "a particle, word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is partial or true only in certain respects, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected", 145). Some examples of hedging are may, assume, unclear, and probably. Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) argued that hedging is "the mark of a professional scientist, one who acknowledges the caution with which he or she does science and writes on science" (p. 135).

Vanda Koppel and Crismore (2002), in their investigation of readers' reactions to hedges, concluded that students read hedged texts critically and with enthusiastically compare with the unhedged texts. Varttala (2000) has also emphasized the functions of hedging in research articles as the indicator of textual precision and interpersonal relationship.

The main sources of communication in academic Discourse have generally focused on genre analysis in recent years (Bhatia, 2005; Holmes, 2000; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 2002; Samraj, 2002; Varttala, 2001; Williams, 2000). However, these studies mainly deal with the rhetorical purposes that a text is supposed to satisfy. Additionally, there are numerous studies dealing with hedges, as a main element in interpersonal interactional metadiscourse (Myers, 2000; Salvager-Meyer, 2002; Skelton, 2000).

“Hyland (1998) categorized and organized interpersonal metadiscourse markers into five categories that hedges are one of them and actually it is subtypes of metadiscourse markers. In recent years, several studies have focused on hedges and metadiscourse markers. According to Biria&Mehrabi (2014) Persian editorial writers use frequent use of hedges because of their tradition of valuing and abiding by the rules of those in power without questioning them or without expressing uncertainty about social and, especially, religious issues.

On the other hand, the heavy use of hedges by the English editorial writers was related to their being more considerate and polite to their readers. A considerable amount of literature has been published in this regard. These studies indicated that different factors such as culture driven preference, genre-driven conventions and foreign language experience of writers interacted in choosing the interpersonal metadiscourse markers by the columnist.

Besides its major role in academic discourse, hedging has also been used in the context of casual and oral discourse (Coates, 2003; Horman, 2004; Intone, 2003; Stubbs, 2000). However, There have not been many cross-linguistic and cross disciplinary Studies on hedging in the related literature. The limited numbers of studies conducted in this area have shown that there are some variations in the use of hedges across languages (Clyne, 2000; Crismore et al., 2001; Vassileva, 2001; Yang, 2003) and across disciplines (Varttala, 2001).
Hedging has been studied in research articles; the present study aims to survey this feature in journalist language, a discourse that hedges are used mostly. The major part of newspaper lies in the editorial. Errors in using hedges can cause ambiguity and misunderstanding and if unaware of this feature, the non-native speakers may have difficulty in understanding the intended meaning of the author especially for those who want to understand the journalist texts. Thus, contrastive analyses of the occurrence of hedges in the journalistic genre will give more insight to L2 learners regarding the possible functions hedges may have in learning a second language. Hedges are needed in utterance to show the information imprecisely and uncertainly. In fact, hedges use to prevent from embarrassing situations in matters one knows wrong.

The following examples taken from Varttala (2004) may clear this point:
1) John may go to Tehran.
2) Penguins are sort of birds.

In these examples *may* and *sort of* are hedges that impose fuzziness into the utterance and show that the writer want to control the accuracy of what is being said. Despite the fact that modals auxiliaries show the hedges, the scope of these concepts conveying the meaning similar to the two hedges mentioned above items like adverbs possibly and presumably, adjective like probable, nouns like hypothesis, some verbs like suggest and appear. The hedging phenomenon, as a subtype of interpersonal metadiscourse, is multi-faceted phenomenon that has been the concern of many scholars and viewed from such different perspectives as Politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Leech, 1983; Myers, 1989), Semantics (Lakoff, 2001, 2002), logic (McCawley, 1981; Zadeh, 1972) and the nature of hedging (Hyland, 1995, 1997, 1998; Markkanen & Schröder, 2000; Varttala, 1999, 2001; Vassileva, 2001; Vold, 2006). Alternatively, of such perspective there are other distinct features dealing with the hedging which examine it within a contrastive framework in two or more languages. Clyne (1992) in a study considers the variations in the use of hedging writing academic papers. For instance, German researcher use more hedging in their academic texts than native speakers of English.

Similarly, Vassileva (2001) examined the similarities and differences in the degree of detachment in English, Bulgarian and Bulgarian English, drawing on three sections of research articles, namely, Introduction, Discussion and Conclusion and came to the conclusion that the degree of detachment was highest in English and lowest in Bulgarian English. In this connection, Burrough-Boenisch (2005) asked 45 biologists from eight different countries to critically read and amend the English in discussion sections of three Dutch-authored papers. He concluded that Dutch scientists tended to under-hedge. By studying of hedging in English and Persian academic articles we came up with the result that English articles were more hedge than Persian one.

Moreover, Atai and Sadr (2008) surveyed the occurrence of Hedging in the Discussion sections of English and Persian journals Published in the field of applied linguistics. Their findings indicated that the variety of hedging used in the Discussion sections of English articles was significantly more than those used in Persian articles. What seems to be unanimously agreed upon in the
obtained findings is that in terms of the frequency and variety, the use of hedging devices in academic genre is language sensitive? These results make us aware of differences in term of using hedging in different languages. They have explained little about variation in use of hedging in other discourse types. In Journalistic prose, hedges are extensively used, and they may cause problems for nonnative speakers (NNS) who may be unaware of its functions.

Errors in the use of hedging in journalist can cause misunderstanding, ambiguity and vagueness. In fact, one may reach an incorrect conclusion about an intended meaning. Hedging phenomenon may therefore cause many problems for L2 learners in writing, reading and translating journalistic texts. Each language community has its own culture and norms which prescribe content, style and rhetorical structure (Árvay & Tanko, 2004). Learners awareness of such norms can help them to decode the authors meaning or to write for another community and controlling variation that may result in miscomprehension.

Studies on cross-linguistic and topic variations in journalistic texts can provide us with an accurate account of the differences not Only in terms of frequency but also in reference to the functions associated with these Devices in journalistic texts to understand about the L2 context norms. On this basis, this study aims to contrastively Analyze English and Persian newspaper editorials as a distinct type of Discourse in terms of the frequency of hedging devices. More Specifically this study sought to investigate what similarities and Differences can be seen in linguistic realization associated with Hedging used in Persian and English journalistic texts.

METHODOLOGY

Materials
The corpus of the study was 30 news articles, 15 in each language, were selected randomly from editorial parts of leading newspapers published in 2006-2012 in Iran and the United States. This study attempted to survey the type and frequency hedges employed in economic, social, and political articles in English and Persian newspapers. Accordingly, the corpus data were collected from the online archive (2006-2012) of the leading newspapers published periodically in Iran and United States. Using sampling from among 60 articles randomly, a total of 30 news articles, 15 in each language were selected. To have equal amount of data in both languages, the first 2000 words from each text were analyzed. The texts were chosen from the field of economy, political, and social. The type and frequency of the linguistics elements, such as hedges markers in a given texts maybe considerably influenced by the topic of the texts.” Iran, Tehran Times, Hambastegi” were remarkable sources of selecting the Persian news articles and the English articles were chosen from the leading American newspapers such as the “Washington post, New York Times and USA” (see appendix A).

Data collection procedures
From among 60 articles in the Economic, social, political sections of the newspapers, 30 news articles (15 from each language) were randomly chosen. Collected data were quantitatively analyzed to disclose their frequency occurrence in a given text and to realize whether there was an outstanding difference between two sets of corpus data in this respect.
Procedures

After choosing from the leading news the chosen parts were precisely read twice word by word in order to paper recognize and find the hedges. Afterward, the number of hedges was counted in each article and in each language separately. The hedges underlined, then, classified to the five types of hedges based on Salager-Meyer (1994) taxonomy. The taxonomy included five main types which are as follow:

1. Shields, such as can, could, may, might, would, to appear, to seem, probably, to suggest.
2. Approximates of degree, quantity frequency and time: e.g., approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, etc.
3. Authors personal doubt and direct involvement, expressions such as I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that…
4. Emotionally-charged intensifiers, such as extremely difficult/interesting, of particular importance, unexpectedly, surprisingly, etc.
5. Compound hedges, the examples are: could be suggested, would seem likely, would seem somewhat.

The editorials were examined to identify hedging devices. Based on Varttalas (2001) modal instances of hedging were identifying in the editorial. The types of hedges were recognized and recorded. For avoiding errors, all the editorials were examined twice.

Varttalas (2001) modal divided hedges into five groups such as modal auxiliaries, verbs, nouns, adjectives, and other groups like if clauses. Nonnative reporting verbs are used to give description of the authors own research such as suggest and argue. Tentative cognition verbs like hope and suspect. Probability adverbs like apparently and probably show some tentative degree. Sometimes and often are adverbs of indefinite that author doing provide reader with exact information. Significantly and somewhat are adverbs of indefinite. About and almost are approximately adverbs that show imprecision on data. Possible is probability adjective.

The total number of hedging tokens in English and Persian were 871 and 626 respectively.245 were used in economic, 207 in political, and 174 in social editorials. Table 1 bellow provides a summary of frequency of the hedges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persian and English editorials use hedging differently. Table 1 clearly shows English editorials used more hedges (871) than Persian ones (626), but regarding economic news Persian newspaper editorials tend to use more hedges rather than English ones (245).

This study adopts the classification proposed by Salager-Meyer (1994). Accordingly hedges classified to five types. Table 2 indicates the classification of hedges in both American and Iranian newspapers, as well as their frequency.
As it reveals from Table 2 (shields) hedging devices are the most frequently employed by both groups of writers, with English writers using 8 hedges more than the Persian writer. This finding correspond to findings of Adam Smith (2000) who believes type one hedges using more than other hedges in academics papers. Accordingly, Butler (2002) also says that modal auxiliary verbs (type one contained) occur in approximately one of every 10 words in newspapers. Recently, Hyland (2000) finds that 29% of all lexical devices in his corpus of biology are modal auxiliary verbs (related to type one in this study). However, Iranian authors prefer to use type 2 (Approximates) hedging devices through using this type, 9 hedges more than others.

Considering type 3 (personal involvement), we did not find any occurrences of this devices in both corpora. Type 4 frequency (Emotionally-charged intensifiers) hedges for academic were 10 and for Iranian was 12. Finally, Type five (compound hedges) frequency in English texts was 8 and for Iranians 10.

The results disclosed that some differences can be seen in using hedging between two groups of writer from different cultures. Based on these differences American writers have higher preference for type 1, and 5, while Iranian writers tend to use of types 2 and 4. However, the prominent similarity between Persian and English newspapers is that there were not any hedging expressions using type 3. As Table 1 discloses, nearly 0% of Iranian and American newspaper writers using type 3 hedging (author personal doubt and direct involvement).

Table 2 bellow shows the frequency of occurrence for different types of shields in both English and Persian. It is clearly observed in the table that among different types of shields, Persian writers tend to use modals more than English writers. But, regarding Probability adverbs and Semi-auxiliaries, it is American writers who have higher preference for them. The table also indicates that totally shields are more frequent (102) in English newspaper editorials than Persian ones (94).
Table 3: Shields in English and Persian newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of shields</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability adverbs</td>
<td>Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-auxiliaries</td>
<td>Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bellow there are some samples extracted from Iran, Tehran Times and Hambastegi newspaper editorials published in Iran and Washington post, New York Times and USA published in United States.

Sample 1:
Dabirehkole bank markazibayaninkehadehaghahkalkefayatsarmayehbankhabayad be hashtdarsadberesadgoftke bar asasehbazel do mitavanbehafzayeshhadehaghhalkefayatsarmayeh bank ha be davazdahdarsadnizfekrkarad.

Sample 2:
Vaghtinezamehbmehdarkeshvar ma zaifastvadarbakhshshamadanshahedehegosastgheyymathahastimpardakhteyaraneh be sooratehnaghdidarkeshvar be tolidmonjarnakhahad shod.

Sample 3:
………Barasaseh in gozareshajmaheymatehmoaseseh ye sherkat dah milyardtoomanifaraboorsirandar …

Sample 4:
Benazarmiresadmshkelatgehtesadigarayehbankhayeamrikaibamoshkelatfaravanimovajehkhahand shod.

Sample 5:
Shayehtarindalilehkanalhayehvaredkonanndeh ye panbeh be keshvarkhoshksalist.

Sample 6:
Aslitarinahdahfih in sherkatdarijadehmarakeztaighetghihatiijadmazareh… Aslitarinraheeslahsakhtareh in moavenatvapishehord an dar…
Sample 7: 
……..In Iran the controversial bill would even benefit the underground economy………..

Sample 8: 
Iran recently acceded to the Libson agreement for the quality and the criteria are credited to a certain country.

Sample 9: 
Accordingly, the Portuguese player made his desire to play in Spain public recently and the Spanish media believe that he would leave………..

Sample 10: 
The UK official bank rate could fall below 2% as the government struggles to avoid the recession.

Sample 11: 
Asked in a Financial times interview how Moscow would respond if the U.S and Iran were to focus on direct talks, Mr.Ryabkov said, “we will not have a word against this.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Approximators in English and Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximates in Persian and English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample 12: 
Correa, who won a September referendum to increase his control over the economy, has struggle for approximately a year……..

Sample 13: 
OPEC President ChakibKhelil says member state will be forced to considerably cut their oil output at an emergency meeting in Vienna, Press TV reported.

Sample 14: 
It would seem that a coil production cut from………..

Sample 15: 
He believes that the index of end price over the storage capacity cannot be an appropriate factor for offering banking facilities to employers in this sector and evaluating them.

Sample 16: 
They believe that the UNSC is a venue for targeting Iran………..

Sample 17: 

44
Sample 18: **It is possible that** the Norwegians thought their choice **would** avoid controversy rather than stirring it.

Sample 19: Half of the groups were also told their decision **would** be discussed with a third party.

Sample 20: It has been reduced by 18 percent and **will** be further controlled this year.

Sample 21: ...But "I think that coal **will** still be cheaper than natural gas" she said.

### Table 5: Intensifier in English and Persian newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotionally charged intensifiers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample 22: The pro-Israel lobby is **extremely** influential in France, regardless of who is president.

Sample 23: Rafsanjani said, “The presence of occupying troops is **the most** important reason for insecurity in Iraq.”

Sample 24: This year, **the most prominent** and **probably** most deserving candidate was Bradly Manning, who really did do something against war, by releasing military film showing a flagrant U.S war crime in Iraq.

### Table 6: Expression of personal involvement in English and Persian newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hedging Expression</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

As it reveals from Table 2 (Shields) hedging devices are the most frequently used by both groups of writers, English writers using 7 hedges more than their Persian writers. This finding is matched with the finding of Adam Smith (1984) who states that type one hedge is the most
frequent hedging used in academic papers. Similarly, Butler (1990) searched that modal auxiliary verbs (included in type 1) occur in almost 1 of every 50 words in newspapers. However, Iranian writers by using type 2 (approximates) show their preference, 9 hedges more than other types.

As can be seen in type 3 (personal involvement), we did not get any occurrences of these devices in both corpora. Type 4 frequency (Emotionally charged intensifiers) hedges for Americans was 12 and for Iranian was 10. finally, type 5 (compound hedges) this hedges frequency in English texts was 10 for Iranian and 8 for Americans.

The results disclosed that in using hedging devices between two groups of writers from different cultures some differences exist. Considering these differences American writers for type one whereas Iranian writers favoring use of type 2 and 4. As it is mentioned before, the writers use hedging to show lack of certainty in truth value of the referential information. The way of using of the hedge markers are varied in newspaper texts and the writers must be aware of the ways to employ these markers. The findings of this study disclosed that some specific hedges are most commonly used by native English and Persian newspapers such modal verbs as might, could, may, and should. Salager-Meyer (1994) said: “hedging in scientific discourse is a necessary and vitally important skill”, p. 149).

The total number of expression identified as hedges in the English newspaper editorials was 871 cases. Out of these cases, 292 occurrences which comprised 33.62% of all the hedges belonged to modal auxiliaries. The highest and the lowest frequencies of identified modal auxiliaries were 16.10% and 4.82% in the political and economic editorials respectively. "Would" with 114 occurrences in English editorials, was the most frequent modal auxiliary (38.04%), while "Would" had 23 occurrences in economic editorials. "Will" with 4 occurrences was the lowest (1.46%). Table 7 bellow, clearly indicates that modal auxiliaries are mostly used in political editorials (38.01%) rather than Economic and Social ones. The table also shows that among different types of modal auxiliaries the verb Tavanestan is the most frequent auxiliary in Persian editorials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modal aux. verb</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tavanestan (can/could)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momkenbudan (may/might)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khastan (will)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayestan (should/ must)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.01%</td>
<td>26.44%</td>
<td>35.53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dahl (2005) discuss that national culture influences the written discourse conventions and is the main reason for differences in texts across languages. It is inferred that description of hedges depends on understanding cultural matters. Another reason for variation in use of hedging is linguistic and sociological perspectives. The English community welcomes hedging in writing because unhedge refers to what the author says is accepted as a fact. Therefore there is not any reason to use personal ideas. In Persian this expectation is different. According to Fairclough (2004), modality in discourse is important which show how speaker/writer understands themselves in relation to other members of the society.

Frequency of hedging forms in English newspapers

There are significant differences between the frequencies of hedges. The findings show that English use more hedges than Persian. The English political editorial use more hedges than social and economic. Although Wierzbicka (1999) contends the idea that Western cultures are more assertive than the Oriental ones, the findings in this study revealed that in journalistic discourse, English authors seem to be less assertive than their Persian counterparts, though they may be more assertive in other settings. Although Persian editorial authors use less hedging devices and are a little more frank than their English counterparts; this is not mean that Persian authors want to show more authority or is impolite. It seems that their perception of society and of cultural factors is different from their English counterparts. Another reason for the differing use of hedges by authors may be due to the culturally determined paradigms and frameworks that influence writers' rhetorical choices.

CONCLUSION
The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that, based on the analysis of English and Persian newspapers, English editorials used more hedges than Persian ones. This difference refers to cultural variation between two communities. Besides, another reason related to discourse consideration. Students can benefit from parts they have opportunity to survey and disclose the correctness of hedging roles and are aware of cultural, social factors underlying them.

Acknowledging some limitations of this study, certain suggestions can be made for further researches. First, this study conducted to find the differences and similarities regarding hedging phenomenon in English and Persian social, economic and political newspaper editorials. Further research can focus on hedges in research titles in English and Persian articles. Second, other researchers can consider hedges in other eras as, sport or other global issues.

REFERENCES


Appendix A. Selected Newspapers

Tehran Times is Iran first English daily newspaper based in Tehran. It was founded after Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. This newspaper covers domestic, political, social, foreign, and sport news along with commentary. Tehran Times has turned into a reliable source of news for hundreds of foreign media outlets and envoys from various countries based in Tehran who want to learn about the country's current events. Its site (www.tehrantimes.com) is among the most frequently visited websites with over 10,000 visitors each day.

New York Times is an American daily newspaper founded in 1851 and published in New York City. It is regarded as a national newspaper of record. It is third in national circulation, after USA Today and The Wall Street Journal. It is organized into three
different sections; namely, News, Opinion, and Features. The News includes themes on International, National, Business, Technology, Science, Health, etc. Opinion contains Editorials, Opinion Articles, and Letters to the Editor. The third section, Features, consist of such parts as Arts, Movies, Theater, and Travel. Its website (www.nytimes.com) is one of the most popular American online newspaper websites”.

*Hamshahr*i is published by the municipality of *Tehran*, and founded by Gholamhossein Karbaschi. It is the first colored daily newspaper in Iran and has over 60 pages of classified advertisement. The newspaper is distributed within the limits of Tehran municipality. It has a daily circulation of over 400,000 copies, which is on par with major American daily newspapers such as the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Boston Globe*, and *Chicago Tribune*. Based on the results of a domestic poll of how citizens of Tehran view television and print media which were released by Iran’s Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance *Hamshahr* was the most read daily in Tehran with 44.1% in March 2014.

*Iran Daily* "historically known as Persia, Iran was one of the greatest empires of the ancient world, which was frequently invaded. Iran's hereditary monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, fled the country in 1979 after decades of corrupt and authoritarian rule, and mounting religious and political unrest. Exiled Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to lead an Islamic revolution and formed the world's first Islamic republic the same year. An eight-year war with Iraq followed. In the elections of 1992 and 1996, former president Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's support increased and at the presidential election of 1997 Mohammad Khatami, Rafsanjani's cultural adviser, succeeded him. Khatami promised greater freedom and tolerance and was supported mainly by women, younger voters and intellectuals. In June 2005, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, former mayor of the capital, Tehran, and famous for his conservative approach and for rolling back reforms put in place by modernists before him was elected president. He has not been shy of confronting the West and has pushed ahead with a national nuclear programmed that has brought international condemnation.”

Appendix B. List of selected Opinion Articles

**Tehran Times Articles**
2. Sanction are used as a tool to destabilize independent states; 13 November 2012
3. Homeless rate decreasing in NYC; Survey; 10 March 2009
4. Britain's drivers most uptight; 5 August 2006

**Iran Daily Articles**
1. Reservation about Money Laundering Bill; 9 November 2007
2. Miller Grabs First Victory of Season, 30 December 2007
5. President Vows to Check Inflation; 7 April 2008
TRANSLATING HEDGES IN POLITICAL TEXTS: A CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF A PERSIAN POLITICAL SPEECH

Somaye Delzendehrooy
Faculty member at Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan

ABSTRACT
With the internationalization of politics the role of translators translating political texts as well as their translations of such texts has been highlighted. Christina Schäffner (2008: 3) talks about the political experts and scientists discussing the "potential consequences" of translating political texts. Thus translating hedges—the words which make things vaguer or less vague—in political texts becomes important as well since politicians usually make use of hedges in order to relieve themselves of the responsibilities for their statements (Schäffner, 1998:179). In this study the English translations of hedges in a political speech are studied based on Fraser's (2010) classification. To this end, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech on "The world without Zionism" and its three translations by Nazila Fathi, in The New York Times Tehran bureau, Aljazeera and MEMRI websites are chosen as the case of study. The results show that different strategies are adopted by the translators such as deletion, translation by the same hedge and translation of non-hedged expression to a hedged ones, or translation of hedged expressions to non-hedged ones; hence modifying the scope of precision and force expressed in the original text.

KEYWORDS: hedges, political text, translation, Ahmadinejad

INTRODUCTION
The sensitivity of political texts and hence their translation arise from the fact that firstly they are regarded as authoritative texts taking their authority from the relation between the reader and the author whose word is "law" (Newmark, 1982: 375-379). Secondly, the internationalization of politics has foregrounded both the status of political texts and their translators' role. This sensitivity makes the translator's job more critical whose product might have consequences unpredictable. That is why Baker (2006) states that political conflicts involve translation and interpretation. This situation gets worse when translating "hedges" which are used by the original author to evade responsibility for what they say or to attenuate the force of the utterance. That is why Newmark (1982) emphasizes on the translator to be very cautious and objective in translation of authoritative texts; hence political texts. According to him the translator should be "sensitive and a critic of language" as well as being able to write well himself (1982: 375).

What are hedges?
According to Fraser (2010: 201) "hedging" is a "rhetorical strategy" whereby the speaker shows a lack of commitment to the truth value of the utterance. Therefore hedges can be defined as any device that qualifies the writer's commitment to the truth of what is being communicated. Hedges
are used to weaken the truth value of an utterance. For instance, compare the sentences: "I don't think I'm responsible." and "I'm not responsible."

As Hovy states (2004: 2) the uses of hedges were firstly examined by Weinerich who called them "metalinguistic operators". It was in 1966 that hedges became the topic of linguistic investigation and in 1972 that they were called hedges by Lakoff. He maintains that hedges are some lexical expressions that are used to shift the borderlines within the "prototype theory" of Rosh (1973). Taking up Zadeh's "fuzzy set theory", Lakoff states that the boundaries of concepts in any natural language is fuzzy and not clear-cut (1973: 151). He has provided a list of such concepts and renewed his wordlists over and time again not considering the effect of context on the meaning/function of words (Hovy, 2004: 2). It was Clemen (1997/1998) who took the context into account and said that hedges are 'achieved primarily by setting utterances in context rather than by straightforward statement' (2004: 2). He defined hedges as 'everything that in a way modified the truth-value of a sentence, the commitment of the speaker or commented on the sentence as such' (2).

As Fraser puts it when a speaker uses hedge she actually does an "intentional action" to modify the content/force of the full value of utterance (2010: 202). In other words, the speaker shows lack of commitment to "either the full category membership of a term in the utterance (content mitigation) or to the intended illocutionary force of the utterance (force mitigation)" (2010: 201). Thus two general purposes can be defined for hedges: 1- attenuation of an undesirable effect on the hearer; hence being more polite in the utterance; 2- avoiding providing the expected information thus being evasive and vague in the utterance (2010: 205).

**Hedges in political texts**

According to Fraser not much research has been done on hedges in political text except one by Partington. Translation of hedges in political texts as well is discussed in a few studies including the one by Schäffner (1988) in her article "Hedges in Political Texts: A Translational Perspective". In her study she has used Pinkal's classification of hedges: modifying hedges, quantifying hedges, specifying and despecifying hedges. She believes that in political discourse, hedging devices function to "relieve the authors of some responsibilities for their statement" (1988: 179). In this regard Fraser, holding the same view, quotes Partington who suggests that hedging is only one of the strategies for evading, others being bald on-record refusal to answer, claims of ignorance, referring the question, refusal to speculate, stating the answer is well-known, and claiming that the question has been answered already (2010: 206).

**Fraser's classification of hedges**

Unlike other researchers who have classified hedges into numerous sub-categories, Fraser has sufficed to the distinction between content and force hedging. He believes that the focus of hedges can vary from word, to a phrase, the entire sentence, or the intended illocutionary force of the utterance, or its perlocutionary effect, as shown below, (2010:203)

That is a kind of [bird]
He has a somewhat elevated temperature.

As far as I can tell, you don’t have anything to fear from him.

I must request that you stop talk while the music is playing. [Request]

I think that she is pretty much guilty. [Perlocutionary Effect on hearer]

Then he introduces his classification of hedges as:

**Propositional hedges**

about, actually, almost, approximately, as it were, basically, can be viewed as, crypto-, especially, essentially, exceptionally, for the most part, generally, in a manner of speaking, in a real sense, in a sense, in a way, kind of, largely, literally, loosely speaking, more or less, mostly, often, occasionally, on the tall side, par excellence, particularly, pretty much, principally, pseudo-, quintessentially, rather, real, really, regular, relatively, roughly, so to say, somewhat, sort of, strictly speaking, technically, typically, very, virtually.

**Illocutionary force hedges** include (204-205):

- Impersonal pronouns: One just doesn’t do that.
- Concessive conjunctions (although, though, while, whereas, even though, even if, ...)

Even though you dislike the beach, it’s worth going for the view.

- Hedged performative: I must ask you to sit down.
- Indirect Speech Acts: Could you speak a little louder.
- Introductory phrases – I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that: I believe that he is here. Believe and think are hedges only when they express a verifiable fact and not an opinion (Schäffner: 1988: 187).
- Modal adverbs perhaps, possibly, probably, practically, presumably, apparently: I can possibly do that
- Modal adjectives (possible, probable, un/likely...): It is possible that there is no water in the well.
- Modal noun (assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion...)

The assumption is that you are going to go.

- Modal verbs (might, can, would, could...): John might leave now.
- Epistemic verbs (seem, appear, believe, assume, suggest, think...): It seems that no one wants to go.
- Negation: Didn’t Harry leave? [I think Harry left]; I don’t think I’m going. vs. I’m not going. [Former hedges the meaning of latter]
- Reversal tag: He’s coming, isn’t he?
- Parenthetic construction: The picnic is here, I guess.
- If clause: If true, we’re in deep trouble.
- Agentless Passive: Many of the troops were injured. (by Ø)
- Conditional subordinators (as long as, so long as, assuming that, given that...): Unless the strike has been called off, there will be no trains tomorrow.
Progressive form: I am hoping you will come.

Tentative Inference: The mountains should be visible from here.

Conditional clause implying permission (if you don’t mind my saying so, if I may say so): If you don’t mind me saying so, your slip is showing.

Conditional clause as a metalinguistic comment (if that’s the right word...): His style is florid, if that’s the right word.

Conditional clause expressing uncertainty about the extralinguistic knowledge required for a correct interpretation of the utterance (if I’m correct, in case you don’t remember): Chomsky views cannot be reconciled with Piaget, if I understand him correctly.

Metalinguistic comment such as (strictly speaking, so to say, exactly, almost, just about, if you will): He has an idea, a hypothesis, if you will, that you may find interesting.

He also mentions Salager-Meyer's (1995) *compound hedging devices* which include:

- Modal with hedging verb: It would appear that...
- Hedging verb with hedging adverb/adjective: It seems reasonable that...
- Double hedges: It may suggest that this probably indicates...
- Treble hedges: It seems reasonable to assume that...
- Quadruple hedges: It would seem somewhat unlikely that it may appear somewhat speculative that...

**Hedges in President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Speech**

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad delivered a speech to an Islamic Student Associations conference on "The World Without Zionism." The conference was held in Tehran, at the Interior Ministry. The Persian text was taken from Islamic Republic of Iran's Presidency Website (http://www.president.ir/fa/1/0/1384/8). There were 72 hedges in the president's speech. Based on Fraser's classification, these hedges belonged both to propositional and illocutionary force hedges. However, the Persian text being published in a report format has probably lost some introductory hedges which might have been used by the president. Out of the 72 hedges 49 belonged to the illocutionary force hedges and 23 to the propositional hedges.

**Translation of hedges in political speech**

Considering language as “social practice”, Fairclough (in Munday 2008: 42) believes that *ideology* is best expressed through language especially when it is “disguised”. *Hedging*, most specifically in political texts, as discussed earlier is one way of expressing and at the same time implying one’s own and/or society’s ideology since using it, the speaker/author tries to both express his or the dominant ideology of the society and evading the responsibility for what he says or writes. So, hedging actually could be regarded as a kind of style through which ideology is expressed. This is why among different stylistic features recognized by Van Dijk, more emphasis is put on “lexical style” or “lexical choice” since it demonstrates the writer’s “perspective and evaluation” (in Munday 2008: 45).
In the case of a president being the speaker, speaking on behalf of a nation, thus apparently expressing the ideology of that nation, the style, particularly lexical style, he chooses to do so becomes critically important; hence its translation. Therefore the translation of hedges in a political speech delivered by a president is of great importance and any changes in the hedges would mean a shift in the ideology expressed by the SL speaker.

The use of hedges has been so important that their manipulation even in the same language; i.e. intralingual translation to use Jakobson’s term, has had some consequences leading even to war! This has been the case with rewriting the dossier prepared by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair’s inner circle of advisers which led to the war against Iraq in 2003. In this dossier the hedge “might be able to” in the claim made by the intelligence service “Iraq might be able to launch chemical and biological weapons within 45 minutes” has been over and over rewritten, reducing hedging from uncertainty to certainty. Thus intelligence has suggested changes to the more certain indicates and conditional would be able to becomes may be and finally shifts to simple indicative are. Therefore the reader believes that the speaker has been sure of the truth value of the proposition (Munday, 2012: 6).

This shows the significance of the translation of hedges when it comes to politics and the critical role the translator has in this regard.

In the next section the translation of hedges in Mahmud Hmadinejad’s speech and the shifts it has involved in its three translations thus leading to a change in overall ideology either in its intensifying or its reducing intensity will be discussed.

The translation of hedges in the president’s speech
Three English translations of this speech are selected for the present study. One is done by Nazila Fathi (published in NY Times), the other by Aljazeera website(http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/15E6BF77-6F91-46EE-A4B5-A3CE0E9957EA.htm), and the third one by Memri website (http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/1510.htm). The translation by Fathi is done from the Persian full text published on ISNA website, yet not complete, but the translation by Memri website is done from the excerpts of ISNA’s report on the speech. Aljazeera's translation was a report on the original speech selecting only some parts, hence not as complete as the other two translations.

Table 1: translation of different hedges in the three translations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hedges</th>
<th>Propositional hedges</th>
<th>Illocutionary Force Hedges</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If clause</td>
<td>Hedged performative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Text</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aljazeera</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memri</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table 1, in none of the translations the same number of hedges is reproduced. However, Memri's translation, being more complete than the other two, not complete though, has reproduced 36 of the total 72 hedges in the original. In what follows each translation is discussed.
separately to see how the hedges are treated in the translations and consequently what effect they have created.

**Fathi's translation**
In her translation a few paragraphs from the beginning and the end of the original report are not translated hence the non-translation of 23 hedges in these paragraphs. Moreover, in one case she has made implicit the original if clause (…: Anyone who recognizes…). In two cases she has changed the hedge (must/should) to non-hedge form (need to) thus changing the scope of precision in the original for Must means that you are required to do it for moral, law or custom or it is a certainty, or a physical necessity, while Need to means it is necessary, to stop something bad from happening, or something worse happening and with regard to the context of the speech changing the hedge to "need to" conveys a connotation which does not exist in the original that implies a sense of "should" rather than "must". Regarding the translation of propositional hedge (very), Fathi has not translated this hedge in two cases: (I hope; this valuable title) which in turn lessens the determinateness intended in the original. On another occasion Fathi has again used a non-hedged form for a hedged one translating "occupying" again lessening the force of the original. There are two occasions as well where the propositional hedge is changed to illocutionary force hedge but not creating a certain effect on the translation.

**Aljazeera's translation**
The translation posted on Aljazeera's website was quite different from the other two translations in the sense that in Baker's (2006: 71-72) terms, "selective appropriation" has been done in this translation; that is, certain sentences have been selected and included in the translation while others were excluded. Moreover, it had commented on the original speech quoting others' comments as well. Out of 7 hedges existing in the parts Aljazeera has translated 5 are reproduced. On one occasion the impersonal pronoun (…) has changed into (any leaders in Islamic umma) thus specifying what was not meant to be specified and intended to remain fuzzy.

**Memri's translation**
Compared to the other two translations, Memri's translation is quite more complete yet some parts are not translated as in the other two. A specific feature of this translation was the translation of non-hedged forms to the hedged ones which occurred in eleven cases; e.g. (تاسیس (و هیچ آثاری از آن نیست: … a very grave move; and we can find no literature about it). In all these cases especially the ones adding the propositional hedge "very" the tone of the translation has intensified. On the other hand there are also four cases where the opposite has occurred; i.e., the hedged are translated to the non-hedged ones: (و این (و این شدنی است: and this is attainable). However in all these cases the sense has not changed hence the original intention not modified.
CONCLUSION

Hedges make the statements fuzzier or less fuzzy and politicians make use of hedges to avoid the responsibility for what they say. In this research the study of three translations of the speech made by President Ahmadinejad on "The World Without Zionism" shows that non-translation of hedges which are used by the president to make things less fuzzier than fuzzy, make the translations less intense modifying the original intention and thus ideology represented through words and lexicons. Of the three translations, Memri’s translation of hedges was closer to the original; however his changing the non-hedged to the hedged ones has intensified the original tone of speech making the speech more sensitive which addresses the superpowers in the world which, in turn, could have led to a war if precautions were not taken. This in turn proves what Newmark mentions about the translators of political texts to be "sensitive and critics of language" otherwise the speeches made by the politicians are reflected in a modified way; the consequences being unpredictable sometimes.

REFERENCES

FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION AND EFL LEARNERS’ WRITING PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF COLLABORATIVE OUTPUT TASK OF DICTOGLOSS

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ABSTRACT
Focus-on-Form (FoF) instruction have become one of the most talked-about topics in the field of language teaching and learning when scholars found that when second language learning is entirely based on meaningful input and interaction, some linguistic forms cannot nurture. One of the most well-known FoF activities on which the present study focused is output-oriented task of dictogloss. Among the substantial body of research investigating the effect of dictogloss on language learning, little attention has been given to the effect of collaborative dictogloss task on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ writing skill. This study is an attempt to consider the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on EFL learners’ writing skill. Forty pre-intermediate EFL learners in Sama institute in Iran participated in current study and they were randomly assigned to two groups (control and experimental). A composition writing test was used to measure participants’ writing performance and TEIQUE questionnaire implemented to examine their initial emotional intelligence. Then, the experimental group applied collaborative dictogloss task which focused on form and meaning of the text, while control group was taught under the conventional approaches which did not put any emphasis on the collaborative dictogloss. Although the finding of present study did not support previous studies reporting the effectiveness of dictogloss task in different aspects of writing skill, it revealed the fact that collaborative output task of dictogloss did not have any significant effect on learners’ writing performance.

KEYWORDS: FoF Instruction, Collaborative Dictogloss Task, Writing Performance
INTRODUCTION
Developing writing ability, as a communicative skill, has been considered as a difficult task since a large number of students make a lot of mistakes and errors in their written texts and cannot create a coherent text. This inability in writing skill may have different reasons. One of them seems to be due to teaching instruction and error correction. Largely, the concerns of EFL teachers in Iranian institutes is the written products of students while the process of how to construct and formulate is not paid much attention, that is they mostly apply product approach of writing in classrooms and encourage the students to write down on the proposed topic individually. According to Elley, Barham, Lamb and Wyllie (1976) if teaching instruction is based on traditional approach, the learners will lose their motivation, and see writing classes as a difficult and boring one. To solve this problem, teachers need to take a different view towards writing instruction and can employ collaborative tasks which are originally supported by the social constructivist view of Vygotsky (1978).

In this regard, Juwita and Aryuliva (2013) found that collaborative output tasks can be applied for promoting learners’ motivation, the accuracy in the production of language and activation of learners’ prior knowledge in the classroom. Further advantages of collaborative task may be related to motivation which positively influences learning. Previous studies indicate that the learners in collaborative tasks would show higher motivation than those in whole-class doing the task individually (Liao, 2006; Pishghadam & Ghadiri, 2011). Extensive studies in second language learning support the use of tasks which need learners to produce output collaboratively (Mayo, 2002). Lesser (2004), for example, believed that learners generally perform better while working together rather than working alone.

According to Nassaji “using collaborative tasks requiring learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of language, e. g. the use of dictogloss can be (regarded as a means of integrating) (FoF) and communication by process” (as cited in Abbasian & Mohammadi, 2013, p. 1371). Dictogloss task involves the students in collaborative reconstruction of written texts and make them, in either tasks, equally focus on form as they collaboratively construct the texts (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). Moreover, they suggested that the dictogloss led the students to notice and reconstruct complex syntactic structures. Lee (2001) focused on the collaboration feature of the dictogloss task and proposed that a collaborative output task of dictogloss help learners be more pleased, have good feelings when they are working collaboratively and consequently learn to use language effectively. Therefore, there seems to be a good reason to use collaborative dictogloss as an appropriate activity to improve learners’ writing performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Focus on Form Instruction
Recent developments in the field of second language learning have brought about changes in pedagogical approaches in second language instruction. Over the past few decades, after the introduction of communicative approach (CA), the focus of classroom instruction has shifted from an emphasis on knowledge of rules and grammar to communicative ability in real-life
encounters and use of language within communicative contexts. While some researchers in communicative approach put emphasis on communication and fluency and claim that when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in real life communication, second language acquisition takes place automatically (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), others state that it is necessary to have particular attention to form (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Ellis, 2000; Long, 1991; Norris & Ortega, 2000). They believe that when second language learning is completely based on experiential and meaning-centered instruction in classrooms, some linguistic competence levels of second language cannot develop as well. Meaningful input and opportunities for interaction allow learner to achieve fluency but not necessarily accuracy in the target language (Ellis, 2000; Long, 1991; Williams, 1999). Seemingly, there is a need to make a balance between the traditional approach which entirely focuses on forms and the communicative approach which put emphasis on meaningful communication in real context (Park, 2004, Long & Robinson, 1998) and consequently focus on form instruction was adopted as a new approach which primarily focused on noticing forms in communicative context.

Long (1991) presented Focus-on-form instruction (FoF) for the first time as an attempt to “overtly draw students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication” (pp. 45-46). FoF instruction can be effective in improving learners’ interlanguage grammar and linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2001). According to Nassaji “using collaborative tasks requiring learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of language, e. g. through the use of dictogloss can be a way of integrating (FoF) and communication by process” (as cited in Abbasian & Mohammadi, 2013, p. 1371). Dictogloss task can be used both individually and collaboratively which get involved the students in collaborative reconstruction of written texts and students in either tasks focused equally on form as they collaboratively constructed the texts (Lapkin & Swain, 2001). Moreover, they suggested that the dictogloss led the students to notice and reproduce complex syntactic structures.

Collaborative Dictogloss Task
Among the considerable number of studies on focus on form instruction, perhaps the most interesting ones are those that in light of Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning and output hypothesis, have taken into account the value of meaningful social interaction in language learning process (Swain, 1998, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Based on the sociocultural theory on the role of collaboration in language learning and psychological area, the present study used dictogloss as a type of focus on form collaborative task for developing learners’ writing. Dictogloss is an integrated skill and collaborative activity was originally assisted the learners to improve their grammar knowledge and was first proposed by Wajnyrb in 1990 which suggested a major change from traditional dictation (Jacobs & Small, 2003). According to Wajnyrb, while involved in the task of dictoglass ”students individually try to write down as much as they can, and subsequently work in small-groups to reconstruct the text; that is, the goal is not the goal to reproduce the original, but to ‘gloss’ it using their combined linguistic resources” (p. 12).

Dictogloss has two very important features. One is the use of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to do a dictogloss activity completely. In the dictation
stage, learners listen to their teacher read a text. In the reconstruction stage, they speak to their group mates in the target language, and write a reconstructed version of the text. In the analysis and correction stage, they must read the original text. Another important feature is providing learners with opportunity to reflect on their use of the target language. In order to do a dictogloss task, learners must rewrite the contents of the original text. In the reconstruction, they talk about the language of the text they are reconstructing (Mayo, 2002).

According to Swain (1998) reconstruction of a text collaboratively, may push students beyond their current interlanguage to more native like forms. Learners not only acquire new knowledge but reinforce what they already know. This activity helps them to have a more active role in the class and facilitates the class management (as cited in Todeva, 1998). Dictogloss has been the subject of a number of studies that supported the use of the task (Brown, 2001; Kooshafar, Youhanaee & Amirian, 2012; Kowal & Swain, 1994; Nabei, 1996; Storch, 1998, Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Kuiken and Vedder (2002a), for instance, investigated the effect of interaction between ESL learners through dictogloss task on the acquisition of the passive form. The qualitative analysis showed that interaction stimulated noticing to construct the new linguistic structures. The findings of a bunch of other studies indicated that in dictogloss activity, reconstructing the texts in groups enables the students to solve linguistic problems that lied beyond their individual abilities (Donato, 1994; Kim, 2008; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002a; Storch, 2002; Swain, 1998; Swain, 2000; Swain, 2006; Swain, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2001, 2002).

Pishghadam and Ghadiri’s (2011) investigation focused the effect of form versus meaning-focused tasks on the development of collocations among Iranian Intermediate EFL learners. The results revealed the fact that FFI group (dictogloss task) had a significantly better performance on the collocation test. In a more recent study Kooshafar et al. (2012) focused on the use of cohesive devices to create a coherent text through dictogloss technique. Two techniques of dictogloss and explicit teaching were used to examine which group was more successful in using correct conjunction in their writing composition test. The results of the study pointed to the conclusion that dictogloss technique seems to be more effective. Jabbarpour and Tajeddin (2013) also compared the effects of three FoF tasks of input enhancement, individual output and collaborative output on the acquisition of English subjunctive mood. The study indicated that the influence of both input and collaborative output activities were greater than the individual output task and also emphasized the importance of using collaborative activities and interaction in the process of English structure acquisition.

While these studies, among many others, have provided us with valuable insights into the effect of dictogloss on different skills, there are a small number of studies on its impact on learners’ writing skill. Abbasian and Mohammadi (2013), for example, examined the effect of dictogloss on intermediate level students’ writing skill based on content, organization, vocabulary, language usage and mechanics and found that dictogloss technique improved learners’ organization and mechanics whereas content, usage and vocabulary didn’t improved significantly. Since writing seems to be a major problem of many EFL learners in Iran, especially those at the higher levels of learning incapable of organizing their ideas in texts to create a meaningful writing, it seems that more research is needed in this field to encourage using such collaborative task during the
language teaching course in English classrooms in lower level e.g. pre-intermediate. Collaborative dictogloss may nurture and develop students’ competence in writing through group works and take an active role in their own learning. Since it is apparent from the literature on FoF that there is a paucity of research in the Iranian educational context in writing ability in general, present study is aimed at finding the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on Iranian EFL learners’ writing skill.

RESEARCH QUESTION
Based on what discussed above, the problem which is going to be examined in present study is to see if collaborative dictogloss is effective in learners’ writing performance. In line with this problem this question will be answered:
1. Does collaborative output task of dictogloss have any effect on EFL learners’ writing skill?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
A total of 40 male and female students in Sama language institute (SLA) in Iran, participated in this study. The students were Persian native speakers and had taken English for three to four years. There were two intermediate classes, one taken as the experimental group with 20 students and the other the control group with 20 students and they varied in age from 13 to 16 years. Students at advanced levels were not included because they were informative on meaning and structure of the words to write a text coherently. Students at lower levels were excluded as well, since they have difficulty in using correct structures and vocabulary. (Kooshafar et al., 2012).

Instruments
To reveal the effect of collaborative dictogloss task on writing performance, the following instrumentations were used:

Dictogloss texts
The texts were taken from Anecdotes in American English book by Hill (1980). According to Read (2006) the selected texts were short and simple because students had to keep the texts in their short term memory to remember them during the process of reconstructing. Furthermore, in preparing the texts, great care was taken to choose all texts appropriate for pre-intermediate level students in terms of their level of difficulty and the vocabulary. To this aim, two experienced teachers were asked to check all the texts whether students would know the meanings of most of the words in the texts at this level. The researcher first picked a 162-word text for the training session. However, when reading the text for the first time during the training session, the participants expressed that it was long. For the second reading, the text was reduced to approximately 120 words.

Composition Writing Test
Learners wrote composition writings prior and after the experiment. The pretest and the posttest of writing had exactly the same format but different content. The reason for having different
content in the pretest and posttest was to eliminate the retention effect that the pretest may have on the subjects’ performance on the posttest. The time allotted to students to write the text was 30 minutes.

Writing Scoring Criteria
To analyze key aspects of writing, the Jacobs’ ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel & Hughey, 1981) was employed. The checklist focuses on the five broad categories: mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.), language use (grammar), content, organization, and vocabulary. The response scales range from excellent to poor. The validity of scale is accepted through a wide large number of raters and composition researchers. All the writing sheets were marked by two teachers and if the given scores of the two raters were not the same, the mean of the two scores were calculated as the final score.

Procedure
First the writing composition pretest was administered to all subjects one week prior to the treatment and before the dictogloss training session. The participants in two groups were required to write a composition pretest within 30 minutes. Then collaborative dictogloss was used in experimental group. The treatment contains four major steps:

Preparation/warm-up: Learners were randomly divided into 3-member groups by the teacher before the dictogloss task began. All the students were given small pieces of paper to individually write down bits of information. Each group was given a single sheet of paper on which one of the members of the group would write the final version of the reconstructed passage. Students then were prepared for the dictogloss activity by introducing them to the topic of the dictogloss text. Any unfamiliar vocabulary items in the text would be explained at this stage.

Reading the text: The short text was read twice at natural speed to the students by teacher. The first time students just listened to become orientated to the topic, and while in second time they were expected to note some key words which they needed to reconstruct the original text.

Reconstruction: The small-groups worked together, pooling their notes to reconstruct the story they had heard and teacher monitored their interaction to make sure that every student was contributing. Students were supposed to pay more attention on structures and meaning. One member of each group wrote out the text. The time given for students to reconstruct the text was around ten minutes.

Analysis and correction: Finally, the texts were compared to the original text, analyzed and corrected by all the students with their teacher’s assistance. The teacher would randomly ask a student from each group to read what they wrote and the rest of the class listened and expressed their opinion on whether the reconstructed sentences were semantically and syntactically similar to the original text. During the correction, the teacher asked them to correct the text. When the students were not able to offer correct answers and explanations, the teacher explained the mistakes. This process went on until all the sentences were accepted by the students and teacher. The modified sentences were put on the board and the students were asked to edit their own text.
In control group, the teacher introduced the topic and asked them to write about a topic. Teacher then checked the participants’ writing and corrected them. Finally the posttests were administered to both groups of students in Week 10. The students were not informed when the posttest would be given. The posttest given to all the groups was exactly the same and it had exactly the same format as the pretest. They were supposed to write an essay with the intention of examining how collaborative dictogloss may effect on their writing performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
To check the reliability of the writing scale, the internal consistency reliability of writing was checked by calculating Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and it was found that the reliability of writing pre-test was and post-test was 0.80.

Inter-rater Reliability
Due to the fact that “rating on writing test in academic context vary considerably” (Hamp-Lyons, 2003, p. 174) inter-rater correlation coefficient was calculated for both group of pretest and posttests. The results as indicated in Table 5.1, revealed a high positive correlation between the rating of raters in both pre- and posttests, so there is no significant difference between the scores of the two teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Inter-rater Correlation of Raters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
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</tbody>
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Note. A = Rater A; B = Rater B; E = Experimental group; C = Control group

Testing the research Question
The research question was to examine whether collaborative task of dictogloss on learners’ writing performance. The descriptive statistics for the writing pre-test and post-test in both experimental and control groups are detailed in Table 2. Based on the following table, the mean scores for the writing skill in experimental and control groups, respectively, are 75.35 and 76.73 as well as post-test scores of experimental and control groups, respectively, are 79.43 and 77.53.
A comparison of the means of pre and posttest of experimental and control groups demonstrated a gain score of 4.07 (79.42 - 75.35) for experimental and a gain score of 0.8 (77.52 - 76.72) for the control group. Therefore, the initial look at the mean differences of experimental and control groups indicates that the experimental group outperformed the control group.

In the next step, an independent t-test was conducted to determine whether any significant difference might be observed for the writing pre-test of both groups. The results of the independent t-test, as presented in Table 3, indicate that there is not any significant difference between experimental and control groups’ scores on the writing pretest (t (38) = .38, P= .70>.05). This means any changes in the mean scores of the groups in the posttest were unlikely to be attributed to preexisting differences among the groups and, instead, could be due to the different treatments they received.

The results of the independent t-test, as depicted in Table 3, indicate that there is not any significant difference between experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the writing posttest (t (33) = -.54, P = .60>.05). As observed in figure 1, the pre-test average of writing skill for experimental group is more than control group.
Discussion
The purpose of present study was to examine the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on learners’ writing performance. The research question asked whether the collaborative output dictogloss task had an effect on EFL learners’ writing skill. To test the research question the data was calculated by descriptive statistics and independent t-tests for pre and posttests. An initial look at the descriptive statistics, revealed that the mean of writing in posttest was higher than the pretest in experimental group. However, the results of the analysis showed that there is no difference between writing pretest and posttest scores. Thus, it can be concluded that collaborative dictogloss did not have any significant effect on pre-intermediate learners’ writing skill. This finding is consistent with the finding of Kuiken and Vedder (2002a) who found that dictogloss did not significantly improve students’ performance. However, the findings do not support some FoF research studies that have reported better performance in producing forms correctly during dictogloss task (Lapkin & Swain, 1998; Lim & Jacobs, 2001a). Moreover, it is inconsistent with Jacobs and Small (2003) and Abbasian and Mohammadi (2013) who reported the positive effect of dictogloss on writing performance. However, more research is needed to examine the application of collaborative dictogloss task in an EFL context.

The reasons for this finding could include some unsystematic errors which were unobservable in some students such as tiredness and reluctance. Moreover, it may be difficult for pre-intermediate students to focus on both form and the meaningfulness of the text. This explanation is supported by Van Patten claim that lower-level students find it difficult to focus on meaning and form immediately (as cited in Tragant & Munoz, 2004). The results, on the other hand, are in line with Khatib and Derakhshan’s (2011) study. They asserted many EFL teachers are not proficient enough to elaborate and explained the difficulties for the students. Thus, another evidence for such result is that the teacher might not be enough proficient enough to correct and analyze the problematic area for the students. Additionally, the limitation of the time may affect the written production of the students. If the study time had been longer, the results might have been different. The last reason seems to be due to the class size which may not big enough to enable teachers to address students’ problem areas both verbally and nonverbally.
The result of present study is in harmony with Kuken and Vadder’s (2002b) study which did not prove the effectiveness of dictogloss on their learners L2 progress. However, it is in contrast with output hypothesis and Vygotsky’s theory. Output hypothesis, provided the theoretical underpinning on FoF instruction, and suggests that when learners are pushed to produce output, their language proficiency can be improved by engaging them produce language through metatalk and interaction. In this regard, Swain (1998) and Lapkin and Swain (2000) claimed that involvement in collaborative activities may promote the learners’ accurate production of the target forms (as cited in Nemati & Arabmofrad, 2014). According Vygotsky’s theory learners may achieve a higher level of language competence and reconstruct their knowledge through collaborative work and corrective feedback and interaction (Esteve & Cañada, 2001).

CONCLUSION
The result of this study seems to not support previous studies that have declared dictogloss task as an effective instruction in improving language skills and especially in writing achievement. It seems that more studies are needed to examine the application of collaborative dictogloss task in an EFL context. Moreover, due to some limitations further investigation warrant in future research studies. The number of the participants in this study was limited, so maybe the findings cannot be generalized for all the EFL students in Iran. Besides, the limitation of time of the study may have affected the written production of the pre-intermediate students. If the interval period had been longer, collaborative dictogloss task might have improved learners’ writing performance. It is also advisable to replicate this study for students at higher levels of language proficiency, since it may be difficult for pre-intermediate level students to focus on form and meaning simultaneously.

REFERENCES


AN INVESTIGATION OF THEORY APPLICABILITY IN TRANSLATOR TRAINING BY MEANS OF TRANSLOG

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ABSTRACT
The majority of translation training departments in our country have largely excluded translation theories from the practice of translation teaching; while it is not the same case for translators’ training centers abroad. The present study has been intended to examine the effect of incorporating translation theories in teaching translation upon translations done by students. For this purpose, an excerpt of "The Road to Oz" has been chosen as children literature that abounds with charactonyms and it has been given to two groups of students one of whom has been taught no theories concerning translation of children literature; while, the other has been exposed to theories related to translation of children literature with special attention to proper names. Next, all students were required to translate the source text at a computer site on separate personal computers under monitoring of the examiner into Persian and their performance was recorded in Translag User; then, it has been interpreted by means of data provided by Translog Supervisor. Finally, it has been concluded that inclusion of translation theory in translator training programs is necessary because it leads to higher quality of translations and also more conscious and confident translators; moreover, it contributes to formation of a systematic pedagogical framework for translators training, because it provides good and necessary hints for those in syllabus designing as well as translator trainers to conduct their training having this point in mind.

KEYWORDS  
Translation theory, translator training, translation quality, children literature, Translog.

INTRODUCTION  
Nowadays, there are many universities offering translation programs at undergraduate and graduate levels in Iran. However, it appears that the undergraduate program of translation does not benefit from a well-established pedagogical system in terms of syllabus as well as assessment and such a situation has not been unique to Iran. Formerly, many translators’ training centers around the world suffered from the same situation to the extent that scholars as House (1981: 32)
had criticized unsystematic nature of translation training programs in which teachers selected a text without explaining the reason of such a selection and distributed it among students and "snared at them and led them into errors". The translation assessment of such a text was done in the next session when students read their translations sentence by sentence and the teacher asked for better versions and at last offered the only "correct" translation to the class. In such a procedure, neither the syllabus design nor the assessment activity followed a systematic pedagogical framework. This trend has been developed in many centers around the world; however, it is still a common procedure in many translators training programs in our country and the majority of translation classes are conducted in such a method.

Considering translation training centers in Europe, Clazada Perez (2004: 119) attributes the evolution of translation training programs to "the connection made between theory and teaching practice". Such a connection seems missing in most of educational systems of translators training departments in our country; evidently, because many instructors and even students believe in the dichotomy between translation theory and practice and maintain that translators "are not made but are born" in Nida’s words (1981: 46). Hence, any theoretical instruction is regarded as a waste of time. Such a dichotomy has been questioned by many scholars, including Hatim (2004:3) who states that " theory and practice are ultimately complementary and, particularly in a field such as translation, the distinction needs to be re-examined" or Landers (2001: 31) who points out that even literary translators are not born but are made and some others as Beeby (1996:63) believe that translation is different from riding a bike in which knowing how muscles work makes no difference to a cyclist and theory can provide guidelines for teachers to help students learn this skill. Yet, teachers are responsible for determining how much theory must be integrated to the course without changing the class into a theoretical one. He refers to this amount of theory as "threshold of termination" and puts forward that teachers should "make a distinction between pure theory, on the one hand, and processes and principles, on the other".

For Beeby (1996), integrating theories into translation classes does not form a methodology for teaching translation theory but a methodology for teaching translating. It can be concluded that most of disagreements made upon the integration of theory in translation teaching originates from such a belief that translation should be learned through practice and theories serve no purpose in this field; while, if theories are incorporated to introduce principles and methods rather than abstract ideas less resistance is witnessed.

Although some researchers as Beeby (1996: 12) claim that "translation teaching has not developed as fast as one might expect" and lacks clearly defined objectives and specific pedagogical framework others as Perez (2004) and Giles (2009) who believed in the potential benefits of theory in translators as well as interpreters training attempted to incorporate theories in teaching translation in order to offer an objective pedagogical framework for translation trainers.

Perez (2004: 121) has developed a tentative syllabus based on "seven important trends in Translation Studies", including:
focusing on (mostly 'discrete') units of language…, focusing on the communicative nature of texts…, focusing on communicative aims through texts…, focusing on the link between translation and target cultures…, focusing on the 'new translation ethics'…, focusing on the translator as a rational and emotional being … and focusing on translation corpora…. (Perez, 2004:121)

Perez’s tentative syllabus is formed to implement the above seven trends or theories practically in the translation practice taught in a class. This syllabus includes five units each of which focuses on one of the trends mentioned above and includes material corresponding to these trends. For instance, the first unit which focuses on 'discrete' units of language provides students with the table of contents of a computing manual to translate or the third unit which focuses on communicative aims through texts encourages students to translate any European Parliament speech. As a result of such a syllabus, students are familiarized with different translation theories including ones offered by Vinay and Darbelnet (1997) or Reiss (1989) and Nord (1997) and made flexible in decision making.

In another effort to incorporate theory in the practice of translation teaching, Giles (2009: 43) who believes in translation as a skill to be learned has provided some models for translators as well as interpreters training. He points out that theories have been excluded from training programs due to the general belief that theories are "useless, abstract and too remote from the actual practice of translation and interpreting"; while, they "can help trainees advance better and faster towards mastery of their professional skills" and the primary benefit of them lies in "their explanatory power which gives reassurance to students who experience doubts and difficulties". Giles (2009: 17,32). He adds that whatever theory is taught to students it helps them have better understanding of translation phenomenon, translation difficulties, translation strategies and tactics provided that theories are directly relevant to students needs, easy to grasp and simple. These theories should be implemented repeatedly throughout the course and after students’ sensitization and adopting theories developed by other translation instructors or researchers is one of the ways through which such theoretical components are found.

According to Shuttleworth (2001: 499-500), methods and principles are better terms than theories since they are "euphemistic formulations" which emancipate syllabus designers from "formal theories as a series of statements intended as research tools rather than an aid for the translator" and translation theories should be viewed "as a means of encouraging informed reflection on the translation process" rather than "as a static body of knowledge which needs to be imparted" and any translation course in order to be relevant to students needs has to form an agenda for itself, according to which it addresses the uppermost questions for students and "expose students to a range of varying opinions on controversial issues of translation and demonstrate that translating is not completely an ad hoc and subjective activity".

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

According to Baker (1991: 37) any academic training of translators requires among others "a strong theoretical component" that induces students to "reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another".

Therefore the present study intends to investigate the two following questions:
1. Do the academic trainings of translators require theoretical components?
2. Does the incorporation of theoretical components can lead to higher quality of translations?

In order to do this, the performance of translation trainees have been recorded by Translog which is, according to Buchweitz and Fabio (2006: 242), "software developed at the Copenhagen School of Business which … logs all keyboard and mouse actions as tasks are performed on an ordinary word-processor interface".

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A group of sixteen junior students majoring in English Literature were recruited. Eight of these students passed the course of Literary Translating (I) in the previous semester (Group A); while, the other group was supposed to pass this course in the coming semester (Group B).

The syllabus of Literary Translating (I) was designed to familiarize students with literary translation in three different chapters, the first of which deals with peculiarities of literary translation and its differences with non-literary translation and the second and third chapters are concerned with methods and principles related to translation of fiction and children literature respectively. In these two chapters some problematic fields as translation of proper names, neologisms, titles and charactonyms were introduced to students and strategies related to them were discussed. At last, some excerpts of texts including certain translation problems as neologisms or proper names were given and students were asked to translate the text considering principles, theories and strategies taught before. Students’ translations were evaluated based on principles and methods introduced.

Such theories were developed based on the understandings that Giles (2009) believes any theories must provide. These understandings are as follows:

Understanding phenomena: Why do authors write the way they do? Why do speakers make ungrammatical sentences? What does it mean to ‘understand’ a verbal statement? How are written or oral statements perceived and processed by the human mind?

Understanding Translation difficulties: Why is it difficult to re-express the same message in a different language? Why is there linguistic interference between two working languages during translation or interpreting? Why do interpreters in the booth sometimes fail to understand very simple source speech segments?
Understanding Translation strategies and tactics recommended by instructors: Why is it acceptable for translators to change some information elements when going from source language to target language? Why should interpreters spend little time and effort as possible on note-taking in consecutive? Why do many translators and interpreters say one should only translate into one’s native tongue, and why do others challenge this view? Giles (2009: 47). In order to test if taught theories have been well acquired, Group A students were given an exam at the end of semester.

**Translog software**

According to Carl (2011: 2) "Translog consists basically of two windows which horizontally divide the screen into two halves; the top window plots the ST, and the bottom window is an editor in which the translation is to be typed". It is possible to register keystrokes and gaze activities in Translog, which can be collected and replayed. Carl (2000) explains Translog activity this way:

Translog-II records user activity data (UAD), that is, all the keystrokes and gaze movements (if an eye-tracker is connected). It classifies the keystroke data as 1) insertion, 2) deletion (delete and backspace), 3) navigation (cursor movements), 4) copy/cut-and-paste, 5) return key or 6) mouse operations. Since the keylogger runs in the background, the recording does not interfere with the writing or translation process. Translog-II logs the exact time at which each keystroke operation is made. If connected to an eye-tracker2, Translog-II also records 7) gaze-sample points, 8) computes fixations (i.e. clusters of gaze-samples) and 9) mappings of fixations to the closest character on the screen. This latter operation performs a mapping from the special location of the gaze on the screen to a character offset in the text. (Carl, 2000: 4108). According to Translog tutorial, this software has been designed to perform in two different modules including Supervisor module and User module. Translog Supervisor has been planned "to create 'source texts', to set up project environments (project files) to be used by the TranslogUser component, to display log file data created by the TranslogUser component in two different modes (i.e. linear mode and replay mode) and to count and analyze log file data". The replay mode represents the typing process of a user and the linear representation represents all the activities done while translating. In the following, linear representation of translation done by the subjects is shown.
As mentioned above, Translog supervisor enables a researcher to interpret the performance of a user by means of data logged in this module. This data which is represented in a part titled Analysis distinguishes between six categories of keystrokes including text production keystrokes, text elimination keystrokes, navigation keystrokes, mouse events, miscellaneous events and system events. Text production keystrokes are all the keystrokes used to create new text (e.g. A, B, C). Text elimination keystrokes are all the keystrokes used to delete text already written (typically Backspace, Delete, etc.). Navigation keystrokes are all the keystrokes made to navigate the cursor (typically Arrow Left, Pg Up, etc.) Mouse Events are mouse clicks used for navigation. Miscellaneous Events include e.g. Paste operations across the clipboard. Such information (as table01 shows) helps us to study the effect of theory incorporation in translation teaching on the final performance of trainees as the purpose of this study.

Features of this software made it so applicable for tracking writing and translation processes as well as teaching and researching translation and writing activities. According to Translog tutorial, this software assists users to compare their performance with either a replay of one of his/her own earlier writing processes or with a replay of something written by a true professional in the field and both of such comparisons would help him get a more accurate picture of the current level of his/her own performance. Moreover, it has been claimed that this software enables translation teachers to teach in a more "process-oriented" method instead of traditional ones. The exact words used in Translog tutorial are as follows:

Instead of teaching everybody in the same way by using the traditional methods of setting an assignment and asking students to hand in a text, which he/she subsequently marks and hands back and discusses in class, he/she can use Translog to teach collectively with an individual emphasis. At the beginning of the course, each student gets a copy of the Translog User program containing all the assignments for the course with a brief instruction in how to operate the program and how to submit assignments as log files. Then the teacher proceeds to look at the creation of the text with each individual student focusing on processing aspects as well as on final solutions. Each student's particular learning needs are addressed, and all problems are addressed from a process-oriented perspective. However, this software was originally designed for research purposes in translation field because the detailed real-time information recorded by it makes it possible to empirically test hypotheses about a correlation between cognitive processing and time.
lapse and also its replay function can serve as a powerful instrument for eliciting rich and accurate process information in this field.

Source texts
All sixteen subjects were required to translate a single English text into Persian which was an excerpt of the text "The Road to Oz" by L. Frank Baum. This text has been chosen because of charactonyms as well as geographical proper names which signify specific connotations. Eight out of sixteen subjects were taught theories related to translation of children literature and particularly translation of proper names in children literature in the previous semester. These theories were intended to familiarize them with differences between children and adult literature in terms of literary prestige, content, structure, public recognition as well as translation methods and strategies applied by translators. Based on these theories, rewriting or adaptation of children literature in another language is as a sort of loyalty to the source text and students were required to pay special attention to proper names; both character names and proper names of geographical places, because such names carry significant connotations and go beyond merely identifying characters and perform specific functions as "amusing readers, imparting knowledge and evoking emotions" in children literature, according to Jan Van Collie (2006: 63).

The city of beasts
When noon came they opened the Fox-King's basket of luncheon, and found a nice roasted turkey with cranberry sauce and some slices of bread and butter. As they sat on the grass by the roadside the Shaggy Man cut up the turkey with his pocket-knife and passed slices of it around.

"Haven't you any dewdrops, or mist-cakes, or cloudbuns?" asked Polychrome, longingly.
"'Course not," replied Dorothy. "We eat solid things, down here on the earth. But there's a bottle of cold tea. Try some, won't you?"

The Rainbow's Daughter watched Button-Bright devour one leg of the turkey.
"Is it good?" she asked.
He nodded.
"Do you think I could eat it?"
"Not this," said Button-Bright.
"But I mean another piece?"
"Don't know," he replied.
"Well, I'm going to try, for I'm very hungry," she decided, and took a thin slice of the white breast of turkey which the Shaggy Man cut for her, as well as a bit of bread and butter. When she tasted it Polychrome thought the turkey was good—better even than misti-cakes; but a little satisfied her hunger and she finished with a tiny sip of cold tea.

"That's about as much as a fly would eat," said Dorothy, who was making a good meal herself. "But I know some people in Oz who eat nothing at all."
"Who are they?" inquired the Shaggy Man.
"One is a scarecrow who's stuffed with straw, and the other a woodman made out of tin. They haven't any appetites inside of 'em, you see; so they never eat anything at all."
"Are they alive?" asked Button-Bright.
"Oh yes," replied Dorothy; "and they're very clever and very nice, too. If we get to Oz I'll introduce them to you."
"Will the Scarecrow scare me?" asked Button-Bright.

"No; 'cause you're not a crow," she returned. "He has the loveliest smile you ever saw—only it's painted on and he can't help it."

Luncheon being over they started again upon their journey, the Shaggy Man, Dorothy and Button-Bright walking soberly along, side by side, and the Rainbow's Daughter dancing merrily before them.

Sometimes she darted along the road so swiftly that she was nearly out of sight, then she came tripping back to greet them with her silvery laughter. But once she came back more sedately, to say:

"There's a city a little way off."

"I 'spected that," returned Dorothy; "for the fox-people warned us there was one on this road. It's filled with stupid beasts of some sort, but we musn't be afraid of 'em 'cause they won't hurt us."

"Never mind," said the Shaggy Man; "as long as I carry the Love Magnet every living thing will love me, and you may be sure I shan't allow any of my friends to be harmed in any way."

This comforted them somewhat, and they moved on again. Pretty soon they came to a signpost that read:

"HAF A MYLE TO DUNKITON."

"Oh," said the shaggy man, "if they're donkeys, we've nothing to fear at all."

"They may kick," said Dorothy, doubtfully.

Procedure

Twenty subjects, top ten students of two classes selected based on their transcripts, were given a leaflet in which they were provided with a very brief introduction to Translog and assured that they would not be graded or mentioned anywhere; moreover, they were required to be punctual and use either Hezare or Pouya English to Persian Dictionary at the test session. These two dictionaries have been preferred due to such features as being up to date and user-friendly.

Sixteen students participated in the test and were asked to translate the text into Persian. It is noteworthy that they were questioned if they have any familiarity with Translog, if they can assess their ability of typing as a good, average or weak typists and lastly if they have any translation experiences except the actual translation activities done in translation classes. None of the participants had any familiarity with Translog, all of them assessed their command of typing as average and they had no experience of translation except translations done in classes. Moreover, they were told that the source text is an excerpt of children literature and they are supposed to translate it for the children of seven to nine years old.

The task was carried out under the same condition and with access to the same tools (the same dictionaries, separate computers, the internet access) and the researcher remained in the room during the whole session. It is noteworthy that no explanation regarding how to translate proper names was given to questioners and upon completion, participants were asked to save their translations.
Data analysis

One of the objectives of this paper is to assess whether final translation output of students differs when exposed to translation theories concerned with translation of children literature or not. For this purpose, data provided by Translog supervisor has been analyzed in correlation with translation quality assessment model proposed by Katharina Reiss (2000).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, we will present statistics obtained from the Translog file in two separate tables each of which represents the performance of Group A (those who have not passed Literary Translating I) and Group B (those who have passed Literary Translation I).

Next, the translation quality of each group is considered in relation to time results provided by Translog and finally time used for revision of translation will be calculated based on Translog information to see if revision has any role in the quality of translations offered by students or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>TUE¹</th>
<th>TP²</th>
<th>TE³</th>
<th>CN⁴</th>
<th>ME⁵</th>
<th>TPPM⁶</th>
<th>DU⁷</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2541</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<td>219</td>
<td>171</td>
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<td>187</td>
<td>39.26</td>
<td>01:14:08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Total User Event
²Text Production
³Text Elimination
⁴Cursor Navigation
⁵Text Production Per Minute
⁶Duration

As the above table presents, Group B have spent more time translating the source text except for two cases; i.e. S05 and S07, although time differences between these two students and their counterparts in group A is too small.
Interestingly, figures related to total user events, text production keystrokes, text elimination keystrokes, cursor navigations and text productions per minute are higher for Group A in comparison with Group B. So, what did group B use the extra time for? The answer for this question is either for revision of translation or for reflecting upon translation strategies to use before offering the final product.

In order to understand if group B spent more time for revising their translations or not revision keystrokes can be calculated and compared with group A’s. Owing to the statistics provided by the Translog software, this figure can be simply calculated by adding the total revision keys (a Translog figure which includes backspace, mouse and cursor movements), dividing that figure by the total keystrokes and, finally, multiplying by 100. This way, we obtain the number of revision keystrokes per hundred keys logged. The following table represents this figure in percentage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student/group</th>
<th>Total revision keys</th>
<th>Total keystrokes</th>
<th>Revision keystrokes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>S01/ GB</td>
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<td>14.71%</td>
</tr>
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<td>S02/ GB</td>
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<td>S04/ GA</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>3807</td>
<td>23.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S04/ GB</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>3776</td>
<td>32.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S05/ GA</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>3430</td>
<td>14.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S05/ GB</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>3952</td>
<td>20.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S06/ GA</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>3216</td>
<td>19.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S06/ GB</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>3052</td>
<td>15.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S07/ GA</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>2864</td>
<td>26.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S07/ GB</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2907</td>
<td>8.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S08/ GA</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>4157</td>
<td>21.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S08/ GB</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>3324</td>
<td>12.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table presents, the percentage of revision keystrokes is significantly lower for group B except in two instances; hence, it appears that Gile's (2009: 32) claim of " I believe the main positive effects of theoretical components in a training program should be sought in their explanatory power and in the reassurance it can provide to students who experience doubts and difficulties" is proven because group B who benefited from theoretical instructions concerning how children literature is and how it should be translated have had less revision keystroke and made translational decisions more confidently.

It appears that longer time of translation in spite of less number of text production keystrokes originates from longer cognitive processes that group B has undergone. In other words, it can be claimed that the results of this part proves the claim of Baker (1992: 58) who declared that " … theoretical component… induces students to reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another".
Such a longer process can be attributed to retrieving the theoretical information concerning how to translate the source text; however, this very claim can be tested by means of Think aloud protocol in another research.

As the next step, the present study intends to examine if longer time used for translation has led to higher quality translations or not. For this purpose, Persian translations were assessed based on Reiss model which includes three categories, i.e. examination of the ST in terms of text-type, examination of the TT in terms of linguistic elements and lastly examination of the TT in terms of extralinguistic elements. *The City of Beasts* as a form-focused text, in Riess’s words (2000), requires a SL-oriented translation method which creates an analogous form for creating a corresponding impression in TL. All of eight students attending GB in this study have adopted such a translation method while the ones forming GA were either inconsistent in translation method or adopted a literal method which fails to recreate an analogous form in the TL.

According to Reiss (2000) optimal equivalence should be evaluated at different levels of semantic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic. Therefore, at linguistic category of translation criticism, "equivalence of semantic elements, adequacy of lexical elements, correctness of grammatical structures and correspondence of stylistic elements" are evaluated to see if optimal equivalence is obtained or not, according to Reiss (2000: 43-66). Considering optimal equivalence, Kade notes that “there are parallels between languages on the level of langue […]”, (cited in Reiss, 2000: 49), but “the act of translating involves choosing the optimal equivalent from among the potential equivalents on the level of parole […]”, (ibid). In other words, “all those possible equivalents of a word in isolation are potential equivalents, while the optimal equivalent is determined by the microcontext and macrocontext” of the text, according to Manafi (2005: 60).

Regarding translation criticism at linguistic level, equivalence of semantic elements is achieved when meanings of the original text are preserved in translation; adequacy of lexical elements is accomplished when a translator deals with ‘technical terminology,’ ‘special idioms,’ ‘metaphors,’ ‘idiomatic usages,’ ‘proverbs’ and ‘untranslatable words’ in a competent way; correctness of grammatical structures is achieved with due attention is given to differences in the linguistic systems of two languages and transpositions lead to optimal equivalence and correspondence of stylistic structures occurs when “the differences between colloquial and standard or formal usage, standard, individual and contemporary usage as well as deviations from normal language usage” is observed, Reiss (2000: 43-66). However, Reiss (2000: 86) believes that no comprehensive evaluation of translation is possible unless all the factors including extralinguistic ones are considered. These factors are: immediate situation, the subject matter, the time factor, the place factor, the audience factor and the speaker factor, (see Reiss, 2000). Examination of *The city of Beasts* in terms of text-type as well as examination of Persian translations in terms of linguistic and extralinguistic elements reveals the following information concerning translation quality of students under study:

| Table 3: Translation quality and time spent |
As the above table shows, four out of eight translations offered by Group A are inadequate because they fail to achieve optimal equivalence has been achieved at both linguistic and extralinguistic categories; moreover, conventions of children literature as covered in translation theories concerning this genre have not been observed. While, Group B has offered four adequate and four fairly inadequate translations because they more or less succeed in achieving optimal equivalence at both linguistic and extralinguistic categories. Considering the theories introduced, these students managed to achieve optimal equivalents by transferring the connotations implied in the ST proper names and producing an adequate translation in terms of some extralinguistic factors as the speaker, audience as well as some linguistic factors as correctness of grammatical structures.

It can be concluded that theoretical familiarity with translation task can lead to "better understanding of translation phenomena, difficulties and strategies or tactics" as Gile’s asserts (2009: 17). However, he claimed that theoretical incorporation in translation teaching can lead to faster performance of translators that is not proven by the results obtained in this study.

To see the difference between performance of these students, two translations belonging to group A and group B students are given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student/group</th>
<th>Translation Quality</th>
<th>time spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S01/ GA</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>02:03:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S01/ GB</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>02:17:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S02/ GA</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>01:45:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S02/ GB</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>02:21:39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S03/ GA</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>01:42:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S03/ GB</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>02:17:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S04/ GA</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>01:13:32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S04/ GB</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>01:40:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S05/ GA</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>02:10:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S05/ GB</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>02:09:02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S06/ GA</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>01:27:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S06/ GB</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>02:13:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S07/ GA</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>01:29:42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S07/ GB</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>01:14:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S08/ GA</td>
<td>Fairly adequate</td>
<td>01:07:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S08/ GB</td>
<td>adequate</td>
<td>01:14:08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

شهرهیوانات
وقتی که ظهوره زنلی ناهار روباه پادشاه را بازکردنی‌است، آن یک بوکلمون کباب شدیده خوشه‌ها با سس قره قاطق چند بیکه تان و کره بویدروی سیزه‌ها با کناره‌ها نشستند. بعد مردی‌شمالو با چاقوی بچه بوکلمون را زیبی کرد و هر راکه ای را به یکی داد.

دختیگین کمپن باشته‌ای زیادی‌سیدیا نوشی از یک کمک به یکیکه ای از به‌دارید؟
در دواستی گفت: معلومه که نداریم. ماروی زمین فقط خوراکی‌های جامد می‌خوریم ولی یک بطری چای سرد هم نمی‌خوریم!

دختیگین کمپن محوت‌شانی غنچه‌ی زرگ‌که از بوده با اشتیا ازیاد یا بوکلمون را می‌خورید. آتش ارسید: خوش‌شئ؟

غنچه‌ی زرگ‌که سخت می‌خورید بو به بارا می‌خورید. سری تکان داد.

دختیگین کمپن گفت: منم می‌توانم خورم؟

غنچه‌ی زرگ‌که گفت: نه این را که نمی‌توانی به خوری.
دخترنگین کمان گفت: خوب من منظره یک تیکه تیکه می‌کنم.

آخه خیلی گرسه ام. بزرگ‌ترین گفت: باش بینم می‌توانم به‌سمه خودم سیرشوم.

سه‌مهم‌ترین کوه‌ولوی از سه‌میلی‌سیفی بی‌پوش هست که دوست دارم اما از بس که بود سپشت. یک‌نفر دیگر چای سردس نوشید و عاشق رضایم کرد.

درتی که داشت غذا خورده‌ها برای خوش‌درست می‌کرد گفت: این‌قدر کودک یک مگس‌هن راهم بزورسی می‌کرد.

ولی چیزی که شکر باقی چون شریش به نام عمدی‌های هستند که هیچی نمی‌خورند.

درتی گفت: یکی مترسک هست که شکمش از پرده ویکی دیگه هن جنگل‌یه یک هست که از کلی ساخته شده است. آنها.

اصلا‌شتهایی برای غذا خوردن نادران یارای همی یکی نمی‌خورند.

غنه ی زرنگ پر‌سید: حالا که هیچی نمی‌خورند زندان‌بانه؟

درتی جواب داد: ای لیبها که زندان‌تان خیلی باهوش و بامزه هم هستند. هر وقت متفق شریف آنا را به شما ن скач می‌دهم.

غنه ی زرنگ پر‌سید: مترسک من راه می‌ترساند؟

درتی به غنه نگاه کرد گفت: نه آخه تو چنگ نیستی. مترسک قشنگ‌ترین لبخند دارد که تالار‌شیرا و بالته روز صورتش ناشی شده و جراح نمی‌تواند آنا تغیر‌دهد.

ناهارخوردن‌شیان تمام شد و ب افریدن‌اشاد دادن. درتی مرتضی‌مالون و غنی ی زرنگ بامانت در حالی راه میرفت و دخترنگ‌های کام باخوش‌ماند و سروی در چنار آن‌ها مرفت گاهی رگ‌هارگانگ مثل برق از نامحسور یک کم‌مه‌دشت که کسی اورانمی‌های که هم آرام حرکت می‌کرد و به همه لبخند می‌زد. امکان‌افکتن به آرامی برگشت و گفت: یک‌نفر نه که چون می‌شنود

درتی گفت: ار ایداصیم است. افراد رویه هم هشدارداده‌اند که درا این حالی حمایت هم وجود‌دارند. ولی جای هچی چیزی نیست جون به ماکاری‌ی دارد.

مردی‌پشمالگند: اسفا فکر کرده راه‌نکشید ت امری دارد غم ندارد اجاسم نمیدهی یکی مو ازسر اکثر کم‌کرد.

باین حرف کیمی خیال‌شان راحت‌شده و راهشان هادام دادن تایلکه یکی تابلوی راه‌نما روی ان نوشته بود: نمی‌توانم دیگر نام‌ها گاه‌ها گاه‌ها گاه‌ها گاه‌ها گاه‌ها.

مردی‌پشمالگند: اگراینها هم علاش باشد یک دیگر اصلا نمی‌تررسیم.

درتی باشک و تردد گفت: ولی مکانه لک‌نامه بزنند.

In what follows, a sample of translation done by a student of group B is given:

هندگاهی که چهار فرا رسید آنها سه‌ی ناهار کینگ فاکس را باز کردن و یک یکولنی سرخ شده‌خورشی خوبه به همراه سس زغال اخته و تکه‌هایی نان و کره بی‌پرده‌کردن. یک محض اینکه روی علف‌هایی کنار جاده نشستند شانگی من یکولنی را با چاقوی جهریش برید و بین یکی حمایت کرد.

پلی‌کروم مشتاق‌های پر‌سید شما قظره‌ای شنیم که یک غذایی که یک کلیه‌ای ابی‌ناریدی؟ درای جوب داد: البته که تنها چیزی جامد روی میخورم که اینجا روی زمین هستند. ولی چیز سرد یه اسکان کن می‌خواهید؟

دختر رین یو پاتن پارایت یا نگاه کرده که که یکی یکولنی رو کردن یا پرسید خوش‌می‌هست؟ یا سری تکان یادیکه می‌کنی به می‌تونم بخورم؟

باتن پارایت گفت: به این رو ویل منظوره‌های که دیگر هست جواب داد: نمی‌بودم. بسیار خب می‌خوان اسکاک خانم کم چون چنین گرسته. تصمیم‌گیری گرفت و به تیپه نازک از سه‌ی بی‌پوشون رئیس که شانگی است باری او بریده. به همراه به ویل نوی و کره وقتی که اتحاد کرد پلی‌کروم فکر کرده که حتی بهتر از کیک‌های غذایی هست. ولی به وقت گرس‌گوشی به‌طرف کرده او با چیزهایی از کردن سرد تمام کرد.

دردی که داشت برای خوش‌خورشی خوبی از اماده‌های که به مگس می‌توانست بخوریم. اما از می‌بودن که بعلتی از آدم در ازون هستند که هرگز چزی نمی‌خورند.
It is noteworthy that in both translations some instances of mistranslations are visible; although, the group A students offer a higher quality translation. The same is more or less true for the other students of group A who were familiar with the requirements of translating children literature.

CONCLUSION

According to the preceding parts, it can be understood that software programs as Translog can be well applied in researching the process of translation and are able to assist translation researcher to achieve more reliable results based on objective statistics provided; moreover, it can be concluded that translation theory has been inappropriately excluded from teaching syllabus in translator training centers of our country because it can help students understand the phenomenon of translation, difficulties of this task and also how to tackle such difficulties better.

Based on the aforementioned findings, it can be concluded that theories can influence on the performance of translation trainees and yield higher quality translations; although, inclusion of them in translation teaching programs does not lead to faster translations. Furthermore, one should make a distinction between theories of translation as abstract statements useful for research purposes and translation theories which focus on specific translation approaches and strategies. This study appears to prove that any theoretical instruction aimed for solving specific translation problems and doubts of students can lead to higher quality of translations.

It is noteworthy that in order to obtain the ideal results concerning research questions as ones proposed by the present study, a think aloud protocol test can be included as well. Such a study can be better conducted if it is performed by higher number of subjects. Furthermore, conducting a pre-test to assess language proficiency as well as typing command of participants could be
beneficial. Moreover, a process-oriented examination of participants’ activities by means of Think aloud Protocol could yield more reliable results.

Except for one case, it is not clear if participants have attempted consulting the Internet to get access to information concerning connotations of proper names in "The Road to Oz" or not. It appears that considering this issue could have led to considerable results. Although the participants were required to use either Hezare or Pouya English to Persian Dictionaries, the effect of dictionaries on the final translations could have been minimized if a certain English to Persian Dictionary had been uploaded on the Translog User. Two participants; i.e. S01 and S03 in Group A, admitted that they are too slow in any kind of performance; hence, a personality test to determine how quick witted the participants are could have helped the researcher in the choice of subjects in order to minimize the effect of personality traits upon the final results.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF INSTRUCTING MNEMONIC DEVICES ON IMMEDIATE VERSUS DELAYED VOCABULARY RETENTION

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ABSTRACT
English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners frequently ask their teachers what strategy or technique to use in order not to forget the lexical items. In this study, the researcher made an attempt to find out the effectiveness of mnemonic devices as a memory strategy on the learners’ vocabulary retention. For this purpose, 60 Iranian EFL acquirers at pre-intermediate level of language proficiency, were selected and participated in this study. There was no limitation regarding their age. To ascertain the homogeneity of the learners, the researcher implemented Preliminary English Test (PET) as a pretest. The participants were assigned into two groups of 30, experimental and control. The experimental group was instructed 80 pre-selected words through mnemonic devices, but the same vocabularies were instructed to the control group in a traditional way. To answer the first question, the mean scores of both experimental and control groups were compared on the immediate posttest. The result demonstrated that instructing words through mnemonic devices is more influential than through the traditional methods. To answer the second research question, the researcher compared the mean scores of the experimental group on the immediate and the delayed posttests. The result revealed that learners’ delayed recognition of second language vocabulary is not affected by the passage of time, it means that words learned via mnemonics instruction were retrieved well both in the process of immediate and delayed retention. This study shed light on the fact that memory strategies like mnemonics are of great application and importance in the process of short term and long term retention of EFL learners. Therefore, mnemonic devices should be given prime attention by both EFL material developers and instructors as a potentially efficient technique for vocabulary instruction, acquisition, and long term retention at foreign language improvement.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary, Mnemonic Devices, Immediate Retention, Delayed Retention

INTRODUCTION
The key factor for most of the learners in second or foreign language learning is how to communicate with each other. Vocabulary is one of the foremost constituents of language that helps learners communicate efficiently. The significance of lexical items is so fundamental and in this regard, Akmajian et al. (2010: 13) state that one of the most significant parts of linguistic
Structure is the word. According to them, “anyone who has mastered a language has mastered an astonishingly long list of facts encoded in the form of words. The list of words for any language is referred to as its lexicon”. The biggest issue that almost all teachers were dealing with was that most of the Iranian EFL learners often complain that they cannot remember many of the words they have learned before; they typically find vocabulary learning difficult. Many students also confess that they usually memorize the word list through repetition, explanation, translation and other conventional techniques. Hence, they have low motivation in learning a second language. Because of that, students need to know some strategies and techniques to learn, retain, and recall vocabulary in different conditions. As a conclusion, it is crucial for the teacher to select a technique that is interesting and exciting to the students and impressive in reinforcing students’ vocabulary learning and retention. Khan (2008: V) declared that mnemonics are derived from “Mnemosyne, ancient Greek goddess. A memory aid or pertaining to aiding the memory. Often considered to be a code, device, acronym or formula to facilitate memory or understanding”. According to Shmidman and Ehri (2010:160), “Mnemonics are effective when they speed up learning, reduce confusion among similar items, and enhance long term retention and application of information”.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

*The Significance of Vocabulary in English Language Teaching (ELT)*

The gradual improvement of the second language lexical items is an essential part of the practice of acquiring a foreign language. However, for a long time, vocabulary was ignored facet of language instruction. Since 1980s, it has found its path in the core curricula and the importance of its instruction became noticeable (Allen, 1983, Carter, 2002).

Instructors came to the conclusion that for developing four skills of language (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) in the acquirers, they have to train them the new or unfamiliar vocabulary words. For instance, we can consider Field (2002: 242) who stated that in the pre-listening phase in the classroom the “pre-teaching of all important new vocabulary in the phase” is noteworthy. Knowing the words and expressions is also beneficial for developing the reading skill. Grabe and Stoller (2001: 196) highlighted that “reading fluency depends on knowing a fairly large number of words so that a reading task itself is not too difficult”. They also noted that the learners should become familiar with the extensive amount of vocabularies in a routine manner if they want to become the fluent readers. Consequently, Vocabulary knowledge is vital to the reading comprehension. “Comprehension is far more than recognizing words and remembering their meaning” (Sedita 2005: 1); however, if learners do not sufficiently understand the meaning of lexical items in the text, in this way communication is impracticable. It is also apparent that to the second or foreign language learners being able to speak fluently is the main goal. In this case, they need to have access to a large amount of vocabularies and phrases. Kramsch (2002: 20) indicated that, “not being able to continue speaking because of a lack of vocabulary is a threat to one’s positive face, but asking for help may be perceived as a threat to one’s negative face”. Generally speaking, vocabulary instruction is an obligatory segment of training language to the students. Understanding a massive amount of lexical items can aid
learners to become better language acquirers and also aid them to gain more self-confidence in their communication.

The significance of vocabulary has been emphasized by many investigators. In this way, Zimmerman (1997: 5) states that, “vocabulary is the most important aspect of second language learning. The more you know the better chance to understand the language or make yourself understood”. Nation (2001: 9) emphasizes that, “second language learners need to know very large numbers of words. While this may be useful in the long term, it is not an essential short-term goal”. He also emphasized the efficiency of acquiring words and expressions with their translation in different ways such as flash cards and word lists.

**Vocabulary Retention**

Retention of the words has always been one of the concerns of the second or foreign language learners. They utilize different techniques in order to memorize the lexical items. For instance, some of them prefer to repeat the words whereas others use flash cards and look at them every now and again. As a result, Vocabulary retention is a matter of great importance to the learners. In this regard, Decarrico (2001: 291) states that instructors can motivate learners in order to “check for an L1 cognate, study and practice in peer groups, connect a word to personal experience or previous learning, say a new word aloud when studying, use verbal and written repetition, and engage in extended rehearsal”.

Up until now different definitions have been presented for the term ‘retention’. Vocabulary retention can be defined as “the ability to recall or remember things after an interval of time. In language teaching, retention of what has been taught may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002: 457). They also added that, “immediate retention is the remembering of something shortly after studying it. The ability to remember something some time after it has been studied” is known as delayed retention (p.248). According to Fry (2012: 48), retention is “the process by which we keep imprints of past experiences in our minds, the ‘storage depot’. Subject to other actions of the mind, what is retained can be recalled when needed”.

Khabiri and Pakzad (2012:81) also mentioned that retention relies on “the amount of mental and emotional energy used in processing a word and readers have developed certain strategies that could assist emotional and mental processing such as meta-cognitive strategies”. They also state that acquirers are suggested to learn vocabularies or phrases through reading texts. In this way, retention should not be perplexed with comprehension. Acquisition of the vocabulary’s meaning entails more than understanding it in a specific context throughout reading activity. The word’s meaning to be preserved in the long-term memory.

Jenpattarakul (2012: 445) indicated that vocabulary retention techniques help learners to be delighted in order to acquire a lot of words and they can keep those vocabularies in memory which can cause positive attitude and increased confidence in acquiring vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary retention techniques refer to the “techniques by which students use to store vocabularies in long-term memory and recall or retrieve easily to achieve reading
comprehension”. As a result, in order to improve the retention the “information needs to possess or be given qualities of meaningfulness, organisation, association, visualisation, attention, interest, and feedback” (Wainwright, 2007: 106).

Mnemonics

Mnemonic devices are memory aids that help learners in recalling particular data by using a strategy or technique that enable learners to develop memory (Richmond, Cummings & Klapp, 2008). During the ancient time of Rome and Greece, mnemonic devices have been applied in order to make the acquisition of target words easier by providing clear pictures for thoughts and ideas (Baleghizadeh & Ashoori, 2010). Mnemonics are useful techniques that help learners remember vocabulary more effectively and this strategy involves connecting unfamiliar information to the information that is already existed in the long term memory of learners through the application of a visual image or letter combinations (Bakken & Simpson, 2011). According to O’Brien (2011: 154), mnemonics have “a firm place in our repertoire of memory techniques”. In addition, Mnemonic devices are good memory enhancing strategies or techniques that assist learners in order to link new information to the previous information stored in their cognitive system and also these techniques, verbal or visual, that develop the storage and recall of data included in memory (Ashoori Tootkaboni, 2012).

Kleinheksel and Summy (2003) described the processes that instructors can use when applying a mnemonic technique as follows:

- Recognize the learner’s memory deficits: it is significant to identify that learners have not an attention deficit but they have a memory deficit.
- Identify curriculum areas where mnemonic devices can be utilized in order to improve memory: a strategy or technique that can be applied in more than one situation is stronger than a strategy or technique that will be employed in only one situation. Therefore, the performance of learners in other academic settings is also important.
- Talk about mnemonic devices with learners: forming the strategy will illuminate the learners what mnemonic devices involve. They also become aware of the advantages of mnemonic devices and the ways that these devices increase the learner’s recall of information, and finally teach the mnemonic devices with great detail. Teacher should instruct the mnemonics, in that case some students broke down this strategy into particular small constituents and others will be able to use it at once.

Different Types of Mnemonics

Mnemonic strategy can be applied in different fields such as mathematics, medicine, history, etc. There are at least three methods to teach mnemonics namely the Keyword, Pegword, and loci strategies. The Keyword method was first proposed by Atkinson in 1975. It aids learners to “link a word form and its meaning and to consolidate this linkage in memory” (Decarrico, 2001:291). According to this source, the keyword method can be carried out in three phases: first the acquirers pick out two concrete words in an L1 and L2 that are identical to each other phonologically or orthographically. Afterwards, a strong connection can be made between the keyword (word in L1) and the target word in L2. In this situation, when the target word is seen or
heard, the keyword would be recalled at once. In the last phase, a visual image is made in order to come together the referents of the keyword and the target word. The important point here is that learners should acquire knowledge to focus on recalling the picture of interaction between the keyword and the target word. Therefore, the keyword method is a way of making a close association between an unfamiliar or new words and its meaning. Kleinheksel and Summy (2003: 32) have claimed that this method is effective because “it increases concreteness and meaningfulness of newly acquired information, and also it ties new information to prior knowledge”.

The second type of mnemonics is the Pegword method. In this method, the numbered or ordered information need to be recalled. According to Dehn (2011), this method is identical to the Loci. This technique contains two stages. The first stage is that acquirers commit to memory the rhyming vocabulary words for the number 1 to 10. In the second stage, the acquirers create in their mind the unknown word and the rhyming word and afterwards connect these two things with other vocabulary words with the associated number (Zarei, Hasani & Keysan, 2013). In this sense, wainwright (2007: 55) uttered that this technique is based upon the idea of making connections between the rhymes and the items the learners desire to remember. For example: “one is bun, two is shoe, three is tree, four is door, five is hive, six is sticks, seven is heaven, eight is gate, nine is wine, ten is hen”.

The loci method is another type of mnemonic devices. This method is used as a memory aid. It is a Latin name for ‘places’. According to wainwright (2007), Roman orators applied this method in order to recall their speeches. For example, they drew the picture or image the places they knew very well. In this regard, Dehn (2011) declared that the loci method is the first visual mnemonic device. It works effectively because learners are associating a word with something they previously know and will not fail to forget, like the rooms in their home. When they remember the rooms, the images or pictures they created will unintentionally be remembered. When they observe what is in the picture, they will identify the information they need to remember. Nemati (2009:124) also points out that in order to use this ancient technique, imagine a familiar location such as a room, then mentally place items to be remembered there, to recall take an imaginary walk along the landmarks in the room and retrieve the items in it”.

**Empirical Studies on Mnemonics**

Empirical research on the effects of mnemonic techniques on retention began in the late 1960s. Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2010) compared the impact of keyword and word list method on immediate vocabulary recall of EFL learners. In this research, the keyword method yielded better results in remembering and understanding the words as compared with word list method. The findings revealed that the experimental group which received vocabulary teaching through keyword method did better than those (control group) which received vocabulary teaching through the word list method. This shows the superiority of the keyword method in order to remember word lists. Secondly, Atay and Ozbulgan (2007) were investigated the effect of memory strategy instruction together with learning through context on the ESP vocabulary retention of Turkish EFL learners. The study exhibited that mnemonic strategies can enhance vocabulary learning. They also compared the performance of learners instructed in bidirectional
retrieval applying the keyword method to study new Spanish words and their English definitions with that of control group learners who used the standard keyword procedure; the results revealed that there was a noticeable difference in the level of recall among the two groups: the retrieval group remembered about 70% of the meanings of the 11 target words, while the level for the standard group was about 50%. In this regard, the results of Nemati’s (2009) study portrayed the superiority of memory strategies in short term and long term retention and she came to the conclusion that giving strategy awareness can help learners store and retrieve new lexical items. Other research findings “provide evidence that instruction involving the use of mnemonic devices does enhance a student’s formal reasoning skills and that this has the potential for application of knowledge to more varied tasks” (Laing, 2010:354).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES
The study intended to investigate the effect of instructing mnemonic devices on the immediate vs. delayed vocabulary retention of Iranian EFL learners. The following questions were posed to fulfill the purpose of this study:

RQ1: Does the application of mnemonic devices have any significant impact on EFL learners’ immediate vocabulary retention?
RQ2: Does the application of mnemonic devices have any significant impact on EFL learners’ delayed vocabulary retention?

And, the following null hypotheses were stated:
HO1: The application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ immediate vocabulary retention.
HO2: The application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ delayed vocabulary retention.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
At first, 95 Iranian EFL students were selected randomly and Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to them. After the administration of PET, the students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean shaped the main participants of the study. Fortunately, the researcher could select 60 participants from among a total number of 95 learners studying in the pre-intermediate level. The selected participants were assigned to two groups. One experimental group and one control group with 30 students in each, consisting of 12 to 15 students in each class.

Instruments
To conduct the current study, the following materials and instruments were utilized:

Preliminary English Test (PET). To homogenize students at pre-intermediate level, the piloted PET was used. This test was comprised of the three sections of reading comprehension (35
items), speaking, and writing (7 items). The listening part was deliberately omitted from the test because of the issues with administration. Though the test was a standard one, the piloting was done to reassure its reliability following the reduction of listening comprehension section. The three parts of exam have the same value, 25% each and the total score was made by adding all the results together (the total score of the test equalled to 75). The administration of the whole test took around 100 minutes and the rating scale used to rate the writing section of PET in this study was the ones provided by Cambridge under the name of General Mark Schemes for Writing. The rating was done on the basis of the criteria stated in the rating scale including the rating scale of 0-5 for PET.

**Vocabulary List.** To ensure the homogeneity of learners regarding their knowledge of vocabulary prior to the treatment, a vocabulary list including 120 items (taken from the learners’ course book) was given the learners in order to illustrate which words were known to the subjects and which ones were not. Accordingly, 80 words of this list which were unfamiliar to the learners were selected and the other 40 vocabularies that were known to the learners were omitted from this list. The posttests of the study were also developed based on these selected words.

**Immediate and Delayed Posttests of Vocabulary.** A teacher- made multiple-choice vocabulary test was developed based on the level of the learners and the concepts presented in their course book as well as the vocabulary list of the course book. Then the test items were checked by the researcher, modified and piloted among 30 students with the same characteristics (gender, level) for the purpose of calculating the reliability of the test. Based on the item analysis done, the weak items were modified and consequently the test received the relatively desired format. The reliability of the test was calculated as 0.79 based on Kr-21 method which is an acceptable reliability. Finally, the test which included 30 items was used both as the immediate and delayed posttests in the present study to measure and compare the participants’ second language vocabulary development in the immediate and delayed vocabulary retention.

**Procedure**
First, the piloted PET was administered to 95 pre-intermediate students to homogenize them regarding their general language proficiency. Out of 95 students, 60 students whose scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean formed the main participants of the study. The selected participants were randomly assigned to two groups, an experimental and a control group with 30 students in each.

The participants of the study in both groups received the vocabulary list of the course book including 120 items. 80 items, which were new for at least 90% of the participants, were kept and the rest were omitted from both the treatment and the source of test construction. Then the treatment period began and continued for 8 sessions. The whole semester included nine weeks and the learners attended the classes two days a week, each session lasting for 90 minutes in both groups. Considering the fact that the syllabus of the language school had to be covered during the semester, 30 minutes of 8 sessions were allocated to the treatment in the experimental group.
As a result, same vocabularies were used for both groups, but the way of the presenting materials was different in the two groups: In the experimental group, learners were instructed based on the mnemonic devices, which included visualization or imagery, and pictures to aid the learners memorize and recall the vocabularies with delayed time intervals. Therefore, the teacher briefed the learners about mnemonic devices strategy and its different types at the beginning of the treatment. Each session, 10 words were instructed through keyword method, Pegword system, and Loci method.

The learners in the control group also received the same materials, course book, vocabularies, idioms, and passages that the experimental group experienced, meanwhile they were not provided with the mnemonic strategies. Instead they worked with conventional methods of learning vocabularies, for example the teacher presented the words in isolation, gave pronunciation of the vocabulary words orally and wrote those vocabularies on the whiteboard and gave a short explanation about their part of speech. Also, the teacher elaborated the meaning of each vocabulary through presenting synonyms and antonyms if necessary and finally applied minimal contexts, i.e. some meaningful sentences.

Then after eight sessions of treatment, the immediate vocabulary posttest was administered to check the learners’ recognition of vocabularies. Then after an interval of three weeks, the delayed posttest of vocabularies was administered to check the learners’ performance concerning retention of vocabularies.

Statistical Analysis of the Research Instruments
To test the hypotheses of the study, some descriptive and inferential data analysis procedures were performed:

Inter-rater Reliability of the Writing Section of PET
Table 1 shows the inter-rater reliability of the writing of the PET test. To score the participants’ writings, the scale presented by Alderson and Tankó (2010) was used which rates the writings based on a 1 to 6 scale. A Pearson correlation was then run to probe the inter-rater reliability of the scores. The results (Pearson R = .85, P = .000 < .05) indicated significant agreement between the two raters.

Table 1: Inter-Rater Reliability of the Writing test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing R1</th>
<th>Writing R2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.856**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Inter-rater Reliability of the speaking Section of PET
Table 2 displays the inter-rater reliability of the speaking test. A Pearson correlation was run to probe the inter-rater reliability and the results (Pearson R = .78, P = .000 < .05) indicated significant agreement between the two raters.
Table 2: Inter-Rater Reliability of the Speaking Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking R 1</th>
<th>Speaking R 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

KR-21 Reliability Indices
The KR-21 reliability indices of the tests were displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: KR-21 Reliability Indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>KR-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>51.26</td>
<td>70.600</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Posttest</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>2.825</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed Posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.83</td>
<td>3.217</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criterion-Referenced Validity
This kind of validity is an empirical one. In this kind of validity, the correlation coefficient between the newly developed test and the criterion test will be calculated. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the PET, immediate, and delayed posttests of vocabularies were computed as the criterion-referenced validity indices of the latter tests. As displayed in Table 4, the immediate posttest (r (58) = .73, P < .05, representing a large effect size) and delayed posttest (r (28) = .94, P < .05, representing a large effect size) enjoyed significant criterion-referenced validity indices.

Table 4: Criterion-Referenced Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.733**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.944**</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).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Testing Assumptions
Four assumptions should be met before one decides to run parametric tests (Field, 2009). The subjects were independent that is to say their performance on the test was not affected by the
performance of other students. The present data were measured on an interval scale and the subjects performed independently on the tests. The assumption of normality was also met. As displayed in Table 5 the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors are within the ranges of +/- 1.96 (Field, 2009).

Table 5: Testing Normality Assumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Skewness Statistic</th>
<th>Skewness Std. Error</th>
<th>Kurtosis Statistic</th>
<th>Kurtosis Std. Error</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Kurtosis Std. Error</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>-.711</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>-.854</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-.587</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>-1.375</td>
<td>-.652</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>-0.783</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed Posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-.502</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>-1.176</td>
<td>-.634</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>-0.761</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></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>-.658</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>-0.790</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-.427</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>-1.000</td>
<td>-.1325</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>-1.591</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The assumption of homogeneity of variance is discussed when reporting the results of the independent t-test.

Subject Selection Statistics
Table 6 below represents the descriptive statistics of the subject selection procedure. The piloted PET test was administered to 95 students. Based on the mean (51.26) and SD (8.40), 60 students whose scores fell within one SD above and below the mean were selected.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Subject Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>51.26</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N (list wise) 95

PET General Language Proficiency Test
An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the PET test in order to prove that both groups enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the administration of the treatment. As displayed in Table 7 below, the experimental (M = 54.63, SD = 3.02) and control (M = 54.76, SD = 2.97) groups showed almost the same means on the PET test.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of PET by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54.63</td>
<td>3.025</td>
<td>.552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54.76</td>
<td>2.977</td>
<td>.523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the independent t-test (t (58) = .171, P > .05, R = .022, representing a weak effect size) (Table 8) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the PET test. Thus it can be concluded that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the administration of the treatment. It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = .046, P > .05). That is why the first row of Table 8, i.e. “Equal variances not assumed” was reported.

### Table 8: Independent t-test of PET by Groups

<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>Equal</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variances</td>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>57.844</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variances</td>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Investigating the First Null Hypothesis

The first null hypothesis was set as “the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ immediate vocabulary retention”. An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention in order to probe the effect of mnemonic devices strategy training on the learners’ recognition of the vocabularies as measured on the immediate posttest. As displayed in Table 9 the experimental (M = 21.47, SD = 2.82) outperformed the control (M = 16.83, SD = 2.76) groups on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention.

### Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of Immediate Posttest of Vocabulary by 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>Posttest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>2.825</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.83</td>
<td>2.768</td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the independent t-test (t (58) = 6.417, P < .05, R = .65, representing a large effect size) (Table 10) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention. Thus the first null hypothesis as “the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ immediate vocabulary retention” was rejected. The experimental group after receiving mnemonic devices strategy instruction outperformed the control group on the immediate posttest of vocabulary.
Table 10: Independent t-test of Immediate Posttest of Vocabulary Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>Mean Difference</td>
<td>Std. Error Difference</td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>6.417</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4.633</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>3.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.417</td>
<td>57.976</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4.633</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>3.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = .045, P > .05). That is why the first row of Table 10, i.e. “Equal variances not assumed” was reported.

Investigating the Second Null Hypothesis

The second null hypothesis was set as “the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ delayed vocabulary retention”. A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental group’s mean scores on the immediate and delayed posttests of vocabulary retention in order to probe the effect of mnemonic devices instruction on the learners’ delayed vocabulary retention. As displayed in Table 11, the experimental group showed almost the same means on the immediate posttest (M = 21.83, SD = 3.21) and the delayed posttest (M = 21.47, SD = 2.82).
Table 11: Descriptive Statistics; Immediate and Delayed Posttests of Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed Posttest</td>
<td>21.83</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.217</td>
<td>.587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Posttest</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.825</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the independent t-test (t (28) = 1.515, P > .05, R = .098, representing a large effect size) (Table 12) indicate that there was not any significant difference between the experimental group’s mean scores on the immediate posttest and delayed posttest of vocabulary retention. Thus the second null-hypothesis as “the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners’ delayed vocabulary retention” was supported.

Table 12: Independent t-test; Delayed Posttest of Vocabulary Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Delayed Posttest</td>
<td>-.367</td>
<td>1.326</td>
<td>.242</td>
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CONCLUSION
The main objectives of this study were to find out whether the application of mnemonic devices can boost learners’ vocabulary knowledge or not and how far the learners’ vocabulary retention improves after being taught by using mnemonic techniques. It was also essential for researcher...
to see the changes in the range of the vocabulary knowledge of the students before and after the research. Another basic purpose of the current study was to pay more attention to the weakness the learners have in vocabulary learning.

This study was done in order to answer two questions. The first question was whether the application of mnemonic devices has any significant impact on the learners’ immediate vocabulary retention or not. To answer this question, the mean scores of both experimental and control groups were compared on the immediate posttest in order to find out whether there is any significant difference between the findings or not. In that case, an independent t-test was computed. The t-test here was a two-tailed t-test since the researcher made no prediction about the answer to this question. The statistical analysis revealed that the application of mnemonics has a positive effect on the learners’ immediate vocabulary retention. So the first null hypothesis is rejected.

The second research question was whether the application of mnemonic devices has any significant impact on the learners’ delayed vocabulary retention or not. To find out the answer, the researcher compared the mean scores of the experimental group on the immediate and delayed posttests of vocabularies. Since the researcher did two experiments on the same group, a paired t-test was computed. The findings revealed that there was not any significant difference between the experimental group’s mean scores on the immediate and delayed posttests. Hence, the second null hypothesis is supported.

In brief, it can be concluded that the instruction of mnemonics to EFL learners in the classroom provided positive atmosphere for them in order to boost their vocabulary knowledge.

**Implications**

Based on the findings of the present research, it is recommended that mnemonic devices can be applied in instructing the words that have any resemblances with learners’ native language. In this sense, teachers should be responsible for making learners aware of the existence of such strategies and provided them with different types of mnemonic devices in order to make them self-sufficient in applying this strategy. The findings of this research have benefit to EFL instructors, learners, and material developers. The findings can help instructors change their beliefs about to be teacher-centered in language teaching and move toward learner-centered approaches. Teachers also can help students to improve their group work activities. (E.g. Share experience, cooperating with each other, etc.)

Syllabus designer and textbook writers also can help instructors to represent specific parts related to vocabulary strategies into the materials they extend in order to remember the vocabularies for a time interval. In that case, strategy training will be involved with everyday classroom procedures and the learners will be directly instructed why, how, and when to apply vocabulary strategies in order to facilitate learning of new vocabularies and also better and faster recalling.

Mnemonic strategy can be applied in testing as a tool for assessing the learners’ strategy application in vocabulary retention. This can be carried out by providing learners with some pictures that aid them memorize the words through the links or connections they made between those vocabularies.
Suggestions for Further Research

There are some suggestions for further research as follows:
- Examining mnemonic devices on a larger number of learners, both female and male, and on different level of language proficiency, and also on different ranges of learners’ age.
- Comparing and combining this strategy with other vocabulary learning strategies.
- Trying different types of mnemonic devices on EFL learners’ vocabulary recall.
- Examining the effect of mnemonic devices on other components of language.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were imposed on this study:

The first limitation was related to the participants. They were all female. This was an empirical survey that only comprises a limited number of subjects. More samples from different institutions would definitely yield more generalizable results. Also, the interval between instructing the vocabulary words and testing them was almost short due to the constraints of the term’s duration. As the listening part of the test took a long time to be administered in the classrooms and was not permitted by the institutions, therefore the researcher did not implement this part. This did not hinder the standardization of the test because different parts of PET were standardized separately.

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TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN: A WAY TO CULTURE PLANNING AND CRYSTALLIZATION OF OTTOMAN LITERARY ACTIVITY

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ABSTRACT
The fact that translation from a certain language can be 'actively involved' in re/shaping a culture and its literary activity depends on a variety of factors, either human or non-human. This study intends to investigate the reasons why during the Ottoman era Persian remained the language of art and literature for three successive centuries (15-18 A.D.). Besides different factors (geographical links, literary figures, richness of the rhetoric of Persian, the Ottomans' willingness to consume new goods, etc.) translation has proved to have had a great influence in crystallizing the Ottoman culture and literary activity since it has been practiced in different forms the most important of which, discussed in this study, is 'parallels/ nazires'. In order to show the role of these factors and the agency of translation in the crystallization of Ottoman culture and literary activity, Even-Zohar's (2010a, 2010b) concept of poly-system theory and culture planning is applied as the theoretical model in this study. It is concluded that translation, done in whatever form, can lead to forming of a culture and literature when it involves creativity, and it is done from a poetically, literary and/or politically dominant language which was the case with translation from Persian in the Ottoman era.

KEYWORDS: Translation, Culture Planning, Persian, Ottoman Era, Literary Activity

INTRODUCTION
Throughout the world, societies have always attempted not to fall behind of what is, globally or in their neighborhood, considered as valued assets on whatever level (material or semiotic). To this end, they have gone different ways whereby they have tried to obtain what their country lacked. They might have directly imported what was 'better' in other societies, or tried to produce or reproduce something of similar quality in their neighborhood or in other known-about cultures. They might have even gained it through victory and dominance over the conquered land. With the case of textual and cultural products whose possession may be positively evaluated in a culture, the importation and re/production mentioned above mostly occur through translation. Translation as a culture transmitter (Newmark, 1988, 7), as a re/shaper of literature and culture, plays a significant role in the socio-cultural context of a society. Re/shaping a culture and literary system of a society demands the translation to be 'actively involved in the making of the center' of the target poly-system (Even-Zohar, 1990, 46); thus being of 'primary' status in the polysystem of TL to act as a model for target writers. This primacy in turn stems from a source language and culture with certain characteristics: this language becomes ultimately the language of art and literature in the TL (the case of Persian in the Ottoman era). Consequently poets and writers write...
their works in the original language to gain prestige and acceptance and to prove their skills and mastery in composing poetry for instance. In the case of the Persian language in the Ottoman era, this language actually acted as a criterion to assess the literary capability of Ottoman poets, and the poets had to live up to that criterion in case they wished to be a Divan poet welcomed at the court.

**Even-Zohar's concept of 'culture planning'**

Culture planning involves making a culture repertoire which is the total 'options' used by a group of people and their members in order to organize life, and it was not an exception with the case of the Ottomans who made 'deliberate' choices to declare Persian as the official language of court while other alternatives such as Turkish existed as well (Even-Zohar, 2010a, 78-79). There are good reasons for this phenomenon:

Firstly, each society assumes it necessary to, advertently or inadvertently, make, but not to inherit, a culture repertoire in order to organize the life of its people. In case of being advertent, as with the case of our study, this making is done by known people such as Mahmoud Ghaznavī, a political figure and Moulānā, a literary figure in the Ottoman era.

Secondly, as Even-Zohar (2002) puts it, the making of culture repertoire is done through invention (based more on 'analogies and oppositions'), and import, involving organizing 'skills and marketing' (p.168). When the 'imported material' becomes integrated in the target culture, it is called 'transfer' thus a 'cultural interference', to use Even-Zohar's terms, has occurred.

Thirdly, the source country (in our case Iran/Persian culture) must have particular characteristics that make another country/ culture (Anatolia (current Turkey)/Ottoman culture) import 'goods' from it. In the following these features as well as the factors involved in the process of 'cultural interference' will be discussed.

**Geographical Links**

Turkey (the then Anatolia) neighboring Iran on the Northwest was one of the provinces of Iran for three hundred years either partially or wholly in the Achaemenid Empire Turkey thus received much influence from the Persian language and culture. The remnants of those days can still be seen in mountains and museums. This era is known as 'The Pars Era' in the history of Anatolia. That is the reason why Riahi (1971) maintained that the roots of Iranian culture in Asia Minor dates back to 2500 years ago. Moreover, political relationships and correspondence between Iran and Turkey were carried out in Persian (Mahmoodian, 1999, 1-15; see also Aidin 2006, 10-18; Riahi, 1971, 2).

**Willingness to consume new goods**

This is a key concept in transfer (Even-Zohar, 2002, 170). There are different reasons that Turkish people were eager to learn Persian (new goods): First, the religion of the Turks was Islam, hence it was necessary for them to acquire some knowledge of Arabic and Persian. Aidin (2006, 19) maintains that Persian and Arabic literature have served as models for Turkish Islamic literature, and when the first great Islamic Turkish literary work (*KutadguBilig*, by Yusuf
Blasagunlu) was written, Persian with Islamic themes was already two hundred years old. It should be noted that this work was written in a rhythm based on Ferdowsi’s *Shānnāme*. Secondly, there were different fields of knowledge that included translations from Persian into Turkish, the first of which appeared after the Anatolian Seljuk Empire: translation of Tazkerat-al-Ouliā, Mersād-al-Ebād, Sa’di’s Golestān (Aidin, 2006, 40). Thirdly, enthusiasm for becoming Divan poets was another reason to welcome Persian, indicating that the Turks had the respect for Persian poets at that time. The love for Persian culture and literature during Seljuk of Asia Minor caused them to consider Persian literature and civilization a part of their kingdom conventions, and some even composed Persian poetry (Rypka, 2003, 323-25). Finally, to become a Divan poet, it was that the poet should learn Persian. Toska (2002) maintains that ‘Divan Poetry’ was not restricted to Turkish but incorporated elements of ‘thought, sentiment, and conception of art’ related to the ‘common culture,’ which was Persian (58-61). Moreover poets had to go through different stages in order to become a divan poet; these are mentioned by Toska (2002, 70-75) as *imitate, applying oneself, developing skills, acquiring experience through experimentation and, engaging in practice.* This was all after they had learnt three languages of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. The Ottoman and Seljuk kings, rulers, and viziers of the time were very fond of poetry and took pride and competed in having poets composing Persian poetry. Thus they would encourage poets to compose Persian poetry. This in turn resulted in what Even-Zohar (2010a, 79) calls ‘socio-cultural cohesion’ provided by the realization of culture planning that was in process at that time (Toska, 2002, 71; see also Aidin, 2006, 10-11).

**Political dominance of the source culture (Persian)**

According to Even-Zohar (2010b, 66), a culture becomes 'source' when it is dominant 'due to extra-cultural conditions.' One of these conditions is the political condition. For more than 200 years Iran had been the only super power in the world (Mahmoodian, 1999, 1); that is, until Alexandria the Great defeated Iran. Afterward, Rome also grew to power. As such, Iran had acquired a great treasure of policies and experiences of governorship. This was to the extent that the Seljuk ruling Asia Minor, (Turkey) although intelligent and powerful, lacked the experience necessary to manage public institutions and thus appointed Iranian ministers and political figures accordingly. That is why most of the Seljuk viziers were Iranian; the most famous of all these ministers was Moein-al-Din Soleymān Deylamī also known as 'Parvāne.' He was the de facto governor of Asia Minor for twenty-six years (Modarresi, 2005, 71; see also Riahi, 1971, 3-7). The Seljuks were Turk but they accepted Islamic and Iranian culture and created their official system based on the talents of the Iranian people (Aidin, 2006, 19). Consequently, the atmosphere in Seljuk court was completely Iranian; out of sixteen kings, eight were named after Iranian kings: three Kaykhsrows, three Kayqobāds, two Kaykawoos, and among princesses the Iranian names were Shāhanshāh, Kaykhośrow Shāh, Jahānshāh, Kay Freydoon, Faramarz, Siavash, Bahramshāh and Kamyar (Riahi, 1971, 1-8). These all have resulted in the success of socio-cultural cohesion, for as Even-Zohar puts it, the society, here the Turks, was dominated by 'external powers' whowere 'high-level' (2010a, 79).

**War**

Despite the devastating nature of war and all the damages it may do to one country, it may also bring some good things to that country.
Malazgirt war. In 1071, the war of Malazgirt opened the doors of Asia Minor (Anatolia) to the Turks, hence opening the way to the Persian language and culture. Riahi (1971) regarded this period as the 'time when Iranian culture actually brought its most influence.' (p.12). The Roman Seljuk government was dependent on the Iranian Seljuk government. But after the collapse of the Seljuk in Iran, the Roman Seljuk declared Persian as the official language; conversations in main cities, correspondences in the ruling systems, teaching, writing, authorship and composing poetry were all carried out in Persian. The reason for this was that the Seljuk, were already acquainted with Iranian culture. Beside, Turkish was not yet advanced enough to meet the society and government needs and the Roman Seljuk language was regarded as the conquered language, thus being unacceptable (Aidin, 2006, 20; see also Modarresi, 2005, 71).

Mongol attack. The Mongol invaded Iran in 1233 AD, causing poets and scholars including Moulānā, Najm-al-Din Razi, Ouhad Kermanī, Ibn-e-Bībī, Fakhr-al-Din Arāqī to leave Iran for the neighboring countries, India and Turkey. Such poets helped the Persian language spread in these areas. Their influence was then felt for the next 700 years (Aidin, 2006, 23; see also Modarresi, 2005, 73; Riahi, 1971, 2-15). The newcomers, being Sufis and mystics, used their views in their literary works. In this context, too, great works of mysticism, including Mevlevi Order, were created.

Influential figures
According to Even-Zohar (2010a, 79), typically, the 'power-holders' take on in the execution of the 'preferred repertoire,' which, in our case, was the application of Persian in the form of the administrative and literary language. However, sometimes people who are not from the ruling class become engaged in the making of the desired repertoire. Jalāl-al-Din Mohammad Rumi is such a poet.

Literary figures. Thus, after the invasion of the Mongols, many poets and scholars settled in Asia Minor. Also, Turkish kings had earlier shown great interest in Persian literature, which originally helped flourish Divan poets. The development of the Persian language and culture at this time owes much to literary figures of Asia Minor. One of the most influential figures was Jalāl-al-Din Mohammad known as Moulānā [our teacher/ master]. Moulānā played a significant role in popularizing the Persian language in Turkey. He was born in September 30, 1207 in Balkh [then a province of Iran] (Mahmoodian, 1999, 6-19; See also Horata and Karaismaigloğlu, 2007, 39). Jalāl-al-din and his family were forced to leave Iran after the Mongol invasion. Although he wrote all of his works in Persian (Mathnavi, Fih-e-MāFih and Divan-e-Shams), he brought a great influence on Turkish literature as well. His son, Soltān Valad, founded Mowlavi Order (Mevlevi Order) whereby he conveyed his father’s thoughts to followers. All of Moulānā’s works became thus translated. Soltān Valad was a poet in Turkish. He influenced Turkish literature and played a substantial role in spreading Persian literature in Asia Minor. As Aidin (2006, 23) remarks, support for Persian language came first from the Roman Seljuk in Konya and then from Moulānā’s poems. In 12th and 13th century AD, the Persian language was used widely by viziers, counselors, and agents of the government. Also, reciting Shāhnāme became popular in the court of the Seljuk. Reciting Mathnavi, also was popular in Khanqahs.
Political figures/figures in power position. Along with literary figures, political figures were also influential in spreading Persian. Among them is Alā-al-Din Kayqobād Seljuk. In the court of this king, there was a chamber where poets and writers gathered regularly. The evidence of this includes Ibn-e-Bībī’s pictures of Shāhnāmeh in Kayqobād’s palace (Aidin, 2006, 9-12; See also Riahi, 1971). A second political figure is Sultān Mahmoud Ghaznavī, a poet himself, who was the greatest admirer of Persian literature and art. He encouraged and motivated men of letters and this actually led to his fame and becoming more powerful. He invited the well-known Persian scientists such as Avicenna and Abu al-Reyhān Al-Bīrūnī. He also founded the establishment of 'Poet Laureate' which all helped Persian language and literature glow (Rypka, 2003, 324).

Richness of the rhetoric of language
According to Sāfi (2011, 5), the success of the Persian language in India (from 11 to 19 AD) and, in Turkey came from several factors: the capability of this language in coining new words, eloquent combination of words, the musicality of speech and rhythm, and rhyme in letters. The concept of letters in Persian, in its general sense, entails asceticism and self-discipline, indicating that the poet should try to avoid whatever weakens eloquence (Zarrinkoob, 2004, 42). Persian eloquence has won admiration from Arabic posts too: Being proud of their poetry, Arabic poets such as Jāhez and Attābi) encouraged studying Persian books, and claimed that poets who look to find figures of thought and eloquence should read Persian books (Zarrinkoob, 2004, 11). To understand letters, great knowledge of the language alone does not work (Kazzazi, 2008, 15).

Linguistic and poetical properties and education system influence
Persian prose in its oldest form used themes from history, mysticism, religions, and ethics, and avoided non-serious concepts. Zarrinkoob recognizes a wide range of subjects in Persian prose (Zarrinkoob 2004, 36): biographies, witticism, narratives, Sufi education, folklore, political debates, mysterious stories, didactic writings, ethics, and education.

Systems of educations in Iran also served as sources of inspiration for the Arabic countries. According to HasanIbn-e-Sahl, the Iranian vizier and scribe of Al-Ma'mon, during the Abbasid period, letters was considered to be based on Iranian culture, including educational thoughts left from the time of the late Sassanids particularly Anooshirvan (44). This shows that Holbrook’s (2002, 88) view about Iranian culture as forming under the influence of Arabic culture is not trustworthy.

Persian as lingua franca
Persian also served as lingua franca, rather than Arabic, in large areas of Dar-al-Islam, practically in all parts of Asia, from Iranto China (as evidenced by Ibn Battuta). Encouraged by the Sāmānids, even the learned authorities of Islam, the Ulama(Islamic scholars) began using Persian as a lingua franca in public (Frye, 1975, 96). According to Famighetti (1998, 582), the second lingua franca of the Islamic world, especially in eastern regions, was Persian. He maintains that not only Persian language did function as the 'state and administrative language' in many Islamic dynasties, such as the Samanids, Ghurids, Ghanznavids, Ilkhanids, Seljuqids, Mongols, and early Ottomans, but also Persian cultural and political forms, and often the Persian language, were used by the cultural elites from the Balkans to India'. For example, as Boyle (1974, 185) points out, the
only 'oriental language' that Marco Polo knew and used at the Court of Kubla Khan and in his journeys through China was Persian. Toynbee (1939, 514–15) assesses the role of the Persian language by highlighting its significance in terms of richness of rhetoric and power:

'In the Iranian world, before it began to succumb to the process of Westernization, the New Persian language, which had been fashioned into literary form in mighty works of art ... gained a currency as a lingua franca; and at its widest, about the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries of the Christian Era, its range in this role extended, without a break, across the face of South-Eastern Europe and South-Western Asia'.

Persian is still the lingua franca in Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan. It had the same status in India as well but before the British conquest. It is still understood by many in South Asia, mainly in Pakistan.

The role of translation in re/shaping of Ottoman literary activity

There are two differences between translation and the factors mentioned above: one is that the factors are the reason of the increase in producing translations from Persian, indicating the dominance of Persian. The other difference lies in the fact that in the Ottoman Empire, translation from Persian played its significant role, although it was no longer at its peak. Turkish had already received much influence from Persian and was thus mature enough to be used as the official language. At this time, thus, translation from Persian became very important. Toska (2002, 58) states that in the period from 14th to 19th centuries, a great amount of translation from Persian occurred.

Paker (2002b, 120) distinguishes between two kinds of translation concept in the study of Ottoman literary translation practices, namely, terceme (translation practice of a wide range) and nazire (imitatio in the form of parallel and response poetry), both of which she believes are 'culture-bound'. The former, which is here referred to as ordinary translation/translation proper, was practiced from 13th century onwards mainly in literary and scientific works (from Persian and Arabic to Turkish), such subjects as religion, Sufism, ethics, politics, medicine, geography, astrology, and astronomy (Toska, 2002, 58). The latter, nazire, focuses on poetry composed by poet-translators. Paker (2002b, 120) describes them as the 'primary agents of Ottoman literary translation and transmission' (120). This is also called parallels (Toska, 2002, 60-62). Explaining the criteria of translation evaluation in 16th century Turkey, Toska defines parallels as 'poems composed as a parallel to another in the same rhyme, scheme, meter and redif (a letter added to a complete rhyme) and also in meaning, sentiment and thought.'

Of relevance here there are two points that Toska (2002) makes regarding translation criteria: one is that she places emphasis on the innovative (emphasis is mine) aspects of translations, their style and poetic features. The other is that if the 'interventions' made by the poet translators resulted in 'introducing a new manner of expression,' then this kind of translation or rewriting would be considered as the work of the poet, not that of the original author. This is exactly what Even-Zohar maintains about making culture repertoire, which he believes is done through
invention. An invention is of course based on 'analogies and contrasts' similar to the Ottoman’s nazire/parallels and muārezāt respectively (2010a, 89-97). They tried to compose poems similar to Persian poems in rhyme, rhythm, and base vocabulary. Such translation is also called concealed translation, implying that the context of composing such poetry was concealed (Holbrook, 2002, 86-95). However, nazire/parallels in Islamic literature is not considered imitation, but a way to honor the work of the original poet (Levend in Parker, 2002b, 125). Toska (2006, 58-60) makes the same point, asserting that a poet writing parallels to another poet’s work showed his respect and liking for that poet. Some examples of nazires/parallels are, for example, Qotb’s Khosrow Shirin (based on Nezāmi’s work), Āsheq Pāshā’s Qribnāme (based on Moulānā’s Mathnawi). Other forms of poetry, considered translation by both Andrews (2002, 16) and Paker (2002b, 123-128), are in response to javāb, in contrast with muārezāt, in verification of tazmin, and in reception of istikbāl (adopting Persian poetry). There were also 'additive poems,' such as Takhmis, meaning five (for example, Amir Ali Shirnavāei’s work) and Tesdis (six). Commentary (Sharh) was another form of translation, which appeared in the form of commenting on the original poem, rather than translating it. These commentaries came into prominence when Persian was no longer the official language. The Turks’ interest in Persian literature caused these commentaries and dictionaries to emerge for a better understanding of Persian masterpieces (Aidin 2006, 33). According to Andrews, poems at that time were seldom translated by any means other than by nazire/parallel or nazire-like forms (25). The result of such translations, Andrews believes, was the change of both languages, Persian and Turkish, that is, the Persian language became ‘preserved through re-writing and re-interpretation, ‘and the Turkish language became ‘created, recreated and enriched’ (24, emphasis is mine).

This is what Even- Zohar seeks to show in introducing culture planning and successful transfer, which result in inventing something new that the recipient culture had been in need of. Since, new connections and relations are created in this way (resulting in the domestication of the goods, here poems), it can be said that a successful act of transfer has happened (Even-Zohar 2002, 166-174). Andrews (2002, 26) also believes that the Ottoman literary culture was 'derivative, imitative, foreign, inauthentic, elitist, and unnatural,' and through a translation form like 'nazire/parallels, which he believes was 'neglected' and 'creative' at the same time, new relations between words and thus new literary and poetic usages were introduced, which led to the generation of the new language (Ottoman literary language) and literary inventiveness. This point along with what Toska (2002, 73) asserts in her article about the important role translation has played in 'establishing, developing, and enriching Ottoman literature' proves the dependence of Ottoman literature and culture upon Persian, the source culture both by prestige and dominance (Even-Zohar 2010b, 63-67). In fact, a 'successful transfer' has occurred between the two countries, for the 'power base' (Even-Zohar 2010a, 88) necessary for such planning and transfer existed and the 'desired shifts' had taken place.

CONCLUSION
To sum up, every nation strives for remaking/planning/shaping its culture through resorting to different ways including translation, whereby the source language and culture is transferred to the target country. However, few languages have become so widely transferred as Persian has done
during the Ottoman era of Turkey. Certain characteristics of a language can make it high-level and worthy enough to become translated, imported, and transferred, so much so that it becomes the official and literary language of the target country and that its literature becomes a model for men of letters in the recipient culture for long periods of time. This has been the case with the Persian language in the Ottoman era. Moreover this study highlighted the applicability of Even-Zohar’s model that is focused on the role of translation in shaping the literary activity of a society. It shows that his model reveals new historical insights about the importance of Persian for Ottoman culture.

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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO IMPROVE THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS: SCAFFOLDING MEANS AND PROCESS WRITING

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ABSTRACT
Writing skill is an essential index for learning. It is a means of transmitting information and communicating the thoughts and feelings. In Iranian educational system, English as foreign language (EFL) teachers still utilize traditional approaches based on memorization and drilling which are not efficient enough to meet the students’ pedagogical needs. Therefore, the current article reports a study conducted within the sociocultural framework and aimed at introducing a teaching model for writing which empowered students’ writing ability through the integration of scaffolding means coined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) and Seow's process model. To this end, 30 homogenous participants with intermediate level of proficiency studying English as a foreign language in a language institute in West Azerbaijan, Iran were treated in order to spot the feasible effect of the application of various scaffolding means in a process-oriented situation on students’ writing proficiency. The students were weighted in pre and post tests in order to gather the required data. The outcome, manifestly, elucidated a significant difference between writing ability of experimental and control groups on the post-test. The findings of this study suggest some implications for the teachers to highlight the socially situated learning and promote high quality differentiated instruction in educational contexts.

KEYWORDS: Writing ability, Process Writing, Scaffolding, Scaffolding means

INTRODUCTION
Effective communication in any target language can be regarded as the primary goal of learning a foreign language. Since English is culturally, politically, economically, and scientifically one of the most popularly used languages, there is a drastic need for effective communication skills in English all around the world. In order to communicate concepts and knowledge, having an effective skill in writing well seems necessary. According to Byrne "any piece of writing is an attempt to communicate something; that the writer has a goal or purpose in mind; that he has to establish and maintain contact with his reader; that he has to organize his material and that he
does this through the use of certain logical and grammatical devices" (1988, p. 14, cited in McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 184). White and Arndt (1991) contended that writing is "an important experience through which we are able to share ideas, arouse feelings, persuade and convince other people. We are to discover and articulate ideas in a way that only writing makes possible" (p.1). In the View of Ariana (2010) "writing skills assist the learner to become independent, comprehensible, fluent and creative in writing, important abilities which help learners put their thoughts in a meaningful form and to mentally tackle the message in a proper manner" (p.34). However, the purpose of instructing in English as a second or foreign language is often allotted to improve the students' skills and capabilities in speaking, listening, and reading in the target language while the development of the students' writing is ignored (Edelsky & Smith, 1989 as cited in Gomez, 1996).

Based on the view of Kelleher (1999), writing is one of the least understood language production tasks, which both competent and incompetent writers often bemoan that the process of writing is circuitous and grueling. In language teachers' ideas, writing is "a language skill which is difficult to acquire" (Tribble, 1996, pp. 3). It "normally requires some form of instruction" and "is not a skill that is readily picked up by exposure" (Tribble, 1996, p. 11). Writing as a complex cognitive activity requires learners to pay more attention to context, word choice, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure and organization of ideas (Mourssi, 2013).

Among the various approaches, including controlled composition, free- writing, paragraph pattern approaches, it is the process approach as one of the most predominant ones to English writing instruction that can be a central means for maximizing students' composition skills (Bae, 2011). Shaping meaning and paying attention to what writers want to communicate to the reader is central, but not the accuracy of their writings. In the definition of Badger and White (2000, p.154) it is, "...seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on... grammar and text structure". According to Zamel (1983) process approach is as "a non- linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (p.165). The process of writing was considered to be mainly cognitive one in the earlier writers such as Hayes and Flower, but more recently there has been a tendency to consider a more sociocultural orientation (Barnard & Campbell, 2005). In creating meaning, the interaction among interlocutors is focused. This approach is based on the assumption that "language is socially constituted" (Gere, 1987, p. 87). For Seow (2002), the writing process is a private activity which can be broadly seen as comprising four main stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing which this study followed Seow's process model to assist students to write freely and arrive at a product of good quality. These stages are elaborated below.

Planning (pre- writing): It is an essential step in the writing process. It stimulates thoughts for getting started. This stage can help writers generate ideas, collect information, and organize their thoughts.
Drafting: This stage is the process of moving from the pre-writing step to the actual writing of a final draft. Writers are focused on the fluency of writing rather than accuracy or the neatness of the draft.

Revising: It is the process of reviewing the written text on the basis of the received feedback by the teacher or peers. Revision isn’t correcting minor grammar errors but focusing on content and organization of the whole text.

Editing: This stage is the process of tidying up the revised text to prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teacher. Students edit their own or their peer's work for grammar, dictation, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and accuracy of supportive textual material such as quotation, examples, and the like.

In all, the composing writing focuses students on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, how to revise text for clearer meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar, and how to produce a final product (Cited in HosseiniFard & Saharkhiz, 2014, p. 497).

Writing mainly from the perspective of applied linguistics is investigated and the work of cognitive psychologists and linguists or the work of sociolinguists is used (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, pp. 238-243). For Vygotsky (1978) as one of the champion of social constructivism, the link between social context and individuals’ psychological development is directly highlighted (Bruffee, 1993, 1996; Gere, 1987 as cited in Tsai, 2006). The type of social interaction involves cooperative or collaborative dialogue promotes cognitive development. For him interaction between more capable people such as teachers, parents and adults can foster the children's cognition better (De Vries, 2000). In all, both individual and social factors have a paramount role in extending children's current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence. As Hughes (2001, p.17) claims, children learn best "when they have the guidance, learning environment, intellectual and emotional support created by an adult or mentor figure". The capable people are able to model learning, questioning and thinking and thus assist children to develop their learning skills. As Pea (1993, p. 47) asserts "the mind rarely works alone" and writing is the process of co-constructing of texts by students working together. Writing in the definition of Candlin and Hyland (1999, pp. 107, cited in Phung, 2004) is "therefore an engagement in a social process, where the production of texts reflects methodologies, arguments and rhetorical strategies constructed to engage colleagues and persuade them of the claims that are made". One of the fundamental axioms within Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory is scaffolding originally introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) that is "...... a kind of “scaffolding” process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted effort" (p. 90). As Behroozizad, et.al (2012, p.37) concern "within scaffolding process which is a dynamic reciprocal process the learner is a kind of active participant as well. Both teacher and learner construct a shared understanding by means of communicative exchanges in which the student as a novice learns from the teacher as a more expert other".
In characterizing the nature of scaffolding, Murray and McPherson (2006, p.140) state that “Scaffolding, then, is more than help and instruction because it involves the use of task-specific explicit strategies that help the learners become independent by exploiting their ZPD”. In educational context, the teacher's role as the mediator is of great prominence as he plans, provides, guides, and operates qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate scaffolds which are classified as a supportive means of developing students' learning process. The facilitative role of the writing teacher has inspired research on the role of the teacher as a responder to students' writing (Cited in Hosseinifar & Saharkhiz, 2014, p. 498). Hammond (2001, p. 60) illustrates how scaffolding works by asserting that "Knowing when and how to intervene is what scaffolding is all about. It is about the teacher taking an informed and active role in guiding students' learning as they come to terms with new ideas and concepts". He adds that scaffolding is far more than 'helping out' so that a student can carry out a task. The teacher's usage of variety strategies assists students to gain understanding and confidence to work independently in applying new learning. In the context of the current research, as a facilitator, the teacher offers guidance in assisting students to engage in the thinking process of composing. The teacher's provided supports can be presented in any number of ways. In Riorden's view, it can be clues, reminder, encouragement, providing example, breaking the sophisticated task into steps, or anything else that permits the students to develop as an autonomous learner (Riorden, 2003). Among these supporting means, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) maintain six means of assisting performance which the present study tried to apply them in maximizing students' writing dexterities in a process oriented setting. They are modeling, feeding back, hints, instructing, explaining, and questioning that support the learning activities of the student. Application of theses means by a capable person (in the case of this study, the teacher) is to guide students learning during task completion. The detailed explanation of these means is presented as the following:

*Giving hints* is the provision of clues or suggestions by the teacher to help the student go forward.  
*Feeding back* is the provision of information regarding the student's performance to the student him/ herself.  
*Instructing*, The teacher telling the students what to do or explanation of how something must be done and why.  
*Questioning*. It involves asking students questions that require an active linguistic and cognitive answer.  
*Explaining or cognitive structuring* is the provision of more detailed information or clarification by the teacher (Cited in Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010, p. 277) and *Modeling* which is, "the process of offering behavior for imitation" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 47).

In Iranian EFL setting especially in language institutions due to students' limited competence, time limitation, and poor motivation, writing still stays a big complication, and it seems that application of traditional methods and strategies can't meet today's class requirements. Moreover, regarding the existence of a gap in literature regarding the potential effects of the integration of scaffolding means and process writing in order to investigate its effect on writing performance of
students, this article attempted to assist bridge this ostensible gap in the literature. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to apply various scaffolding behaviors in a process oriented situation to assess the impact of scaffolding means on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The present study delved into a scrutiny to come up with cogent answers to the following research question:
RQ: Does the integration of scaffolding means and process writing as a teaching model affect students' writing ability?

METHODOLOGY
Sample and setting
The purpose of the current research was to apply scaffolding means within the stages of process writing to examine their effects on students' writing ability. The participants consisted of thirty intermediate EFL learners. They studied English as a foreign language in a language institute in Iran, Salmas. Participants were female with the age range of 15-18. Their mother tongue was Azari and their national language was Farsi. These participants were selected based on proficiency test conducted before by the language institute itself. They were randomly divided into two groups, i.e., one experimental group and one control group. Each group consisted of 15 students. Again, in experimental class the participants were required to constitute different groups of three because so as to use experiences and knowledge of each other during writing process. As Ting (2010, p. 623) highlights the process approach is based on the communicating theory in which the learners can learn from and with each other effectively. The process of conducting this study was in regular class time. That is, along with students' course books, every session from the total time of the class (90 minutes) half of the class time was allotted to conducting this study. The class took a 15- session course, two days a week.

Instruments
In order to actualize the research question, the current research implemented writing tests to measure both of the groups' dexterities in writing ability before and after treatment.

The purpose of the pre-test was to achieve the initiated homogeneity and final comparison, and for the post-test the purpose was to measure the participants' improvement at the end of the treatment period. In pre- test of writing, all the students in two classes were asked to write an English composition on the topic "What are the effects of watching television on people's life?" selected from TOEFL test. The material used in this study was "Refining Composition Skills" by Smalley, Ruetten and Kozyrev (2002). It was used as the main course book for two groups. The instructed parts of textbook deal with the process writing, the format of paragraph and essay writing, and different types of paragraphs and essays. After completion of the treatment during a course of 13 weekly sessions, in the last session a post- test was administrated to two groups in order to measure the students' writing performance after the treatment. They were required to
write an English composition on the topic "What are the causes of air pollution" selected from TOEFL test. In order for the scoring process of students’ writing tasks to be reliable two experienced teachers who have been teaching EFL courses were selected. In order to prevent any raters’ bias, writers’ names were eliminated. Whenever the two scores of a writing test disagreed by three points or above, the two raters examined it again and reached a final agreement after consideration, and the total score of the writing test was the average of the two raters score. To prevent the procedure of students' scores to be subjective, an analytic scale selected from Jacobs et al. 's (1981) (cited in Weigle, 2002, pp. 115-116) and Hoang (2007) was used in which both assessors judged about the students' writing tests based on this scale. According to Weigle (2002) the analytic scale provides more useful diagnostic information about students' writing abilities. The rating scale for evaluation consists of five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The five aspects are differentially weighted to emphasize. First content (3/5 point) and next language use (2/5 point), with organization and vocabulary weighted equally (1/5 point) and mechanics receiving very little emphasis (1 point) which totally equally to 10 point. In other words each aspect is analyzed by specific criteria with four degree scale, so the total score of each test ranged from 1 as the minimum to 10 as the maximum.

Procedure
To undertake the study, at the first stage, students in the two groups were asked to write an English composition in class which served as the pre-test of the study to measure the quality of the participants' written texts before the treatment. The groups wrote the essay about 150 words in 20 minutes on a topic. Then, the inter-rater reliability of writing section was calculated. To do so, the writing section was rated by two experienced teachers selected from the institution. Both of them used the same rating scale which was Jacobs et al (1981) and Huang (2007). For the treatment to take effect, in experimental group the students were required to constitute different groups of three participants. In writing the composition, students were writing through traversing the main phases of writing process including 1) planning, 2) drafting, 3) revising, and 4) editing, in which they received peer and teacher scaffolding during every stage. The tasks and activities which were carried out in the experimental class were described as follows.

In planning stage, in order to help students to write and gather information about the topic, the teacher used making a brainstorming technique. In drafting stage, students began to write their first draft based on their ideas listed in planning stage. While writing, the teacher was circulating among the groups and guided them through monitoring students' written drafts. In revising stage, the teacher collected the students' first drafts and revised them in the class in a limited time, then he gave the papers back to the students and asked them to revise their papers based on the hand written commentaries. In editing stage, the students in the final phase were required to read word by word their revised papers and turn their attention to the form during the editing with using edit checklist of Seow (2002). There were seen three kinds of correction; self-correction, peer correction and finally teacher correction. After finishing every topic, the students submitted their essay to the teacher for evaluation. He assessed their papers based on the same rating scale of Jacobs et al (1981) and Hoang (2007).
However, in the control group, the students were asked to produce an individually-written essay in the traditional way. They wrote their essays without going through the stages of process writing and without any receiving existence scaffolding. At the final stage, the classes were given a post test of writing in order to measure their writing ability. They were asked to write an essay about 250 words in 30 minutes on the topic selected from the book taught. Again their scores were rated based on the same rating scale by the same teachers. The data obtained from test results constituted the major basis for statistical analyses.

**Data Analysis**
The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The t-test analysis (independent and paired samples t-test) was used to compare the performance of both groups' scores in pre-test and post-test.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**
The purpose of this study was to apply scaffolding means within the stages of process writing to examine their effects on students' writing ability. The research question addressed in the study was:

RQ: Does the integration of scaffolding means and process writing as a teaching model affect students' writing ability?

At the initial step a writing task selected from the trained course book was administrated as the pre-test to measure the quality of students' skills in writing before treatment. Two experienced teachers were asked to score students' writing based on the rating scale of Jacobs et al.'s (1981) and Hoang (2007) to probe the reliability of students' scores on writing pretest. The average of raters given scores was selected as the total writing scores of the pretest. Table 1 reports the correlation analysis which was an evidence of high correlation between the given scores by each rater, and it is a consideration of internal consistency between the scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Writing Pretest Rater1</th>
<th>Writing Pretest Rater2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Pretest Rater1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1 .943**</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) .000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Pretest Rater2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .943**</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) .000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N 30 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
As Table 1 indicates, the correlation coefficient (r= 0.943) shows a high correlation between given scores by both rates. Because the correlation coefficient is so close to +1, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between scores. As it is known, closer the coefficients are to +1.0 and -1.0, greater is the strength of the relationship between the variables. The value of Cronbach’s Alpha (\(\alpha=967\)) shows that the scores enjoy high reliability.

**Table 2: Reliability statistics of writing scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.967</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is observable in Table 2, \(\alpha=967\) shows that the given scores by both raters are highly reliable. In other words there is a considerable internal consistency between the scores.

To identify the equality of the groups at the outset of the study, an independent sample t-test of writing scores of both groups was carried out. Table 3 presents these results.

**Table 3: Independent Samples t-test Run on Pretest writing scores of both groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Writing Pre-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Independent t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.9720</td>
<td>0.6533</td>
<td>1.386</td>
<td>0.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.2227</td>
<td>0.82072</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of Table 3 showed that there was no significant difference between experimental and control groups before treatment with reference to their writing ability (\(p=0.05\), sig <0.515). Therefore, the results are an evidence of the homogeneity of two groups before conducting the treatment.

Having undertaken the treatment phase of the study, a writing task was administered as the posttest to identify the effects of treatment on students’ writing ability. Similar to pre-test, the scores of post test were evaluated based on the same rating scale by the same teachers. The results of Table 4 demonstrate a high correlation between the given scores by each rater and the reliability analysis of the scores demonstrated the inter-rater reliability of writing scores.
Table 4: Correlation analysis of scores of writing post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing posttest for experimental group rater1 Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Writing posttest for experimental group rater2 Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Writing Posttest for Control group rater1 Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Writing posttest for control group rater2 Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing posttest for experimental group rater1</td>
<td>.933**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing posttest for experimental group rater2</td>
<td>.933**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing posttest for Control group rater1</td>
<td>-.253</td>
<td>-.174</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing posttest for control group rater2</td>
<td>-.274</td>
<td>-.188</td>
<td>.920**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The statistics for the reliability analysis of participants’ writing scores in the post-test of experimental and control groups are depicted in the following table which declares that scores of two groups enjoy high reliability.

Table 5: Reliability Statistics of writing scores of posttest for the groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To spot the potential impact of treatment on participants' writing performance, another independent samples t-test was conducted on the post test scores to testify if there is any significance difference between groups after treatment in writing ability (See table 6).

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test Run on Posttest writing scores of both groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Writing Post-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Independent t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>0.66396</td>
<td>11.368</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>0.42129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With comparing the mean scores of two groups recounted in tables 3 and 6, the results led to this conclusion that the writing performance of two groups have improved from pretest to posttest but the improvement of participants' writing ability is remarkably observable in experimental group (treatment was based on the integration of scaffolding means and process writing) in terms of
mean scores (4.97 to 7.57). Therefore, the difference between two groups was significant (Sig=0/0, P<0.05). It is revealed that the implementation of various intervention strategies in a process-based setting significantly affected participants’ writing ability.

In addition to investigating the difference between groups in terms of their writing skills, the difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group is aimed to be measured by conducting paired sample t-test. Table 7 shows the results.

Table 7: Paired t-test of the writing scores of experimental group in pre and post-tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Paired t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test (Experimental group)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>0.58143</td>
<td>-14.090</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test (Experimental group)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>0.66396</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of table 7 the mean scores of experimental group in pre-test and post-test were 4.97 and 7.57, respectively. It was found that there is a significant difference between two scores. Furthermore, the result of paired t-test indicates that the significant value (0.0) was less than p (.05) which revealed that the difference is highly significant.

Based on the results of figure 1, the mean scores of students' writing ability in experimental and control groups during pre-test are 4.97 and 5.22, respectively. However, in the post-test, after
implementing scaffolding means during the process writing in experimental group and traditional method of teaching writing (GTM) in control group, the mean scores of students' writing ability in experimental and control become 7.57 and 5.26, respectively.

To sum up, regarding the results of independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test this study found that there were significant mean differences in the pre-test and post-test scores of experimental group and post-test scores of learners trained by using scaffolding means in a process-based setting and traditional method of teaching writing. As the findings demonstrated, the participants in experimental group had a better performance in their writing and achieved better than control group because in experimental group, various intervention strategies implemented by the teacher in order to guide and assist the students step-by-step in every stage of process writing in which they could produce a final written text by the help and supervision of their teacher. The participants were provided supports based on their needs and problems, and they could benefit from these various means that finally resulted in improving their writing ability.

With regard to the effectiveness of applying means in a process-oriented situation, the findings are keeping with the results obtained in Riazia and Rezaii's (2010) study which affirmed the paramount role of the teacher in providing different scaffolding behaviors in mediating students' writing in order to help reach higher stages of independency. The result also is consistent with the socio-cultural theory which claims that learning is created in the process of interacting with others in the social environment which occurs first through person-to-person (interpersonal level) and then individually (intrapersonal level) through an internalization process (Vygotsky, 1978).

Students in the process-oriented setting through communication could benefit from each other's experiences and knowledge to write with high motivation. In the supportive learning environment, students can be motivated and take more responsibility to learning and become more independent learners which are in line with the results of Veerappan (2011) findings that showed the effectiveness of scaffolding technique in journal writing to assist students to develop themselves and become independent learners. The findings were also aligned with the results of Iranian researchers who claimed that those learners who received scaffolding were more involved in the process of instruction than those who received no scaffolding (Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2011).

CONCLUSION
This study introduced a teaching model for writing which empowered students' writing ability through utilizing various means coined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) during four stages of process writing categorized by Seow (2002). The results of research found indication of the effectiveness of implementing various scaffolding means in a process-oriented setting on the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. The teacher as the facilitator or mediator was always in the stage to guide students towards correction. He presented himself as a helpful and facilitator offering support and supervision. Since the nature of process writing is social, the students in the socially constructed situation learnt to work in collaboration with their friends. Through the
teacher's guidance and supervision, students learnt how to plan, write, revise, and edit their writing.

The outcomes can assist English language teachers to promote high quality differentiated instruction in educational contexts and in order to stimulate students thinking process and their motivation to learn as well as to discover the areas of strength and weakness to adjust learning experiences, supplying students with challenging and reasonable tasks and creating a social situation will make learning enable.

Similar to any other research, the outcomes of the current paper are influenced by a number of limitations. This study was limited to the number of participants, the number of topics and time. Among these limitations, the shortage of time was the most important one for this study. If there was enough time to conduct the treatment, it was anticipated that more topics could be written and more comprehensive results of integrating scaffolding means during the process writing could be accessed.

In regard to the limited number of participants, this study was conducted in one of the language institutes; therefore, the results aren’t generalizable to other language institutes. Thus, as sample size of this study was small and was conducted in an academic context, and with intermediate level students, further research is needed to be done in other learning context with a large sample size such at the university level across proficiency. Moreover, further studies are required to investigate the effects of scaffolding means on other skills or sub skills.

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THE ROLE OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION ON IMPROVEMENT OF SPEAKING AMONG IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
Speaking can be realized as the most common way to convey the message to others and the ability to communicate effectively is a basic requirement which needs to be taken seriously in English education. Likewise, classroom interaction has been said to be one of the primary means of learning in classrooms which has a significant role in language classrooms. Thus, classroom interaction has been suggested as a way of improving speaking skills in conducting the present research. For this purpose the impact of teaching speaking strategies and participants’ gender on improving speaking skills are considered. For conducting the research, 30 intermediate English language learners were studied. The research pursued a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. The results revealed that classroom interaction can be considered as a way of improving the learners’ speaking ability. Gender made no significant difference for the betterment of their speaking skills. Furthermore, teaching speaking strategies introduced ways of interacting and as a result could help them improve their speaking skills. Structuring the class so that it devotes most of the class time to learners interactions and encouraging in-depth conversations among them can be good ways of promoting classroom interaction.

KEYWORDS: Interaction, Classroom Interaction, Speaking, EFL learners

INTRODUCTION
Hamzah and Ting (2010) noted the importance and the role of English language in the Information and Communication Technology world, educational field, and in real life situations. They also indicated the need to be competent in English language and in spoken English, because English is a world language. Of the four main English language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – the most important one is speaking. Nunan (2001) introduced listening as the Cinderella skill in second language learning and speaking as the overbearing elder sister. He claimed that functioning in another language is generally characterized by the ability to speak
that language. Luoma (2004) stated that “speaking skills are an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes them an important object of assessment as well” (p.1). For many second or foreign language learners, speaking skill in English is a priority. Thus learners evaluate their language learning success and their effectiveness of English course based on their improvement in spoken language proficiency (Richards, 2006). Although all English language skills are very significant to learn English language, it is by speaking that others understand one has learnt a language. If one wants to be understood or express his/her feelings, speaking is the most common way. All English language learners especially those in Foreign Language (FL) settings are at least once asked the question “can you speak English?” But what are their responses? Can they express themselves accurately and fluently?

Yule (2006) notes that English conversation is an activity between two or more people in which they take turns at speaking. At one time one speaker speaks and participants wait until s/he indicates the end of his/her speaking, usually by a completion point such as asking a question or pausing. Other participants can take the speaking turn in a number of ways such as making short sounds, using body shifts, or facial expressions. In this way they indicate that they have something to say.

One of the most significant features of conversational discourse is being ‘co-operative’ which has become a principle of conversation named co-operative principle. This principle was first described by Paul Grice. Grice (1975, as cited in Yule, 2006) stated the co-operative principle “Makes your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p.129). Four conversation maxims called ‘Gricean maxims’ support this principle: the quantity maxim, the quality maxim, the relation maxim, and the manner maxim.

It is through interaction that people give and take information, become familiar with each other’s culture, and expresses their needs. In EFL situations, due to lack of the real encountering with the foreign language, there is a need to provide similar situations in classrooms in order to make learners interact and experience using the new language. According to Allright (1984) classroom interaction which is a productive teaching technique manages the classroom language learning. “Interaction is face-to-face communication with Particular prosody, facial expression, silence, and rhythmical patterns of behavior between the participants” (Crystal, 2003). Interaction also provides opportunities for production and receiving feedback. Interaction in classroom is based on the input provided by both teacher and students. The interaction can be between teacher and students and also between student and student. Both of these kinds of interaction need to be enhanced in the classroom environment.

Nugroho (2011) stated that classroom interaction has a significant role. Experiencing something by oneself will help learning it better and in the classroom environment it has been gained by engaging in classroom activities. Interaction between students and teacher influences the learning success. Learning opportunities are more for those who are active in conversation through taking turns than those who are passive. Interaction is viewed as significant by Chaudron (1988, cited in Nurmasitah, 2010), because analyzing target language structures and getting the meaning of
classroom events is done via interaction. It is through interaction that learners gain opportunities to insert the derived structures of classroom events into their own speech (the scaffolding principles). The communication constructed between the teacher and learners determine how much classroom events are meaningful for the learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW
In countries such as Iran where English is used as a foreign language and it is taught mostly as a compulsory subject in educational program, the speaking skill is not duly treated, simply because of the time limitation and attention to other skills i.e. speaking has not received much attention and often does not receive due attention in final examinations.

Recently more attention is given to improving learners’ speaking skill especially in foreign language situations by researchers. A thesis done by Khadidja in the academic year 2009-2010 investigated the relationship between the opportunities for production that arise in a classroom setting and the development of the speaking skill. The writer used teachers’ and students’ questionnaires in order to collect data. The conclusion was that classroom interaction can have a positive impact on learners’ speaking capacities. Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) investigated the factors effecting students’ English speaking skills. In order to collect data they also used students’ and teachers’ questionnaires. They concluded that teachers should use English as medium of instruction, promote interactive techniques, and cultivate English communication culture and also teachers and students should promote questioning and answering in English.

Menegale (2008) studied the expanding teacher-student interaction through more effective classroom questions. The article referred to the teachers’ use of questions and tried to explore the ways in which questioning can be used not only as a means to promote learning in content and language integrated learning contexts but also as a means to enhance students’ participation and, as a result, their oral production. The conclusion indicated that teachers tend to use questions which recall the students’ former knowledge.

Knop (2009) in his article on the increasing use of the target language in classroom interaction presented some strategies and activities used successfully by teachers to increase target language use. Both the research and classroom practice showed that students’ use of the target language may be increased through student-to-student pair interactions. Liao (2009) studied the effect of combining the four main language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) on improvement of speaking ability. The writer concluded that the teacher should provide opportunities to knit skills together, because this is what happens in real life.

Choudhury (2005) addressed interaction in second language classroom. The writer explored the problem of active participation by incorporating the researchers’ views and his own teaching experience. Teachers and learners together were the contributing source in managing the classroom interaction and at the same time managing learning opportunities. The findings revealed that making learners actively participate as much as possible cannot be universally right,
as not all learners learn best in the same way. What all learners need is an environment in which they can settle down to productive work, each in their various subtle ways.

Lourdunathan and Menon (2005) examined the effect of interaction strategy training on group interaction and task performance. For this purpose they trained ten groups of students. The results suggested that training resulted in a significant use of interaction strategies and more effective interaction between group members. Faridatusolihah (2012) examined the effect of teaching English speaking using audio-lingual method on the improvement of the students’ speaking ability. The sample of the research included 84 of the second grade students of junior high school 1 Cisalak Kab Subang. The writer used quantitative method and non-equivalent group’s pretest-posttest design to conduct the research. The results of the research showed that teaching English speaking using audio-lingual method was effective to improve the students’ speaking ability.

Mohammadi, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2014) investigated the effects of classroom structure on the speaking skills of Iranian EFL learners. They also investigated whether learners perform better in competitive, co-operative or individualistic environments. 120 participants were selected among the male pre-university students as the sample of the research. A pretest was conducted at the beginning of the course, then a posttest of speaking after the sessions. The findings revealed that classroom structure affected speaking skills and the results also showed that there were no significant differences among the individualistic, co-operative, and the control groups.

A study was done by Malmir and Shoorcheh (2012) on the impact of teaching critical thinking on the Iranian EFL learners’ speaking skill. The sample of the research contained 40 advanced language learners (20 male and 20 female learners) in an institute in Hamedan. The critical thinking techniques were taught to the experimental group. The results of the study revealed that the students who received critical thinking strategies did better on the oral interview posttest and there was not any significant difference between male and female learners after giving the treatment.

Most of the attention given to improving speaking skills has been through manners other than interaction. Since little attention has been paid to interaction among all the students inside the classroom, especially in Iran as a foreign context, this study aimed at exploring the role that interaction could play on improving this skill.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
Oral communication is introduced as a prerequisite to students’ academic, personal, and professional success in life by Morreal, Osborn, and Pearson (2000). Students are mostly taught orally. Poor listening skills make them fail to get the material they encounter and their problems will be intensified when they cannot respond appropriately because of poor speaking skills. Students who cannot clarify themselves may be judged as uneducated. Thus the ability to communicate effectively is a basic requirement which needs to be taught. In the current study, the effect of gender on improving speaking ability is also investigated.
The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of classroom interaction in improving speaking skill. Thus, the main goal followed by the present study is to explore the relationship between interacting inside the classroom and improving the speaking skill.

The results of the present study can be useful for teachers and learners. It can provide a rationale for the teachers to carry out oral interaction in class to improve students’ speaking skills. The results of this study can be used as a model by teachers in order to instruct and train good English speakers. The results of this study can also be useful for the learners to be acquainted with using strategies appropriate for their success in improving their verbal interaction. In addition students can benefit from strengths of others through making interaction with them. This will also improve their discussion skills and as a result their speaking capabilities. This study helps to determine the effectiveness of applying interaction in teaching speaking in EFL classroom.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The following research questions have been addressed in conducting this investigation:

Is there any relationship between classroom interaction and speaking improvement among Iranian English learners?
Is there any difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking skills?

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
The present study is a quasi-experimental research with a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. In pretest/posttest design, the immediate effect of treatment and the extent to which a treatment results in learning can be determined (Mackey & Gass, 2005, Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Participants
This study included 30 participants. They were selected among the students of a language institute in Ilam, Iran. The whole participants were divided into four groups, two groups as the experimental groups and the other two as the control groups. The classes were groups of 7 and 8 (8 females and 7 males in experimental group and 7 females and 8 males in control groups). Out of the whole participants (30 participants), 15 participants were female and 15 participants were male learners. Their ages ranged from 15 to 40. All of them were from Ilam with Kurdish as their first language. The classes were mixed and included both male and female learners. The procedure of selecting the sample was non-random based on convenience sampling. According to Mackey and Gass (2005) convenience sampling is the selection of participants who happened to be available at the time of the study.

Instrumentation
In this study “Oxford Quick Placement Test” (version 1) was used as a tool to put the learners in approximately the same level. The test contained 60 multiple-choice items which needed 30 minutes to conduct.
The “Cambridge English: Proficiency Speaking Test” also known as “Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) was used as the pretest. This test included 3 parts which lasted for 19 minutes. The test examines grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

After training the learners and giving treatment to the experimental groups, the “First Certificate in English (FCE)” was employed as the posttest which included 4 parts. The whole test took 14 minutes to conduct. The pretest and posttest were performed in groups of 2 or 3 persons. For groups of three, the tests took some minutes more. They needed two examiners to conduct; one examiner gave the test and the other one just listened to the examinees’ performance and decided upon giving the marks. During administering the pretest and posttest, the voices of the examinees were recorded.

**Procedures**

As indicated in the previous section, “Oxford Placement Test” was given to the learners to determine their levels and make them homogeneous. For carrying out this study, the pretest (CPE) was taken in the form of two or three persons, that is two or three participants were examined each time. Each of the different speaking skills (grammar, vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, interactive communication) marked by two examiners. Then the marks were added to achieve a single mark. The marks were for the whole speaking test, not for each part of the test.

Then, during 4 weeks, 3 sessions per week, speaking strategies were taught to the participants in experimental group. Apart from introducing these speaking strategies to the learners, there was a discussion topic for each session. The control and experimental groups had the same topics for discussion. The only difference was that the experimental groups received the speaking strategies.

After performing the classes, the posttest (FCE) was given to the learners to consider their progress. During both pretest and posttest the examinees’ voices were recorded. The pretest and posttest were the same for both control and experimental groups.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 represents the distribution of the scores gained by the participants in the control group after performing the pretest and posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Scores</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest (%)</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest (%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows that 13.3% of the participants in control group gained the lowest score (6) in the pretest. The highest score was 13 with 6.7% frequency. The score 10 was the score which gained the most frequency (33.3%).

The above table indicates that after conducting the posttest the score 7 was the lowest score among control group participants with 6.7% frequency. 13.3% of participants in control group gained the highest score (16). But the most frequently score gained by participants was 9 with 26.7% frequency. In Table 2 descriptive statistics of the control group scores in pretest and posttest are presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Descriptive statistics of control group scores in pretest and posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Statistics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pretest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Posttest</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be seen from Table 2, the mean of the total scores in pretest is 8.8. The maximum and minimum scores were 13 and 6 respectively. It is obvious from the table that the mean of the total scores in control group posttest is 9.13. The maximum and minimum score were 16 and 7 respectively. Comparing the total score means of the two tests in Table 2 indicates that there is not a significant difference between the scores of pretest and posttest in control group. Table 3 demonstrates the frequency distribution of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Frequency distribution of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Scores</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from Table 3 that highest frequency in pretest was pertinent to scores 12 and 15 with 20% frequency and the lowest frequency was related to scores 7, 8, 9, 11, and 16 with 6.7% frequency. The above table mentions that 13 and 16 were the scores with the lowest frequency (6.7%) in posttest. The highest frequency (20%) belonged to scores 14, 15, and 17. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Descriptive statistics of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Statistics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pretest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Posttest</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The data show that the mean of the total scores in pretest for experimental group is 11.86. The highest score gained by participants in pretest was 16 and the lowest score was 7. From Table 4 it is obvious that the mean of total scores in posttest for experimental group is 14.06 and the highest score gained by participants in this group was 17 and the lowest score was 10. By comparing the mean scores gained from Tables 4, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the scores of pretest and posttest in experimental group. As stated earlier, the first research question intended to check if there is any relationship between classroom interaction and
speaking improvement among Iranian English learners. To find this relationship, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was run.

Table 5: Relationship between classroom interaction and speaking improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Significance Level (sig)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking skills</td>
<td>.850**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 considers the relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking skills using Pearson correlation coefficient. As seen in the above table, the correlation coefficient is 0.850. So, there is a high correlation between classroom interaction and speaking skills. Thus, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two variables and employing interaction among learners inside the classroom improved their speaking skills. This finding supports the finding obtained by Khadidjah (2009-2010) and Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011).

The second research question aimed at finding if there is any difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking skills. To find this difference, Independent Sample Test was employed.

Table 6: Independent Sample Test for considering gender differences in speaking skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variance assumed</td>
<td>1.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variance not assumed</td>
<td>-.887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F value for Levene’s test is 1.745 with a significance value of 0.197. Since the significance value is greater than 0.05 (p>05), the null hypothesis (no difference) was confirmed for the assumption of homogeneity of variance, concluding that there is not a significant difference between the two gender variances.

CONCLUSION
The purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of interaction inside classroom on improving speaking proficiency. To carry out the study, the sample was chosen among English
language learners in Safir institute in Ilam, Iran. In addition to investigating the role of classroom interaction on improving speaking proficiency, the effect of gender on improving speaking proficiency was also assessed. To test the research questions of the study, inferential statistics was utilized using SPSS software.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking proficiency. It means that interaction inside the class improves the speaking proficiency. The second question was tested using Independent t-test. The level of significance gained from Levene’s test proposed that there was no significant difference between gender and improving speaking skill. Therefore, gender (male/female) of the participants did not affect speaking proficiency. Thus, it can be concluded that gender cannot be considered as a factor inhibits or helps learners to improve their speaking proficiency.

On the basis of the present research findings, it can be concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between the variables of classroom interaction with speaking skills. That is to say, by reinforcing classroom interaction, speaking skills will be improved as well. The results of the study showed that there was no difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking proficiency.

There were some limitations in conducting the research that need to be addressed. The size of the sample is one limitation of this study. 30 English language learners were investigated, of whom 15 people were female learners and the other 15 were male learners. Thus, generalizing the findings should be made cautiously. Another limitation is about the place of conducting the research which was in an institute in Ilam. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to schools, universities, and also to institutes in other cities.

REFERENCES


THE BASIC IMPACTS OF TASK-BASED APPROACH UPON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY ENHANCEMENT IN ESP CLASSES

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Islamic Azad University, Ilam Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT
The present study examines the vocabulary teaching in English for specific purpose (ESP) classes within the model of task-based language teaching, focusing on accounting students at scientific and applied university of technology center of Dehloran in the country of Iran. Two homogenous groups of students who were taking their ESP courses took part in the study as a control and an experimental group. A teacher-made test of technical vocabulary knowledge was conducted as the pretest. Vocabulary in the control group was taught using a traditional approach, whereas in the experimental group, technical vocabularies were taught on the basis of task-based approach. At the end of the course, a post-test was given to the students to characterize the impact of the treatment on the experimental group. Data analysis revealed that the task-based approach was more influential in teaching technical vocabularies compared to the traditional one. Moreover, the results indicated that the experimental group learners outperformed the control group. The results of the current study can be accounted as positive trend not only for teachers and students but also for book designers. Teachers can use this trend extensively in ESP classes so that they can improve students’ knowledge.

KEYWORDS: English for specific purpose (ESP), task-based language teaching, traditional approach, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION
The approach of Task-based is a revolution in ELT in the late 20th century which has been developed based on the concept of tasks. Nowadays, the concept of task and task-based methodology is the common orthodoxy in the field of language teaching and it’s becoming more and more important in ELT. According to (Festco., et al, 2005) learner-centered teaching methods facilitate learning. Task-based teaching method encourages the learner to do the task and learner plays a key role in the learning process (1). This method emphasizes meaningful learning through doing completely learner-centered tasks and task is considered as the basic unit of the syllabus design, curriculum development and teaching in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). As Yarmohammadi (2005) states, in this method the learners would have the opportunity for analysis, problem solving, innovation, and critical and creative thinking. This approach is likely to provide learners with opportunities to connect old knowledge to other learning tasks in a communicative way (Ellis, 2003). Ellis indicates five task features. First, a task is an activity in teaching and learning a language. This type of activity requires learners to use the target language
to achieve a particular purpose. Second, a task focuses on meaningful activities or on the
language form. Third, a task involves language use in terms of communication, to allow learners
opportunities to take part in meaningful interactions to complete a specific assignment. Fourth, a
task uses one or more language skills. Fifth, a task involves learners in understanding the use of
the target language. Ellis (2003) also suggests that the task-based approach brings a variety of
benefits to learners; one of the most important is motivation. Motivation is therefore likely to be
seen as the key to all learning. Once students are motivated, they can complete the given tasks or
desired goals (Brophy, 2005). Since the present paper examines the impact of TBLT on
increasing vocabulary in ESP classes it is better to have considerations on both ESP and
vocabulary. The most important difference lies in the learners and their purposes for learning
English. ESP students are usually adults who already have some acquaintance with English and
are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform
particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes
and needs and the functions for which English is required. ESP concentrates more on language in
context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from
accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP focal point is that
English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes); instead, it is
integrated into a subject matter area important to the learners.

Definition of ESP (Dudley-Evans, 1997) is as follows: in terms of general characteristics 1. ESP
is defined to meet specific needs of the learners 2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology
and activities of the discipline it serves 3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these
activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre. In terms of
variable characteristics: 1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines. 2. ESP may
use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. 3. ESP
is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional
work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level. 4. ESP is generally
designed for intermediate or advanced students. 5. Most ESP courses assume some basic
knowledge of the language systems. Vocabulary is viewed as a major part of language
proficiency as it allows learners to use four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and
writing (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This importance is recognized whether the language in
question is a first, second, or foreign language (DeCarrico, 2001). Richards and Renandya (2002)
assume that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the
basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write" (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p.255). In
terms of teaching technical vocabulary in ESP, it is most important to make a distinction between
suggest two broad areas related to technical vocabulary. 1. Vocabulary that is used in general
language but has a higher frequency of occurrence in specific and technical description and
discussion. 2. Vocabulary that has specialized and restricted meanings in certain disciplines and
which may vary in meaning across disciplines. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP
should be seen as an approach to language teaching which is directed by specific and apparent
reasons for learning. Their specific and apparent reason for learning English is for academic
purposes and their academic study will involve specialized areas across different discipline in
physical sciences as well as in social sciences. The aim of their vocabulary acquisition is surely
academic vocabulary. A rationale behind this is that learners will do academic study in English must focus on academic vocabulary which is variously known as a general useful scientific vocabulary and semi-technical vocabulary because they need to exhibit a wide range of academic skills like reading about research papers in their own fields, listening to teachers speak about their work, writing academic papers and presenting oral or written evaluations of methods or results in many cases.

We know that ESP courses receive a great deal of attention and emphasis among the EFL practitioners and learners especially at universities. Concerning the importance of ESP textbooks, Mansor (2001) maintains that they have always been an integral part of a syllabus, and that they have served many teachers well, providing them with the pivot onto which their lessons hinge. Over the past few years, various approaches, methods and procedures, have been employed to aid learners learn second language. In one period considerable attention and emphasis was paid to teaching and teacher-oriented classes. Because the emphasis was on grammatical and paid to phonological structures, the vocabulary needed to be relatively simple, with new words introduced only as they were needed to make the drills possible. The belief was that vocabulary would take care of itself once the students learnt the grammatical structures (Zandmoghadam, 2007). Most of ESP students in Iran are well aware of the importance of vocabulary in studying a foreign language; they are well aware of their need to enhance their vocabulary as well as to improve their communicative competence but in ESP courses in Iran at university level, despite new methods and approaches, most of the techniques teachers use on teaching vocabulary are still traditional and old-fashioned; the teacher emphasizes on the translation of technical text and there is no real interaction among students. Hence, the present paper indicated whether teaching to ESP student through task-based approach can be influential and practically useful in ESP vocabulary enhancement.

REVIE OF LITERATURE

According to Willis (2007) “task-based language teaching (TBLT) helps language learners make real efforts to communicate as best as they can in the foreign language which they are learning” (p.2). Willis (2004) contends that task-based instruction (TBI) is in fact a meaning focused approach that reflects real world language use for purposeful communication. In TBLT, all the four language skills are considered as important. Moreover TBLT has been more effective than CBLT in teaching reading comprehension to ESP learners (Malmir, 2011). According to Willis (1996), tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communication purpose in order to achieve an outcome (p. 23). Richards and Rodgers (2001) offer some assumptions which are believed to underlie TBLT. As far as the theory of language is concerned, "language is primarily a means of making meaning" that is, what is important in language use is meaning. In fact, Skehan (1998), in his definition referred to this point too. "Multiple models of language inform task-based learning". Richards and Rodgers (2001) believe that TBLT draws on functional, interactional and, in some cases, structural models of language. Skehan (1998) believes that when we deal with task complexity, we have to consider the structural model too. "Lexical units are central in language use and language learning", and "conversation" is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition". Cubillo
and Brenes (2009) examined task-based instruction in an ESP course in the computer center at the University of Costa Rica. This study presented the advantages of using Task-based learning to help learners from the computer center at the University of Costa Rica infer the rule of the superlative form of adjectives in English. It is important to mention that the methodology based on tasks help learners pay more attention or concentrate more on meaning. Task-based language learning is an approach in which learners concentrate more on meaning than on form. By doing this, students perform different communicative tasks, which happen to be more meaningful because they are close to the learners’ reality, instead of doing form-based discrete exercises, which are usually decontextualized and meaningless because they do not see a reason to do them. Cubillo concluded that it is important to point out that implementing the TBL methodology in an ESP context is a challenging task for language teachers. As Brown (1994) pointed out teachers should take advantage of different approaches and techniques and combine them to help learners improve their skills. Subsequently, by implementing task-based instruction, learners as well as teachers will certainly benefit from a different approach to language pedagogy because it is more motivating, challenging, innovative, appealing and meaningful to students than other traditional grammar-translation based approaches. Task-Based Language Teaching has shown that learners have the greatest role in a learning process. Learners’ cooperative activity and speaking in groups while performing tasks have significant role. In this regard gender is one of the effective factors in language learning.

Although many studies revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female in language learning as a whole, like (Yarahmadi, 2011; Kashefian & Maroof, 2010) but many others had different results and rejected the aforementioned statement. For example Zare (2010) investigated how the use of language learning strategies varies according to gender and revealed that in Iran female EFL learners prevailed over males in the use of strategies. Noordin, (2010) investigated the effect of task difficulty on using socioaffective strategy in listening comprehension. The results of this article revealed that experimental group generally tended to use more socioaffective strategies for any difficult task, while control group used these strategies for easier tasks or difficult at a certain level. As Kavaliauskienė (2005) writes, teaching through tasks creates favorable learning conditions for students who study English for specific purposes. In her words, task-based instruction seems to grant meaningful use of language and promote autonomous learning. Introducing task-based instruction as a practical methodology which can be supplemented in EFL textbooks, Finch (2004) asserts that by creating such student-centered and interactive learning materials, teachers can achieve syllabus goals and can help their students to become more motivated and effective learners. Yuan and Ellis( 2003) found that giving students an unlimited time to perform a narrative task resulted in language that was both more complex and more accurate in comparison to a control group that was asked to perform the same task under time pressure. The students used the time at their disposal to monitor and reformulate their utterances. Interestingly, the opportunity to plan on-line produced a different effect from the opportunity to engage in strategic planning, which led to greater fluency and complexity of language. It seems, then, that if teachers want to emphasize accuracy in a task performance, they need to ensure that the students can complete the task in their own time. However, if they want to encourage fluency they need to set a time limit. Therefore, the second attempt of this study is to
demonstrate whether gender difference has any considerable influence on vocabulary learning in ESP courses in Iran or not.

RESEARCH QUESTION
This study was primarily designed to investigate the effect of task-based teaching of technical vocabulary on Iranian ESP learners. It also tried to find out whether there is any difference between male and female learners in learning vocabulary through task-based approach. Regarding the objectives of the study the following research question were proposed:
Q1. Will there be meaningful differences in the performance of students taught ESP vocabulary by a task-based approach and that of students taught by a traditional method?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
Sixty BA students of accounting aging from 18-26 in Science and Applied University of Technology in Dehloran city in the country of Iran participated in this study. After experiencing participants by technical vocabulary pre-test, 40 (N=40) of them were chosen and were assigned randomly to two groups of 20, namely a control group and an experimental group. The two classes included 12 male and 8 female students. The participants came from various socioeconomic backgrounds and different cities of Iran.

Instruments
Teacher-made Technical Vocabulary Pre-test
To achieve maximum of possible homogeneity among the subjects regarding their general vocabulary, a vocabulary test was administered at the beginning of the study. The reliability of this test was calculated by Cronbach Alpha Formula which was 0.95. In reality, the test included 50 multiple-choice items. The grades were calculated out of 100. The teacher-made technical vocabulary test with 50 multiple-choice items was administered to test the ESP learners’ ability regarding their technical vocabulary knowledge (see appendix 1).

Teacher-made Technical Vocabulary Post-test
After the subjects were homogenized regarding their general vocabulary knowledge the task based instruction was started for experimental group within seven weeks (two sessions each week) whereas the control group was taught in traditional method. In order to see whether the task-based instruction of vocabulary had any significant impacts on ESP learners’ technical vocabulary knowledge, the same technical vocabulary test with 30 items was administered as the post-test after treatment (see appendix 1).

Procedure
The research was conducted at the beginning of the semester. After homogenizing participants regarding their general vocabulary competence, the researcher divided them into two groups namely a control and an experimental group. After that, the teacher-made pre-test regarding their technical vocabulary knowledge was assigned in each group. The researcher applied two different
approaches to teach technical vocabularies to the participants in the study. The participants in the control group were required to study the texts, translate them and answer some non-task-based comprehension questions, i.e. they were taught technical vocabulary based on the traditional method. For the experimental group the same passages with some task-based exercises which fit a task-based framework were used. In fact, the class time was divided into three phases: pre-task, task cycle and post-task. In pre-task phase the researcher tried to activate the ESL learner’s schemata related to the text with new technical vocabularies to motivate them to read. In the during task phase, the students were engaged in completing different kinds of tasks, and in the post-task phase, they gave a report, repeated the tasks and even dealt with language focus tasks. In fact the classes were held one session a week for one hour and a half. After 7 weeks of instruction, the teacher-made technical test was given to find out the probable differences between the performances of the two groups.

Data Analysis
After collecting data, it was processed by SPSS program. In the case of the question of the study, first of all descriptive statistics paired sample $t$-test was run to examine whether there was significant difference in vocabulary knowledge of learners in the experimental and the control group. An independent sample $t$-test was run to compare the means of two groups in post-test. To find out the probable differences in vocabulary learning between male and female in the experimental group.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
To answer the question concerning the effect of task-based language teaching approach on vocabulary learning of ESP students, descriptive statistics and a set of paired and independent $t$-test was used. The result of table 1 shows that there is not meaningful improvement in the control group. As mentioned earlier, two tests were conducted in the current study. At the first stage, a pre-test was conducted so as to ensure that the two groups were homogenous in terms of their language proficiency. The mean scores obtained through the pretest for the control and experimental group were 69.53 and 71.40, respectively. To see whether the two groups were meaningfully different or not, T-test was run, the result of which is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of independent sample test on learners’ language technical vocabulary in pretest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-.621</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the value of the $T$-observed was less than $T$-critical at $P<.05$, ($t=0.621$, $DF=28$, $p< .05$), it can be understood that there was not a meaningful difference between the control group and the experimental group with regard to their technical vocabulary knowledge. Simply put, the control and the experimental groups were at nearly the same level of English technical vocabulary competency. Simply put, the control and the experimental groups were at nearly the same level of English technical vocabulary competency. To determine the influence of the Task-based Approach Model upon Increasing Vocabulary Learning in ESP Classes and traditional teacher teaching on EFL Learner's technical vocabulary enhancement in ESP classes, a post-test based on
the content taught during the course was conducted to both groups. The mean scores of the control and the experimental groups were further processed to show whether there is a meaningful difference between their reading improvements. The results indicated that the mean scores for the control and the experimental group on the posttest was 64 and 77.33, respectively. However, another t-test was run to show if there was a significant difference between the two groups of learners in their achievement scores the result of which is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Result of independent sample test on the Learners’ technical vocabulary on the posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2.326</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>-13.33</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the T-observed was higher than the T-critical (t=-2.326, DF=28, p< .05), it can be said that there was a meaningful difference between the control and the experimental group in their reading improvement. However, according to the above mentioned statements it is understood that teaching technical vocabulary through task-based approach has a significant effect on ESP learners’ technical vocabulary improvement.

One of the major purposes of this paper was to determine if the application of task-based has any impact on vocabulary learning of ESP students. The indicated findings reveal that there was a significant difference at .05 level .i.e., the participants’ performance in the task-based class was remarkably better than that of traditional class. Logically, the significant improvement regarding the vocabulary learning ability of the participants in the experimental group must have originated from the type of instruction they had been exposed to during the time (14 sessions) that the experiment was conducted. Another factor that may influence learners’ performance is the nature of the task that may be stimulating. Richards and Rogers (2001, p.229) assert that task activity and task achievement, as a characteristic for task-based instruction, are motivational. Brown (2000) goes on to state "it is easy to assume that success in any task is due simply to the fact that someone is motivated" (p. 160). Generally, TBI has the potential to bring about moderate to large vocabulary gains. It is not unlikely that the characteristics of tasks, authentic materials, learner-centered communication, negotiation of meaning, integration of new and existing knowledge, and a meaningful non-linguistic outcome can foster vocabulary acquisition in the same manner they foster the acquisition of other language features. The second objective of the present study was to discover if there is a difference between males and females in learning vocabulary in the class which was conducted based on the task-based approach. The findings revealed that males notably performed better than females in the experimental group. Psychologists have found there are significant differences in cognitive performance of males and females.

CONCLUSION

With regard to what have been mentioned, those ESP learners who have been taught vocabulary through task-based language teaching outperformed those learners who have been taught vocabulary through traditional approach. Therefore, the traditional approach is proved to be
unsuccessful and ineffective. The present paper has provided further empirical evidence for the value of a task-based approach to second language learning. It reveals that learner-learner interaction while performing tasks provided opportunities for the learners to talk about vocabularies and monitor the language they used.

Task based language teaching is a meaning-centered methodology, according to Ellis (2003), such meaningfulness in TBLT provides an authentic, purposeful, and intentional background for comprehending and using language, and it is encouraging for the EFL learners. But in traditional method the focus is on translation and memorization of new vocabularies and students are not concerned with the context in which these technical vocabularies are used. One of the features which can be referred to as a reason for the outperformance of the TBLT class in comparison with the traditional class is the collaborative and interactive nature of the task-based approach where language use and language learning take place simultaneously. The cooperative natures of planning and report stages help students get feedback from the members of a task group. Of course, the students in TBLT receive feedback from the teacher. However, in the traditional group the students work individually on the exercises, so they do not receive any feedback from their peers and the only authority for judging about accuracy of exercises is the teacher. Therefore, it can be claimed that the existence of such a feedback provides a more relaxing and less threatening condition for learning foreign language. The results of this research can have several implications in ESP, language teaching methodology, materials development and teacher-training programs. As far as ESP is concerned, ESP learners can best benefit from task-based teaching of vocabulary. With regard to language teaching methodology, the findings of this study emphasizes the role of task-based approach in teaching vocabulary. In fact, everything turns around tasks and task completion in this approach. Concerning materials development, new textbooks must be designed for ESP learners. The books must be as communicative as possible. The books must pay equal attention to all four language skills and sub-skills especially vocabulary. They must be designed based on tasks. Like any other research this study has its own limitations. The subjects of the study included only 60 students in the field of accounting in the city of Dehloran. The inclusion of more subjects in other field could add the reliability of the study. Similar studies should be done in other countries to verify the usefulness of the study.

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### Appendix: Learners’ pre-test and post test scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Group</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
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<th>Posttest</th>
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THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON TESL TRAINEES’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS APPLYING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

Samira Nikian & Faizah Mohamad Nor

ABSTRACT
This study investigates pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards the implementation of Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach based on their learning experience to find whether they experienced CLT approach during their preparation at university. This study is a qualitative study of 15 TESL trainees in a local university in Malaysia. The instruments used to elicit data for the study were questionnaires and interviews. The results show that some of the participants stated although they experienced CLT at university but school situation is different. Finding from the present study is necessary for some changes in English language teaching in Malaysian secondary schools to achieve effective skills for global communication through English. In this regards, policy-makers can reform textbook content, increase school hours or funding. These changes can be started gradually in classroom content even under current conditions. In addition, policy makers should implement learner-centered teaching from primary school, in order to change the culture of education. Even with limited time and large classes, it is possible to incorporate activities which motivate learners to actively participate in L2 communication.

KEYWORDS: CLT, attitudes, learning experience

INTRODUCTION
I attempted to identify how the participants considered the experience of TESL trainee education at university have been conducive to facilitating CLT implementation in their own contexts as well as to improving their teaching proficiency in a general way. All the participants, on entry into the programme, attended a one year foundation courses and then joined to TESL programs. The positive experiences which can be enjoyed by the pre-service teachers from this kind of teaching and training may lead them to adopt a similar approach in their classrooms (Rogers, 1983; Marshall.1998; Baron, 1998). Many researchers believe teachers often tend to apply the same teaching method which they experience during their study in classrooms (Carless, 1998; Baron, 1998).

LITERATURE REVIEW
Previous schooling experiences and the everyday concepts with which they entered the teacher education program had a powerful influence how they perceived and enacted the curricular reform concepts during the practicum experience (Ahn, 2009; p.5). Recent research in mainstream teacher education [see review by Pajares (1992), Nespor (1997), Fang (1996) and
Johnson (1994) and language teacher development (Brown and McGannon, 1998; Johnson, 1992; Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000; Peacock, 2001) show that some student teachers’ attitudes, which are largely derived from their prior experiences, may adversely affect their learning approach to teaching. Pre-service teachers often regard alternative models of teaching as peripheral (John, 1996) and therefore easily dependent on teaching as they had been taught. The impact of student teachers’ prior experiences and attitudes on their attitudes of teacher learning has been discussed extensively in the literature (Holt Reynolds, 1992; Bailey et al., 1996; Freeman, 1992; Johnson, 1994; Numrich, 1996; Borg, 2006). Whitebeck (2000) found “pre-service students’ simplistic views may be the number of years students spend observing their own teachers” (p.129). Holt-Reynolds (1992) probed that the pre-service teachers’ attitudes about teaching were derived from their learning experiences. He found “the personal histories of pre-service teachers appear to function as prior knowledge of what ‘good’ teaching should look, sound, and feel like” (Holt-Reynolds, 1992, p. 343). In this regard, Farrell (1999) found pre-service teachers who were taught mandated Grammar method course in Singapore were interested in teaching grammar in the same way they had been taught it themselves.

In his study, the pre-service teachers were asked to write about their attitudes of teaching grammar directly or indirectly. Their writings revealed that their prior language learning experiences (learning English grammar through a deductive approach in Singapore) influenced their choices. Similar to Farrell’s (2001) findings, Urmston (2003) found that pre-service teachers’ attitudes were based on their experiences as learners. Moreover, in 2009 Zheng (2009) state EFL teachers bring attitudes acquired from the years’ learning experience as a pre-service teachers in teacher education programs. Bailey et al. (1996), cited by Ho-Yan (2004) also claimed that student teachers’ pre-existing attitudes, which stemmed from their past learning experiences, could both facilitate and hinder their attitudes of teaching practice.

Mok (1994) concluded that teachers’ learning experience as a learner and as a teacher guide their attitudes of teaching. In addition, Ellis (2006) also declared that different learning experiences influenced their attitudes. So, teachers' professional training can be taken into account as an important factor that plays a crucial role to form teachers' positive attitudes of teaching. Ellis (1994) found that Vietnamese teachers were not able to apply CLT due to lack of educational background in CLT. A few other studies investigated the relationships between teachers’ attitudes, learning experience and pre-service teachers trainings and the results are summarized in the following table.
Table 1: Research on the Relationships among pre-service teachers learning experience and training and attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Bramald et al., 1995&quot;</td>
<td>“162 PGCE Students”</td>
<td>“pre-service teachers Students’ prior attitudes about learning are changed in various ways through teacher education courses”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Anderson and Bird, 1995&quot;</td>
<td>“3 training course students”</td>
<td>“Trainees’ interpretations of their teacher education coursework are influenced by their prior attitudes”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Almarza, 1996&quot;</td>
<td>“4 PGCE students”</td>
<td>“During teacher education courses, PGCE students’ attitudes change differently despite similar behaviour”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Peacock, 2001”</td>
<td>“146 BA TESOL Students”</td>
<td>“BA TESL Students’ attitudes about vocabulary and grammar learning are different from experienced teachers’ and hardly changed”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table suggests that teacher attitudes are influenced by EFL pre-service teachers’ prior language learning experience. Since the literature shows experiences may have a positive or negative impact on teacher attitudes and some studies indicate considerable differences between pedagogically and non-pedagogically educated teachers in terms of their classroom behaviour, EFL pre-service teachers’ attitudes should be surfaced and acknowledged during the teacher education programme (Zheng, 2009). Apart from learning experiences some other factors that may influence on practicing CLT include L2 teaching and learning experiences (e.g., Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999; Sato, 2002); school norms and values (e.g., Sato, 2002); parental expectations, lack of institutional support and resources, and teachers’ pedagogical and practical knowledge (Wang, 2002).

RESEARCH QUESTION
This study examined the following question:
How learning experience influence on TESL trainees’ attitudes towards applying Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?

METHODOLOGY
Since the aim of this study is to the influence of learning experience on TESL trainees’ attitudes towards applying Communicative Language Teaching, the qualitative methodology examines the attitudes of fifteen TESL trainees with the help of survey questionnaire and in depth interview. These participants were asked to complete the questionnaire and all of them were asked to participate in the succeeding interview. The use of these two data collection instruments help validate both the answers in the questionnaire and in depth interviews in which the researcher and the subject are fully interactive (Ary et al., 2009; Mishra, 2005; Moustakas, 1994).
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Borg (2003) mentions that “teachers’ prior language learning experiences establish cognitions about learning and language learning which form the bases of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives” (p. 88). In chapter 2 we discussed the effects of learning experience on shaping teachers’ attitudes. Hence, in alignment with the first aim of the research which investigates TESL trainees’ attitudes towards CLT, the second question of the second questionnaire asked the participants about the method of their learning experience at schools. 60% of the participants experienced direct method and grammar translation method and 53.33% of them experienced CLT as the method of teaching in their school. 33.33% of participate used ALM during their studying time at school. Table 2 demonstrates the findings of this question (What methods did you experience as a language learner) in details.

Apart from the second questionnaire, these fifteen TESL trainees were also asked in both the interviews to comment on the school experiences that had encouraged them to apply CLT in the real classroom as a teacher. These experiences were categorised into two major themes one of the major theme is learning experience as encouraging factors with associated two subthemes: encouraging factor as following the same methods of their teachers, encouraging factor to not following the same methods of their teachers because they had bad memories of them. Another major theme was learning experience does not have any influence on applying CLT. The emerging findings of the interviews are summarised in Table 3.

| Shi rely | Haffifa h | Sar a | Yu an | Ste ph an i e | Na jw a | As hki n | Si Na | Ma isa rah | fad hil a | Ai ne e | A mi rah | Alja ya | She an y | Asia h |
|---------|----------|------|-------|--------------|--------|---------|------|-----------|---------|-------|-------|--------|--------|---------|-------|
| Neve r CL T, trad itio nal met hod , on ly lect | Taugh t most time oral presen tation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Tra di tion a l at sch ool just in UT M teach in CL T, de gree | Teac her on a l ca ter ter. | My T did n’t use CL T at CL T just in UT M teach in CL T, | Usu ally trad itio nal, as I can’ t spea k a lot, i felt bor rove | Tra di tion a l, as I can’ t spea k a lot, i felt bor rove | In pri or ty, as I can’ t spea k a lot, i felt bor rove | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to | Mo sty chal k and di sc uss c ommu nic ation/G ood expe rience encour age me to |

Table 2: the results of the second question of the second questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
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</thead>
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<td>a) Communicative Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Direct Method</td>
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<td>c) Grammar Translation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Natural Approach</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Silent Way</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Total Physical Transport</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: interviewees’ results of the interviews
In response to the question that I asked in the interview about TESL trainees’ school time (Do you think that your English learning experience in middle and high school encouraged you to implement CLT or prevented you from using CLT in your teaching?), the majority of the participants commented that a few of their English teachers were very good and used CLT to
arouse their interest in teaching the language. Some of them were satisfied with the way of their school teachers and liked to follow their instructions even though they used traditional methods based on the text books for example Maisarah said;

S; i think it is ok and successful because most of us the level of proficiency is quite good. We are doing well because we learn English quite ourselves at home and we learn English by ourselves so the waviness of English is already in minds so the teacher just asked us on write an essay and submit it to me tomorrow so she correcting grammar on the paper but not giving us very direct comments about articles or past and present tense
R; So you mean their teaching was not efficient? You use self study?
S; ya self study

S; primary and secondary both of them traditional methods where spelling text and only use the text books and teacher only focus on giving in put too much because most of us already know the basic and most of us know the structure of sentence so we just in the class create an essay and submit it to the teacher and we have accurate lesson and direct lesson about grammar
R; now you teach grammar directly?
S; youself, youself, youself
R; What methods were used to teach you English in school? Did the school teachers incorporate CLT in their teaching?
S; no because before this the school did not have computer lab and it is not using the technology or the facilities very much so we were just using textbook, traditional methods and work book and like that

Maisarah believed they learned English through self study not by the helps of teachers. She thought this way of learning was efficient because she taught her level of English proficiency and her friends was good. The same as Maisarah, Amirah also liked to follow her teachers’ methods of teaching in secondary school but opposite to Maisarah she experienced pair work and group work and became aware of the advantages of student-center class and liked to do the same in her classroom. She said: “i think it encouraged me because I like to do group work and pair work because is more fun than just listening to the teacher talking” (second interview Amirah, line 38-39. In addition, Fadhila also remembered one of her teachers in secondary school who made the class learning fun. She stated “I think most of the times they used chalk and talk but once in a while the teachers use songs, use poems she knows how to make learning fun” but “previously in my high school my teachers i still remember one teacher who I looked up the most because she was really warm and kind but at the same time she had that side when she needs to be very strict” (Fadhila’s second interview line 12-14 and 20-2).

Interestingly, some of the participants expressed they did not like the teacher center classes of school time learning and those bad memories encouraged them to use CLT in their classroom now. The following extracts show this issue.

S; ok class was very routine in traditional way the method that teachers always use was grammar translation they always tell me directly what is essay about and they translate each
words because some of my friends did not understand. They (the teachers) always did aloud reading together and they (the students) always repeat after my teacher. I think it is a very traditional way to learn English right?

So I think my English learning experience I think encourage me to implement CLT because since I felt bored learning in traditional way so I want students feel happy and joyful when learning English so i really try to use as much as CLT

S: Ok in my memory my teachers asked me to do many questions by following the format examinations so we can get A in the exam
R: What methods were used to teach you English in school? Did the school teachers incorporate CLT in their teaching?
S: I think no in my time there is no CLT method. It was grammar translation method
S: I think it encourage me to implement CLT because i have experience that I could not speak in English. I can read but i can’t speak so i have to improve the new generation

S: “Secondary school no they used direct teaching method
R: can you remember how was the class?
S: many of the time like writing class try to write, grammar class also teacher by teacher give example and do practice it is more for exam rather than learning English

Correspondingly, Ainee felt the learning experience that she had gotten from the school time encouraged her to use CLT in her classroom. She said:

“the learning experience actually encourage me to implement CLT but bad memory that I try not to do them. What I am doing now in practical time, I always note from students will know what students need like previously what I need from the teachers now I can do for them as a teacher”

Ernie Aljaya also was not satisfied about her secondary school times and she tried not to follow the ways of her secondary school teaching but she tried to follow the way of one her teachers in primary school. She said:

S: Secondary school no they used direct teaching method
R: can you remember how was the class?
S: many of the time like writing class try to write, grammar class also teacher by teacher give example and do practice it is more for exam rather than learning English
S: I use my experience to teach the students because I am one of those students that always neglect what the teacher says infront ok i am one of the students who sleep behind why i sleep because the way the teachers taught is quite boring because it is chalk and talk and actually i want to change that I don’t want my students to sleep in my classroom that is why I use CLT. I want everyone to interact

Ernie also told me that she had a very good experience with one of her English teacher in primary school she said:
S; during my time most of the students use chalk and talk but there is one teacher I really like during my primary school she did some CLT she used some songs and poems and role play and it is very fun and I like the way she is teaching during my primary but during my secondary most of them are in chalk and talk and then how I learn English before entered UTM. I used to listen to English songs

The same as Aljaya, Sheanyin also confessed that although she did not like some of the rules and behaviours of teachers in school time and tries not to apply them in her class, they are still some actions that she follows them in her own class. She said:

S; i think i will not the traditional way to teach my students now because quite boring and when class is boring and students will not learn
R; Do you think that your own education as a student has had any influence on the way you teach? How?
S; yes like dr khairi i try to use that method to teach students

R; Based on your observation of your school teacher’s teaching, to what extent would you say your approach to foreign language teaching is similar to or different from hers?
S; actually is a bit different what my teacher implement but then i also use some of the methods that teacher used like punishment
R;Why some of them u don’t do maybe
S; I don’t really like them because it is boring

Surprisingly, Sara contended that although she had good experiences at school, she did not like using CLT because she thought good learning experience is not the encouraging factor in using CLT. She believed students’ lack of motivation and proficiency act as inhibiting factors in applying CLT.

S; so because i don’t think it is suitable for the students because they have low proficiency and it is one problem and then they are very restless and run a round and do not want to participate not motivated
R; How do you find your students’ participation and performance in class? You said not good and you are not satisfied with them yes?
S; Yes

Based on the interview results, 70-80% of class time at school time was teacher talking while just one of the participants who went to a school in Melaka stated that the teacher talking was just 20% during school time and most of the time students were talking in the class. One of them also expressed although during primary school TTT was 60-70% but during secondary the TTT decreased to 40-50%. The participants also showed their disagreement on traditional teaching in which teachers’ talking time was very high by answering to question number 9 and 10 of the first questionnaire. The tables 4.4 and 4.5 demonstrate their answers.
Table 4: results from question number 9 of the first interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
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<td>3.00</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the following table, 10 of the participants (66.6%) believed student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher’s talk while 33.3% believed teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback.

Table 5: results from question number 10 of the first interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

66.6% (10 out of 15) of the participants believed student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher’s talk while just 33.3% (5 out of 15) of them agreed teachers talk should exceed students talk. This awareness of decreasing TTT in the class may be the results of the new method of studying at university.

CONCLUSION
In this section some conclusions drown by researcher about the influence of learning experience in TESL trainees’ attitudes. It can be concluded through the themes that learning experience plays an important role in shaping TESL trainees’ attitudes. According to the findings presented in the above table, the majority of participants reveal that they avoid following Audio Lingual Method and traditional methods because they had negative backgrounds in learning via ALM and GTM.

Limitation of the study
The current study is a study of the fifteen TESL trainees’ attitudes towards CLT in Malaysia. Thus, generablizability of the results is limited. It is suggested that a large-scale study of the same research topic carry out in Malaysia and other Asian contexts in order to yield a greater generablizability.

REFERENCES


THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFL TEACHERS' CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT
Cultural intelligence (CQ) is positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction among Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) teachers. The present study sought to investigate the correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their job satisfaction. A sample including 110 Iranian EFL teachers completed two questionnaires, e.g. Job Satisfaction adopted from Karavas (2010) and Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Cultural Intelligence Center (2005). Results of correlation indicated a direct significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their job satisfaction. This study can help teacher educators to implement some cultural material to their curriculum for teaching prospective teachers.

KEYWORDS: EFL Teachers, Cultural Intelligence, Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION
Job satisfaction simply means as the extent to which employees are content with their jobs. The issue is important for both employers and employees (Kazerouni & Sadighi, 2014). Kazerouni and Sadighi (2014) view Job satisfaction as the fulfillment acquired by experiencing a variety of job activities and rewards. Cranny, Smith and Stone (1992) define job satisfaction as “an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to a job that results from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired (expected, deserved, and so on.)” (p.1). Spector (1997) defines job satisfaction as “how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs” (p.2). Job satisfaction has also been defined “as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke 1976, p.1300).

Another factor which is to be investigated here is EFL teachers' cultural intelligence (CQ). The term can be defined as knowledge of a variety of cultures. It is a multidimensional construct which is targeted in contexts where cross-cultural interactions occur due to differences in race, ethnicity, and nationality (Ghonsooly, Shariffar, & Raeisi Sistani, n.d.). Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006, as cited in Ghonsooly et al. n.d.) define CQ as "an individual's capacity to deal effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (p.101). By function, the researchers mean “the capability to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Ghonsooly and Golparvar (2013) argue that cultural intelligence as the ability to effectively interact with people from various cultures necessitates cultural awareness. In the other hand they maintain that successful interaction with the members of a given culture requires the awareness of its values, perspectives, and patterns of behavior. Similarly, according to Cheng (2007, as cited in Ghonsooly & Golparvar, 2013) being aware of cross-cultural communication patterns is the first step to have harmonious and successful communication. On the other hand, Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction “as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (p.1300). Evans (1997) interprets job satisfaction as “a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met” (p.833).

Ghenghesh (2013) sought to find out the extent to which different factors influence the job satisfaction and motivation. The results obtained in Ghenghesh's study (2013) show that there are a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors which can have influence teachers’ job satisfaction and motivation. The most important reason shown to enhance teachers' intrinsic motivation was good relationship with colleagues/co-workers. Along similar lines, the second ranked extrinsic factor, ‘the working environment in one’s department/faculty’, was a motivating factor for teachers to work harder (Ghenghesh, 2013). It was also found that teachers were motivated and satisfied if students showed interest in the module they were taking. It was also found that 40.8% of teachers in the different faculties and the English Department were dissatisfied with the ‘poor language level’ of students upon entry to the university (Ghenghesh, 2013).

Griva, Panitsidou, and Chostelidou (2012) conducted a research to identify factors affecting motivation and professional satisfaction of foreign language (FL) teachers employed in the Greek education system. They concluded that such factors are important because teachers' views and needs can influence their attitudes, work behavior and commitment in teaching. It is also interesting to reveal how FL teachers' expectations and fulfillment from their job are different based on teachers themselves, schools and contexts (Griva et al. 2012).

According to Doyle and Kim (1999) such factors as lack of respect from administration, lack of advancement opportunities, lack of long term employment and job security, overly heavy workloads, lack of rewards for creativity, and the malfunctioning of the education system create dissatisfaction among ESL and EFL teachers.

Petrović (2011) conducted a study to determine the level of cultural intelligence of teachers and to examine which variables could predict cultural intelligence. It was found that the participants (N=107 elementary school teachers from four towns in Serbia) showed a high level of cultural intelligence and that significant predictors of teachers' cultural intelligence included enjoyment of
intercultural communication, experiencing multicultural classes as a challenge, openness to cultural learning and contacts with people from other cultures.

Iqbal and Abbasi (2013) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job burnout among universities professors in Karachi. It was concluded that the ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in the universities helps professors control burnout. In addition, the belief one has about the cause of his fortune or misfortune (locus of control) is a predictor of burnout among professors (Iqbal & Abbasi, 2013).

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

The present correlation study aims at investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their autonomy. In order to achieve the results of the study the following research question research question was posed:

Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence?

Accordingly, the following research null-hypothesis was proposed:

There is not any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

The participants of this study were 110 Iranian EFL teachers from Khorasan Razavi province, Iran. Their age ranged from 24 to over 45. Participants were selected according to Krejcie-Morgan table (1970) out of 150 EFL teachers. They were either BA or MA. Their teaching experience ranged from 5 to 25 years. Teachers of both private language institutes and public schools participated in the study.

**Instrumentations**

In order to collect the required data, the following instruments were employed by the researcher.

**Job satisfaction**

In order to assess the participants' job satisfaction, a questionnaire composed of 15 Likert type statements was administered. The items were measured on a 5 point scale ranging from 1= highly satisfying to 5= highly dissatisfying. The questionnaire was adopted from Karavas (2010).

**Cultural intelligence scale**

In order to assess the participants' cultural intelligence, this questionnaire developed by Cultural Intelligence Center (2005) was administered. Composed of four components, e.g. metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral, the questionnaire consists of 20 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The responses range from "strongly disagree"(1) to "strongly agree" (5).
Procedure
Selected participants, 110 Iranian EFL teachers from Khorasan Razavi, Iran were given two questionnaires, e.g. job satisfaction and cultural intelligence scale. Participants completed the questionnaire either online or on paper. Data were collected and analyzed. Next section summarized data obtained from the instruments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
To determine whether Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction relates to their cultural intelligence, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was employed. Table 1 shows the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>CQ</th>
<th>JS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CQ</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JS</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.550**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As Table 1 shows, there is a statistically significant (r=.55; sig=.000) correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence. Therefore, the null-hypothesis proposed by the researcher was rejected. According to this finding it can be concluded that the more these participants are culturally intelligent, the more they are satisfied with their jobs. This finding is in agreement with what found by Bückera, Furrer, Poutsma and Buyens (2014) indicating that CQ has positive influences on communication effectiveness and job satisfaction among 225 Chinese managers working for foreign multinational enterprises in China.

Discussion
The present study aimed at investigating the correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence. Data analysis employing Pearson correlation coefficient indicated a statistically significant and direct relationship between the two variables. It can be claimed that, in order to be satisfied with their jobs EFL teachers need to enhance their cultural intelligence through exposing to a variety of cultures in the era of technology and globalization. Chen and Starosta (2006, as cited in Tajeddin & Momenian, 2011) argues that due to the rapid growth of globalization, technology development, and population migrations, communication with people from other cultures became necessary in English Language Teaching in the 1980s resulting in the intercultural attitude towards language teaching (Derin, Zeynep, Pinar, Özlem, & Gökçe, 2009, as cited in Tajeddin & Momenian, 2011). In order to become satisfied with their jobs, EFL teachers in Iran need to improve their cultural intelligence through communicating with people from different cultures worldwide. As a result positive educational outcomes may occur.
CONCLUSION
In order to investigate whether there is any relationship between EFL teacher cultural influence and their job satisfaction, we conducted this correlational study. The result showed that there is a positive and somehow strong correlation between these variables. The data were gathered through questionnaire from 110 EFL teachers in Khorasan razavi, Iran. It was shown that the knowledge of culture and cultural differences can have an effect on teachers’ satisfaction about their job. There are some implications regarding this study.

First, there is a need for culture teaching in the curriculum of EFL prospective teachers’ courses. These teachers should be exposed to different cultures and should learn about them in order to be more effective. Second, there is a need to develop culture awareness lessons for those EFL teachers who have finished their teacher education courses. These teachers also need to become aware of cultural values and differences. Third, there is a need for some cultural lessons and materials in EFL textbooks. The textbooks should cover different cultures from different parts of the world and make their values clear for students.

There are some limitations in this study. First, this study is just correlational and don’t propose a way to incorporate cultural knowledge in teacher education courses. Second, as a correlational study our sample is limited and we need more teachers to confirm the result. Third, the teachers are all from Khorasan razavi province, and this issue limits the generalization of our study.

REFERENCES


The IMPACT OF CONCEPT MAPPING TECHNIQUE ON EFL READING COMPREHENSION: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT
Reading is one of the crucial skills in the second language learning. One of the necessary needs for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners is to learn how to manipulate strategies to get the benefit of reading in second language context. Concept maps are one of the strategies that can be applied by the learners in their reading comprehension. They help learners to connect new information to already ones. To fulfill the aim of the study, 61 EFL advanced students were chosen. Then they randomly assigned to two experimental group (concept mapping, 15 males and 16 females) or control group (traditional method, 12 males and 18 females). A pre-test and post-test was run. The results of the pretest revealed that two groups are homogeneous in their reading ability. The experimental group was instructed concept mapping in their reading comprehension while the control group followed traditional method in their reading. The results of ANOVA and T-test revealed that two groups had significant differences in their post test reading comprehension and students in experimental group outperformed those in control group. The findings of this study have some implications in applying appropriate technique to teach reading to EFL learners.

KEYWORDS: Concept mapping, EFL advanced learners, Reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION
Reading can be viewed as a basic skill in language learning. One of the necessary needs of students is to learn to read for communication. Learning how to read definitely help learners to use this skill as a source of getting information. According to Swalander and Taube (2007) “good reading ability is the key to success in educational setting and this is why researchers try to find effective educational and psychological variables that can explain variations in reading ability and academic achievement (p.207)”. In addition, researchers and scholars interested in student motivation and learning in academic settings put much emphasis on the position of the students’ thoughts and beliefs in learning (Schunk, 2003). In most cases the burden of reading information
leads to rote memorization and retention of materials rather than meaningful and deep learning (Lambiotte & Danserou, 1992).

Reading is highly dynamic interaction between a reader and the written text. The ultimate goal on the reading is comprehension, “When readers are not comprehending, they are not reading (Chastain, 1988). Reading comprehension is very crucial for university students; with help of reading they can expand their repertoire of information and knowledge. Unfortunately in Iran educational context there is no special policy to teach the students strategies for better comprehension. In this educational system, students are not taught with any special strategy and consequently they cannot interact with the text and as a result, many of them lose their interests in reading in English that leads to be unsuccessful in their English courses. So “finding an efficient approach which facilitates learners’ learning and help them comprehend better seems to be quiet necessary ” (Jalilifar, 2010: P 98 ).

Antoniou and Souvignier (2007) point out that "effective reading requires the use of strategies that are explicitly taught”(p:43). According to Barnett (1988) reading strategies are referred to as mental operations which are used by readers when they read a text and try to understand it effectively. Hence, the most successful students are those who manipulate different strategies to help them to cope with their problems in this regard. Teachers can have effective roles in introducing new strategies to the students in facing with their difficulties.

One of the strategies that can be used by EFL learners in their reading comprehension is concept mapping. The beneficial effects of concept mapping on different educational outcome has been demonstrated by many researchers (Ojima, 2006; Snead & Wanda, 2004; Chularute & DeBacker; 2004).

In the light of mentioned benefits of teaching techniques for reading comprehension, the present study aims to investigate the effects of concept mapping technique on EFL advanced students. reading comprehension. Since the reading comprehension is very crucial in advanced level Students successful in this regard increase their proficiency and make them more motivated toward their goals and achievements.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical background

Concept mapping was introduced by Joseph Novak for the first time in 1972. “Concept mapping is a graphic organizational technique design to help individual and group to explain and explore their knowledge and understanding a topic ”Talebinejad and Mousapour (2007). In a concept map, concepts are framed in circles or boxes and the relationship between them are illustrated by connecting lines which link two concepts. The written words on connecting lines show the relationship between two concepts. Concepts defined as “a perceived regularities in events or objects, designated by a label” (Novak & Canas, 2006). Concept map helps learners to link previous knowledge to novel information, and manifest related ideas. Drawing map lead students to engage in learning process actively. Concept mapping reveals in what ways readers

Two theories support the use of concept mapping in education. One is Constructivist theory; it implies that learners take with them their previous knowledge to class which is influenced by cultural and ethnic factor (Colburn, 2000) Constructivists believe that the way individual understand their experiences forms meaning. In other words what we know is constructed by our personal experience. The other theory which supports concept mapping is Ausubel assimilation theory. Ausubel (1968) classifies learning into two categories, a) meaningful and b) rote learning; "meaningful learning happens when the learner consciously and deliberately chooses to relate new knowledge to knowledge the learner already knows" (Novak, 1998: 19, cited in Shimerda, 2007: 120).

Teaching reading strategies are among the ways to enhance learners reading comprehension. Oxford (1990) states that learning strategies are “specific action taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable and more effective ” (p.8). Various strategies can be manipulated to increase students reading comprehension ,one of them which seems to enhance students reading comprehension is concept mapping. 

Related studies
Several studies have been done to investigate the effect of concept mapping on different language skills. Some of them revealed the effectiveness of concept mapping on reading comprehension. Gobert and Clement (1999) point out that, the students who used concept map in their reading, can illustrate their interpretation of the text in a visual way while in traditional method; the knowledge embedded in the written form is not completely meaningful to the learners.

Contrary and Chen (1998) found out that, concept mapping is not effective in the students reading comprehension and summarization. Accordingly Han (2006) investigate the effect of concept mapping reading instruction and traditional reading instruction for Chinese EFL learners. Three different areas were investigated: main idea reading, subordinate idea reading and reading between lines. The results reveal that there is no significant difference in three reading areas between two instructions. According to Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) teachers can apply concept mapping strategies for testing the students' vocabulary rather than testing them on word definitions. They further state that concept mapping act as a stimulator which activate the learners' previous knowledge. As a result develop related instead of isolated word knowledge.

In another study, Snead and Wanda (2004) investigate the effects of using concept mapping on the science achievement of middle grade science students. The finding of the study showed that low ability students get the benefit of concept mapping more than high ability students, in another word; low ability students outperformed the high ability students. Chularut and DeBacke (2004) investigated The influence of concept mapping on achievement, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in students of English as a second language The finding of the research revealed that the concept mapping group showed significantly greater gains from pre-test to post-test than the control group who had self –study.
Khajavi and Ketabi (2010) studied the influence of concept mapping on reading comprehension and self-efficacy of intermediate EFL students. After treatment sessions in experimental group results indicated that students in the concept mapping group showed greater achievement than students in the control group.

In the same vein, Moreira and Moreira (2011) investigate the effects of concept mapping on context comprehension of course book and achieving meaningful. The results of study show that text concept mapping is effective in students’ meaningful learning and students’ self-confidence enhance with using concept mapping.

Accordingly, Shaul (2011) conducted a study in which she investigated the effects of student-generated, concept mapping on the performance of EFL, grade 12, students in reading comprehension texts. The results indicated that low-knowledge students who generate their maps had better reading comprehension than those of high-knowledge students or both control groups. Besides, students' disposition toward self-generated concept mapping had a progressive positive change, regardless of students' level.

Most recently DeylamSalehi., Jahandar, and Khodabandehlou (2013) studied the impact of concept mapping on Iranian EFL student’s reading comprehension in two high schools in Iran. With regard to the results of the study, the experimental group who manipulate concept mapping in their reading comprehension outperformed the control group with traditional reading method.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
The present study aims to answer to the following questions:
1- Is there any differential effect between reading comprehension of students who apply concept mapping in their reading comprehension under treatment and students in control group who used traditional method?
2- Is there significant differences between males and females students in reading comprehension applying concept mapping?

**METHODOLOGY**

*Participants*
The population under study in this research were 68 (31 male and 37 female) EFL students. They studied in Kish language institute, a private institute in Kermanshah, they were learning General English at advanced level. They were enrolled in TOEFL preparation class. The age of the participants ranged from 25 to 34. In order to have homogeneous groups, prior to the study, a placement test was held. From the first population 7 were omitted, after attending placement test due to low grade and not meeting the benchmark for attending this study. Later the participants were randomly assigned to either experimental (concept mapping, 15 males and 16 females) or control group (traditional method, 12 males and 18 females).
Instruments
A reading comprehension test was used as a pretest and posttest in the study. It included 8 passages were select from Active reading –Book two (Anderson, 2007)The test was pilot by 15 students who were at the same level of proficiency, but did not take part in the study. Based on the results of pilot study, two passages were omitted and then the modified version was used for the main study.

Besides, the researcher prepared a handout based on some sources like Novak and Canas (2006) in order to familiar students with concept mapping, how to draw a concept map as well as some examples. To measure students’ progress in reading ability, a reading test was run. There were 50 items in the test. Each item received 1 score which made 50 score for the whole test.

Procedure
The participants were first briefed about the purpose of the study. Prior to conducting the study both groups were given a reading text to measure their reading comprehension. After pretesting session the students participated in ten 60-min study sessions (two session in a week). The reading passages were the same for both groups but they were instructed by different methods i.e. concept mapping and traditional methods. In experimental group, at the first session students were introduced to the concept mapping. Then the teacher explained its effects on reading comprehension, trained students how to connect pieces of information and found the relationship between them and finally draw maps. The students were required to study the handout for the next sessions. In the following sessions the participants work on reading text, highlight the concepts, draw maps and receive feedbacks from the instructor but in control group (traditional method), the participants received no special instruction and follow conventional methods i.e., they are required to read the text, look up unknown words from the dictionary and at the end, the instructor and the students discuss about the text and some synonyms and antonyms were provided for the unknown words. At the end of treatment, a reading comprehension test with the same level of readability was run as a post test for both control and experimental group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
For the purpose of data analysis, the data on pre-test and post-test were gathered and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences; SPSS.16. Then ANOVA was applied to calculate differences between two groups. In order to answer the research questions, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Tables 1 and 2 show the descriptive and inferential statistics of the two groups.

Table 1. Compare the mean scores for both experimental and control group. The mean score for experimental group and control group was 30.01 (M=30.01) and 24.61 (M=24.61) respectively. The ANOVA was conducted to investigate the mean score of both groups. As showed F=16.41, which is significant at P=.000, revealed that there is a significant difference between two groups.
Table 1: Descriptive and inferential analysis of the pretest and the posttest and the results of the independent F-test of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30.01</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>24.61</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 reveals in experimental group, T= 8.24 which is significant in p = 0.00 which showed that, the participant in experimental group outperformed the control group.

Table 2: Paired Samples Statistics of pre-test and post-test in both groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>36.35</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Pretest</td>
<td>23.68</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>25.47</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>24.70</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Control and Experimental group achievement
The above diagram shows clearly that there is a significant difference between the experimental and the control group. It confirms that EFL students that were instructed with concept mapping gained higher scores in reading comprehension than the control group.

Table 3 indicates that there are no differences between males and females in reading comprehension manipulating concept mapping instruction. The results of T-test on the performance of the students are shown in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Mean Error</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28.19</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of the study, concept mapping instruction had significant effects on EFL advanced level students. The results of this study is in line with Chang, Chen and Sung, (2002) who maintain that concept mapping has significant role in encouraging students’ reading comprehension in writing summaries, developing vocabulary increasing self awareness in learning, reviewing material and in reading as a whole. However, the findings of this study is in contrast with Han (2006) and Chan (1998) who state that concept mapping is not effective in reading comprehension. It seem that better performance of the experimental group over the control group is that with drawing maps, the students connect their new information to their previous one. According to Ozek and Civelek (2006), proficient readers could make prediction and hypotheses about the text content by linking the new information to their previous knowledge. In concept mapping instruction the learners discover the relationship between different concepts in the text that contribute to deeper insight into the text. Concept mapping help learners to activate their background knowledge and schemata when they are trying to draw maps that lead to involvement in learning process actively and this engagement cause to meaningful learning. Furthermore, effective learning which comes from active student participation can ultimately shape their language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Effective learning and increased motivation for a subject rely on educational experiences, appropriate subject matter and connecting previous schemas to new learning (Bruner 1978; Gardner, 1978).

Concept mapping as a strategy in education is parallel with the movement from teacher to learner and as a result has the power to improve academic achievement (Peterson & Snyder, 1998). Askov (1991) pointed out that an effective teacher should help students be efficient at self-learning. Therefore, students needed study skills which they could apply while reading inside and outside of class. He also explained that the ‘concept mapping’ technique is a study skill that helped students sees relationships between the messages since they required learners to think through while constructing the maps. As a cognitive tool, Concept maps, can serve as a scaffold to cognitive development as they may lower cognitive load, enhance connections between
complex Constructs, and offer paths for retrieving and accessing knowledge (Novak & Gowin, 1985; O'Donnell, Dansereau & Hall, 2002).

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the study, using concept mapping technique had a significant role on EFL reading comprehension. This technique hinders memorization, which is boring for the learners and lead them to meaningful learning by connecting new knowledge to previous learned one. The findings of this study have great implications for both students and teachers.

Teachers should always seek new strategies to help students solve their problems in learning language. Teachers can introduce this technique to the students to improve their reading comprehension. In addition, it enables the teacher to perceive the area that students do not have sufficient knowledge and help them to fill this gap.

With learning this technique, Students’reading comprehension achievements enhance and in this way they will be motivated to read and reading turns to an enjoyable activity. Accordingly, this strategy allows learners to learn new vocabularies, grasp the main ideas of the text and make connection between the concepts that leads to meaningful learning. Besides, because concept mapping is a student-center strategy; they have more chances to work on reading outside the classroom context. Additionally, concept mapping is an effective tool to organize ideas and thoughts and make the retrieving the details easier. Additional research could be investigation the effect of concept mapping on the other language skills such as listening and writing and speaking. It should be noted that this study conducted in a private institute with limited number of students, So, this limited number of participants limits the generalizability of the findings of the study. Hence, findings need to be reported cautiously. In order to generalize the results of the study more population should be taken into account.

REFERENCES


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DIFFERENCES IN COMPLIMENT RESPONSE ACROSS GENDER

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ABSTRACT
Among different speech acts, compliment responses have been of interest for many researchers because they are loaded with cultural and socio-cultural factors and therefore require a great deal of pragmatic insight. In this study, the differences in compliment response between Iranian male and female university students were investigated. Data was gathered through a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with two imaginary situations in which participants were complimented by a classmate of the opposite sex, and a friend of the same sex, and were asked to write their responses to each of those imaginary compliments. Participants were forty male and female students of English at University of Allameh Tabatabai. Findings revealed that participants responded to compliments differently as the gender of the interlocutors differed. The results can shed light on the pragmatic knowledge of the respondents and the cultural and socio-cultural factors which affect the way people perceive compliments given by different sexes and the way they respond to them.

KEYWORDS: pragmatics, speech acts, compliment, compliment response, discourse completion tasks

INTRODUCTION
The last two decades have witnessed a plethora of research on pragmatics and its different aspects such as speech acts (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Billmyer, 1990; Rose & Ng, 2001, Intachakara, 2004), discourse markers, (Wildner-Bassett, 1986; Yoshimi, 2001), pragmatic routines (Tateyama, 2001; Wishnoff, 2000), politeness, and etc. Among these different aspects, speech acts such as apologizing, requesting, complimenting, compliment response, etc., have attracted the majority of researchers’ attention and among different types of speech acts, compliment responses have been of interest for many because they are loaded with cultural and socio-cultural factors and therefore require a great deal of pragmatic insight.

A compliment is defined as a speech acts which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speakers, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristics, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer (Holmes, 1988). Holmes states that compliments are ‘‘positively affective speech acts, the most obvious function they serve is to oil the social wheels, paying attention to positive face wants and thus increasing or consolidating solidarity between people’’. However, sometimes compliments can serve another function and become a threat to the negative face.
Many studies have been conducted so far in the domain of compliment response (CR). The majority of such studies aimed to compare different strategies of responding to compliments across different communities and cultures (Huth, 2006; Wolga & Scholmberger, 2007), and others took into account other factors such as gender difference in CR (Heidari, et. a., 2009). In this study we compared the CR strategies used by male and female Iranian university students because there is an obvious gap in literature regarding this issue. The only study which compared CR strategies between males and females in Iran is Heidari, et. al., (2009)'s study which focused on Iranian male and female teenage students. In that study, they compared such strategies with regard to four situational setting: appearance, character, ability, and possession. They collected their data using DCTs and analyzed it through Holmes micro/macro strategies framework. The result of their study indicated a consistent tendency across the macro, micro levels for the female participants to use fewer Accept strategies, and more Evade and Reject strategies, than their male counterparts; that is, the females express appreciation for a compliment less and denigrate themselves more.

In the present study, such comparison was made between male and female university students. The major difference between this study and the previous one is that other variables such as the role of compliment giver’s gender on compliment receiver’s response were considered.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Pragmatics**

Pragmatics is defined by different researchers and scholars in different ways. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of speakers meaning, contextual meaning, how more gets communicated than said, and the expression of the relative distance. The same author in another place defines pragmatics as the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. For Crystal (1997, as cited in Rose and Kasper, 2001), "pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraint they encounter in using the language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p.2).

Pragmatic competence is the competence which enables speakers to behave and talk appropriately in different contexts. According to Edward and Ccizer (2004), pragmatic competence is the knowledge of social, cultural, and discourse conventions that had to be followed in various situations. For Barron (2003), "pragmatic competence is understood as knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realizing particular illocutions, knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts and finally, knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages' linguistic resources" (p. 10). Native speakers of each language have acquired such competence during their learning of language and use pragmatic rules unconsciously in interaction with others. However, language learners need to be presented with such tools.

For a long time, pragmatic competence, or the ability to behave appropriately in different situations had been ignored in language pedagogy. However, the inability of students to handle
different situations on the one hand, and the emergence of Communicative Competence Models (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Bachman, 1990; and Bachman & Palmer, 1996) in which pragmatic competence was considered as an essential part of language competence on the other hand, gave a new prominence to the subject of pragmatics in language pedagogy. In Bachman (1990), pragmatic competence was considered as one the two main component of language competence along with organizational competence.

For Bachman, Organizational competence comprises those abilities involved in controlling the formal structure of language while pragmatic competence is concerned with the relationship between users of those structures and the context of communication (pp. 87-89). As Kasper (2001) also believes, pragmatic competence is not a piece of additional knowledge to the learner's existing knowledge, but it is an organic part of the learners' communicative competence.

In SL contexts, it is expectable that learners gradually acquire such rules through their frequent exposure with the new language. However, in FL context where learners barely have any interaction in the new language out of the class, the need to teach pragmatics is the most apparent. However, Bardovi-Harlig (2001), claims that even ESL learners who have access to good amounts of pragmatic input differ significantly in their performance compared to native speakers.

At the same time, researchers found that pragmatic competence could not be expected to be developed along with the grammatical competence and it was apparent when they came across many learners who were linguistically highly competent but who lagged behind in their pragmatic ability (Lee, 2007; Eslami-Rasekh et.al, 2004; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009; Bardovi-Harlig & Dorney, 1997). The same point is mentioned by Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor (2003), "learners at the higher levels of grammatical proficiency often show a wide range of pragmatic competence. Thus, we find that even advanced nonnative speakers are neither uniformly successful, nor uniformly unsuccessful, but the range is quite wide".

The importance attributed to pragmatic competence and the apparent difference between pragmatic competence of native speakers and language learners, even those who are highly proficient with regard to linguistic knowledge, highlights the importance and necessity of teaching pragmatics. The study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of these pragmatic rules relates to the domain of Interlanguage Pragmatics.

**Speech Act Theory**

Speech act theory was first proposed by the British language philosopher, John Austin. According to Austin (1955, as cited in Barron 2002), a speaker produces three types of act:

- The *locutionary act*, i.e., the act of uttering (phonemes, morphemes, sentences) and also referring to and saying something about the world.
- The *illocutionary act*, i.e., the speaker's intention realized in producing an utterance. E.g., request, compliment.
The perlocutionary act, i.e., the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer, e.g., to make hearer do something, to make hearer happy. (p. 12)

This classification reveals that in producing an utterance, not only we say something, but also we mean something from what we say, and we seek to have an influence on our interlocutor. According to Barron (2002), the illocutionary act is the principal focus of speech act theory and it is, indeed, itself, standardly referred to as the "speech act".

However, the perlocutionary act is of concern for the study of CR because sometimes the actual effect of a compliment on the compliment receiver can be very different from what the speaker has in mind. This specially happens when the compliment giver is not properly familiar with the social and cultural conventions of the compliment receiver or when she/he does not take into account the social status of his/her interlocutor. For example, in some cultures it is common for a man to compliment another man while in others it can be totally misinterpreted. According to Golato (2005), what really makes a compliment a compliment is the context within which it is uttered. She demonstrates that the same utterance can be compliment, interruption, reproach, sarcasm or tease in different situations.

Searle (1980; as cited in Barron, 2002) believes that the central assumption of speech act theory is as follows:

…. the minimal unit of communication is not a sentence or other expressions, but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts, such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing, …., etc.

For Cohen (2007), "speech acts are often, but not always, the patterned, routinized language that natives and pragmatically competent nonnative speakers and writers in a given speech community use to perform functions such as thanking, complimenting, requesting, refusing, apologizing, and complaining" (p.3).

Many studies have been conducted with a focus on different speech acts such as requests (Fukuya & Clark, 2001), compliments (Rose & Ng, 2001), apologies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990), etc. Indeed, speech acts are an aspect of pragmatics which has attracted the highest degree of attention in recent years. According to Cohen (2007)," speech acts constitute an engaging aspect of pragmatics because of the possible misfit between what you say or write in a language in the given speech act and what is meant by it" (p.3).

**Compliment Response (CR)**

Compliment responses have often been studied in a contrastive fashion to illuminate cultural differences in CR behavior between two speech communities. The studies presented in this section contrast how users of two different languages respond in distinct manners to compliments. One contrastive study of American and Thai’s compliment responses (Gajaseni, 1994), for example, found that Americans were not only more likely to accept compliments, but that they tended to give more lengthy responses. The author also found that both groups tended to
accept compliments more from an interlocutor of a higher social status and to reject those more often from someone of a lower status. This finding might show that these groups see compliment acceptances more polite than rejections.

Chiang and Pochtraeger (1993) compared compliment responses of Chinese-born and American-born English speakers and found the American-born speakers were more likely to positively elaborate on responses, while the Chinese-born participants were more likely to deny or negatively elaborate on a compliment. These authors state that “for Americans, the least preferred type of compliment response is rejection or denial” (p.2). Fong (1998) studied the perceptions of compliment behavior of Americans by Chinese immigrants and found that the Chinese natives often thought that Americans gave compliments too freely. The Chinese speakers in this study questioned the sincerity of the compliments.

Yoko (1995) compared Japanese CRs to American norms and found that in the Japanese speakers’ responses, rejection of the CR was the ideal and acceptance of it could be problematic. The author notes that the standard American CR is “thank you” which accepts the compliment without necessarily agreeing with it and avoiding appearing conceited. Yoko also writes that compliments put the recipient in a conflict to neither reject a compliment but to also show solidarity and rapport. Yoko writes “in contrast, it is generally accepted in Japanese society that people should not accept compliments referring directly to themselves or their possessions” (53).

Nelson, Al-Batal, and Echols (1998) compared Arabic and English CRs and found that both groups, unlike the previously mentioned studies, were more likely to accept compliments than to reject them. The authors noted that Americans used “appreciation tokens” (“thanks”) while the Arabic-speaking Syrians often used formulaic forms not seen in the American data.

Yu (2004) studied the CRs of two groups of Chinese learners of English, one group lived in the United States and the other in Taiwan. Similar to the present study, these participants responded to compliments in different situations with interlocutors whose status and gender varied. Yu found that the responses from the learners in the United States were more likely to be acceptances than compliments, and the responses from the learners in Taiwan were more likely to be rejections.

Not all studies of interest to this study are concerned with cross-cultural variation. Parisi and Wogan (2005) studied the effect of gender on complimenting behavior of American college students and ground great variance in the performance of CRs depending on gender. They explain “males gave females a higher proportion of compliments on appearance than skill and females did the opposite, giving males a higher proportion of compliments on skill than appearance” (21). Hobbs (2003), however, had different results when she examined politeness strategies used in voice mail messages. She notes “male speakers’ use of politeness markers was roughly equal to that of women’s” (243).

Heidari, et al., (2009)’s study focused on compliment response strategies used by Iranian male/female teenage students. In that study, they compare such strategies with regard to four situational setting: appearance, character, ability, and possession. They collected their data using
DCTs and analyzed it through Holmes micro/macro strategies framework. The result of their study indicated a consistent tendency across the macro, micro levels for the female participants to use fewer Accept strategies, and more Evade and Reject strategies, than their male counterparts; that is, the females express appreciation for a compliment less and denigrate themselves more.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
In the present study, the following research questions are addressed:

1- Is there any difference between CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same/opposite gender?
2- Is there any difference between CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same/opposite gender?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**
A total of forty students of English in Allame Tabataba'ee University, Iran, including 17 males and 23 females, were selected as the participants of the study. Students were between 18 and 29 years old and had studied English for an average of 6 years, so all had a high-intermediate proficiency in English. To ensure their homogeneity with regard to English proficiency, all the participants were selected from those enrolled in the third year of English studies.

**Instrument**
A DCT was utilized to elicit data from the participants. The reason for using DCT was that they can provide us with sound data in a relatively short period of time. The DCT was consisted of two situations. In each situation the participants were presented with a compliment on appearance or possession, however, once the compliment was given by a classmate of the opposite sex and in the second situation by a close friend of the same sex. Participants were asked to identify their gender, age, and number of years studying English before giving their answers to the compliments (See appendix).

**Data Analysis**
Different CR patterns used by the participants were analyzed using Holmes' (1988) frame work of CR strategies which is consisted of three macro strategies, Accept, Evade, and Reject, each of which divided into a number of micro strategies as shown in table 1.
### Table 1: Holmes' CR Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro level CRs</th>
<th>Micro level CRs</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accept</strong></td>
<td>Appreciation Token</td>
<td>“Thanks”; “Thank you”; “Cheers”; “Yes”; “Good”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeing Utterance</td>
<td>“I know”; “I am glad you think so”; “I did realize I did that well”; “Yeah, I really like it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Downgrading Qualifying Utterance</td>
<td>“It’s nothing”; “It was no problem”; “I enjoyed doing it”; “I hope it was OK”; “I still only use it to call people”; “It’s not bad.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return Compliment</td>
<td>“You’re not too bad yourself”; “Your child was an angel”; “I’m sure you will be great”; “Yours was good too.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reject</strong></td>
<td>Disagreeing Utterance</td>
<td>“Nah, I don’t think so”; “I thought I did badly”; “Nah, it’s nothing special”; “It’s not”; ‘Don’t say so.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question Accuracy</td>
<td>“Why?”; “It’s right”; “really?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenging Sincerity</td>
<td>“Stop lying”; “Don’t lie”; “Don’t joke about it”; “You must be kidding”; “Don’t, come on.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evade</strong></td>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>“That’s what friends are for”; “You’re polite”; “No worries”; “My pleasure.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>“It wasn’t hard”; “You can get it from (store name)”; “It’s really cheap.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>“Really?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the data revealed some new CR strategies which were categorized under the label of **Insulting** because the compliment receiver answered the compliment with some sort of insult such as “it's none of your business”.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results
In this section the kind of strategies used by the participants in different situation is explained. It should be mentioned that in some occasions, the students used more than one strategy for each situation.

**CR Strategies Used by Females with Females of the Same Age**

When encountered with a compliment giver of the same sex and age, female participants tended to follow an **Accept, Evade, and Reject** trend with regard to macro CR strategies. When focusing on micro CR strategies, **appreciation token** is the first popular one, and **Informative comment** the second one. Other CR strategies are **agreeing utterance, shift credit, request reassurance, and insulting**.
Table 2: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Females with Females of the Same Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation Token</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing Utterance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downgrading Qualifying Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Compliment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeing Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Accuracy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Sincerity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CR Strategies Used by Males with Males of the Same Age

Surprisingly, male participants used only two CR strategies with their male counterparts, Appreciation token and insulting. More surprisingly, Appreciation token consisted about 94% of the responses and Insulting 5%. Other CR strategies were not used in this sample at all.

Table 3: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Males with Males of the Same Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation Token</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downgrading Qualifying Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Compliment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeing Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Accuracy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Sincerity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CR Strategies used by Females with Males of the Same Age

At the macro level, females followed Accept, Evade, and Reject trend when replying to male compliment givers of the same age. At the micro level, Appreciation token encompassed around 61% of the compliment responses and Insulting 17% of them. Other CR strategies include Return compliment, Disagreeing utterance, Shift credit, Request reassurance.

Table 4: Frequency of CR Strategies used by Females with Males of the Same Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation Token</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downgrading Qualifying Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Compliment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeing Utterance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Accuracy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Sincerity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CR Strategies Used by Males with Females of the Same Age

Male participants used the same Accept, Evade, and Reject trend respectively with their female counterparts. Again, Appreciation token has the most popularity, and Agreeing utterance the next
one. Other strategies included Request reassurance and Insulting. Reject strategies were not used at all.

Table 5: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Males with Females of the Same Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accept</th>
<th>Appreciation Token</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>64.7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeing Utterance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Downgrading Qualifying Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return Compliment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>Disagreeing Utterance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question Accuracy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenging Sincerity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evade</td>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other strategies</td>
<td>Insulting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Based on the results obtained, the research questions of the study are discussed one by one:

**What are the CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same gender and similar age?**

In this situation, the two dominant CR strategies at macro level were *Accept* and *Evade* and at micro level, *Appreciation Token* (65.2%) and *Informative Comment* (17.3%). Other strategies were *Agreeing Utterance*, *Shift Credit*, and *Request Reassurance*. This pattern may be the result of intimacy between two females of the same age. Such an intimacy gives the participants the freedom to use more *Informative Comment* in which they find the opportunity to elaborate more on the subject of compliment.

**What are the CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same gender and similar age?**

The results were surprising when male participants responded to male interlocutors of the same age. The majority of CR strategies were *Appreciation Token* (94.1%) which may be the sign of confidence that such participant could feel when encountered with a compliment giver of the same gender and age. However, a new category of CR strategies emerged in this situation which we called *Insulting* (5.8%). This might be the result of misunderstanding from the compliment receiver side who misinterprets the compliment as a negative act rather than a positive one. In other words, the compliment receiver might had interpreted the compliment as a sign of envy, tease, sarcasm, or things alike rather than a true compliment and this had led him to respond with a kind of Insulting.

**What are the CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the opposite gender and similar age?**

When the interlocutor was a male of the same age, female participants tended to use CR macro strategies in *Accept, Evade, and Reject* order. At the micro level, *Appreciation Token* (60.8%) was the dominant CR strategy. Other frequently used strategies were *Insulting* (17.3%), *Disagreeing Utterance* (8.6%), and *Request Reassurance* (8.6%). Almost all the time, the *Insulting* strategy was used when the compliment was on appearance. This trend can have many cultural implications and shows the tendency of female participants to interpret such compliments from male interlocutors as having sexual intentions rather than being genuine. Disagreeing
utterance and Request reassurance strategies can be a sign of confidence lack and modesty among female students.

What are the CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the opposite gender and similar age?

In this situation, macro strategies were followed again in Accept, Evade, and Reject order. The two dominant micro strategies were Appreciation Token (64.7%) and Agreeing Utterance (17.6%). Other CR strategies were Request Reassurance (11.7%) and Insulting (11.7). Using more Accept strategies can be a sign of higher confidence among male students when receiving a compliment from a female student. However, similar to females, male participants tended to use occasionally other strategies which may reveal their uncertainty and misunderstanding.

CONCLUSION

The present study was an attempt to investigate the differences in compliment response between Iranian male and female university students. Another factor which was of interest was the effect of compliment giver’s gender on the compliment receiver’s response.

Results of this study showed that males and females follow different strategies when responding to compliments from interlocutors of the same or opposite sex. Female students, for example, tended to be more modest in responding to compliments than their male counterparts. This modesty was observed either when the compliment giver was a male or a female. On the other hand, when responding to a female friend, female students used another strategy, informative comment, asking for more details of the compliment. In contrast, other strategies used with male classmates were insulting or disagreeing.

Male students, in general, showed more modesty to their female compliment givers than their male friends. At the same time, they used more agreeing strategies when their compliment giver was of the same gender. Part of this difference can be attributed to socio-cultural norms which dominate a society. Such norms in a society like Iran expect females to be more modest and conservative when encountered with a male speaker. However, males often do not have this restriction and tend to express themselves more freely.

Results of this study can be illuminating for both fields of language teaching and cultural studies. They familiarize us with the dominant compliment response strategies which learners of English use in their daily interactions and inform language teachers about students’ strengths and weaknesses. In addition, such results can present valuable insight into the cultural norms which dominate any society. However, the present study was limited both in the size of the participants, and in their variation regarding social factors and age range. Further research can be conducted at a larger scale and with a variety of participants from different educational and social backgrounds, and different age groups. Also, the tool of data collection can be enhanced by incorporating more situations.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX
Discourse completion Task (DCT)
Age:

Sex: (Circle One): M  F

Year studying English:

Please write what you would say in response to the utterances in the following situations. Write your response, exactly as you would say it to the person with whom you are speaking. There is no right or wrong answer so please answer as honestly as possible.

1. A student of the opposite sex compliments your haircut. What would you say to him/her?

2. Your close friend (of the same sex as you) compliments you on your new car. What would you say to him/her?
THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE, TOPIC FAMILIARITY AND IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS’ WRITING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT
Awakening Willingness to communicate (WTC) in learners of second language is deemed the supreme goal of L2 education. WTC refers to the idea that language learners who are willing to communicate in the second language look for chances to communicate, and actually they do communicate. The present study focused on the relationships among WTC, topic familiarity and Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability to answer the following research questions: 1) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity? 2) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability? 3) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability? Seventy five male and female EFL learners participated in the study. The participants took Nelson English Language Test (200C) as the proficiency test and filled out MacIntyre et al. (2001) WTC questionnaire. They were also given a list of topics (Malekzadeh 2011) to choose the familiar and unfamiliar ones for writing tasks. The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation and paired-samples t-test. The results revealed that there was no relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. Also, there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. Findings also indicated that there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. This study claimed a bond between WTC and writing ability with regard to topic familiarity. The findings of the present study suggest that EFL learners outperform in writing when they are more willing to communicate and familiar with the topics.

KEYWORDS: willingness to communicate (WTC), topic familiarity, writing

INTRODUCTION
Since the late 90s, attempts have been made to conceptualize willingness to communicate to explain an individual's degree of readiness to participate in discourse in an L2 (MacIntyre,
Clement, Dornyei & Noels, 1998). MacIntyre et al. (1998) recognizes the difference between L1 and L2 WTC and mentions it's probably being due to the uncertainty inherent in L2 use that interacts in a more complex manner with the variables influencing L1 WTC, i.e. individual differences. WTC was originally introduced with reference to L1 communication, and it was considered to be a fixed personality trait that is stable across situations, but when WTC was extended to L2 communication situations, it was proposed that it is not necessary to limit WTC to a trait-like variable, since the use of an L2 introduces the potential for significant situational differences based on wide variations in competence and inter-group relations (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998).

To improve communicative skills one needs to use language. This is specifically why WTC is potentially of great importance. With an increasing emphasis on authentic communication in L2 learning and instruction, a willingness on the part of students to communicate seems to have multiple advantages such as development of learner autonomy, an increase of exposure and second language communication (McIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Conrad, 2001; Kang, 2005).

Researchers in WTC seem to agree that learners who actively use the language have a greater potential to develop language proficiency; since they have more opportunities to communicate with others. Thus, the more willing to communicate language learners are the more likely they are to attain greater language proficiency (McIntyre, 1994; McIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002). Therefore, employing strategies to reinforce WTC, encouraging students to involve in verbal behaviors, and fostering risk-taking on the part of learners can undoubtedly meet the goals of language learning instruction.

Designs of some useful and interesting topics for students will stimulate students' talks. Familiarity with the discussion topics will promote the smooth progress in communication activities and increase students' WTC abilities. The study of literature (Peyton & Reed, 1990; Song, 1997; Reid, 1997; Holmes & Moulton, 1997; Peyton, 1984) shows students' satisfaction and lower anxiety when they write about topics of their interest.

Students generally find writing a very demanding skill and feel anxious in the writing tasks. One of the reasons is that the writing task requires more elaboration and clarity compared to other skills. Writing teachers commonly do not look for appropriate methods to facilitate students' writing processes; instead correct their grammatical errors which results in anxiety and students' unwillingness to write (Garlikov, 2000).

Writing is claimed to play an important role in one's intellectual development and career preparation (Gere, 1985). According to Dyson (1995), writing is not merely an individual activity but a process which requires social interaction. As writing skills of students develop, they begin to apply their knowledge to the written expression more and more easily and go beyond what they have learnt (Raimes, 1983).

To sum up, learners usually communicate when they are interested. So, teachers should try to improve learners' writing ability by locating their fields of interest.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. Is there any significant relationship between WTC and topic familiarity in Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
2. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ WTC and writing ability?
3. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ topic familiarity and writing ability?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES
H1. There is no significant relationship between WTC and topic familiarity in Iranian intermediate EFL learners.
H2. There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ WTC and writing ability.
H3. There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ topic familiarity and writing ability.

METHODOLOGY
Design of the Study
In this study, an ex post facto correlational design was used to find the relationships among WTC, topic familiarity and Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability. The results showed that there were a significant relationship between learners' WTC and writing performance as well as topic familiarity and writing ability.

Participants
The participants in this study were Iranian intermediate EFL learners in Jihad Daneshgahi, Kharazmi University branch. Nonrandom convenience sampling was used for the present study. The reason is that, the samples of this study were willing, available for the study and they could provide useful information for answering questions and hypotheses (Creswell, 2008). Based on the learners’ scores of the proficiency test (Nelson English Test), the total participants of the present study were 75 male and female intermediate English learners whose age ranged from 15 to 36 years old.

Instrumentation
The instruments used in this study were:

Nelson English Language Test
The first instrument used in this study was a 50-item placement test, with the purpose of finding the proficiency level of the participants. Based on the defined band scores, participants who scored 60 were defined as intermediate learners.
In this study, the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire developed by MacIntyre et al. (2001) was used in order to collect the necessary data. This questionnaire is designed in two parts 27 items which tests communication inside the classroom and outside the classroom context. Since in EFL Contexts learners have little, if any contact with language outside classrooms, the researcher decided to use the first part—WTC inside the classroom. It is a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire consisting of four skill areas of speaking (8 items), reading (6 items), writing (8 items) and listening comprehension (5 items).

A list of topics for writing (Malekzadeh 2011)
All learners were given a paper with a list of strange and unusual topics used by Malekzadeh (2011). Then, they were required to check those topics they had no idea about. The purpose was to choose topics for which the learners did not have any background knowledge. Out of these topics, two familiar (Traveling to a foreign country and You have three more days to live) and two unfamiliar topics (Your plane encounters turbulence and drops and Going to Mars) were chosen.

Procedure
As mentioned earlier, convenient sampling technique was used to select samples of this study from Jihad Daneshgahi, Kharazmi University branch. In order to find the proficiency level of the participants, Nelson English Language Test 200C was used. The maximum time allocated for the test was 45 minutes. The students answered the multiple choice questions of the test by simply ticking the correct option in the test and they were asked to answer all the questions. The participants were also informed that no negative points were granted for their wrong responses.

In the second phase of the study, MacIntyre et al. WTC questionnaire was given to the students to check their willingness to communicate while they choose 1 = Almost never willing, 2 = Sometimes willing, 3 = Willing half of the time, 4 = Usually willing, 5 = Almost always willing for each item. On the same session, the students were also given a list of topics for writing. The students ticked topics that were familiar and put (X) for topics that were unfamiliar to them. The students completed the survey in 20 minutes. After examining the papers, the topics that students chose as familiar and unfamiliar were chosen. At the next phase, one of familiar topics along with an unfamiliar one were given to the students and they were asked to write three paragraphs about each. In the last phase, the students were asked to write about the second familiar and unfamiliar topics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
All the participants were supposed to write four writings in this study, two writings for familiar and two for unfamiliar topics. Familiarity and unfamiliarity with the topics were determined by the participants themselves. Then each of these writings were rated by three raters. In order to indicate the inter-rater reliability among the raters, the Pearson Product correlation moment was calculated. The results are shown in the following tables.
Unfamiliar Writing Task 1

Table 1: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Unfamiliar Writing 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intraclass Correlation</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>F Test with True Value 0</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Measures</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>13.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Measures</td>
<td>.925</td>
<td>.890</td>
<td>.950</td>
<td>13.363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .80$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

Unfamiliar Writing Task 2

The second unfamiliar writing task done by participants was about “Your Plane Encounters Turbulence and Drops”. Fifty seven out of seventy five participants chose this as the most unusual and the strangest topic. After being rated by three raters, Pearson Product correlation moment was run to determine inter-rater reliability among the raters.

The results of the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = .77$, $P < .05$) (Table 2) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners’ writings on the second unfamiliar topic.

Table 2: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Unfamiliar Writing 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intraclass Correlation</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>F Test with True Value 0</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Measures</td>
<td>.537</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>4.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Measures</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>.673</td>
<td>.852</td>
<td>4.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .53$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

Familiar Writing Task 1

Fifty four out of seventy five participants believed they were familiar with the writing task "You Have Three More Days to Live". So, as the first familiar writing task they wrote about this topic. Like the other tasks, this task was rated by three raters and in order to determine the inter-rater reliability, Pearson Product correlation moment was run.

The results of the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = .84$, $P < .05$) (Table 3) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners’ writings on the first familiar topic.

Table 3: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, familiar Writing 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intraclass Correlation</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>F Test with True Value 0</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Measures</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>.533</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>6.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Measures</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td>6.498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .64$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.
Familiar Writing Task 2

The last task of this study due to sixty six out of seventy five participants was about the familiar topic "Travelling to a Foreign Country". The three raters rated the last task too and Pearson Product correlation moment was run to determine the inter-rater reliability. The results of the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = .87$, $P < .05$) (Table 4) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners’ writings on the second familiar topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Familiar Writing 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intraclass Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Measures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .70$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

The First Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity.

A Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was calculated to specify the relationship between EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. The results of the Pearson correlation ($R (73) = .16$, $P > .05$, representing a weak effect size) indicated that there was not any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ WTC and topic familiarity. Thus the first null-hypothesis could not be rejected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Pearson Correlation, WTC with Topic Familiarity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In literature, according to Kang (2005), providing interesting topics for which learners have background knowledge and experience raises their interest and fosters their willingness to communicate. Also, familiarity with the discussion topics will promote the smooth progress in communication activities and increase students' WTC abilities. The study of literature (Peyton & Reed, 1990; Song, 1997; Reid, 1997; Holmes & Moulton, 1997; Peyton, 1984) shows students' satisfaction and lower anxiety when they write about topics of their interest. Similarly, Cao and Philp (2006) found that the degree of students' WTC is determined by factors such as group size, familiarity with the interlocutor, the degree of interlocutor(s)' participation in the discussion, and familiarity with the discussed topic. While Schmidt-Rinehart (1994) indicated that the subjects scored considerably higher on the familiar topic than on the new one the opposite result found here.
The Second Null Hypothesis
There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ WTC and writing ability.

To determine the relationship between EFL learners’ WTC and writing performances, Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was run. The results of the Pearson correlation (R (73) = .24, P < .05, representing an almost moderate effect size) indicated that there was an almost moderate and significant relationship between EFL learners’ WTC and writing ability. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Pearson Correlation, WTC with Writing Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Familiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

There is no other piece of research in the literature investigating the relationship between learners’ WTC and writing ability, but Freiermuth and Jarrell (2006) investigated the effect of online chat on willingness to communicate. They gathered their data from questionnaires and from the analysis of the discourse produced by the students. They concluded that in the context of their study online chatting, in comparison to face-to-face interaction, put students more at ease and hence enhanced their willingness to communicate. Milani (2008) attempted to investigate the role of task type (oral and written), proficiency level, and gender on 190 Iranian adult language learners’ WTC. The results indicated that task type did not itself determine WTC, and there was no significant difference between oral and written task in prompting a higher WTC. Willingness to communicate in the written form increased in higher levels, while the oral WTC, more or less, remained the same.

The Third Null Hypothesis
There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ topic familiarity and writing ability.

A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the EFL learners’ means on topic familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. As displayed in Table 7 the subjects showed a higher mean on topic familiar writing tasks (M = 7.38, SD = 1.39) than unfamiliar topics (M = 6.10, SD = 1.60).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7: Descriptive Statistics, Topic Familiarity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliarity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the paired-samples t-test (t (74) = 8.96, P < .05, r = .72) representing a large effect size indicated that there was a significant difference between the subjects’ means on topic
familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. Thus the third null-hypothesis was rejected. The EFL learners showed a significantly higher mean on familiar topics.

Table 8: Paired-Samples t-test, Topic Familiarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.284</td>
<td>1.241</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the above figure, it can be seen that the participants had significantly different performances on the familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. Comparing the mean scores of the writing tasks makes it clear that the participants performed better on familiar writing tasks compared against the unfamiliar ones. Therefore, the third null hypothesis can be rejected and it can be said that there is a significant relationship between topic familiarity and writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Not much has yet been done on measuring the effect of topic familiarity on writing performance in EFL setting. Most of the researches have been done on oral production, but a few studies have been done on L2 learners’ written performance. Lynch (1996) emphasizes that in many cases it is our unfamiliarity with the appropriate background knowledge that prevents us from understanding something, rather than our inadequate knowledge of the language. Pulido (2007) also found that familiarity of the learners with the topics of the reading tasks leads to their better comprehension of the texts.
Chang (2006) revealed that while reading comprehension monitoring efforts were motivated by both topic familiarity and linguistic difficulty, inferencing events were primarily facilitated by topic familiarity.

In sum, most of the EFL learners, even the graduate ones have some difficulties in English writing. Furthermore, when the L2 learners are exposed with tasks having familiar topics or when they have prior information about the topics of the tasks to be performed, in fact, they automatically focus-on-meaning rather than form (Long, 1990; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994; Markham and Latham, 1987). The findings of the present study suggest that EFL learners outperform in writing when they are more willing to communicate and familiar with the topics.

CONCLUSION
The main trust of this study was to investigate whether writing performance in learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) is related to their willingness to communicate (WTC) and topic familiarity. Three questions motivated the researcher to conduct such a study. The first question was related to the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. In order to answer the first question of the study, Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was conducted to see if there existed any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. The results showed that there was no relationship between the two variables.

The second question focused on the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. A Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was run to answer the second question of the study to examine the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. It revealed that there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability.

Finally, the third question examined the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. A paired-samples t-test was run to investigate if there existed any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. The results indicated that there existed a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability.

The findings of the study can be quite advantageous for language teachers and course book designers. In any classroom context, teachers should consider the fact that not all the learners are equally willing to communicate with others and participate in classroom activities. Keeping the personality differences among the learners in mind, teachers should try to understand all learners, both willing and unwilling to communicate, and be realistic in setting the learning objectives. In order to encourage learners to communicate more in class, the teacher can pick up materials about which learners have background knowledge and experience.
Also, by the current zeal towards task-based language teaching, it seems that teachers' familiarity with learners' individual differences with respect to patterns of WTC in the foreign language can definitely help him design better tasks and assign more logical roles to students.

The results of this study can help language course book designers, too. It is not only the language teacher that must select appropriate tasks for learners, course book designers also have an important role in designing appropriate materials, so that such material can serve the needs of all kinds of learners. It is definitely a wise decision to design some activities about which learners have background information.

Similar to any other research, the outcomes of the current paper are influenced by a number of limitations and delimitations and should make the reader cautious about generalizing the findings to other situations. The researcher could not control the age and education background of the participants. Furthermore, the study was intended to make use of male and female learners to the same degree, but since the participants of this study were selected from one language institute, the researcher had problems in finding as many participants as she wished. The participants were intermediate; so, the findings cannot be generalized to populations at higher proficiency levels. Moreover, the researcher focused on writing proficiency of the participants; therefore, other language skills could not be addressed.

REFERENCES


THE IMPACT OF IDEOLOGY ON TRANSLATION: A CASE IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT
Of the many factors, which are important in the field of translation, ideology has received considerable attention. The effect of ideology on translation practice has been an issue of great concern to researchers in the past years. To this end, two professional translators with different opposing ideologies were selected following purposeful sampling technique to satisfy the objective of the study. In this investigation, each translator was required to work on three news articles on current issues. The analysis of the translated texts revealed that the translators’ ideologies did affect their translation. The study might have implication both theoretically and pedagogically. The results might be useful for curriculum developers in translation studies and practitioners.

KEYWORDS: Ideological impact; Ideological manipulations; Leftist; Rightist; Translators.

INTRODUCTION
A translation can be considered as a piece of social work, which serves others. It means that the value of translation can only be realized and the effect of translation embodied when it is transmitted and accepted by others. Translation is not just a process that goes on in the translator’s head. It can play an important part in the struggle between rival ideologies (Bassnet & Lefevere, 1990).

Many factors may affect translation, but there has been considerable attention to its ideological aspect from the researchers’ point of view. According to Fawcett (1998), “throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effect in translation” (p. 107). Research on this field began in the early history of translation profession. From the researchers’ perspective, ideological approach to translation can be seen even in some of the earliest famous translated texts. Since the 1980s, Western researchers have shown great interest in the relationships among power, ideology and various cultural products and some (Calzada Perez, 2003; Schaffner, 2003) even claim that “all language use is ideological”, “any translation is ideological” (as cited in Ping, 2004).

The deficiency of old linguistics-based approaches – which ‘are mainly descriptive studies focusing on textual forms’ (Calzada-Pérez, 2003) – in accounting for social values in translation and other aspects of language use resulted in developing a new trend of research called critical discourse analysis (CDA) ‘whose primary aim is to expose the ideological forces that underlie communicative exchanges [like translating]’ (Calzada-Pérez, 2003, p.2). According to CDA
advocates, all language use, including translation, is ideological and this means that translation is always a site for ideological encounters. Similarly, Schäffner (2003) claims that all translations are ideological since ‘the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put are determined by the interests, aims, and objectives of social agents’ (p. 23, as cited in Karoubi, 2005). Schäffner (2003) explains, “ideological aspects can be more or less obvious in texts, depending on the topic of a text, its genre and communicative purposes, and ideological aspects can also be examined in the process of text production (translating) and the role of the translator as a target text producer as well as a source text interpreter” (as cited in Karoubi, 2005).

Karoubi (2005) has also explained that translators can use translation as a tool for conveying an idea that like or dislike. This process that may happen unconsciously, in most cases, is unavoidable. Translators interpret texts by setting them against their backdrop of known words and phrases, present statements, familiar conventions, previous texts, or, in other words, their general knowledge, which is ideological. This knowledge is what has been called the basis of their interpretation of the text.

Vision is another representation of ideological impacts. Information can be presented from an ideological perspective: a system of norms is values pertaining to social relations. This explains why two newspapers reporting on the same event can produce different reports (Renkema, 2004, p.127).

**Definition of Ideology**

The term ideology has been always related to politics and economy as it is evident in its dictionary definition as “ideas that form the basis of an economic and political theory or that is held by a particular group or person” (*Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary*).

Ideology has been defined in different ways; but most of its definitions are directly related to personal and political beliefs. Ideologies are opinions, assumptions, attitudes, and values that indicate the unequal status of individuals and groups in society. They are not always conscious. Ideologies could be unconsciously internalized through one’s social practices and historical experiences. Ideologies do not always have a preventive and misleading function. While ideologies cause inequalities seem natural and acceptable, they can also illuminate them to facilitate social change.

Scholars in the field of language-related, cultural and translation studies, however, often tend to extend the concept of ideology beyond political sphere and define it in a rather politically neutralized sense as “a set of ideas, which organize our lives and help us understand the relation to our environment” (Calzada-Pérez, 2003, p. 5, as cited in Karoubi, 2005). The ideology of a translation, according to Tymoczko (2003), will be a combination of the content of the source text and the various speech acts represented in the source text relevant to the source context, layered together with the representation of the content, its relevance to the receptor audience, and the various speech acts of the translation itself addressing the target context, as well as resonance and discrepancies between these two ‘utterances’. 
Responsibility of Translators

Responsibility can appear in any profession, and the translation profession is no exception. Translators should be aware of the ethical issues that can come up so that they know how to avoid them as well. Researchers of this field believe that the translators are autonomous individuals who are responsible for the result of their translational act consequences. They focus on translator, giving him/her more freedom. While they consider translators as mediators and manipulators, they expect them to be responsible for their behavior. There are myriad and varied responsibilities for a translation professional; some of which are visibility, accuracy, attention to details and punctuality, etc. However, one of the basic responsibilities, is communicating the meaning of a text, or making sure that the text has been communicated properly. One the one hand, the translator must strive to approximate the translation product to the original text in terms of message, meaning and communicative and informative intents. On the other, the translator must approximate the translation product to the norms, conventions and standards of the target language. In the presence of uncertainty, these constraints become stronger and more salient forcing the translator to adopt translation strategies that often fail to produce optimal approximations (Darwish 2009). Nowadays, greater importance is given to the ideology: The effect of translator’s point of view on the process and product of translation. These days the concept of translators’ ideology is much discussed. As it was mentioned earlier, this impact is unavoidable, but some translators try to reduce it as much as possible. They prefer not to be engaged in social and political challenges of their country. In spite of being unavoidable, the impact of this factor needs to be controlled. Although it is against the translators’ ethics, sometimes a translator’s ideology may change the whole meaning of the original text, which is completely against the ethics of translation profession. It will be apparent from this review that one aspect of translation is rooted in ideology. While much excellent work has been done over the past decades on the different aspects of translation, we are still a long way from its ideal form.

Studies on Translation and Ideology

According to Darwish (2010), translation is an occupation that is easily subjected to ideological manipulations and it plays a selective role in the transfer of science, literature and art into receptor languages and cultures. He believes that it also, more seriously fulfils a reconstituting function in managing knowledge transfer and social and cultural change. Although it is almost unavoidable to keep your perspectives apart from your behavior, in this case translation, other scholars in the field of translation believe that the best and the most reasonable translation is the one, which is away from your attitude. They claim that simple translation is the easiest form of translation profession. Lander (2001) believes that a translator should not allow ideology to color anything s/he translates. He claims that if ideology influences translation, the profession suffers. Nevertheless, Epstein (2008) has commented that this point of view refers to the ideal translation. In this ideal world, ideology would not color our translation. Epstein believes that in reality, in most cases, it is impossible to avoid this impact (Epstein, 2008). In a study related to ideology and translation, Karoubi (2005) has demonstrated that translators’ knowledge that is their ideology influences their behaviors. Translators can use translation as a tool for conveying an idea that they like or dislike. Translators interpret texts by setting them against their backdrop of known words and phrases, present statements, familiar conventions, previous texts, or, in other words,
their general knowledge, which is ideological. This knowledge is what has been called the basis of their interpretation of the text.

Translation activities in Iran appear to have largely been ideologically influenced. In fact, it is not specific to Iran but is evident throughout world translation history. Fawcett (2001) provides an eloquent illustration of how “throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions have applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effects in translation”. Depending on whether they find themselves in agreement with the dominant ideology of their time or not, translators choose translations with the same ideology to support it or a different one to reform it (as cited in Ping, 2004). This point may be found in translation of a text by two opposite ideologies. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether there is a difference between the acts of translators with different ideologies, and if there is any, how different ideologies influence the product of translations of a text. There seems to be a contrast between the professional behaviors of two translators with different ideologies; one is leftist, the other one is rightist.

RESEARCH QUESTION
This paper is a tentative probe into the effect of ideology on the translation product. It seeks for appropriate answer(s) for the following question: Is there any difference between the translation products of translators with different ideologies?

METODOLOGY
The present study followed a descriptive design to examine the profile of two translated texts and to provide a gist of prominent ideological differences between them.

Participants
The sample comprised two translation professionals. One of them worked in a translation office and the other one a self-employed in Tehran, Iran. They were both male and had completed their bachelor’s degrees in English translation in Iran. One of them aged 30, and ideologically was rightist; he was also an English teacher in a high school. The other one aged 35 with an opposite perspective, a leftist. Sampling technique was purposive and non-random to meet the requirement of the study.

Materials
In order to carry out the topic of news articles we had in mind, we needed access to a number of different English news cites or newspapers. We chose one of the most recent and challenging topics of news. It was about Syria’s civil war especially about using chemical weapons. This was a challenging topic because there were two different views related to this subject matter. One of the articles was chosen from CTV National News; It contains 474 words and was published by Associated Press (AP) on June 13, 2013. There were two more articles from Washington Post. The first one, Syrian civil war threatens cease-fire with Israel, by Colum Lynch, contained about 2100 words and was published on Thursday, March 21, 2013. The second article chosen from Washington Post contained 757 words and was written by Abigail Hauslohner, published on
The use of the news articles as the instrument for gathering the data in present study has several advantages:

- It was supposed to be quite challenging to indicate different ideologies.
- It was rich and sensitive to individuals’ political perspectives, which formed the main part of their ideologies.
- It might allow comparison with other studies.

**Procedures**

Each translator was given a copy of the so-called articles to translate into Farsi in the second week of May 2013. None of them was informed about the purpose of this study; that is to say, none of them had received any information about the research and its process. They received both articles at the same time. Translating the texts lasted for approximately one week. They were allowed to use dictionaries to translate the articles.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the first news article, which contained 2100 words, 8 main words, the second news that contained 474 words, 6 keywords, and in the third one with 757 words, and 5 major words, were translated considerably different. It might be claimed that these differences are rooted in the translators’ ideology. Some targeted key sentences, phrases, and words were translated completely different. However, the focus of attention of this study is on key words. Table 1 below displays some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original word/phrase</th>
<th>Leftist’s translation</th>
<th>Rightist’s translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebels</td>
<td>مخالفين</td>
<td>شورشيان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>اسرائيل</td>
<td>صهيونیستی رژیمی</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist organization like</td>
<td>سازمان تروریستی حزب الله</td>
<td>سازمان حزب الله</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hezbollah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli invaders</td>
<td>مهاجمین اسرائیلی</td>
<td>متخاذبین اسرائیلی</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>جزی محیط</td>
<td>شورشيان</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 also shows the differences in the so-called articles:
CONCLUSION

After analyzing the translation products of these two translators, it was found that there were considerable differences among them. It may be argued that translation is an independent profession, but indeed, it is a profession that strongly depends on ideology. The foregoing discussion has sought to highlights how ideology has impact on translation products. Translation is and will remain one of the most important and worthy occupations; however, it is an occupation that is easily subject to ideological manipulations.

Ideological impact on translation is a noticeable factor that is unavoidable but it is more close to the ideal world if we can reduce this impact. When the translators’ ideology influences the translation’s product strongly, the whole profession may suffer. Sometimes the main idea of the original text may be manipulated and changed by this impact; therefore, it is better to reduce it as much as it is possible.

However, some researchers in this field believe that this manipulation cannot affect the source text strongly. The translator can in some few strongly communicative translation situations, i.e. less formal, encouraging self-expression, “rewrite” the source text in the light of his/her personal ideology/axiology. This can be viewed as a manipulation – happily this is called axiology nowadays – but this is not however the manipulation preached by the School of Manipulation (see Snell-Hornby, 1998) since this does not affect the explicit semantic content and function of the source text (as cited in Petrescu, 2009).

The present paper, as other researches in language studies, has some limitations. The subjects were few, then the generalizability of results is low. Also, a limited genre was studied, and selection of other genres might bring up different results.
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A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF DISCOURSE MARKERS BETWEEN IRANIAN AND AMERICAN PHYSICS LECTURES

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed to compare the American English and Farsi physics lectures to identify the frequency of use and various types of discourse markers used by means of a corpus linguistics analysis. Moreover, it intended to compare them in terms of their occurrences to see to what extent the physics lectures spoken by Iranian lecturers resemble to or differ from the ones spoken by American lecturers. To this end, a corpus of ten spoken physics lectures was selected. Half of these lectures (five American physics lectures) were extracted from Stanford University website, and the other half (five Farsi physics lectures) were downloaded from Iranian Sharif University of Technology website. For analysis, the DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed. The variables for the analysis were frequency rate and occurrences of each pre-established markers in the corpora. The frequency and percentage of each DM was calculated, and then Chi-squares were applied to show whether the differences in the different corpora were significant. The results revealed significant differences between the frequencies of different DMs in the two corpora. It was observed that American physics lecturers used DMs more than the Iranian ones. An overall view on individual categories illustrated that micro-markers had the highest rate in contrast with macro-markers and operators across both corpora.

KEYWORDS: Corpus, Physics lectures, Farsi, American English, Discourse marker

INTRODUCTION
A discourse marker is a word or phrase that is relatively syntax-independent, does not change the meaning of the sentence, and has a somewhat empty meaning, e.g. the particles oh, well, now, then, you know, and I mean, and the connectives so, because, and, but, and or perform important functions in spoken and written discourse (Schiffrin, 1986). The difference between spoken and written discourse can affect the use and function of discourse markers (henceforth DMs). Speakers have access to a richer context in spoken discourse; in other words, “they have prosody and phonology as well as nonverbal communication or interaction with external physical objects” (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 112). A lecture, as a spoken discourse, intends to present information or to teach people about a particular subject. Teachers are involved with different instructional
materials, such as seminars, tutorials, videos, and writing assignments, among others; but lecture remains the central instructional activity (Flowerdew, 1994) which plays an important role in academic settings. Benson (1994) defines lecture as “the central ritual of the culture of learning” (p.425). There is a wide literature on the study of lecture genre in order to be able to differ from various lecturing styles, linguistic features affecting lecture delivery, etc. However, we also have to take into consideration the assumption about lecture culture and how these may differ significantly (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 82).

All over the world, lecturing is considered as an effective practice in higher education, focusing especially on spoken academic discourse (Dunkel & Davy, 1989). Understanding and comprehending lecture content seems to be necessary for students’ university success; furthermore, students should be able to not only read English publications, but also participate and deliver papers at conferences, even do research and give lecture in academic contexts. Many researchers have suggested that an understanding of the role of DMs and the relationships between different parts of the text is fundamental for the comprehension of lectures (Coulthard & Montgomery, 1981; Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Morrison, 1974).

In Iran, lecturers are not trained in how to give lecture nor are there specific trainings in regard to the use and functions of DMs which are fundamental for lecture comprehension. This study is an effort to analyze the content of lectures, specifically physics lectures, as an academic genre within a corpus linguistic approach. The aim is analyzing some linguistic features (DMs) that are useful in the understanding and retention of physics lectures. The objective is to describe the use and functions of DMs and the similarities and differences that may exist between American physics lectures and Iranian ones.

**Significance in language learning**

The results of the study have implications for the lecturers of physics science to be aware of different conventions governing this discipline. Discourse markers are used in dissimilar ways in different languages and disciplines; this makes it important for teachers and ESP course designers to recognize this for instruction. The results of the study can also make lecturers of the physics disciplines aware of the conventions of their discipline and help them to be careful in using different DMs to deliver their speeches in a more natural way. Still another contribution of this study is that it contributes to the improvement of the ability to understand the language of spoken academic discourse.

**Statement of the Problem**

In Iran, lecturers are not trained in how to give lecture nor are there specific trainings in regard to the use and functions of DMs which are fundamental for lecture comprehension. The study presented here is an effort to analyze the content of lectures, specifically physics lectures as an academic genre within a corpus linguistic approach. The choice of physics was not made arbitrarily. Physics has been traditionally viewed as a difficult subject to study, particularly at the university level. Language problem in physics lectures maybe acute due to the complexity and abstractness inherent in science such as physics. To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have been conducted to scrutinize DMs within monologic lectures in discourse of physics science.
in general, and to compare DMs between Farsi and American English physics lectures in particular. The main purpose of this study is to analyze spoken academic discourse, and more concretely the genre of physics lecture as it is presented to undergraduate university students by means of a contrastive analysis between Farsi and American physics lectures.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Researchers have recently become interested in academic genres (seminar, conference presentations, etc.), especially the genre of lecture. DMs are essential for the understanding of written texts, and they play a significant role in creating a meaningful and coherent message in the communication process of oral discourse. The studies presented here have used spoken corpora as the method of study and they have focused on the use of a single or various DMs. In addition, these researchers provided a wide and broad classification of DMs. For instance, Del Saz (2003, 2005) focused on the notion of reformulation and the lexical units that explicitly convey reformulation. She called them Discourse Markers of Reformulation (DMs of RF). She claimed that what has been called reformulator can be considered a DM. She analyzed naturally occurring instances of language collected in the British National Corpus (BNC) and considered reformulators as DMs because, according to Fraser (1999), they have connectivity and non-truth conditionality which are features of a DM.

The DMs of RF is based on Fraser’s canonical form for a DMSEQUENCE, namely, S1-DM+S2. In her investigation, Del Saz (2003) attempted to fit DMs of RF into Fraser’ (1999) classification. Swales and Maleczewski (2001) worked on spoken academic discourse and emphasized on what they called “a cluster of features that constellate around discourse management across a wide range of university speech events” (2001, p. 146). They described speech events as ‘activity types’ (Levinson, 1979) in which language is used to get things done. They pointed out a difference between academic speech that is monologic (often lectures, conference presentations, etc) and dialogic talk (telephone workshops, interviews, etc). They examined MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English) (Simpson, Briggs, Ovens, & Swales, 2002) and studied the use of footing changes they called New Episode Flags (NEFs). They focused on the linguistic resources (or NEFs) which participants used in different university events to move from lecture format to discussion (or the reverse) or change the direction of the lecture or discussion. They analyzed linguistic resources such as group vocatives (folks, gang, friends, guys), directive or vocative verbs (say, listen, look) and exhortative or jussive imperative let, all these not with a large number of occurrences. They also analyzed more frequent NEFs in the MICASE such as okay, so and now (DMs). Another study dealing with academic discourse is one by Rendle-Short (2003), who analyses the use of the DM so in seminar talk within the computer science discipline. Based on Schiffrin (1987), she explains how so can function in two distinct ways.

Semantically, so ties adjoining clauses together conveying causal relations. First, it can mark the overall structure by indicating its relationship to a whole stretch of discourse and another part of discourse. Secondly so marks structure locally, by referring to the immediately preceding clauses, in this case so is marking lower-
levels of structure. Moreover, so can also function pragmatically; in this case so marks the potential speaker discourse transitions functioning as such as a topic-shifter. Rendle-Short (2003) takes these three functions of so and analyses them in a corpus composed of six first video-taped and then transcribed computer science seminar talks. She found that the DM so is commonly used seminar talk with different functions depending on its position in the talk. She particularly attracted by the way in which DMs are used together with intonation, pitch, volume, gesture and tools considering all these resources for the speaker. Also, she has shown that monologic talk is not continuous but divided into smaller parts or sections which follow a finely organized and well-structured discourse pattern. The question is whether this finely organized discourse pattern can be universally applied or, on the contrary, spoken discourse patterns mainly depend on the genre under analysis as well as on the speaker's performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study aims to answer the following questions:
Which types of DMs do American lecturers use in the monologic lectures of Physics?
Which types of DMs do Farsi lecturers use in the monologic lectures of Physics?
Is there any significant difference in the use of DMs between American and Iranian monologic lectures of Physics?

METHODOLOGY
Corpora
In this contrastive study, a corpus of 10 spoken physics lectures was compiled. Five American lectures were collected from the Stanford University website (www.stanford.edu) and five Iranian lectures from the Sharif University of Technology website (www.maktabkhooneh.org). All the lectures were delivered by native speakers of respective languages and they also had the same topics. Only monologic lectures were selected where one speaker monopolizes the floor, sometimes followed by question and answer periods. The titles of the lectures used in this study were in the domain of quantum mechanics, Einstein’s theory of relativity, thermodynamic, cosmology and electronic. The duration of the lectures in both corpora was so close to each other; the long ones were approximately one hour and fourthly six minutes and the shorter ones were roughly one hour and twenty five minutes.

Instruments
The DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed for analyzing the corpora (See Figure 1). This taxonomy was used to determine and compare both corpora in terms of the occurrences and frequency rate of each DM.
Belles-Fortuno's (2006) taxonomy is based on the Hallidayan’s (1994) functional meanings, namely, ideational, interpersonal and textual, and the relations they can convey along the discourse utterances. His model consists of three categories: micro-markers, macro-markers, and operators. “Micro-markers express logico-semantic relations in the discourse. According to this model, these markers have lexical or descriptive meaning (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 95). Therefore, categories such as causal, contrastive, consecutive or additional DMs would be placed under this part. “Macro-markers convey an overall structure of the ongoing discourse and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances. They enhance retention and recall in post-lecture tests” (14, p. 43). They play an essential role in activating content schemata and helping listeners to successfully follow the lecture. Operators are those DMs which rhetorically signal the speakers’ intentions and affect the illocutionary force. These markers are more specifically related to conversational, spoken discourse rather than written discourse. Belles-Fortuno (2006) narrowed the scope of his study by choosing a maximum of three DMs for each category. In the current study, Belles-Fortuno’s classification was used for contrasting the DMs application in both North-American and Farsi physics lectures.

**Procedure**
After downloading and transcribing the selected lectures, we commenced the main phase of the study which is the process of analyzing the lectures’ discourse markers. The variables used for the analysis of DMs were the number of occurrences and the frequency rate of each pre-established marker in the two sub-corpora. For analyzing the corpora of this study, the DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed. After analyzing the North-American physics lectures, the Farsi ones were analyzed. Hence, a contrastive study between North-American English and Farsi physics lectures was carried out and the results for this study were provided. Prior to conducting the analyses, we analyzed the one Farsi and one English physics lecture as the pilot study to help minimize the likelihood of endangering the
reliability of the analyses and the findings. After we were through with the analyses, Phi correlation was applied to calculate the inter-rater reliability of the analyses. As can be observed from the obtained correlation coefficient between the two ratings (inter-rater reliability, $= 0.86$), there was a high reliability of the researchers’ judgment in analyzing the lectures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A general overview of the analysis of DMs in both the NAC and IC gives the following results: DMs seem to be more often used in the NAC than in the IC as the resulting rates show. According to the occurrences rate, a total of 2852 DMs for the five American physics lectures were found in the NAC, whereas in the IC the rate was lower, 1496 DMs for the five Iranian physics lectures. Without distinguishing and comparing both corpora, the total rate for each individual category of DMs, that is, micro-marker, macro-markers, and operators, is as follows: micro-markers were the most frequently used type of DMs, followed by operators and macro-markers.

As shown in table 1, the overall results of analyzing micro-markers indicated that the North-American physics lectures used micro-markers as 61 percent of DMs in their speeches and the Iranian physics lectures used them as 61.5 percent. Thus, in the NAC micro-markers were used similarly to the IC. Also the results of analyzing micro–markers in the NAC represented that the two categories with the highest frequency rates were additional (40%) and consecutive (31%), while the categories with lower frequency rates were contrastive (11.5%), causal (9%) and temporal (8.5%). In the IC, the most frequent category was additional (54%); the other three categories showed close frequency rates and comprised temporal which were used more, (12.5%) then consecutive (12%), followed by contrastive, (11.5%). As the results displayed, consecutive was the second category in the NAC, whereas in the IC, this category represented a minor difference with temporal, and came in the third place. Categories showing the lowest frequency rates were temporal and causal in the NAC; however, in the IC, contrastive and causal had the least frequency rates. It should be noted that, at the end of each table in this section DMs are compared with each other through Chi-square. In all the comparisons, the probability ($\alpha$) level is set at 0.05 (see table 1). According to the above table, Chi-square (0.0) indicates significant differences in the frequency rates of micro-markers between the NAC and IC. It means that the American and Iranian physics lecturers used micro-markers in differently their speeches.

On the other hand, the findings reveal that the total percentage of macro-markers in the IC was slightly higher than the total percentage in the NAC. The most frequent category in both corpora
was *topic-shifter*. The next categories in order of frequency rate were *organizer* and *rephraser* in both corpora. The least frequently used categories were *conclusion* and *starter* in the NAC and the IC. Table 2 shows the frequencies of macro-markers in both sub-corpora. As you can see, the significance value of Chi-square (0.821), illustrates no significant differences between the two corpora. In other words, there was not any remarkable difference in the use of macro-markers between the two corpora.

Table 2: Macro-markers Frequencies in the NAC and the IC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-markers</th>
<th>in the NAC</th>
<th>in the IC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starter</td>
<td>46 (9%)</td>
<td>27 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rephraser</td>
<td>75 (14.5%)</td>
<td>46 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>118 (23%)</td>
<td>65 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic-shifter</td>
<td>269 (52%)</td>
<td>161 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>7 (1.5%)</td>
<td>7 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>515 (18%)</td>
<td>306 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.821)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concerning *operators*, they revealed a slightly higher frequency rate in the NAC in contrast with the IC. In the analysis of *operators* in the NAC, the three most recurrent categories were *pause-filler*, *acceptance* and *confirmation-check* although this order was different in the IC, and it was as: *pause-filler*, *confirmation-check* and *acceptance*. On the other hand, the categories showing the lowest frequency rates were similar in both corpora, which were *attitudinal* and *elicitation*. The least frequent category was *elicitation* in both corpora as illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: Operators Frequencies in the NAC and the IC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-markers</th>
<th>in the NAC</th>
<th>in the IC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal</td>
<td>31 (6%)</td>
<td>26 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pause-filler</td>
<td>257 (42%)</td>
<td>115 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation</td>
<td>5 (1%)</td>
<td>4 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>210 (34.5%)</td>
<td>68 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformation-check</td>
<td>99 (16.5%)</td>
<td>88 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>602 (21%)</td>
<td>290 (19.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 3 depicts, the significance value of Chi-square (0.0), which is way below 0.05, demonstrates significant differences between the two corpora. In means there were significant differences in the ways North-American physics lecturers and Iranian physics lecturers use operators. At the end of this section it is worth mentioning the Chi-square of the overall results of both the NAC and the IC in table below:

Table 4: Chi-square of overall comparison of the NAC and the IC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-markers</th>
<th>in the NAC</th>
<th>in the IC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Overall Results of DMs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 shows the Chi-square of the overall results in both corpora. As one can observe, the Chi-square value is (0.0) which means that there were significant differences in the use of DMs between the North-American physics lectures and the Iranian physics lectures.

Discussion
The findings in the result section compared the use of discourse markers in terms of their frequencies and occurrences in the two corpora. However, the quantitative analysis is needed to be complemented and supported by qualitative analyses. Attempts are made to handle this in what follows to discuss the findings in detail. Thus, the research questions are brought up again here, and the main findings are expounded on thoroughly based on the results obtained.

Is there any significant difference in the use of discourse markers between American and Iranian monologic lectures of physics?
The total number of DMs was different across the two corpora. The North-American physics lecturers and the Iranian physics lecturers employed DMs with different frequencies since the nature and history of each language is distinctive in many aspects. One might interpret this in light of North-American lecturers’ tendency to segment and use DMs more often than Iranian lecturers. A closer look at the three types of DMs (micro-markers, macro-markers and operators) revealed that, in general, micro-markers are the type of DMs most widely used in both corpora over the other two types. This may be due to the type of the genre under study, monologic physics lectures. The fact that micro-markers are more often used than macro-markers and operators could be due to the peculiarities of the genre, that is, academic lectures specifically physics science. Taking into account that micro-markers express logico-semantic relations in the discourse, it could be said that in the North-American and Iranian physics lecture discourses, there is a need to convey lexical and descriptive meaning along the discourse of lectures as opposed to macro-markers, which convey an overall structure of the ongoing discourse and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances although both micro and macro-markers affect and reinforce part-of-discourse/part-of discourse relations (Belles-Fortuno, 2006). It is worth pointing out that those instances of micro-markers tend to be more fixed and less variable linguistic units, different from macro-markers, which tend to be longer chunks of language, more unsteady and sensitive to changes and prone to form language expressions, which may vary from one language to another, not having clear corresponding counterparts (Swales, 2004). According to the present findings, operators are second in use in the North-American corpus and third in use in the Iranian corpus.

This is not surprising taking into consideration the specificities of a corpus like ours. We have analyzed a spoken academic corpus and not a written one; the characteristics of an oral corpus differ from those of a written corpus. In spoken discourse, speaker-speech or, even more so, speaker-hearer relations are important in the discourse community which has to share a common communicative purpose and use similar rhetorical devices in the communication process (Swales 1990). Operators are those DMs which rhetorically signal the speakers’ intentions and affect the illocutionary force. Probably, the study of a written corpus would have given operators a minor and less significant position; however, the results obtained from our spoken academic discourse corpus give operators a quite important position. This fact could be linked to the trend towards a
more ‘open’ lecture style (Swales, 2002) which tends to be more participatory as has been already been mentioned in this dissertation. Relations speaker-speech or speaker-hearer gain importance resulting in a relevant use of operators in both the NAC and the IC.

On the other hand, macro-markers were one of the least frequently used DMs. Although expressing relations part-of discourse/part-of discourse (as micro-markers do), these markers are characterized by conveying global discourse structural meanings and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances affecting discourse relations at a more segmental level of analysis. The fact that macro-markers are one of the least frequently used markers makes us think of macro-markers as having less relevance in the spoken academic discourse of North-American and Iranian physics lectures. As said above, it may happen that the specificities and peculiarities of spoken academic discourse do not aid and promote the use of macro-markers which would possibly be more relevant in the study of written discourse. The relation part-of discourse/part-of discourse seems to be primarily expressed by means of micro-markers rather than macro-markers in our NAC and IC. Previous studies regarding DMs in lecture discourse have pointed out the importance of macro-markers, which are said to be “more conductive to successfully recall of the lecture than micro-markers” (Chaudron & Richards, 1986, p. 122). This idea is also supported by DeCarrico and Nattinger (1988) who postulated that macro-markers are beneficial for activating content schemata and more recently followed by Jung (2003). Although these authors have highlighted the importance of macro-markers rather than that of micro-markers, the findings from this study have proven that micro-markers have a prominent place in lectures; at least micro-markers have proven to be more often used and preferred by the North-American and Iranian lecturers in the field of physics sciences.

Which types of discourse markers do American lecturers use in the monologic lectures of physics?

Results showed that American lecturers use micro-markers more than the two other DMs categories. In the NAC, the three most frequently occurring micro-markers were in order: additional, consecutive and contrastive. As already said in the previous chapter, the Americans used additional and consecutive more than the other micro-markers in their physics lectures. As a discipline, physics is concerned with describing the world by constructing models, the end product of this modeling process often being a mathematical representation, which in physics is colloquially referred to as an equation. Because of their importance in the representation of physics knowledge, physics equations affect discourse of physics lectures. Equations are connected to each other with the use of additional and consecutive DMs. The final results of micro-markers in this study also revealed that physics lecturers used additional and consecutive markers more than the other DMs.

If one observes the sub-categories in micro-markers, the most relevant markers in the NAC are and, so and then. The additional micro-marker and has proven to be the most frequently used marker in the NAC, functioning in the majority of its uses as additional marker. As a DM, and can also work as an operator conveying relations speaker-speech where it is used as a hesitator or pause-filler rather than having a strict semantic meaning. Other micro-markers with high
Within the *consecutive* category, there is a micro-marker that outnumbers the rest, *so*. It has largely been studied as being one of the most ambiguous DMs as well as one of the most commonly used ones together with *and*. From the NAC analysis, we have observed that *so* can have more than one function among discourse utterances and can convey different meanings. We have considered here *so* as a semantic DM that affects ideational internal relations functioning as a micro-marker within the *consecutive* category and marking fact-based, knowledge-based or action-based consecutive relations, mostly exchangeable by *therefore*. These instances of *so* generally occur at the end of a section of speech. At this point, we understand a section of speech as characterized with louder more prominent speech at the beginning of the section and quieter, faster speech at the end of it. The beginning of each section introduces a new topic or idea, thus resembling the paragraph-initial indentation of the written paragraph (Brown & Yule, 1983; Chafe, 1979; Hinds, 1979).

A closer look at individual categories reveals that in the NAC the *topic-shifter* category owes its high frequency to the macro-marker *so*; however, as noted previously in this chapter, *so* is one of those polysemous markers that can have different meanings (we have already seen *so* as a consecutive marker in the micro-marker classification). *So* as a macro-marker affects the overall discourse structural relations, in this case it normally occurs at the beginning of a section of talk, generally after a long pause, and its function is to introduce a new topic, in contrast to *so* as a micro-marker with a consecutive meaning. This function of *so* as a *topic-shifter* is similar to the notion of *so* as a ‘flag’ mentioned by Swales and Malczewski (2001), or the ‘global’ function of *so* that indicates relationships to a whole stretch of discourse pointed out by Schiffrin (1987).

Within *organizer*, there was a macro-marker with a high frequency rate which has been used in the NAC, worth mentioning here. This was *let’s*, the contracted form or *let us* in the full form with the first person plural object pronoun. These macro-marker appeared in the NAC followed by verbs such as *go back, run through, focus, look*, etc.

On the other hand, less important in the NAC were the categories of *starter* and *conclusion* with very few occurrences. The lack of *starter* and *conclusion* macro-markers could be linked to the fact that a lecture time session is not necessarily and strictly related to a lecture lesson time; that is to say, one content lesson or syllabus unit may need more than one session (lecture) to be fully and completely explained. Therefore, there are no clear beginning or concluding linguistic signals within a single lecture, but a need to use *organizers* or *topic-shifters* to create an ongoing discourse structure.

In addition, operators were the second frequent category which the American lecturers used in their speeches. Furthermore, the three most frequent categories were: *pause-filler, acceptance* and *confirmation-check*. Taking into account the two kinds of relations conveyed by operators (relations speaker-speech and/or speaker-hearer), we observe that the most relevant category for the NAC *pause-filler* conveys relations speaker-speech, whereas the two other relevant
categories, *acceptance* and *confirmation-check*, convey relations speaker/hearer. Presumably and according to authors such as Benson (1994) and Mason (1994) among others, the North-American lectures tend to move toward a more participatory and interactive lecturing style. If this is so, a larger number of confirmation-checks would have been expected in the NAC, but the results show the opposite and there is a large number of *pause-fillers*. The question here is that why the North-American lecturers use fewer confirmation-checks than pause-filler. One possible interpretation is that North-American University students are more used to participating in classes, thus providing feedback to the lecturers in ways that do not occur in Iranian lectures. As said previously, the second most relevant category in the NAC was *acceptance*. In this sense, a more interactional type of lecture can also be given by the use of *acceptance* operators.

If we take a general view of the results obtained in the use of operators in the NAC, the most recurrent operator is *Okay* as it can have different functions as an operator, either as a *pause-filler*, an *acceptance* operator, or a *confirmation-check*. The operator *Okay* is quite broad since it can function in many different ways as a response to questions when prompting or agreeing with the main speaker, what other authors have called *back-channel* instances of *Okay* (Swales and Malczewski, 2001) and what Belles-Fortuno (2006) have categorized as *acceptance* *Okay* can also be used as a kind of question tag, that is, *Okay?*, in which case it is a *confirmation-check* (both cases marking speaker-hearer relations). However, and contrary to what could be expected from a direct question, most instances of *Okay* as a *confirmation-check* in the NAC are not intended to elicit a direct verbal response (Belles-Fortuno, 2006). The third function of *Okay* is as a *pause-filler* operator to maintain the floor in which case it is hard to interpret, barely holding a semantic meaning.

The two least frequently used categories in the NAC were *elicitation* and *attitudinal*. In the case of *elicitation*, we are not surprised, since the corpus under study is composed of monologic lectures where one speaker monopolizes the floor with scarce or little interventions. A wide use of *elicitation* operators was not expected in any of the two sub-corpora although one could be less monologic than the other that is the American one. As for the *attitudinal* category, we have to point out the case of the operator *I think / we think*. *I think* has proven to be the most recurrent *attitudinal* operator in the North-American lectures in the discourse of physics sciences.

*Which types of discourse markers do Farsi lecturers use in the monologic lectures of physics?*

Concerning the Farsi lecturers’ use of DMs in the monologic lectures of physics science, it should be mentioned that Farsi lecturers use DMs slightly different from the American ones. The frequency and occurrences of DMs in the IC were less than the NAC. Furthermore, the DMs categories were used in the IC with the following order: micro-markers, macro-markers, and operators. An overall view in the IC showed that micro-markers have the highest rate in contrast with macro-markers and operators, the same as the NAC. This represented that lecturers in both corpora tended to express logico-semantic relations in their lectures. As a result, it could be said that in the discourse of physics lectures, there was a need to convey lexical and descriptive meaning by using micro-markers. Within micro-markers, there were three categories with the highest frequency rates that are: *additional*, *temporal*, and *consecutive*. Comparing the use of micro-markers in the IC and NAC, the highest category in ranking *additional* is similar to the
NAC due to markers *and* and its counterpart in the IC *va*. The use of *va* (*and*) within the *additional* category is the most relevant for the final number of micro-markers used in the IC. As an additive marker, *and* normally occurs after or before a short or long pause in order to add something new to the ongoing topic joining two clauses together.

The other main difference between the NAC and the IC is found in the *temporal* category. This category is very relevant in the Iranian lecture corpus, whereas it is one of the least frequently used categories in the NAC. We could say that temporal internal relations in the Iranian lectures seem to be rather important; the lecturer is prone to place students and discourse in time much more than the North-American lecturers who make a more extensive use of additional and contrastive micro-markers. By way of contrast, *consecutive* was one of the important categories in both corpora. In the IC ranked third. One can say that the use of *consecutive* markers in the physics lectures can be due to the nature of this physics science. As I said elsewhere in this chapter, the existence of mathematical equations as an unrepeated part of physics intensifies the use of *consecutive* markers in both corpora. *Consecutive* markers can link mathematical equations to each other as observed in the physics lectures in both the NAC and IC.

The second type of markers was macro-markers which had the next place in frequency after micro-markers in the IC. It is worth mentioning that macro-markers express relations *part-of discourse/part-of discourse* (as micro-markers do). These markers are characterized by conveying global discourse structural meanings and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances affecting discourse relations at a more segmental level of analysis. Thus, macro-markers are used more in the IC than the NAC; it means that the American lecturers convey discourse structural meaning more by the use of micro-markers, but in the IC, macro-markers are also important for conveying this discourse structural meaning. The relation *part-of-discourse/part-of-discourse* seems to be primarily expressed by means of micro-markers rather than macro-markers in the NAC. Previous studies regarding DMs in lecture discourse have pointed out the importance of macro-markers, which are said to be “more conductive to successfully recall of the lecture than micro-markers” (Chaudron & Richards 1986, p. 122). This idea is also supported by DeCarrico and Nattinger (1988), who postulated that macro-markers are beneficial for activating content schemata and more recently followed by Jung (2003).

Macro-markers which were employed more in the IC were *topic-shifter, organizer* and *rephraser*, the same as the NAC. According to the findings, the Iranian lectures in the discourse of the physics Science tend to generally change the topic the same as the North-American lectures. Both *conclusion* and *starter* accounted for the lowest percentage in the ranking due to DMs like *baraie paian dadan be* (*to end up*) and *baraie shoro* (*to begin*). It is obvious that the lecturers in both the NAC and IC just use these markers at the beginning of their speeches or at the end of their speeches; sometimes they even do not make use of this kind of markers in their speeches and finish them directly. Comparing the IC with NAC, one can understand the North-American lecturers use this kind of markers slightly more than the Iranian ones, and it can be due to the nature of Farsi language and the culture of Iranian people.
The last category in the IC was operators. As the results described, the three most frequent categories in the IC were: pause-filler, confirmation-check, and acceptance. Taking into account the two kinds of relations conveyed by operators (relations speaker-speech and/or speaker-hearer), we observe that the most relevant category for the IC (pause-filler) conveys relations speaker-speech. However, the second frequent used operators were confirmation-check which conveyed speaker-hearer relations. Comparing these results with the NAC in which the second place belongs to acceptance, we can say that there were differences in the use of operators in both corpora. Confirmation-checks were more numerous in the IC than the NAC. This could be due to the fact that the Iranian lecturers need to continuously check that the audience has understood what they are explaining, either because the lecturer has the feeling the students are not having an effective lecture learning, because the topic under discussion is of a difficult nature, or due to the age of the audience (junior or senior), a junior student might feel shy to interrupt the lecturer. Therefore, he or she does not participate as much as a senior tertiary student, which would explain why confirmation-checks were used more in the IC than NAC.

CONCLUSION
The purpose of this study was to explore and compare the frequencies and occurrences of discourse markers between North-American and Iranian physics lectures to find out whether or not there were any significant differences in their use. In addition, it aimed to juxtapose American and Iranian lecturers of physics science in terms of the similarities and differences between the ways they use these discourse markers. The results of the study indicated that there were differences in the use of discourse markers. In other words, American lecturers’ use of discourse markers differs from Iranian lecturers’ in terms of their frequencies. Regarding different frequencies, results revealed that that discourse markers were utilized more frequently by the American lectures than the Iranian ones in the field of physics science. To put it simply, there were differences among the two corpora in terms of their most and least frequent DMs. Another conclusion to draw is that DMs are the same in both corpora respecting their occurrences. By this, it can be said that the American and Iranian lectures use similar discourse markers in their physics speeches.

Limitations of the study
There were definitely some limitations to this study. Firstly, we faced some problems during data collection. The data were selected from prestigious universities websites, and we had to find physics lectures which had the same topics in both the American and Iranian ones. These factors made the process of data collection more time-consuming than we expected and limited our corpus to only five lectures in each corpus. Furthermore, the full transcripts of the lectures were not generally available on the websites, and hence we had to transcribe all the lectures by ourselves; this was a painstaking undertaking.

REFERENCES


RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF GENESEE AND UPSHUR’S SELF EVALUATION RATING SCALE

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ABSTRACT
Tests are the most widely used assessment tools in the classroom and outside of the classroom. They are used for placement, admission to a program, achievement, research and other purposes. In some circumstances, due to practical and/or other concerns, instead of tests, self-assessment scales are used. In both cases, however, it is important to consider the appropriateness, i.e., the reliability and validity of the measure. Reliability measures the consistency of the test; validity is the extent to which the test measures what it claims to measure. This study reports and discusses the results of administering a self-reporting test, namely, Genesee and Upshur’s self-evaluation rating scale (GUSRS). Over 1000 Iranian students took the test. The results, analyzed through confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach’s alpha, revealed that, the GUSRS is a valid and reliable instrument. The instrument may be useful especially as a complimentary measure along with other test forms. Before using this rating scale, however, the examinees should be given training on how to interpret the test items.

KEYWORDS: Reliability, Validity, Self-evaluation, Rating scale

INTRODUCTION
Interest in self-assessment methodologies in foreign/second language education has emerged in 1980s. Work has been undertaken in many parts of the world and several reports on the theoretical and practical implications of using self-assessment techniques have come out (Oscarsson, 1997).

Attention to self-assessment developed out of interest in the area of autonomous learning or learner independence. Conversely, it has been viewed as one of the more challenging areas of self-directed learning. It is admitted that learners might not be experienced enough to make judgments of this sort (Blue, 1994).

Many teachers express doubt about the value and accuracy of student self-evaluation. The doubts may relate to the point that students may have fictitious perceptions of their accomplishments and that they may be motivated by self-interest. Frequently heard is the claim that the “good students” under-estimate their achievement while students who do not know what successful performance requires, over-estimate their attainments. These concerns suggest, from a measurement perspective, that self-assessment introduces construct-irrelevant variance that threatens the validity of assessment (Ross, 2006).
Despite these criticisms, there are a number of reasons why self-assessment should be encouraged in language classes. Oscarsson (1998) gives six different reasons why self-assessment can be beneficial to language learning. First, he stresses that self-assessment promotes learning. It gives learners training in evaluation, which results in benefits to the learning process. Secondly, it gives both students and teachers an awareness of perceived levels of abilities. Training in self-assessment, even in its simplest form, like asking “What have I been learning?” encourages learners to look at course content in a more discerning way. Thirdly, it is highly motivating in terms of goal-orientation. Fourth, through the use of self-assessment methodologies, the range of assessment techniques is expanded in the classroom. Because of using self-assessment, the learner broadens’ his/her range of experience within the realm of assessment. Fifth, by practicing self-assessment, the students participate in their own evaluation (Dickinson, 1987). They, in effect, share the assessment burden with the teacher. Finally, by successfully involving students in their own assessment, beneficial post-course effects will happen.

In spite of the criticisms leveled against self-assessment in terms of validity and reliability, educators have successfully used writing conferences, reflection logs, weekly self-evaluations, self-assessment checklists, teacher-student interviews and inventories. A popular technique in the area of self-assessment has been the use of rating scales, checklists and questionnaires. These three techniques have been used as a means where learners could rate their perceived general language proficiency or ability level. A lot of developmental work has been done in this area using “ability statements” such as “I can read and understand newspaper articles intended for native speakers of the language” (Coombe, 1992; Oscarsson, 1984).

Learner diaries and dialog journals have been proposed as one way of systematizing self-assessment for students (Oscarsson, 1984; Dickinson, 1987). Learners should be encouraged to write about what they learned over the course and what they plan to do with their acquired skills.

To summarize, there are a number of benefits to using self-assessment in the classroom. It allows students to weigh up their knowledge of the language at various points within a course and/or semester. It also assists students in the development of critical faculties. Self-assessment also enables students to look at language in more concrete terms. Using the techniques mentioned here, self-assessment motivates students to look at their strengths and weaknesses and become more autonomous learners that is a fundamental part of the learning process.

The purpose of the study
Self-assessment can take many forms, including writing conferences, reflection logs, weekly self-evaluations, self-assessment checklists and inventories, teacher-student interviews, etc. These types of self-assessment have one thing in common: they ask students to look at their work to find out what they have learned and what have not learned. Although each method differs slightly, all should include enough time for students to consider reflectively and evaluate their progress. When students understand the criteria for good work before they begin an activity, they are more likely to meet those criteria. The key to this understanding is to make the criteria clear. Students' reflections can provide effective feedback for improving your instructional plan. As

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your students answer questions about their learning and the strategies they use, think about their responses to find out what they are really learning and to see if they are learning what you are teaching them.

Whereas formal or standardized tests have already established construct, predictive, and concurrent validity and reliability indices, the question of the validity and reliability of learners' self-estimates still remains controversial. Many language constructs, such as proficiency and communicative competence, are hard to define and must be clearly operationalized to ensure the validation of assessment among learners. The criterion by which learners are to assess themselves may be unclear and thus add an added risk to validity.

Language learners in EFL contexts may find self-assessment very difficult if no comparisons to a native speaker are available to them. Since reliability, like validity, depends on systematic analysis, the questions is whether self-assessments are consistent. They most likely are not. Learners need to be encouraged to assess their performance on a regular basis. The present study, then, attempts to examine one self-assessment checklist. It further intends to determine the psychometric characteristic of a frequently used self-assessment instrument, namely, Genesee and Upshur’s self-evaluation rating scale (GUSRS).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
The study addresses the following questions.
1. Are the constructs of GUSRS psychologically real in an EFL setting?
2. Is GUSRS reliable in an EFL context?

**METHODOLOGY**
This section describes the means and methods utilized to answer the research questions put forward in this study. It describes the participants, the instruments, the data collection procedure, the scoring method and the analyses performed.

**Participants**
Over twelve hundred undergraduate English and non-English major students were asked to take the rating scale. Nevertheless, some students did not return the forms. Some others did not provide the information requested. Hence, these forms were discarded. All in all, the researcher could obtain 1016 forms.

**Instrumentation**
To achieve the purpose of this study Genesee and Upshur’s (1996) self-evaluation rating scale was used. According to the instructions of the questionnaire, the students should rate themselves with terms such as *never, rarely, half of the time, often, always*. Since these terms are categorical, they may result in subjective judgment thereby decrease the reliability of the outcomes. To avoid this pitfall, the rating was modified. The subjects were required to choose 0-20, 21-40, 41-60, 61-80, 81-100 depending on how competent they saw themselves in each skill. The items are illustrated under Table 1 below. To make sure that the subjects clearly understand the items, they
were translated into students’ native language, Persian. To avoid drawbacks of probable mistakes in the translation of the scale, it was back-translated.

**Data Analysis**

The two issues often cited in reference to more serious research studies are the reliability and construct validity of inventories or surveys when administered to specific samples. Assessing reliability is a relatively straightforward statistical technique. Cronbach’s Alpha is the statistical procedure that is usually used. The higher the value of alpha, the more accurate the survey or inventory is estimated to be. One frequent way of establishing indicators of construct validity is to use confirmatory factor analysis of all the items and scales on a survey to see if the conceptualization of the theory/model is confirmed. Should the index meet the cut-off point set by the psychometrics then some piece of evidence has been produced upon which a case for construct validity can be established. To establish the reliability and the construct validity of the rating scale, the techniques mentioned above were used.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The first research question was:

*Are the constructs of GUSRS psychologically real in an EFL setting?*

It must be stated that this question does not lead to a null hypothesis for the question essentially deals with a latent construct not (in) dependent variables. Hence, construct validity is usually examined through factor analysis which purports to ‘discover simple patterns in the pattern of relationships among the variables’ (Darlington, 2004). The construct validity of the GUSRS was examined through the use of confirmatory factor analysis. To do so, a structural equation model was developed. The structural model is displayed in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>s1 s2 s3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>s4 s5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>s6 s7 s8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>s9 s10 s11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The model was developed in accordance with the original authors’ conceptualization of language proficiency. They believe that proficiency can be manifested in the following manner.

Items 1, 2, and 3 constitute speaking ability. They are written out below.

- I can describe where I live and people I know.
- I can describe my life experiences and events.
- I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects.
Items 4 and 5 comprise writing ability. They are inscribed here:

- I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality, and address on a hotel registration form.
- I can write short essays.

Listening comprehension is mirrored in items 6, 7, and 8. The items are noted down below:

- I can understand native speakers when they talk about daily affairs.
- I can understand academic lectures.
- I can understand movies without too much effort.

Items 9, 10, and 11 speak for reading comprehension. They read as follows:

- I can read and understand the information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, menus, and timetables.
- I can read articles and reports on social or political issues.
- I can read articles and reports related to my field of study.

The parameter estimation for the model used maximum likelihood. Goodness of fit information is displayed in the following table.

**Table 2: Goodness-of-Fit Information for the GUSRS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees of Freedom</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Fit Function Chi-Square</td>
<td>187.98 P = 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP)</td>
<td>147.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Fit Function Value</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Discrepancy Function Value (F0)</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)</td>
<td>0.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI)</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECVI for saturated Model</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECVI for Independence Model</td>
<td>10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square for Independence Model with 55 Degrees of Freedom</td>
<td>10231.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence AIC</td>
<td>10253.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model AIC</td>
<td>239.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated AIC</td>
<td>132.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence CAIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model CAIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturated CAIC</td>
<td>522.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standardized RMR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normed Fit Index (NFI)</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Fit Index (CFI)</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incremental Fit Index (IFI)</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Fit Index (RFI)</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical N (CN)</td>
<td>344.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of the model in question was found to be 0.06, which typically indicates close fit. Hence, the researcher could retain the self-evaluation model used in this study.

The RMSEA measures the amount of discrepancy between model and data in the population, taking model complexity (i.e., number of estimated parameters) into account. The following are rules of thumb for the interpretation of the RMSEA:

*Practical experience has made us feel that a value of RMSEA of about .05 or less would indicate a close fit of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom. This figure is based on subjective judgment. It cannot be regarded as infallible or correct, but it is more reasonable than the requirement of exact fit with the RMSEA = 0.0. We are also of the opinion that a value of about 0.08 or less for the RMSEA would indicate a reasonable error of approximation and would not want to employ a model with a RMSEA greater than 0.1 (Browne and Cudeck (1993).*

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) here was calculated to be 0.99. According to one rule of thumb, the CFI value should be above .90 for a model to be acceptable. The Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) was 0.98 indicating that the model fits the present sample. T-values obtained between measured variables (items) and latent variables (constructs) in all cases were statistically meaningful signifying coherent relation between the indicators and the constructs they represented. Moreover, these T-values showed that all indicator variables were effectively measuring the same construct, i.e., the model enjoyed convergent validity (Anderson, and Gerbing, 1988).

Further, T-values observed between factors, namely *speaking, writing, listening and reading* and the latent construct of proficiency represented as SELF (short for Self-assessment) turned out to be significant implying that these factors could legitimately be viewed as good measures of language proficiency.

Assuming that construct validity evidence would subsume other types of validity, namely, content, criterion, face and consequential, it would be safe to claim that the GUSQ is a valid instrument to be used for the assessment of proficiency in Iran. However, the utility of a self-rating instrument must not be exaggerated because, as readers may agree with the writer, there is a possibility of measurement inaccuracy with such instruments. Some teachers and researchers rightly question the methodology of self-assessment on the ground that some students may overestimate themselves, especially if the consequence of the test is dire for them or they may underestimate themselves due to their personality. Another factor that may cause overestimation/underestimation of one’s ability is the fact that the students may misinterpret the items of the rating scale. This is particularly true of perfectionist student. A perfectionist student may have trouble with concepts such as ‘clear’, ‘detailed’ and ‘complex subjects’ as stated in the following statement taken from the GUSRS.
The above-mentioned statement is but one example. Other statements are also open to personal interpretation.

The reliability of the GUSRS is addressed in the next section. The second research question was: *Is GUSRS reliable in an EFL context?*

As stated before, reliability questions do not render themselves to null hypotheses for they do not deal with the so-called (in) dependent variables. Again, the researcher has to resort to the acceptability norms in the field of Social Science research.

Before attempting to answer this question, it must be added that the rating scale had four scales, namely speaking, writing, listening and reading. Hence, the reliability of all subscales and that of the whole questionnaire is reported here. The reliability index for the whole questionnaire turned out to be. 0.92.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Reliability Statistics of GUSRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analyses were run to examine the internal consistency of items in each scale (Table 4). All four scales, namely speaking, writing, listening and reading yielded acceptable reliability estimates ranging from 0.68 to 0.89.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Reliability Statistics of the GUSRS Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The item-total correlations were examined for the items in all scales. Correlations for all items were within acceptable ranges (0.46 to 0.71).

Based on the results displayed in the tables above, one can easily see that the rating scale of interest in the present study is highly reliable. That is to say, Iranian researchers can use this rating scale with certainty. Needless to add, however, in using any instrument, the findings based merely on measurement model will not be 100 percent useful. Practitioners and researchers are advised to take contextual factors into consideration. For example, before using the GUSRS rating scale, the users should see if the rating scale items reflect the way language teaching/assessment is echoed in the curriculum and whether a self-assessment instrument is appreciated by the stakeholders in education, namely, officials, principals, teachers, parents and students.
CONCLUSION

Having answered the research questions, the researcher found that the GUSRS is an appropriate questionnaire on account of construct validity, reliability and practicality. If the present sample represents the population of Iranian University students, instructors and or researchers can use this rating scale for proficiency assessment. Nevertheless, assuming that statistical analysis is not the final arbiter for it investigates the input given to it not more, the researcher, based on the review of the literature, suggests that some new descriptors be added to the GUSRS if one wishes to develop a more comprehensive measure of self-assessment.

The present study did not deal with the following issues which, if investigated, might be of great use for the clarification of other factors in self-assessment studies.

1. Age factor was not controlled. This would shed light on the issue of underestimation or overestimation of one’s abilities through an inside in measures.
2. The socio-economic status of the subjects was not taken into account. The main charge here is that the socio-economic and the cultural context of students’ lives may influence their approach to self-assessment. Learners are not all alike; they live in particular socio-economic settings where age, gender, race and class all interact to influence their attitudes to tests.
3. Data gathering was limited to the implementation of a questionnaire on one sample of subjects. However, Gay and Airasian suggest that determining construct validity involves gathering numerous test results from the instrument on similar populations (Airasian, 2000). This would also provide more information on the reliability of the measure. Moreover, the literature of Social and Psychological Research contends that research in this field should be approached through different elicitation instruments – the so-called triangulation approach. It remains to be seen whether students' self-ratings correlate with outside criteria (criterion-referenced testing). The study could have been carried out, using parallel tests of proficiency, say, TOEFL, in a tighter design such as ‘within group’ and or ‘between groups’ design. This would bring concurrent evidence of both content and construct validity of the instrument used.

Limitations of the study

The study has some limitations. First, the instrument used for this study is a self-report measure. Second, the instrument items are subject to personal interpretation. Such instruments are prone to overestimation and or underestimation thereby the results obtained might be conflated with error. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with care. Third, personal variables such as age, gender, educational background and socio-economic status of the participants were not controlled. As a consequence the generalizability of the findings may be somewhat limited.

REFERENCES


THE IMPACT OF USING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT ON WRITING PERFORMANCE OF IRANIAN MEDICAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
Recently much attention has been paid to assessment in language pedagogy literature. Portfolio Assessment as an assessment technique was not an exception as well. One of the benefits of using portfolios for assessment is that they tend to promote a richer and more sophisticated understanding of writing (Birjandi, et.al. 2008). Unfortunately, to date little research has been done on the use of portfolios as an assessment technique at the university level in Iran and the effects it might have on writing skill. Hence the researchers tried to find the impact of using portfolio assessment on the improvement of Iranian medical students’ English writing performance. The study used a sample population of 64 male and female students in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences in Bandarabbas, Iran. They were selected out of 182 students based on the results of an essay writing test. The participants were randomly divided into two groups of 32, the control and experimental groups all of whom attended a session of “getting started with portfolios” held by the researchers in which the portfolio model of Moya & O’Malley (1994) was explained. All of the participants attended the same English course held in 15 sessions. The experimental group members were treated with the portfolio method (i.e. given the portfolio properties, they were asked to prepare and present their writing tasks as a structured portfolio) while at the end of the class both groups were given an essay posttest. The results of this study showed a rather significant advantage in the scores of experimental group providing confirmation of the positive effect that the portfolio compilation by the students had on their writing performance. This would provide further proof that the mostly avoided portfolio approach is in fact beneficial in the learning process of writing as a productive skill and is worthy of considering by teachers and curriculum planners.

KEYWORDS: Portfolio, Portfolio Assessment, Performance Assessment

INTRODUCTION
Assessment is a powerful pedagogical tool for promoting effective learning. By googling the net using the key words "learning portfolio" and "portfolio assessment" the popularity of these concepts are seen in academic circles (Apple, 2004; Fenwick, 2000; Jennings, 2008; Shimo,
If done in the right ways, assessment can provide a basis for planning the next instructional steps in response to students’ needs. It gives feedback to be drawn on into teaching strategies and practices at all levels. Tutors should use assessment as part of teaching and learning to raise their students’ achievement.

Teachers and researchers are greatly interested in implementing a portfolio assessment in their classrooms (Paulson, et.al. 1992). These interests stem from the different aims that teachers and researchers would like to achieve. They suggested three reasons for using portfolios in writing instruction: as teaching tools, for professional development, and for assessment purposes.

The traditional role that assessment plays for the purposes of grading and reporting should be revisited to promote learning. In this regard, an effective way of assessing students through assessment is by means of authentic assessment to review their portfolios. Portfolios are open-ended and versatile. The content of the portfolios depend on determined educational goals and purposes and can include a variety of students’ tasks.

Portfolio development is introduced in many studies as a viable replacement for standardized testing. The feasibility of altering or supplementing standardized testing with portfolio assessment for the purpose of determining student achievement and competencies is currently being explored everywhere.

Proponents of portfolio-based assessment are of the idea that portfolios are better predictors of students’ performance in any authentic situation and they can also improve students' higher-order thinking skills (Tillema, 1998). Research concerning portfolio use at the college and university level, however, is limited at this time. Portfolios are becoming more popular in a variety of postsecondary programs like English composition and writing as well (Clayton, 1998). To date, little research has been done on the use of portfolios as an EFL program at the university level in Iran.

The Portfolio Assessment Process
According to Damiani (2004), the use of the portfolio as an assessment tool is a process with multiple steps. The process takes time, and all of the component parts must be in place before the assessment can be utilized effectively. She goes on to mention these steps as follows.

Decide on a purpose or theme
General assessment alone is not a sufficient goal for a portfolio. It must be decided specifically what is to be assessed. Portfolios are most useful for addressing the student’s ability to apply what has been learned. Therefore, a useful question to consider is, what skills or techniques do I want the students to learn to apply? The answer to this question can often be found in the school curriculum.

Consider what samples
Consider what samples of student work might best illustrate the application of the standard or educational goal in question. Written work samples, of course, come to mind. However,
videotapes, pictures of products or activities, and testimonials are only a few of the many
different ways to document achievement.

**Determine how samples will be selected**
A range of procedures can be utilized here. Students, maybe in conjunction with parents and
teachers, might select work to be included, or a specific type of sample might be required by the
teacher, the school, or the school system.

**Assess the process and the product or the product only?**
Assessing the process would require some documentation regarding how the learner developed
the product. For example, did the student use the process for planning a short story or utilizing
the experimental method that was taught in class? Was it used correctly? Evaluation of the
process will require a procedure for accurately documenting the process used. The documentation
could include a log or video of the steps or an interview with the student. Usually, if both the
process and the product are to be evaluated, a separate scoring system will have to be developed
for each.

**Develop an appropriate scoring system**
Usually this is best done through the use of a rubric, a point scale with descriptors that explain
how the work will be evaluated. Points are allotted with the highest quality work getting the most
points. If the descriptors are clear and specific, they become goals for which the student can aim.
There should be a separate scale for each standard being evaluated. For example, if one standard
being assessed is the use of grammatically correct sentence structure, five points might be allotted
if all sentences are grammatically correct. Then, a specific number of errors would be identified
for all other points with zero points given if there are more than a certain number of errors. It is
important that the standards for evaluation be carefully explained. If we evaluate for clarity of
writing, then an operational description of what is meant by clarity should be provided. Points
available should be small enough to be practical and meaningful; an allotment of 20 points for
clarity is not workable because an evaluator cannot really distinguish between a 17- and an 18-
point product with regard to clarity.

**Share the scoring system with the students**
Qualitative descriptors of how the student will be evaluated, known in advance, can guide
learning and performance.

**Engage the learner in a discussion of the product**
Through the process of discussion the teacher and the learner can explore the material in more
depth, exchange feelings and attitudes with regard to the product and the learning process, and
reap the greatest advantage of effective portfolio implementation.

**Significance and Objectives of the Study**
The concepts of traditional testing or the more recent assessment approaches – including
portfolio creating or portfolio assessment – are not new in many developed language pedagogical
approaches around the world. For some teachers though, the portfolio approach is unknown. As
Rea (2001) asserts, they find a gap between what they believe could be a helpful pedagogical approach and what their students are actually doing.

Our instructors and students in Iran are less familiar with the concept of Portfolio Assessment, thus are not ready to use it in current EFL programs in the universities. Those who are familiar with it would choose not to use it for several reasons one of which might be the time-consuming nature of portfolios. The researchers find it necessary to make it more clear for them and also show its possible merits for teachers and students.

**BACKGROUND**

Portfolio development is increasingly cited as a viable alternative to standardized testing (Shepard, 1989; Valencia, 1990a). The feasibility of replacing or supplementing standardized testing with portfolio assessment for purposes of determining student achievement and competencies is being explored everywhere.

Recently, portfolios have been proposed and adopted as student assessment management tools in addition to or simultaneously with standardized achievement tests (Baron, 1992b; Brewer, 1990). More recently, there has been a growing interest mainly in mainstream educators in performance assessment and specially portfolio assessment thanks to concerns that multiple-choice tests fail to assess higher order skills and other skills essential for functioning in school or work settings (O'Neil, 1992; Rothman, 1991). Multiple-choice tests are not authentic because they do not represent the activities that students typically engage in. In addition, multiple-choice tests do not reflect current theories of learning and cognition and are not based on abilities students actually need for future success (Hancock, 1994).

Whereas standardized tests serve a purpose in education, they are neither infallible nor sufficient. Many educators acknowledge that any "single score, whether it is a course grade or a percentile score from a norm referenced test, almost always fails to accurately report student overall progress" (Flood & Lapp, 1989, p. 509). A single measure is incapable of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, processes, and strategies that combine to determine student progress. Another concern is that standardized tests cannot be used to closely screen student’s progress in the school curriculum throughout the year since they are only administered once or twice per semester, thus portfolio development is increasingly drawn on as a viable alternative to standardized testing.

**RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS**

Based on the presented subject of portfolio assessment and its effects on the students’ proficiencies during EFL programs the researchers propose the following question to be addressed in the study:

1. Does portfolio assessment have any impact on the writing proficiency of university EFL learners?
To address this question the researchers try to logically and statistically reject the following null hypothesis:

1. Portfolio Assessment does not affect the writing performance of intermediate EFL learners.

If the researchers can reject this null hypothesis then an alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

**METHODOLOGY**

For the purpose of this study, an experimental design was used with an experimental group and a control group to investigate the effectiveness of portfolio compilation on the experimental group’s writing performance in comparison with that of the control group participants. In this section, the sampling method, instruments and the procedure used in the study are elaborated on.

**Participants**

Based on the portfolio model presented early in the study, the current study was conducted on a group of 64 intermediate students in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences in Bandarabbas, Iran, studying in a Medical Doctorate program. They were selected out of 182 students based on the results of an essay test.

**Instruments**

The materials used in this study are an essay writing as pretest and another essay writing as posttest with equal word counts and scoring procedures and similar topics related to the field of medicine (i.e. patient history, prescriptions, etc.). The submitted writings were marked by two raters as well as both researchers with the same scoring criteria applied in all to minimize the subjectivity. The Pearson’s inter-rater reliability index was calculated at (r=0.81).

**Procedure**

After selecting the 64 participants, the researchers gave them a choice on their preferred testing method. This test included two writing topics related to the science of medicine and for each topic the students were asked to write an essay of at least 100 words. Then they attended several sessions of Getting Started with Portfolios in which the researchers elaborated on the portfolio model of the study. Having mastered the knowledge necessary for preparing a portfolio and the grading based on this approach instead of the traditional methods of testing, the researchers asked them to voluntarily select between these two approaches (keeping in mind that if the students have an option to choose between the portfolio approach and the traditional method the final results would be more reliable).

These 64 students were randomly divided into two groups of 32, one as the experiment group and the other as the control group. All of the participants attended the same writing class receiving the same input. The experiment group members were treated with the portfolio method of assessment (i.e. given the portfolio properties, they were asked to prepare and present their writing tasks as a structured portfolio) while both groups were assessed with an essay test parallel to that of the pretest.
The results of pretest and posttest which were rated by two skilled writing raters plus the researchers according to the same scoring criteria are presented and discussed in the next chapter. It should be noted that the age and gender of the participants were not controlled in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of Both Groups

The results of the pretests and posttest were rated by three skilled writing raters. Using SPSS v.20, the following analyses were made on subjects’ scores. First you can see in table 1 the descriptive statistics of the control group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Group Pretest Average</th>
<th>Control Group Posttest Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N Valid</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>14.9921</td>
<td>15.5546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>15.1700</td>
<td>15.1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>14.17$^a$</td>
<td>15.02$^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>1.5731</td>
<td>1.2679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>2.408</td>
<td>1.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-.315</td>
<td>-.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Skewness</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>8.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>479.25</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it’s been illustrated in table 1, the average score achieved by control group in the posttest (15.5546) has by a small amount exceeded the average of control group pretest (14.9921). This increase is scientifically insignificant and can even be ignored.

But let’s take a look at the descriptive statistics of the experimental group of the study in table 2.
Table 2: Descriptive statistics of experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental Group Pretest Average</th>
<th>Experimental Group Posttest Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N Valid</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>14.9453</td>
<td>17.0078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>15.9800</td>
<td>18.3100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>14.93a</td>
<td>18.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>1.9720</td>
<td>1.2134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>3.756</td>
<td>1.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-.387</td>
<td>-.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Skewness</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>9.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>10.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>488.75</td>
<td>573.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 2 illustrates the same descriptive statistics regarding the experimental group’s pretest and posttest. We can observe a rather noticeable increase between the average of pretest (15.2734) and the average of posttest (17.9296). This increase is statistically interpreted in later tables.

**Discussion**

A researcher can reject the null hypothesis in social sciences when the significance is below 0.05 and then the alternative hypothesis will be accepted. As is shown in this study, the paired samples statistics of experimental group indicate that the t-test with 44 degrees of freedom was significant which means that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

This also means that the difference observed among Experimental group averages of pretest and posttest is a significant reliable difference. The average mean observed for the experimental
group’s posttest far exceeds the same observation for the control group which suggests that the method used for the experimental group is more effective than that of control group.

CONCLUSION
This study set out to determine the effects of portfolio compilation as an assessment approach on the writing performance of Iranian language learners. The writing skill, generally, is the weakest of the four skills among Iranian learners of English and for the participants, the medical students, this skill is of utmost importance. Hence, attempting to improve their writing performance, the authors implemented the portfolio approach and tested it against a simple essay approach. Finally, based on these results the researchers can claim that the portfolio assessment method used in this study has positive effects on writing competence of Iranian EFL learners.

There were however some limitations such as considering only the writing skill and not the combination of all skills. The authors also liked to investigate other Iranian students in different university programs which was simply not feasible for a single piece of study.

REFERENCES


REPLACEMENT OPERATION IN SELF-INITIATED REPAIR PRACTICES IN ORAL REPRODUCTION OF SHORT STORIES

Azizeh Chalak, Amirhossein Talebi, Seyed Naser Khodaeian, & Ali Asghar Pourakbari

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ABSTRACT
This paper investigated replacement operation, one of the self-initiated repair operations, practiced by Iranian students of English as a foreign language (EFL) in reproduction of short stories. In addition, the present study examined learners’ priorities in employing repair methods. Two repair methods were analyzed, explicit repair and tacit repair. To this end, two groups of thirty EFL students in two oral reproduction courses at Sheikh-Bahaei university (Iran) were required to reproduce two short stories as their final exam. This study purposefully used two groups of learners in two different academic years, sophomores and juniors, to inspect whether the academic level of studies has an impact on the frequency of use of repair practices. To collect data, two short stories were selected from Oral Reproduction of Stories by Abbas Ali Rezai, and participants were voice recorded. After transcribing the data and applying the Chi-square test (Yates correction factor), the results revealed that both sophomore and junior Iranian EFL learners produced explicit repair practices more frequently. Furthermore, students in the sophomore group practiced more instances of replacement repair operation. The findings of the present research may have implications for syllabus designers and teachers as well as students.

KEYWORDS: self-initiated repair, repair operation, repair method, explicit repair, tacit repair

INTRODUCTION
As it is evident, students in educational EFL settings frequently encounter conversational challenges when they are to interact with other interlocutors such as other students or teachers i.e. they mostly experience moments of conversational breakdowns for various reasons. In fact, they struggle to transmit a comprehensible message to their interlocutors, and they sometimes fail to do so. Therefore, Leonard (1983) suggests that competent communicators learn to regulate and modify messages within a conversation. Speech modification may entail planning to select appropriate words, reducing the complexity of utterances, or elaborating on a statement for clarification. When individuals do not properly regulate or modify messages, a communication breakdown may occur. Interactants, thus, try to make repairs to their utterances in order to maintain communication.

Hence, Language repair, first defined by Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) as the set of practices whereby a co-interactant interrupts the ongoing course of action to attend to possible trouble in speaking, hearing or understanding the talk, is used as an important communication
strategy to maintain the conversation and avoid breakdowns. ‘Trouble’ includes such things as ‘misarticulation, malapropisms, use of a ‘wrong’ word, unavailability of a word when needed, failure to hear or to be heard, trouble on the part of the recipient in understanding, incorrect understandings by recipients’ (Schegloff, 1987a : 210), among others. Repair is used to ensure ‘that the interaction does not freeze in its place when trouble arises, that inter-subjectivity is maintained or restored, and that the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion’ (Schegloff, 2007b : xiv).

A key distinction has been provided by conversation analysts between initiating repair and actually making the repair by giving the repair solution. In fact, this is an important distinction because repair can be initiated by one party and completed by another. Most often, repair is initiated by the speaker of the trouble-source or repairable (these terms are used interchangeably in the literature), and this is referred to as self-initiated repair. Generally the speaker who self-initiates repair also completes the repair by producing a repair solution (Kitzinger & Lerner, 2010).

In self-initiated self-repair, then, a current speaker stops what s/he is saying to deal with something which is being treated as a problem in what s/he has said, or started to say, or may be about to say — for example, cutting off the talk to replace a word uttered in error with the correct word. By contrast, in other-initiated repair someone other than the speaker of the trouble-source initiates repair. Hence, it is the recipient of a turn-at-talk (rather than its speaker) who initiates repair on it (Schegloff, et al., 1977).

Self-initiated repair operations identified by Schegloff (2007) are: replacing, inserting, deleting, searching, parenthesizing, aborting, sequence jumping, recycling, reformatting and reordering. Replacing, which is probably the most common operation in English and also in some other languages (Fox, et al., 2010) is the focus of the present study. It involves ‘a speaker’s substituting for a wholly or partially articulated element of a turn-in-progress another, different element, while retaining the sense that this is the same utterance’ (Schegloff, 2008).

Replacement repairs come in various forms such as antonyms or synonyms, alternative formulations of the trouble-source term. Also, they can substitute a full-form for an indexical reference, or a new full-form reference for the trouble-source reference, either for the same referent or for a different one. Replacing can extract an individual from a collectivity or conversely can aggregate an individual to a collectivity by replacing (e.g. “I” with “we”) (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2007a). Speakers can also use replacement to change the tense of a verb (e.g. from past to present).

Cut-offs are a common way of halting progressivity in English (and in many other languages). So, too, are various other hitches in speaking — including sound stretches and other delaying productions (e.g. “um”, or “uh”). Such hitches do not initiate repair by themselves, but rather alert recipients to the possibility of a repair of trouble (if it was trouble) only becoming evident from an inspection of what happens next. Nevertheless, Repairs can also be initiated tacitly, without any explicit advance indication that progressivity is being suspended; in such instances it
is only apparent on production of the repair solution that a repair is being affected, and that the onward progressivity of the turn has been suspended for the purposes of that repair (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2010). There is no one - to – one relationship between the method of repair initiation and the repair operation: repair initiated with a cut - off can turn out to be replacing, inserting, deleting, or any other of the full range of repair operations.

On the basis of such assumptions, the present research aims to investigate whether two methods of repair: explicit (using cut-offs and hitches) and tacit (using no indicators) in replacement repairs are used in the oral production of Iranian EFL learners. The study also aims to identify how repair methods in replacement operation practices are used by both groups in order to regulate and maintain conversation, pass comprehensible messages to their interlocutors and achieve their communicative goals. The findings will hopefully provide insights into how important these practices are in real life communication; in addition, EFL syllabus designers may gear the courses to the linguistic and communicative ability of their students.

Indeed, a couple of prior studies have been carried out on language repair. For example, Nagano (1997: 81) in his study on the self-repair of Japanese learners of English concludes that “… the self-repair of Japanese speakers of English is not very different in some ways from that of the L1 speakers in Levelt's study”.

Research has also shown that repair, which is a language phenomenon, is necessary for keeping communication smooth and accurate, and it has been evident in the literature that language learners are able to employ many repair strategies in second language interaction (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 2000, 2007; Watterson, 2008). Additionally, It is evident in language repair research that both native and non-native speakers of English use repair practices while negotiating meaning in order to understand or make themselves understood (Firth & Wagner, 1997).

Drew (1997) suggests that "self-repair is also a mechanism of remedying mistakes in conversation". ‘Mistakes’ may also relate to acceptability problems, such as saying something wrong in a broad sense, that is untrue, inappropriate or irrelevant (Schegloff, 2007).

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), self-initiated self-repair (self-repair) takes the form of initiation with a non-lexical initiator, followed by the repairing segment (p. 376). These non-lexical initiators include cut-offs, lengthening of sounds, and quasi-lexical fillers such as uh and um. In order to repair their errors in problematic talk, language users repeat words and use fillers to gain time and achieve their communicative goal. Schegloff et al. (1977) state that self-initiated and self-completed repair (self-initiated self-repair) occurs when the interlocutor who is responsible for the trouble source both initiates and completes the repair.

The problematic talk 'trouble source' can be defined as an utterance or a part of an utterance that is perceived as problematic by at least one of the interlocutors. The speaker may feel that the utterance did not correspond to what he/she wanted to say, while the hearer may be unable to
decode the intended meaning of the utterance. The speaker may also assume that the recipient did not understand the utterance in the right way (Faerch & Kasper, 1982:79).

Self-initiation, self-completed repair is the most common repair strategy used (Schegloff et al., 1977). The speaker makes an error, detects it, cuts off what he/she was saying, and repairs the error. Repairs are signaled through the use of strategies, such as interruption, editing expressions (er, em) and backtracking. Similarly, Berg(1986: 212) admits that the repair process begins with an error. An error means "all kinds of inadvertent behaviors". Errors are usually detected during the articulation of the problematic word, which is usually signaled by the interruption of the flow of speech by the speaker himself.

Research on the repair of second language learners (e.g., Kranke & Christison, 1983; Schegloff, 2000) shows preference for self-initiated repair, although variations can be seen in the amount of initiation depending on the learner's language level (cf. Kranke and Christison, 1983). Krahnke and Christison (1983) remark that "...language learners have demonstrated ability to utilize non-language-specific techniques of interaction maintenance which also facilitate their comprehension, and we can assume, their acquisition of the new language" (p. 234).

When EFL learners come across situations in which they make conversational mistakes, repair comes to help to smooth the way to return the conversation to normalcy. However, lack of linguistic knowledge may impede them from using repair practices or lengthen the time before repair is produced. According to Faerch and Kasper (1983), during the planning and execution phases, L2 speakers encounter problems due to their lack of linguistic resources; therefore, they modify their plan and use their existing knowledge, usually consciously, with the intention of sending a comprehensible message and achieving their communicative goal.

As a matter of fact repair operations take various forms as Schegloff (2007) suggests such as replacement, insertion, deletion, etc., yet repair is produced either explicitly by using hitches (hesitation markers and indicators) or tacitly with no hitches as in the following examples (taken from the data of the present research):

(1)
1 S: Buh the men we:re the men are were surprise’d
2 T: [nod]

(2)
1 S: The man said told his son he should’n heve done id
2 T: Ok

(3)
1 S: She jus’ uh:’(0.4) met her mum at the street’ ‘er, (0.2) on de street
2 T: ....
(4)

1  S:  You know and thet house wes really bi:-small
2  T:  Aha…

As it is evident from these replacement examples, students in examples (1) and (2) did not use any advance indications to let the interlocutor become aware of the suspension of the turn; however, in examples (3) and (4), students explicitly alerted the cut-off by using delaying hitches and sound stretches respectively.

Replacement is a common repair practice whose role in communication could be one of the "most effective strategies for promoting comprehension that a speaker can use" (Hoekje, 1984: 10). However, research literature on replacement operation in Iranian EFL learners is not rich enough. Hence, the need for more research on repair practices, especially repair operations, is felt as teachers and syllabus designers can benefit from the findings of this type of research to have a better grasp.

Fotovatnia and Dorri’ s study (2013) concentrated on repair strategies used by Iranian learners in accordance with gender’s effect on their use; nevertheless, repair operations were not the focus of the study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The focus of the present study is to investigate replacement operation in oral reproduction of stories. It compares explicit and tacit repair practices produced by Iranian EFL learners. More specifically, the aim of the present research is to answer the following questions:

1. Is replacement, as the most frequent repair operation, practiced by Iranian EFL students in retelling short stories?

2. Which repair method, explicit or tacit, is more frequently practiced?

3. Is there a relationship between the participants’ academic level of studies and the frequency of replacement repair practices?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of this study were sixty male and female third-year and second-year EFL students enrolled in the oral reproduction courses at Sheikh-Bahaei university. In December 2014, these participants, in two groups of 30, ranging from age 20 to 24 performed a story-retelling task as their final exam. The first group included fifteen males and fifteen females, and
they were all selected from the oral reproduction of short stories course offered to sophomores. Also, the second group included fifteen males and fifteen females, but they were selected from the same course offered to juniors. Students were not informed that they were selected for this study to keep the natural state of their performance. However, the researcher let them know the fact after the exam.

**Instruments and materials**

To control the effect of prior English studies, all students who had enrolled in these two classes took an Oxford Placement Test (Allan, 2004). Prior to the study, the OPT was used to assess the participants’ homogeneity in terms of proficiency. The test had 100 multiple choice items. Along with Allen’s (2004) scoring guidelines, 60 of the participants who scored higher than 68 out of 100 were selected as upper-intermediate learners for the main phase of the study. Two short stories were selected from Oral Reproduction of Stories book (Rezai, 2013): *The Six Rows of Pompons* and *All Summer in a Day*, which were thought to be interesting, and within the proficiency level of the students, after consultations with three university professors.

**Procedure**

All participants were assigned to read the stories and prepare for oral reproduction as their final exam. The participants were individually audio-recorded in the researcher's office while retelling the stories to the researcher. The researcher used gestures, such as nodding, to show that he was following, and interested, and to encourage the participants to continue their retelling. Since real-life conversations require more interaction between speakers, the researcher also tried to interrupt the participants, using words and expressions, such as *then, aha, OK, oh my God!, Did he do that? Oh Really!, and What happened then?* This had a positive impact on the participants' performance, and their motivation to complete the task. The participants' production was carefully transcribed. All pauses and sound elongations were included in the transcription. In the transcription, every pause was shown in seconds, which was measured with the use of a stop watch. Markee (2000) suggests that the entire speech event should be transcribed to "provide an exhaustive account of the data potentially available for analysis" (p. 105).

The researcher was interested in analyzing the oral production of the participants because the interlocutor, who was the researcher of the present study himself, did not produce much discourse. Regarding the markers of repair, the researcher detected repair methods in replacement operation in the transcription of the spoken discourse of Iranian learners of English, and then classified them into two categories: explicit and tacit repair. Markee (2000) identified markers of repair stating that "repairs are likely to be signaled by various markers of incipient repair (pauses, silences, sound stretches, cut-offs and phrases like ‘you know’ and ‘I mean’" (p. 86). Next, frequencies and percentages of explicit repair and tacit repair in replacement operation practices were calculated. Furthermore, to find out any statistical differences in the use of repair methods between the two groups of EFL learners, a Chi-square test was used.

It should be noted that in order to maximize the reliability of the researcher's classification, it was passed to three intra-raters, who are professors of Applied Linguistics at the University of Isfahan. In order to make the raters' task easier, the methods were highlighted and classified in
context. That is, the whole utterance in which repair was practiced was transcribed. The raters were asked to verify whether the researcher’s classification was accurate based on the definition of each method. Their comments were taken into consideration and after necessary rectifications, the final categories and frequencies were ready.

Also, the researcher selected two groups of students from two different years of studies to find out whether offering this course to both sophomores and juniors was an appropriate decision taken by syllabus designers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As can be seen in Table 1, the participants in the first group recorded 163 instances of replacement repair practices while retelling the two stories. It was observed that they tried their best to report as many events as they could; even very specific details were reported. This was evident in the average number of words used in their oral production which by means of MS Office word count, was found to be 600 words per story on average. It was also observed that all the participants in the first group used some instances of repair practices, either explicit or tacit. They practiced the two methods under investigation at the rate of 136 and 27 instances, respectively.

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Repair Methods Practices of the First Group (sophomores)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repair Method</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacit</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 above shows that the juniors used fewer repair practices than the sophomores; they employed a total number of 112 instances of replacement repair practices, representing both methods. Contrary to the first group participants, it was noted that the third-year participants described only the key events; very specific details were not reported. This was manifested in the average number of words they produced, which was 450. Again, participants of the second group produced explicit repairs more frequently (63 cases).

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Repair Methods Practices of the Second Group (Juniors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repair Method</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacit</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to find out whether these differences were significant or not, a Chi-square test (Yates correction factor) was applied. The results of this statistical analysis procedure are discussed. The data show that the sophomores used 163 cases of replacement repair practices, while the juniors practiced 112 instances, indicating that the sophomores used more cases of replacement repair. The result of the Chi-square test ($\chi^2=23.19$) reveals significant differences between the sophomores and juniors in practicing replacement repair operation at $\alpha = .01$. The critical value
of $\chi^2$ with 1 d.f is 6.63. Thus, it can be concluded there is a relationship between the academic years of studies and practicing replacement operation. That is, the participants in the second year of their studies produced more instances of replacement repair operation.

Discussion

Above all, the results of the present study confirm that replacement operation is frequently used by Iranian EFL learners too. Also, the use of two methods of repair practices by Iranian EFL learners reveal that the findings are in line with the results of previous research on language repair (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2010). However, it was found that there were significant differences between the two groups in terms of the frequency of repair practices.

The statistical analysis presented in Tables 1&2 revealed that the learners in the first group significantly produced more explicit repair practices and fewer tacit repair instances of replacement operation in the story retelling task, when compared to those in the second group. This may have been due to a number of reasons. As stated previously, the number of words uttered by sophomores exceeded the number of words produced by juniors, which might be attributed to their lack of communicative abilities since linguistic background was controlled by homogenizing the participants through using an OPT.

Replacement operation as a self-initiated repair practice was used by both groups as an attempt made by the speaker to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item, when s/he felt that s/he made an error. Another point is that the juniors produced fewer repair instances, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story-retelling, i.e. they reported only the major events in both stories. It was possible that the juniors, due to the fact that they were more experienced, had designed a plan before attending the short stories retelling session. The answer to this question can be found by applying further research.

Also, Self-initiated repair was used when the speakers encountered problems with retrieving different items of the stories such as names of characters, story events, and main ideas. Additionally, it was noticed that replacement repair was not always successful; that is, the speakers tried to correct what they thought to be a mistake, but they did not do that successfully. This finding is thus a verification of the view that self-initiated repair is a well-organized, orderly, and rule-governed phenomenon and not a chaotic aspect of spoken discourse (Schegloff et al., 1977). Furthermore, it was found that participants in both groups were keen on taking risks to transmit comprehensible messages to their interlocutor, who was the researcher in the present study. They practiced repairs to retrieve ideas and lexical items and maintain conversation, and to produce correct forms or ideas. The participants’ use of such repairs made their oral production comprehensible, despite the presence of hesitations and pauses.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate if replacement operation is practiced by Iranian EFL learners in oral reproduction of short stories and how learners prioritize their repair methods in their utterances. Additionally, this research examined if academic level of studies might have an
impact on the frequency of repair practices produced by the learners. Not surprisingly, the findings may raise the need for EFL syllabus designers and researchers to be aware of differences in producing repair practices among learners. In fact, courses offered to students must have been geared towards specific communicative abilities of the target learners, for example, when students can benefit more from their courses as they become more communicatively competent. In addition, teachers will be able to respond to the communication problems of students more effectively when they understand students’ ways of resolving the conversation problems and the factors that affect them. In fact, teachers may help their students by giving awareness of appropriate strategies to overcome conversational difficulties.

Another implication is what can be used by students as learners’ strategies i.e. learners get a better grasp of their own oral productions and find necessary strategies to deal with their own conversational breakdowns and in case of retelling short stories, students may find pre-planned strategies which can help them to perform the task more successfully.

The present study suffered from several limitations such as time and small samples. Also, this research included only students with an upper-intermediate level of proficiency; therefore, generalizations cannot be made to all levels of proficiency.

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This research was self-funded. No governmental or private organizations provided financial support.

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THE EFFECT OF CHATTING IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS ON LEARNING VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT
Teaching how to speak English is one of the important factors between educational practitioners and thus finding efficient techniques to improve this ability have long been under research. The most important element for speaking and communication is learning vocabulary. Since learning vocabulary is not easy, utilizing new techniques can help students in facilitate learning and create motivation for them. As the native speakers are the genuine source of vocabulary, this research was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of chatting with native speakers on learning vocabulary. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 56 students in Danesh Ara institution of Iran in Mashhad city were selected, who took a placement test. Subsequently, 40 intermediate students were selected, 20 as experimental group and 20 as control group. They all took a pre-test on vocabulary and then were advised to chat with the native speakers. Some students, who did not know how to chat with the native speakers, were instructed how to do so. The control group didn’t have the chance to speak with the native speakers and they learned the vocabulary with traditional methods (e.g. reading the new words, repeating after the teacher and then memorizing them for the next session). After 20 sessions, the pre-test was administered as post-test. The data was entered in SPSS and the independent sample test is calculated, the results showed significant improvement on learning vocabulary in the experimental group. So chatting with the native speakers could be one of the interesting technique in facilitate learning vocabulary.

KEYWORDS: Chatting, Vocabulary, Intermediate, Native speakers.

INTRODUCTION
Most studies that were reviewed focused on the effects of using computer on language learning, and the effects of online units designed to teach L2 vocabulary on the students’ achievement, attitude towards English language and satisfaction with the online unit. The examiners noticed
that there are very few online materials designed to help L2 learners learn vocabulary, and very few scales designed to measure premedical students’ attitude towards English and their satisfaction with these units. This adds to the significance of the current study. The researchers made use of the communicative method of teaching English that focuses on enhancing vocabulary in designing the learning material of the current study.

As Michelin (1997) states that “The use of the Internet in English language classes exposes the students to a wider range of English than they usually encounter in their daily lives. Furthermore, the World Wide Web is an invaluable source of information both for teachers and students. With respect to other advantages of implementing the internet, it can be stated that real time technology can help to solve the problem of insufficient exposure to vocabulary practice, specifically by chatting with the native speakers.

From reviewing the literature relevant to the current research, the following are concluded:
The current study is similar to Ushida’s (2003) study since both studies used online units to develop students’ acquisition of vocabulary and both measured the effects of these units on the students’ attitude toward English language and satisfaction with these units. Kaya’s (2006) study is the most similar study to the current study in the design of the online units and using WEBCT to deliver the units to improve the students’ vocabulary acquisition.

Kaya’s (2006) online unit contained text, images, movie, and audio in order to facilitate the vocabulary learning process like the online unit used in the current study. As Warschauer and Healey (1998) states that through chatting, learners of a language can communicate inexpensively and quickly with other native speakers all over the world. This communication can be either synchronous with all users logged on and chatting at the same time.

RESEARCH QUESTION
Is there any significant difference between the performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners in learning vocabulary when instructed by chatting and those who receive instruction in traditional way?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
56 participants took part in a placement test in Danesh Ara Institute in Mashhad, Iran. So, the explorers could determine their language level. Upon inclusion in the program, this sample was selected from intermediate students. Their proficiency level had been determined via the placement test administered at the institute.

Placement test has been designed for choosing the intermediate students and placing students into the six levels of the series and the other option for getting to this level was passing previous levels of English courses in institute. It could be inferred that the participants had the same, or very similar general English proficiency. After administration of the test, only 40 participants
could get score of 52-61 for placement test and thus they were selected to be the sample of this study. This clarified that participants were at level 4 (intermediate) and indicated that the great majority of subjects were homogenous. The proficiency level of the participants was also determined by passing the previous levels of English courses in the institute. The Iranian EFL learners were divided randomly into experimental group and control group.

20 participants were assigned to be the experimental group and were called group A. 20 participants were assigned to be the control group and were called group B. Both groups had the pre-test to examine their initial lexical knowledge. Then group "A" received treatment based on chatting with the native speakers. But group B did not receive this treatment. Finally both groups had the post-test after 20 sessions. Both pre-test and post-test were the same for both groups. The pretest study was different because it measured three dependent variables and provided support for the learners.

**Materials and instruments**

In the data gathering procedure, the first step consisted of placement test. Placement test helps the investigators to select intermediate students and collect required data. The instruments used for data collection were placement test, pre-test, post-test, online chat, computer, social network (Yahoo messenger).

The Placement test was utilized to determine the level of the participants. It is written by the Colchester English Study Centre (Appendix 1). It was administered in different occasions and the reliability is proved and it help to select intermediate students and to homogenize their proficiency level. The students who can answer 52-61 correct questions from 80 questions are selected as intermediate level. The pre-test was used to measure the learner’s initial vocabulary knowledge. And the post-test was utilized to determine the efficiency of online chatting with native speakers on vocabulary knowledge. All participants were encouraged to register in free online websites and make their own ID in order to know each other and contact with native speakers of English.

The experimental group had access to the Internet and used yahoo messenger for online chatting with the native speakers. We considered and assessed the students’ computer skills, typing abilities and familiarity with communication technology. Then we selected EFL learners who had similar level of skills in these regards.

**Design and procedures**

The study started in November 2013 and ran for 20 sessions. 3 tests were used. The procedure included different stages of application such as selection of the subjects, instruments and materials.

At the first session, the intermediate students were selected via placement test. Those who obtained scores between 52 and 61 indicated that they were at the intermediate level and thus homogenous. In fact, the placement test acted as a criterion for selecting the students who were approximately at the same level of vocabulary knowledge. In order to have an effective
comparison between the level of lexical knowledge of treatment and control groups, a pre-test was administered to check their knowledge of vocabulary and proficiency level as a reference for their improvement after treatment. So after 20 sessions both groups attended the post-test. After administration of pre-test, the control group received no treatment. However the experimental group received treatment based on online chatting with the native speakers and we rechecked their ability at surfing the net, typing, and online communication and chose those who had the same and equal ability.

For the experimental group, the teacher specified the duration of online chatting for 6-8 hours per day. During this time, the teacher was also online, in order to supervise and assist the EFL learners. EFL learners used yahoo messenger software for online chatting with the native speakers and they used it as a tool to type the messages in chat box and communicate with the native speakers about any topic. Furthermore the institute administered 8 random sessions to assess the students’ progress during online chatting with the native speakers. These 8 sessions helped them to understand the situation and the process of improvement of lexical knowledge. It should be noted that the control group was taught by using traditional methods (such as reading the words, repeating them and saying the meaning of each word). This group did not have the chance to chat with the native speakers. To maximize the validity of the study, we controlled some variables such as age, gender, environment, time of chatting, knowledge of vocabulary, typing ability, familiarity with online communication and checking the students simultaneously. Farhady, Jafarpoor, Birjandi ,1994 state that," one of the best ways of testing knowledge of vocabulary is via close passage test". Thus we also used close passage test in the last week to make our results more valid.

Data analysis
The data was analyzed through SPSS and One-way analysis of variance was run to analyze the average scores of the two groups. Placement test shows the homogeneity of the groups and also participants' background information. The pre-test was administered to show the knowledge of vocabulary and level of proficiency. We used the independent samples T-test to compare the results of the post-test of two groups and we also used the paired samples T-test to compare the result of pre-test with post-test for each group.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION
To start with, the researchers had to analyze the data obtained from the administration of the Pretest/Posttest. The group statistics of the scores of the 40 students who took the Pretest/Posttest in both the experimental group and control group are presented in Table 1.

| Table 1: Descriptive analysis of both groups in T1 and T2 - Group Statistics |
|-------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Students          | N  | Mean     | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Pretest           |     |          |              |              |
| Experimental Group| 20  | 14.65    | 3.977       | .889        |
| Control Group     | 20  | 14.15    | 3.360       | .751        |
| Posttest          |     |          |              |              |
| Experimental Group| 20  | 15.80    | 3.037       | .679        |
| Control Group     | 20  | 14.30    | 3.147       | .704        |
The next step in data analysis was computing the reliability among pre-test and post-test in experimental and control group. As the pre-test and post-test are the same, if the test is reliable, the alpha should be up to 0/75. Table 2 shows the alpha of pre-test and post-test of the experimental group is 0/944 and Table 3 shows the alpha of pre-test/post-test of the control group is 0/898. It means that the pre-test/post-test is highly reliable. Because we have two groups, experimental and control group, naturally the scores are different. The test reliability of the 2 groups which is shown in the table below is different.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.944</td>
<td>.962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next step was to run an independent t-test to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the pre-test (Table 1). The results, as indicated in Table 4, demonstrated that the variances fulfilled the condition of the homogeneity at 0.05 level of significant. (F=2.402, ρ=0.130>0.05)

Since the homogeneity of the variances of the two groups was proved, the results of the t-test was claimed to be dependable. Considering the results of the t-test (t=0.309, df=38, ρ=0.759>0.05), it was concluded that there was significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

Table 4: Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.429</td>
<td>36.969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>1.534</td>
<td>37.951</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
An independent t-test was run to compare the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the post-test. As displayed in Table 1, the mean score for the experimental group is 14.65, with a standard deviation of 3.977 in pre-test and 14.30 in post-test, with a standard deviation of 3.147. The mean score and the standard deviation for pre-test of the control group are 15.80 and 3.037, and the mean score and the standard deviation for post-test of the control group are 14.15 and 3.360, respectively. These statistical analysis shows the differences between the control and experimental groups’ mean scores on the post-test. And as shown in Table 4, Sig. (2-tailed) is more than 0.05, it indicates the effect of chatting on improving learning vocabulary.

CONCLUSION
The purpose of this study was to examine whether chatting of the Iranian intermediate EFL learners with native speakers had any significant effect on learning vocabulary. At the outset of this study the participants were homogenized through the placement test. The results of this study indicated that online chatting with the native speakers, had a significant effect on learning vocabulary on the EFL learners. Also it is clearly observed that the learners in the experimental group were actively involved in expressing themselves freely in the chat rooms with using new vocabulary without anxiety and fear of making mistakes. This sense of security also motivated them to accomplish more as they went along during the course. Using Internet chat rooms for improving students’ knowledge of vocabulary is also of great importance due to the opportunity that a chat room naturally gives to its users by combining speaking and writing (more specifically typing) so that all of them can express themselves and type their ideas at the same time without any interference with and interruptions of others’ speech and also give reply from the native speakers that are the genuine source of the EFL and learn the new vocabulary from them. This is not possible in real classes. A very prominent advantage of chat room worth mentioning is that whatever is typed there can be saved on disks and further be used by the students to improve their learning and by the teacher to evaluate students and their progress and design better activities and tasks for their improvement of vocabulary.

Internet and chatting with different people all over the world are very important revolutions in the history of human communication. In the third millennium, few people would contest that English is an essential world language today and that the Internet has become a part of modern life. The investigators hope that the results obtained from this study would be beneficial for all those involved in language learning/teaching and help EFL learners improve a much coveted goal, i.e. learning vocabulary that is the key to learning every language.

All in all, according to this research, chatting of Iranian intermediate EFL learners with native speakers has a positive effect on learning vocabulary in experimental group when compared with the control group that shows the level of scores after the treatment is higher than the scores before the treatment).

Limitation of the Study
The limitation of this study is problem with Internet disconnection when the students and the researcher should attend for chatting. Other limitation is that some of the students couldn’t attend
on time because they have other works to do and they attend late. Then explore the real native speaker was other limitation in this study. Some people give wrong information about their nationality, at first the researcher should chat with them and when she assure that the addressee was native speaker, introduce to the students and it wasted a lot of time.

REFERENCES


Mynard, J (2002). Introducing EFL students to chat rooms. The Internet TESL Journal, 8(2). Retrieved on September 23, 2005, from


Appendix 1: Placement test

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PLACEMENT TEST
( Written by the Colchester English Study Centre)

Choose the answer that you think is correct and circle the appropriate letter:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>This man has dark ......................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) heads b) head c) hairs d) hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>and a .........................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) beard b) barber c) moustaches d) facehair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>He is ......................... a jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) wearing b) carrying c) having d) holding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. and he is .................................. a piece of paper.  
   a) wearing  b) holding  c) having  d) getting

5. He is sitting at his ...............................  
   a) chair  b) desk  c) office  d) room

6. - perhaps he is .................................  
   a) work  b) at work  c) business  d) on job

7. You arrive at a party at 8 p.m. What do you say?  
   a) Goodnight  b) Good-bye  c) Good evening  d) Good afternoon

8. Someone offers you a drink. You don’t want it. What do you say?  
   a) Thank you  b) Please  c) No, thank you  d) No, please

9. Henderson ................................. going to work.  
   a) likes not  b) don’t like  c) doesn’t like  d) not like

10. ................................. early in the morning?  
    a) Does he get up  b) Gets he up  c) Do he get up  d) Get he up

11. He ................................. to drive a car.  
    a) am learning  b) learning  c) is learning  d) are learning

12. A train is ................................. a bus.  
    a) more quickly  b) quickly  c) quicker than  d) more quick

13. He ................................. swim very well.  
    a) not can  b) cannot  c) doesn’t can  d) don’t can

14. ................................. the bus to work.  
    a) Always Roberts catches  b) Roberts always catches  c) Roberts catches always  d) Roberts does always catches

15. Peter works in London. .................................  
    a) He goes there by train  b) He there goes by train  c) He goes by train there  d) There goes he by train

16. ................................. TV last night.  
    a) Did he watch  b) Watched he  c) Did he watched  d) Does he watch

17. I spoke slowly, but he ................................. understand me.  
    a) canned not  b) didn’t can  c) didn’t could  d) could not

18. He made ................................. last year.  
    a) many money  b) much money  c) a lot of money  d) lots money

19. I asked him .................................  
    a) to not go away  b) to go not away  c) not to go away  d) go not away

20. He used to live .................................  
    a) on  b) in  c) to  d) at

    a) spoked  b) speaked  c) spoke  d) spoken

22. “Quiet, please – I .................................”  
    a) am doing a test!  b) do a test!  c) doing a test!  d) does a test!

23. I won’t go to Cambridge if it ................................. tomorrow.  
    a) rain  b) would rain  c) rains  d) raining

24. While he ................................. to London he saw an accident.  
    a) was driving  b) drives  c) drove  d) had driven

25. Millions of cigarettes ................................. every year.  
    a) is smoke  b) are smoking  c) are smoked  d) are smoke

26. He has a ................................. experience in marketing in Europe.  
    a) grand  b) wide  c) large  d) great

27. I remember ................................. him in London.  
    a) of meeting  b) to meet  c) to meeting  d) meeting

28. But I saw him in Frankfurt .................................  
    a) 3 years ago  b) for 3 years  c) before 3 years  d) since 3 years
29. Could you look ............... the blackboard and read what is on it?  
a) to  b) on  c) for  d) at  

30. Smith went abroad last year. ................................. abroad before.  
a) He had never been b) He had been never c) He never went d) He went never  

31. The last Olympic Games ................................. in Athens.  
a) were helded b) was holded c) were held d) were held  

32. He took ................................. cheese.  
a) all of  b) all  c) the all  d) all of the  

33. The committee held a ................................. last week.  
a) meeting b) gathering c) session d) sitting  

34. I ................................. the Prime Minister’s speech very carefully.  
a) heard to  b) heard c) listened to  d) overheard  

35. He would have known that, if he ................................. the meeting.  
a) had attended b) would have attended c) has attended d) would attend  

36. Would you mind ................................. the door?  
a) open b) to open c) opening d) to opening  

37. In August he ................................. for us for 25 years.  
a) will have worked b) will work c) is going to work d) will be working  

38. ................................. since I came back to the office?  
a) Did Robinson telephone b) Was Robinson telephoning c) telephoned Robinson d) Has Robinson telephoned  

39. He speaks English very well ................................. he’s only 12.  
a) whereas b) despite c) in spite of d) although  

40. “Don’t do that,” I said. I ................................. him not to do that.  
a) talked b) told c) spoke d) said  

41. He never takes risks. He’s a very ................................. man.  
a) mindful b) anxious c) attentive d) cautious  

42. I’d like to put ................................. a suggestion, if I may.  
a) forward b) over c) across d) through  

43. I ................................. this test for at least half an hour now.  
a) do b) am doing c) have done d) have been doing  

44. I’ll speak to him when he ................................. .  
a) will arrive b) is arriving c) arrives d) would arrive  

45. “Can you come tomorrow?” He asked ................................. tomorrow.  
a) if I come b) that i come c) if I could come d) that I can come  

46. He hasn’t come again today. If he doesn’t come, ................................. what to do tomorrow.  
a) he wouldn’t know b) he didn’t know c) he will not have known d) he won’t know  

47. CONVERSATION (questions 47 – 64):  
Mr and Mrs Wallace want to buy a house, so they go to the office of an estate agent.  

Agent: Good morning. Mr and Mrs Wallace?  
Mrs Wallace: Mr Hogan?  
Agent: How do you do.  
Mrs Wallace: I spoke to you on the phone. ................................. is my husband.  
a) This b) It c) He d) That  

Mr Wallace: How do you do.  

Agent: How do you do. ................................. sit down.  
a) You b) Please c) Now d) Let  
(They all sit down at a desk.)  

Agent: I understand from our telephone conversation that you’re .................................  
a) intending b) interesting c) intended d) interested  

in buying a property for about £85,000, is that ................................. ?
51. Mrs Wallace: No. Well the price is right, but – er – well, we …………………. a problem.  
a) make  b) have  c) are  d) seem  
We’ve been living abroad for the last ten years -

52. Mr Wallace: Longer …………… that.  
a) than  b) that  c) as  d) to

53. Mrs Wallace: Yes, I suppose it is – and we want to settle back here ………………….  
a) because  b) and  c) but  d) so

54. we have very different ideas of the …………………. of place we’d like to live in.  
a) kind  b) piece  c) shape  d) area

55. Mr Wallace: Yes, you see …………………. prefer to live in town, in a centrally located flat.  
a) I  b) I’d  c) we  d) we’d

56. Mrs Wallace: And I am really keen to live in …………………. country.  
a) the  b) a  c) some  d) -

57. I want a big garden. I want a new view. I want to be …………………. to go for walks.  
a) able  b) possible  c) can  d) allow  
I want to go back to work – that is, to get back into teaching.

58. Mr Wallace: Well, I’m sure you ……………… teach in London, in town, just as easily.  
a) would  b) might  c) should  d) could

59. Mrs Wallace: Yes, ……………… I think the chances of  
a) and  b) but  c) so  d) then

60. getting a job ……………… probably much greater in a village school  
a) is  b) are  c) will  d) would

61. and I ……………… like to be part of the community again, darling.  
a) would  b) do  c) will  d) shall

62. Mr Wallace: And I want to live in a flat …………………. maintenance included.  
a) for  b) with  c) and  d) by

63. You know – you pay for all the ……………… I mean, I’m not a do-it-yourself man.  
a) services  b) servants  c) assistance  d) assistants

64. I don’t like to mend leaky …………………. , and that sort of thing.  
a) walls  b) floors  c) roofs  d) ceilings

65. **AT A HOTEL (question 65 – 80)**  
Mr Graham has just checked into a hotel, but he is not happy with his room. He goes down to the 
reception desk.  
Mr Graham: I’m ……………… there’s been a mistake. My room doesn’t have a bath.  
a) sorry  b) afraid  c) anxious  d) regret

66. Hotel Clerk: Well, I think your room is correct, sir. Room 118 …………………. ?  
a) don’t you  b) isn’t it  c) doesn’t it  d) can you

67. Mr Graham: …………………. , could I have a bath, please?  
a) Thus  b) Well  c) In spite  d) Thank you

68. Hotel Clerk: Er – I’m afraid we don’t ……………… a room with a bath and –  
a) reserve  b) get  c) have  d) retain

69. Mr Graham: Look, I’m very tired. I don’t want to ……………… but my firm always book a room with a 
bath.  
a) shout  b) denounce  c) anger  d) argue

70. Hotel Clerk: Er – I’ll check the ………………….  
a) correspondence  b) mailing  c) communicate  d) lettering

71. but I don’t think you were …………………. into a room with a bath.  
a) reserved  b) checked  c) booked  d) registered  
There we are, it is Mr Graham, isn’t it?  
Mr Graham: It is, yes. The clerk shows Mr Graham a letter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hotel Clerk: Yes, one ................. room.</th>
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<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>alone</td>
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<th></th>
<th>Mr Graham: I’ll see them when I get back. Well, I ................. that it’s our mistake,</th>
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<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>appreciate</td>
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<th></th>
<th>but are you sure there’s ...................... with a bath?</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>not</td>
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|   | Hotel Clerk: Well, .................. |

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<tr>
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<th>Mr Graham: I’ve just flown a very long ...................... and I’m very tired and all I want is a bath and a sleep.</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>distance</td>
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<th></th>
<th>Hotel Clerk: Well, as I’ve said, sir, there’s ...................... nothing for tonight.</th>
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<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>extremely</td>
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But let’s see. You’re here for five days, aren’t you?

|   | Mr Graham: Oh dear! |

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hotel Clerk: I’ll just have a ..................... with the manager.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>word</td>
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<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Mr Graham: I would ......................... it.</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>value</td>
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<th></th>
<th>I’m ................................. to have a long hot bath!</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>despaired</td>
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<th></th>
<th>Hotel Clerk: Don’t worry, sir! ................................. it with me.</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>Let</td>
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TEFL TEACHERS’ REACTIVE FOCUS ON FORM: THE CASE OF IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE AND INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THEIR SPOKEN LINGUISTICS ERROR TYPES

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ABSTRACT
The role of corrective feedback (CF) is debated in second language acquisition (SLA). The possible relationship among L2 teachers’ spoken corrective feedback types, the learners’ proficiency levels, and their error types have not been unequivocally shown, in particular, not in the case of foreign language teachers’ reactive focus on form among pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. This study includes the transcripts of 120 hours of naturalistic classroom interactions recorded from ten classes of five teachers (two classes for each teacher, one pre-intermediate and one intermediate), totaling 1608 reactive focus on form episodes, known as corrective feedback. Chi-square analysis was used to analyze association between variables of this study in pairs (proficiency level and error types, proficiency level and corrective feedback types, error types and corrective feedback types). Statistically significant associations were revealed from the results of the analysis and also recasts were found to be the most widely employed corrective feedback types at both proficiency levels. Overall, the present study has shown that there is a diversity of corrective feedback reactions by the EFL teachers.

KEYWORDS: Corrective feedback, Focus on form, Reactive focus on form episode, Recast, Marked recast, Unmarked recast

INTRODUCTION
During interaction in foreign language classes, participants in the conversation may negotiate for meaning due to a lack of understanding. As part of this negotiation, foreign learners receive feedback on their language production, potentially helping to draw attention to different language problems and leading them to notice gaps between features of their interlanguage and the target language. By providing learners with information regarding their linguistic and communicative accomplishments or failures, this interactional feedback creates a favorable environment for L2 development. Through negotiation of meaning, input can be uniquely tailored to individuals’
strengths, weaknesses, and communicative needs providing language that suits their distinct development levels.

The discussions on how corrective feedback (CF) should be viewed, have developed in SLA and language pedagogy and the controversies address (1) whether CF contributes to L2 acquisition, (2) which errors should be corrected, (3) who should do the correcting (the teacher or the learner him/herself), (4) which type of CF is the most effective, and (5) what is the best timing for CF (immediate or delayed) (Ellis & Jiang, 2009). According to Lyster (1993) and Swain (1995), a communicative oriented environment is not the only necessary condition for Second Language (SL) acquisition. According to them, a way to significantly improve learners’ performance is to focus on form in communicative settings, referring to formal instruction while communicative activities are performed, i.e., teachers drawing learners’ attention to specific linguistic forms when a task-based syllabus is followed. For Ellis (1994), there are two ways to focus on form. The first is through the activities that require both communication and attention to form, and the second through corrective feedback during performance in communication activities. The latter will be the focus of this article.

Focus on form
Focus on form overtly draws students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication (Long, 1991, as cited in Doughty, 2001). Focus on form involves an occasional shift in attention to linguistic code features — by the teacher and/or one or more students — triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Focus on form Instruction
FFI occurs during interlanguage construction and attempts to draw learners’ attention to and providing opportunities for them to practice specific language features (Ellis, Basturkman & Loewen, 2001).

For example, a student might say, “Everybody love flowers.” The teacher would respond, “love!” You need to use the third person singular “loves”. The student would then state, “Everybody loves flowers.” A distinction exists between reactive and pre-emptive focus-on-form. Reactive focus-on-form refers to error correction, corrective feedback, or negative evidence/feedback. Error correction occurs when, during the context of focus-on-meaning activities, learners’ attention is drawn to errors in their production. Thus, the error triggers discourse aimed at a specific linguistic item. Contrarily, pre-emptive focus-on-form is defined as occurring when either the teacher or a learner initiates attention to form even though no actual problem in production has arisen (Farrokhi & Gholami, 2007).

According to Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) corrective feedback (CF) takes the form of responses to learner utterances that contain error. The responses can consist of (a) an indication that an error has been committed, (b) provision of the correct target language form, or (c) metalinguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these (p. 340).
Lyster & Ranta (1997) identified six different corrective feedback strategies: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic information, elicitation, and repetition. All of these techniques are placed in an explicit-implicit continuum. Farrokhi (2005a) also proposed a more comprehensible and applicable classification of feedback types: unmarked recasts, marked recasts, explicit correction, and negotiated feedback.

**L2 proficiency and CF**

This article also explores the relationship between the learners’ proficiency level (pre-intermediate and intermediate levels) and the teachers’ employed CF types. Proficiency in an L2 requires that learners acquire a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, which caters to fluency, and a rule-based competence consisting of knowledge of specific grammatical rules, which caters to complexity and accuracy (Skehan 1998). Evidence that proficiency level may affect teachers’ choice of corrective feedback can be found in Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) study. They reported that the teacher of the most advanced class tended to recast learner errors to a lesser degree than the other three teachers did.

**Types of errors**

When foreign language teachers are correcting learners’ errors, it is important to identify the type of error the learners make because it is not always the case teachers want or need to correct everything. In setting up taxonomy of errors, many researchers have established their own category of errors. In this study the researchers have used the Lyster’s taxonomy of errors which distinguishes four main error types: (1. grammatical, 2. lexical, 3. phonological, and 4. unsolicited use of L1) Lyster (1998).

**REVIEW OF THE RELATED STUDIES**

One of the most popular questions among researchers and teachers is how to treat foreign language learners’ errors. Correcting learners’ errors is a vital classroom activity which is open to systematic investigations since as Guenette (2007) observes, the problem of how to handle learners’ errors lies in the paucity of research which deals with corrective feedback systematically and at the same time controls many a variable involved in the process of giving corrective feedback to learners. To give or not to give feedback is no longer the question, because, thus, the majority of studies on feedback (Ashwell, 2000; Amirghassemi, Azabdaftari, & Saeidi, 2013; Bitchener, 2008; Chandler, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1997, 1999, 2006; Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts, & McKee, 2000) reveal the importance of responding to learners’ output either in oral or written form; Ellis (2009) states that research on feedback can be studied from two perspectives: “the teachers’ provision of feedback and students’ responses to this feedback” (p. 98). He categorizes the former into: Direct CF (Corrective Feedback), Indirect CF, Metalinguistic CF, Focused and unfocused CF, Electronic feedback, and reformulation; the latter deals with whether students are required to revise or not; however, the question of what and how to respond to second or foreign language learners’ speech or written essays remains unresolved; some doubt the type of feedback given to learners, some are skeptical of focus of feedback, and where these two reach a consensus, the third party opposes by questioning both on methodological grounds.
Ajideh and FareedAghdam (2012) investigated the possible relationship among L2 teachers’ spoken corrective feedback types, the learners’ proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced levels), and their error types. They concluded that there might be no one single way of treating learners’ errors. The study provided support for the incorporation of focus on form into the context of meaning-focused instruction. This study suggested that learners of intermediate and advanced levels committed different types of errors and all the teachers employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies and the interaction between error types and CF types were statistically significant, confirming that learners’ error types affected teachers’ choice of CF types.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) investigated the relationship between types of corrective feedback and learner uptake in a primary French immersion classroom. Four teachers provided corrective feedback on learner errors in speech production in 14 subject-matter lessons and 13 French language art lessons. Feedbacks were classified into six types: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. Learner uptake, a student utterance following the teacher’s feedback, was also categorized into two types: repair and need-repair, or in other words, successful and unsuccessful responses. The results revealed that the most frequent type of feedback was the recast. Moreover, the recast never led to student-generated repair; the learner merely repeated what the teacher had said. In contrast, elicitation and metalinguistic feedback were less frequent and were found to be effective in that they encouraged learners to generate repair.

Lyster (1998) also investigated the relationship among error types and corrective feedback in relation to immediate learner repair. The results of this study showed that the interaction between error type and feedback type was meaningful; it also confirmed that error type affected choice of feedback. To the best of our knowledge, there is not any comprehensive descriptive study investigating types of spoken errors and their frequencies across pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. So, there is a need to investigate these issues which probably have a relationship with selecting specific feedback types by teachers. This work attempted to explore different types of teachers’ corrective feedback relative to different types of learners’ errors across two proficiency levels (pre-intermediate and intermediate). To meet these objectives, the following research questions were formulated.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1) Which types of L2 learners’ spoken linguistic error types are corrected most frequently by their teachers across pre-intermediate and intermediate levels?

2) Do L2 teachers use different types of spoken corrective feedback for learners of pre-intermediate and intermediate levels?

3) What types of learners’ errors lead to what types of teachers’ corrective feedback?
METHODOLOGY

Participants
For this study pre-intermediate and intermediate students of five teachers from Payampersa English language teaching institute in Zarrinshahr city in Isfahan province of Iran were chosen. The teachers were one male and four females. One pre-intermediate and one intermediate class per teacher were invited and the interactions of 8 sessions from each class (80 sessions, 120 totally) were recorded, transcribed, coded and analyzed. The total number of the students in this study was 100, aged between 13 to 35, including 48 males and 52 females. The classes ranged in size from 7 to 20 students. The teachers were unaware of the purpose of the study. They were just invited to take part in the study.

Instruments
Quick Placement Test
Besides considering these proficiency levels based on the institute’ criteria, a proficiency test of Nelson test (2001) including 30 questions and a reliability of 0.873 was administrated to screen the subjects and homogenize them based on their levels of proficiency.

Course book
The course book used in the conventionally instructed group was “American Headway 2” for pre-intermediate and “American Headway 3” for intermediate level by Soars and Sayer (2010). These course books were used because they were being taught by the institute and the teachers were familiar with them.

The recording Software Program
The sessions of the classes were recorded with ZavioCamGraba IP System 3.5.57.

Analysis and data coding system
The researchers listened to the recordings, identified and then transcribed episodes containing reactive focus on form (RFF) in this study only because the teachers perceive the learners’ utterance as inaccurate or inappropriate and draw their attention to the problematic feature through negative feedback.

When RFFepisodes were coded, they were classified as two main parts. In the first part the linguistic errors committed by the students were included, and in the second part the teachers’ responses to the errors in the form of corrective feedback were included.

1) The linguistic errors committed by the students were classified into four main types according to Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) classification.
   a. Grammatical errors: determiners, prepositions, pronouns, word order, tense, auxiliaries, subject verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, plurals, negation, question formation
   b. Lexical errors: inaccurate choices and non-target derivations of lexical items in open classes namely, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives, and incorrect use of prefixes and suffixes.
c. **Phonological errors**: Suprasegmental and segmental aspects of the phonological system

d. **Unsolicited uses of L1**: students’ use of Persian when English would have been more appropriate and expected

2) The teachers’ responses to the errors in the form of corrective feedback were classified into six types based on a combination of Farrokhi (2005a) and Lyster & Ranta’s (1997) classifications.

   a. **Unmarked recasts**: (teacher's implicit corrective reformulation of student's non-target like form)

   b. **Marked recasts**: (teacher's corrective reformulation and highlighting or marking the reformulation)

   c. **Explicit correction**: (Teacher’s direct treatment of students' non-target-like form by explanation, definition, examples, etc.)

   d. **Negotiated feedback**: (teacher provides students with signals to facilitate peer- and self-correction).

   e. **Clarification request**: (carries questions indicating that the utterance has been ill-formed or misunderstood and that a reformulation or a repetition is required).

   f. **Elicitation**: (a correction technique that prompts the learner to self-correct through request for reformulations of an ill-formed utterance, the use of open questions, or use of strategic pauses to allow a learner to complete an utterance).

The researchers used the raw frequencies and percentages of RFF episodes and then Pearson’s chi-square analysis was performed on the raw frequencies. In order to determine inter-rater reliability of RFF episodes identification, a second rater coded a sample of 10% of the data independently. Analysis of the coding presented 83% agreement.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results are presented in three parts using different figures and tables as follows:

**The learners’ proficiency levels and their error types**

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of error types in the entire database. A total of 1608 error turns were identified in 120 hours of meaning-focused lessons, 924 (57.5%) and 684 (42.5%) at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels respectively. It means that each RFF episode occurred at a rate of every 4.4 minutes which means that the teachers were attentive to corrective feedback, one reason could be because they were being recorded and they cared about the meaning and form and the other reason could be that the learners were eager to communicate without being worried if they were corrected by the teachers.
The percentages of error types committed by Pre-intermediate learners are as follows: 13.6% were L1, 35.8% were phonological errors, 24.4% were lexical errors, and 26.2% were grammatical. So, phonological errors were the most frequent error type at this level. The percentages of error types at intermediate level show a different pattern, comparing with those at Pre-intermediate level. Grammatical errors accounting for 42.5% were mostly occurred at intermediate level. And lexical errors, with 15.2% discrepancy, had the second highest percentage (27.3%). Figure 1 displays an even more obvious picture of the percentage of errors.

In order to find out whether there was a statistically significant association between learners’ proficiency level and their error types, the chi-square test was used. The results ($\chi^2 = 0.744$, $df = 3$, $p < .05$) revealed that the association between the variables was statistically significant. This suggests that learners of different proficiencies committed different types of errors.
The learners’ proficiency levels and the teachers’ corrective feedback types

In Table 2 we can observe the distribution of different feedback moves employed by teachers at both proficiencies, and figure 2 shows the percentages graphically. In general 924 (57.46%) instances of RFFEs occurred at pre-intermediate classes, while there were 684 (42.54%) instances at intermediate classes. As can be seen in the table 2 and figure 2, marked recasts accounting for almost (42.3%) of all CF moves were the most widely used CF for pre-intermediate learners. And unmarked recasts (35.7%) were favored to be employed more than other corrective feedback types for intermediate learners. This might lie in the implicit nature of unmarked recasts. As the definition clarifies, unmarked recasts, in comparison with marked ones, do not highlight the learner’s non-target-like form. So, unmarked recasts risk being ambiguously perceived by pre-intermediate learners as alternative forms fulfilling discourse functions other than corrective ones.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of feedback types across proficiency levels (all teachers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corrective Feedback Types</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Raw Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Raw Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked</td>
<td></td>
<td>391</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked</td>
<td></td>
<td>248</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit</td>
<td></td>
<td>106</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiated</td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>924</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Percentage of feedback types across proficiency levels (All Teachers)
The results ($\chi^2=2.87$, df = 5, $p< .05$) indicated a statistically significant association. It means that all the teachers employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies.

**The relationship between the learners’ error types and the teachers’ corrective feedback types**

Table 3 presents a comparison of the distribution of CF types across different error types. Unsolicited uses of L1 invited mostly marked recasts (56.65%). Other types of corrective feedback following L1 errors accounted only for 43.35% of all CF turns. Similarly, phonological errors were mostly followed by marked recasts (48.04%). The second CF type following phonological errors was unmarked recast, accounting for 19.35%. Other four types of CF have very low percentages. Lexical errors were corrected mostly using unmarked recasts which accounted for almost half (47.57%) of the total number of CF. They were secondly followed by negotiated feedback (14.56%). The third and fourth CF types used to treat lexical errors were explicit correction (12.14%) and elicitation (11.41%) respectively. Clarification request and marked recasts following lexical errors totally account for 14.32% of all FC types. And finally, grammatical errors mostly favored unmarked recasts (35.65%). Negotiated feedbacks, accounting for 23.83% and marked recasts, accounting for 16.32%, were the second and third type of corrective feedback following grammatical errors. Other three CF types totally accounts for 24.2% of the total number of CFs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corrective Feedback Types</th>
<th>Raw Frequency &amp; Percentage of Error Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiated</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 illustrates a clearer picture of the relationship between learners’ error types and teachers’ CF types. As the findings suggest, the five teachers provided corrective feedback consistently. It means that the teachers’ correction of learners’ errors showed some degree of systematicity in that they tended to select feedback types in accordance with error types: namely, marked recasts after unsolicited uses of L1 and phonological errors and unmarked recasts after lexical and grammatical errors.
According to the results of chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 3.79$, $df = 15$, $p < .05$), the interaction between error types and CF types were statistically significant, confirming that learners’ error types affected teachers’ choice of CF types.

CONCLUSION
The focus of this study which was based on just teachers’ reactive focus on form and only on four types of learners’ linguistic errors among just two levels of proficiencies showed that although the same books and the same language teaching methodology were applied in each class the EFL learners of different proficiencies (pre-intermediate and intermediate levels) committed different types of errors and the EFL teachers being affected by learners’ error types, employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies which means that the learners’ error types affected teachers’ choice of CF types.

This study also shows that we probably can never expect the students of the same class commit the same mistakes because the students think differently and produce different topics to support their beliefs and comments and they use their own specific acquired language competence, culture, knowledge and feelings to create their own personal output. According to Ellis and Jiang (2009) “different perspectives on corrective feedback are offered by interactionist/cognitive theories and sociocultural theory”. This study not only shows the diversity of errors among the students of different proficiency levels but also supports the fact that there is a diversity of corrective feedback reactions by the EFL teachers.
REFERENCES


THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXTROVERT/INTROVERT EFL LEARNERS COOPERATIVE WRITING

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ABSTRACT
The present study was an attempt to investigate the difference between extrovert and introvert English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' cooperative writing. Initially 150 intermediate learners were asked to participate in the study. They sat in a Preliminary English Test PET and 90 homogenous learners, in term of language proficiency, were selected to fill Persian translation of Eysenck Personality Inventory questionnaire. Based on the results, 30 introvert and 30 extrovert learners were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Both groups received a model of cooperative learning (CL), i.e. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) as their treatment. After the treatment was done, they were asked to cooperatively write two essays in descriptive voice on two different topics. Their writings were scored based on Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughery (1981) scoring profile by two raters, and the mean of each student's scores were considered as their cooperative writing score. Then the performance of extrovert and introvert learners on the test was compared using independent samples t-test. The results indicated that introvert learners significantly outperformed extrovert learners. The results indicated that despite the fact that Iranian learners are mostly individualistic, some cooperative learning methods could be helpful and accepted by them. Also teacher training centers need familiarize teachers with CL techniques and syllabus designers use more exercises and tasks include CL models like CIRC.

KEYWORDS: cooperative writing, extrovert, introvert.

INTRODUCTION
Many EFL teachers complain and wonder why their students do not show considerable improvement in their writings every time they check the students’ writings. This shortcoming on the part of a student's maybe partly due to personality traits and partly due to atmosphere of the class which is more competitive and teacher-centered rather than cooperative and learner-centered. almost all researchers working on CL have consensus on that the learners performance improves through cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2008; Kagan, 1990; Slavin, 1995; Sharan, 2010, as cited in shideh, 2011).There is also conflicting suggestions about the differences
between learning achievements of extroverted and introverted learners (e.g. Berry, 2007; Van Dael, 2005). Furthermore, only a few researches have been done in order to compare EFL learners' personality trait of extroversion/introversion and their performance in cooperative writing tasks, e.g., in Iran, Shideh (2011) has investigated this relationship in speaking tasks.

Cooperative writing is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning. In this way students will interact with each other and the teacher during the instructional session. As Johnson and Johnson (2008) stated within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. According to Sharan, Y. (2010) the benefits of cooperative learning are a better mutual relationship, respect, and higher communication. It also has advantages in thinking strategies. Competitive learners have difficulty in obtaining a balance between being competitive and interacting with others. Their emotional interaction and trust are two other concerns. "The basic elements are Positive interdependence, Promotive interaction, Interpersonal and small group skills, Group processing, and individual and group accountability which are essential for effective group learning, achievement, and higher-order social, personal and cognitive skills (e.g., problem solving, reasoning, decision-making, planning, organizing, and reflecting)." (Johnson, D.W & Johnson R.T. 2005, pp.285-360).

**An Overlook on Cooperative Learning**

Co-operative learning has been championed by many advocates. One reason for its popularity lies in the flexibility of the term ‘co-operative learning’ and, consequently, in the possibility of applying it to different theories and educational contexts. At first sight this flexibility strikes one as positive, and no doubt it is. However, the term is potentially misleading if the conditions it denotes are not seen as being embedded in a particular theory, a specific domain of knowledge or a certain curricular context; for example, a common curriculum. In co-operative learning contexts students do not learn in what may be called a compositional vacuum; they are members of a class and a small group. New researches defend the claim that it is especially such compositional contexts that have consequences for learning opportunities in co-operative learning environments (Resh, 1999; Terwel et al. 2001; Terwel & Van den Eeden, 1994; Webb, 1982).

Co-operative learning was designed and implemented to develop social strategies and acceptable social attitudes in students, and to improve social relations within and between groups. In addition, there is a large cluster of co-operative learning models aimed at cognitive development. Sometimes co-operative learning is directed at both the social and the cognitive side of human development. There is yet a third, more comprehensive perspective, one that is not necessarily in contrast to the social and the cognitive aims of co-operative learning. It is called curriculum perspective on cooperative learning. Furthermore College and university students are increasingly being asked by faculty to work co-operatively and learn collaboratively. This increased emphasis on group learning is partly a reaction to societal changes including a new emphasis on team work in the business sector (Millis & Cottell, 1998) coupled with a realization that in a rapidly changing information society (Hansen & Stephens, 2000) communication skills are increasingly important. At the tertiary level of education, the reasons include an increasingly diverse student population who need to develop ways of learning together in order to achieve (Millis & Cottell,
1998), the increased use of teaching and learning that emphasize learner-driven approaches such as peer learning (Hansen & Stephens, 2000), the growth of online courses (Carlson, 2000) that may include a computer-mediated conferencing component requiring online dialogue, and student projects that often require a team approach because of their scope, depth and type (Puntambekar 1999).

Researchers have shown that group learning leads to academic and cognitive benefits. Group learning promotes student learning and achievement (Cockrell et al., 2000; Hiltz, 1998; Johnson et al. 2000; Slavin, 1992), increase the development of critical thinking skills (Brandon and Hollingshead, 1999; Cockrell et al., 2000), and promote greater transfer of learning (Brandon and Hollingshead 1999). Group learning also aids in the development of social skills such as communication, presentation, problem solving, leadership, delegation and organization (Cheng & Warren, 2000).

Kagan (1995) states: cooperative learning was developed originally for educating people of different ages, experience and levels of mastery of the craft of interdependence. He sees education as a reacclituration process through constructive conversation. Students learn about the culture of the society they wish to join by developing the appropriate vocabulary of that society and by exploring that society's culture and norms. Cooperative learning may be used in different situations. For example students work in pairs together in a Think-Pair-Share procedure, where students consider a question individually, discuss their ideas with another student to form a consensus answer, and then share their results with the entire class. The use of pairs can be introduced at any time during a class to address questions or solve problems or to create variety in a class presentation. The Jig Saw method (Aronson 1978) is a good example. Students become "experts" on a concept and are responsible for teaching it to the other group members. Groups subdivide a topic and members work together with those from other groups who have the same topic. They then return to their original groups and explain their topic.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1991) have summarized some principles in their definition of cooperative learning: "First, knowledge is constructed, discovered, and transformed by students. Faculty create the conditions within which students can construct meaning from the material studied by processing it through existing cognitive structures and then retaining it in long-term memory where it remains open to further processing and possible reconstruction. Second, students actively construct their own knowledge. Learning is conceived of as something a learner does, not something that is done to the learner. Students do not passively accept knowledge from the teacher or curriculum. Students activate their existing cognitive structures or construct new ones to subsume the new input. Third, faculty effort is aimed at developing students' competencies and talents. Fourth, education is a personal transaction among students and between the faculty and students as they work together. Fifth, all of the above can only take place within a cooperative context. Sixth, teaching is assumed to be a complex application of theory and research that requires considerable teacher training and continuous refinement of skills and procedures" (p1:6)
There are different models of cooperative learning: Slavin developed the STAD method (Student Teams-Achievement-Divisions) where the teacher presents a lesson, and then the students meet in teams of four or five members to complete a set of worksheets on the lesson. Each student then takes a quiz on the material and the scores the students contribute to their teams are based upon the degree to which they have improved their individual past averages. The highest scoring teams are recognized in a weekly class newsletter. In another method developed by Slavin- TGT (Teams-Games-Tournaments) instead of taking quizzes the students play academic games as representatives of their teams. They compete with students having similar achievement levels and coach each other prior to the games to insure all group members are competent in the subject matter. Other structures include: CIRC- Cooperative Integrated Reading and Comparison (Madden, Slavin, and Stevens), Learning Together (Johnson & Johnson), Jigsaw II (Slavin).

Who Gains What From Cooperative Learning
For all its demonstrated benefits, students are often apprehensive about group learning, especially those who have had previous experience with learning in groups. Students fear that other team members will not pull their weight or that they will waste their time explaining the material to be learned to slower team mates (Felder & Brent, 1996; Salomon & Globerson, 1989). Students are also resistant to student-centred approaches to learning because of its novelty; they are accustomed to teacher-centred, direct instruction where students are provided with the content they need to know (Felder & Brent, 1996). Another major reason for apprehension is that college and university students often do not know how to work together and are not given any help in making their groups functional (Phipps et al. 2001).

Equally important is the impact of group learning on faculty. Faculty face myriad instructional and institutional challenges when implementing group learning into their classrooms. These include the changing role of the instructor from lecturer to facilitator or coach, the shift in authority from the individual instructor to shared authority with the group of learners, careful planning of the instructional setting such as timing and efficiency concerns, and assessment issues such as group versus individual grades.

Traditionally, the instructor has been the source of knowledge in the classroom (Hansen & Stephens, 2000). As a result of the nature of this role, instructors adopted what they considered to be the most efficient instructional method for imparting information – lecturing. While lecturing is still the most common teaching method in higher education (Gamson, 1994), it simply does not occupy a very major role in the collaborative learning context. As the onus for knowledge construction, information researching and product creation rests increasingly with student groups, the role of the teacher changes from ‘the sage on the stage’ to ‘the guide on the side’. In this way, faculty become individuals who facilitate students in the learning process. They assist with knowledge discovery and investigation, subtly steer learning activities and group processes, and coach students along in the educational experience. In group learning, the relationships between students and teachers are different from more traditional educational contexts. Both learners and instructors share the responsibility for the learning experience. Students become participants who use social skills to create knowledge, and undertake and complete tasks (Matthews et al. 1995). For the teacher-as-lecturer to become the teacher-as-facilitator, a shift in authority within the
classroom must occur. This can be disconcerting for many teachers. However, with careful planning, flexibility, self-confidence and practice, a shift in the role of the teacher from the traditional lecturer to a facilitator/mentor can be accomplished successfully (Hanson 1995). Group learning imposes a steep learning curve on everyone involved (Felder & Brent, 1996). The key to making group learning successful is to understand the process and to take precautionary steps to ensure success (Felder & Brent, 1996).

RESEARCH QUESTION
To investigate the difference between extrovert/introvert EFL learners' cooperative writing the following question was proposed: Is there any significant difference between extrovert/introvert EFL learners' cooperative writing?

METHODOLOGY
The purpose of the study is to investigate the difference between extrovert and introvert EFL learners’ cooperative writing. Accordingly, 150 male EFL students were tested and 60 of them were selected to serve as the subjects of the study. These 60 learners were assigned to four different groups—two groups included extroverts and two groups included introverts. Afterwards, they will be taken a course of writing based on a model of cooperative learning, namely Cooperative Integrative Reading and Composition (CIRC). At the end of the program they were asked to sit in two writing tests and the obtained results went through the statistical analysis.

Participants
The participants of this study were 60 intermediate EFL learners studying English at three branches of Iranmehr Language Institute, namely Haft-e Tir, Dolat, and Shahrok-e Gharb, Tehran, Iran. The Participants were ranging between 20 and 30 in age. Initially 90 learners were selected from a larger group of 150 students based on their results on PET. Then, 60 students were selected based on the results of the performance on the administered short scale of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire-Revised. Half of the selected students were proved, based on the results of the questionnaire, to be extrovert and the other half to be introvert.

Instrumentation
Personality Questionnaire
The EPI (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985) is a validated 57 Yes/No item questionnaire to assess the personality traits of a person. The test provides the testees with three different scores: the E score which is related to how much extrovert a person is, the N score measuring the neuroticism, and the Lie score which tries to measure how socially desirable a person has wanted to prove to be. The E score is computed out of 24 since it consists of 24 items, the N score is out of 24, and the Lie score is out of nine. The researchers used the Farsi version provided and validated by Seena Institute of Behavioral Sciences Research in Tehran in order for the respondents to answer the questionnaire more accurately. The reliability of the administration of the EPI questionnaire was calculated to be 0.72.
Preliminary English Test (PET)
To begin with, the researcher used a sample PET to choose a homogenous sample of participants based on their level of proficiency prior to the study. PET consists of the four parts of reading and writing (paper 1), listening (paper 2), and speaking (paper 3).

The first paper (reading and writing) takes one hour and 30 minutes. The reading part consists of five parts (35 questions) which test different reading skills with a variety of texts. The writing part comprises three parts which test a range of writing skills. The test’s focus here is the assessment of candidates’ ability to produce straightforward written English. Paper 2 (listening) takes 30 minutes. This part consists of four parts ranging from short exchanges to longer dialogues and monologues which will be heard by students two times. The test focus in this section is assessment of candidates’ ability to understand dialogues and monologues in both informal and neutral settings on a range of everyday topics. The last paper which is speaking lasts for 10-12 minutes per pair of candidates. The test focus of the speaking part is assessment of candidates’ ability to express themselves in order to carry out functions as threshold level. As this research was focused on the writing ability of the learners, the listening, reading, and writing papers of the PET was administered. The reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the pilot PET – using Cronbach Alpha was 0.72. The inter-rater reliability of the two raters scoring the writing papers proved significant (r = 0.832, p = 0.003 < 0.01). Hence, the researcher was rest assured that the two raters could proceed with scoring all the subsequent writing papers in this study.

Essay Writing Test
Two essay writing test were used to fulfill the purpose of this study. The students will be asked to cooperatively write two essays on two different predetermined topics in a descriptive voice. Their performances on these tests were scored by two raters and the mean of each learner’s score were served as the data for final data analyses.

Writing Rating Scales
The analytic writing scale which was used to rating participants performance on the both essay writing tests is based on analytic scoring profile of Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey (1981, as cited in Weigle, 2002, p.116). In this rubrics, essays are rated on five different rating dimensions of writing quality in different parts: content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points). Also, there are several sample answers to the Writing Part 3, with marks and examiner comments, in order to help teachers to assess the standards required in PET. In the present study, marks for Part 3 of PET were given according to the Cambridge Mark Scheme ranging from 0-5. The inter-rater reliability of the scores, calculated based on the first 10 papers scored by them, was proved significant (r = 0.791, p = 0.007 < 0.01)
RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Participant Selection

The first step in the process of participants’ selection was to pilot PET. Since the purpose of this study was to measure the writing ability of the participants, the speaking section of PET was excluded from PET. Following the piloting of the PET, the descriptive statistics of this administration were calculated with the mean and standard deviation standing at 48.83 and 7.79, respectively. After piloting the test, item analysis was done. Item facility measures fell between .33 and .75 and item discrimination amounts ranged from .14 to .54. Therefore, there was no malfunctioning item; and thus, no need to revision on any of the items. Moreover, the reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the pilot PET – using Cronbach Alpha was 0.72.

Following the piloting, the PET was administered to 150 students with the aim of selecting 90 of them for the study. The aim of this administration was to homogenize learners in terms of their language proficiency. The descriptive statistics of this process are presented below with the mean and standard deviation being 52.28 and 7.98, respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for PET Proficiency Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</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>PET administration</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>69.50</td>
<td>52.28</td>
<td>7.98036</td>
<td>-.297</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Histogram of the Scores Obtained on the PET Administration

The next step was to identify extrovert and introvert learners participants were asked to fill in the Persian translation of Eysenck Personality Inventory. In order to save the validity of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer to the all items of the questionnaire. Only the E score of them, however, was utilized in identifying the degree of extroversion. Descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance in the 24 items of the questionnaire devoted to measure the degree of extroversion (E-score) is provided in table 2.
The researcher administered the two cooperative writing tests as posttests in the two experimental groups.

As shown in Table 3 below, the mean and standard deviation of the introvert group were 78.97 and 8.39, respectively. In the extrovert group, however, the mean was 72.63 while the standard deviation stood at 8.93.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Essay Writing Posttest in Both Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum Statistic</th>
<th>Maximum Statistic</th>
<th>Mean  Statistic</th>
<th>Std. Deviation Statistic</th>
<th>Skewness Statistic</th>
<th>Std. Error Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introvert</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>62.00</td>
<td>94.00</td>
<td>78.9667</td>
<td>8.39328</td>
<td>-.202</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extrovert</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>91.00</td>
<td>72.6333</td>
<td>8.93070</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>91.00</td>
<td>72.6333</td>
<td>8.93070</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally to test the null hypothesis an independent sample t-test was run in order to find out if there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups at the final exam.
CONCLUSION

In implementing cooperative learning contextual factors and personality factors should be taken into account. Although extroverts seemed to benefit more from the activities of CIRC, the introverts outperformed them in the writing. The results were in line with the findings of other researches that reported inverse relationship between the degree of extroversion and writing performance. The reason for this difference could be that introverts “use different pathways in the brain,” when they do writing. Another reason could be lowering significantly the level of anxiety. When they don’t need to retrieve the words immediately, they can better code the words from their long term memory and write it down.

Teacher training centers and institutions need to familiarize teachers with explicit techniques of CIRC which is proved to be more effective in the process of writing.

The results indicate that despite the fact that Iranian learners are mostly individualistic and prefer to work on their own, some cooperative learning methods could be helpful and accepted by them.

The results of this research may have implication for syllabus designers to insert more exercises that include cooperative learning of the materials.

It provides insights for the material developers to use more of CIRC exercises and tasks in their material when they are aimed to improve the writing of the students.

It is recommended that more CIRC tasks and exercises be applied in a lesson in the form of well-designed tasks to enhance students’ learning. This will allow teachers to teach less and students to learn more through constructing their own knowledge over learning.

**Limitations of the study**

Since the educational culture in Iran is individualistic, it is difficult to convince learners to work in groups. The majority of the students depend on the teacher providing them with the correct answers. Therefore, persuading students to work in groups requires a lot of effort. Since CIRC,
by definition, is developed for the upper elementary grades (Stevens et al., 1987, as cited in Slavin, 2011, p 14), the participants of this study were limited to upper elementary learners.

REFERENCES


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THE RELATIONSHIPS OF FIELD INDEPENDENCE-DEPENDENCE WITH EFL LEARNERS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THEIR PERFORMANCE ON GRAMMAR TESTS: A CASE OF HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
Recently, the interest of both teachers and researchers in the field of foreign language learning and teaching has increasingly focused on the learner, including the strategies which an individual uses in learning and communicating. The problem under investigation was to see whether there is any significant relationship among the field independence-dependence, attitudes and performing on grammatical structure by students from high schools of Sanandaj. It also examines separately the relationships of FD/I cognitive styles and the students’ grammatical performance and also the relationships of attitudes and students’ grammatical performance toward learning English. So 60 students of Farzanegan high school were selected. To measure the students’ FD/I level the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) was administered. The means of the students’ scores were used to represent their grammar tests performance. The results of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation revealed a significant correlation between the FD/I cognitive styles and the grammar scores. But again according to those results there isn’t any significant correlation between attitudes and grammar scores. One of the most important implications of this study may be in that teachers can classify their students based on their FD/I cognitive styles to teach structure (Grammar) skills more efficiently and systematically. In fact, the Iranian EFL teachers should take this into account that the learners’ cognitive styles (FD/I) are considered to be determining factors in the process of teaching and learning structure skills.

KEYWORDS: Field-dependent/independent learner’s, Attitude, Performance grammar tests.
INTRODUCTION
The concept of attitudes has since long been one of the most generally applied concepts by psychologists and sociologists (Allport, 1935; Ajzen, 2001). Although many theoretical approaches in social psychology have given their own specific meaning to the concept (Van der Pligt & De Vries, 1995; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), some general notion of attitude is common to all interpretations. Generally accepted is the conception that attitudes have an intermediary role in the psychological process between stimuli from some object (person, situation, and instance) and behavioral responses.

In most approaches attitude is referring to some evaluative condition or process which explains the consistency of individual behavior with respect to some object. Cognitive as well as affective elements (positive or negative) are generally considered as intrinsically related to attitudes. Although behavioral elements are related to attitudes, it is accepted rather broadly that they are not parts of attitudes: attitudes are the evaluative responses that explain (in some degree) the behavioral acts (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Field dependence (FD) refers to a cognitive style in which an individual tends to look at the whole of a learning task which contains many items. The FD individual has difficulty in studying a particular item when it occurs within a field of other items. The "field" may be perceptual or it may be abstract, such as a set of ideas, thoughts, or feelings. Field independence (FI), on the contrary, refers to a cognitive style in which an individual is able to identify or focus on particular items and is not discredited by other items in the background or context (Brown, 2000; Gollnick and Chein, 1994). It appears possible that language tests of today may favor learners with certain cognitive styles. The present study is an attempt at finding the possible relationships of field independence-dependence, with EFL learner’s attitudes towards the English language and their performance on grammar tests: A Case of High-School Students.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
A number of studies have noted that the distinction between Field-Dependent and Field-Independent individuals is similar to that of differentiating Holists and Serialists (e.g., Jonassen & Grabowski, 1993; Riding & Cheema, 1991). Field-Dependent individuals typically see the global picture, ignore the details, and approach a task more holistically. Field-Independent individuals tend to discern figures as being discrete from their background, to focus on details, and to be more surrealistic in their approach to learning.

What Affects Field Dependence-Independence?
Thus far the discussion has focused on things that are affected by field dependence-independence. There are a few factors, however, that affect the degree to which we are each field dependent or independent.

Child Rearing Practices
Witkin (1973) believed that field dependence-independence tendencies result from child rearing practices that emphasize gaining independence from parental controls (Korchin, 1986). The early
studies of child rearing done by Witkin (1973) showed that when there is strong emphasis on obedience to parental authority and external control of impulses, the child will likely become relatively field dependent. When there is encouragements within the family for the child to develop separate, autonomous functioning, the child will become relatively field independent.

**Gender**
There is mixed evidence on the effect of gender on field dependence-independence. Studies of children have not found any differences at all. However, in studies of adults when differences between sexes and field dependence-independence are found, males always achieve scores that are indicative of greater field independence. The effect of gender on field dependence-independence is so small that this factor is practically insignificant.

**Age**
There appears to be some effect of age on field dependence-independence. Children are generally fielded dependent, but their field independence increases as they become adults. Adults (especially adult learners) are more field independent (Gurley, 1984). After that time, field independence gradually decreases throughout the remainder of life, with older people tending to be more field dependent than younger people (Witkin, et al., 1973).

The present study, investigates the relationship between the learning styles (dependent and independent styles) of the students in English language achievement by considering age and gender of the learners.

**Research in the Realm of Field Dependency and Field Independency in Iran**
In his study, Salmani-Nodoushan (2007) titled “Is Field Dependence or Independence a predictor of EFL reading performance” investigated the Field Dependency or Independency on systematic variance into Iranian EFL students’ overall and task-specific performance on task-based reading comprehension tests. Having selected a large number of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students, all majoring in English at different Iranian universities, he administered the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) to the participants. His study demonstrated that individuals ‘cognitive styles made a significant difference in their test performance in the proficient, semi proficient, and fairly proficient groups, but this was not the case in the low-proficient group. In addition his study revealed that cognitive style resulted in a significant difference in participants’ performance on specific tasks such as true-false, sentence completion, outlining, scanning, and elicitation in all proficiency groups.

Yarahmadi (2011) did a study on Field Independence/Dependence and ownership writing differences found that for both male and female students there was a relationship between Field Dependency and ownership in writing. She concluded that the use of first person singular pronouns and/or possessive adjectives was more characteristic of Field Dependent students. She argued that students are able to improve their writing ability by being aware of style areas in which they feel less comfortable, and this provide avenues to enrich their nonintellectual growth. In the same vein, teachers can identify learning style patterns in writing classes and make the best
Ahmady and Yamini (1992) conducted a study on the relationship between Field Dependency/Independency and listening comprehension strategy use by female Iranian English language learners. Selecting 138 students at the intermediate level, chosen out of 208, they were given the Strategy Inventory for Listening Comprehension to determine the type of strategies they used. Correlation coefficients illustrated that metacognitive, memory, cognitive and social strategies were significantly related to the cognitive style, whereas affective and compensatory strategies did not demonstrate a significant correlation. They concluded that FI students used metacognitive, memory, and cognitive strategies more frequently than the FD counterparts, but FD students used social strategies more than FI ones.

Nilforooshan and Afghar (2007) did a study on the impact of Field Dependence-Independence in EFL learners’ writing performance. They found that there is a significant difference between Field Dependent/Independent groups in writing skill in general and narrative writing in particular with Field Independent learners outperforming the Field Dependents.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The present study aims at answering four research questions:
1. Is there any relationship of field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj?
2. Is there any relationship of attitude towards English language and performance grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj?
3. Can GEFT significantly predict attitude toward learning English?
4. Can GEFT significantly predict grammar tests towards learning English?

NULL HYPOTHESES
In line with the above questions, the following three hypotheses are formulated:
1. There is no relationship between field independency-dependency and learning grammatical structure among high school students in Sanandaj.
2. There is no relationship between attitudes toward English and learning grammatical structure among high school students in Sanandaj.
3. GEFT cannot significantly predict attitude toward learning English.
4. GEFT cannot significantly predict grammatical structure toward learning English.

METODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of the study were initially 60 students who studied at grade two in Farzanegan high school of Sanandaj. The age of the participants ranged from 16 to 17. There were no boy students in this study.
Instruments
For collecting information from participant two questionnaires and one grammar test from lessons 1-5 of high school student’s book were employed. The measurements of each of these variables are discussed in the following sections:

Group Embedded Figure Test
The Group Embedded Figure Test (GEFT) was used to categorize students as field dependent, field independent, or bimodal for the purposes of providing their attitudes toward English and learning structure. The GEFT is a group administered test that requires the subject to outline a simple geometric shape within a complex design. The subject must locate or separate the relevant information from the contextual field and restructure it to design the correct shape. In theory, this task discriminates the extent to which the person perceives analytically and is able to identify the relevant information within the organized field. The estimate of reliability of the GEFT is reported at .82 (Witkin, Oltman, Raskin, & Karp, 1971).

The GEFT test was presented in a booklet form. During the GEFT test, participants were required to finish all 25 items within 12 minutes. Within each complex figure was embedded one of eight simple figures, participants were asked to trace the simple figure with a pencil. In the first two minutes, participants worked on seven practice items, which were not scored. In the following ten minutes, participants completed the 18 items that comprised the actual test. The completed tests were individually scored by the researcher. The total possible score ranged from 0 to 18. Omitted items were scored as incorrect (Witkin et al., 1971).

Participants in this study were classified as field dependent (FD) and field independent (FI) based on their scores on the GEFT test. Participants who scored greater than one-half standard deviation above the mean were considered field independent, while participants who scored less than one-half standard deviation below the mean were considered field dependent (Dwyer & Moore, 1991-1992).

Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (ATMB)
Another test that was used for this study is Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). This test was performed to measure the student’s attitudes. This test consisted of 104 items that they can answer the items independently. Since I selected this test for high school students, I have translated the questionnaire from English to Persian.

Grammar test
And the last questionnaire was grammar test, in which I selected 40 questions from khate Sefid book of high school students for investigating the score of their grammars. And since this book was designed by some experts of language teaching so this book is valid and it is used in all English classes of schools.

Procedures
At the beginning of each session, the researcher read a detailed explanation outlining the research process. Participants were asked to complete the GEFT test first. They were given two minutes to
work on the 7 practice items, and then 10 minutes to take the actual test. Standard oral directions from the manual for the Group Embedded Figures Test were given during the test to ensure that all participants received the same message.

The tests of this study were accomplished in 3 days and also in two classes of high school in Sanandaj. At first day, the participants finished the GEFT test which took an average time of 10 minutes, at the second day, they were asked to answer the grammar test which took an average time of 20 minutes independently. There was no interaction between participants during the session.

And in third day, they were asked to answer the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which took an average time of 25 minutes to complete. This test consisted of 104 questions that students answered them according to their attitudes and feelings toward English language.

**Data collection and analysis**

Data were collected through questionnaire. First, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was performed in order to find their own feelings based on everything they know and have heard. There is no right or wrong answer. Second, Group Embedded Figure Test (GEFT) was performed to illustrate the field dependent and independent students. Third, the grammar test was performed in order to examine the student’s score in grammar. And at last to examine the relationships among these three variables, correlation analysis was performed.

A descriptive analysis was first conducted to generate detailed information, including means, standard deviation, and frequency data, to describe and infer characteristics of the participants.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

1. Is there any relationship between field independence-dependence and performance on grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj?

A point-biserial correlation was run to probe any significant relationships of field independence-dependence and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Traits</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar Test</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results ($R_{pbs}(40) = .609, P < .05$) indicated that there was a significant relationships between field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj. Thus the first null-hypothesis was rejected.
2. Is there any relationship of attitudes toward English language and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj?

A Pearson correlation was run to probe any significant relationships of attitudes toward English and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation for correlation of Learning Structure with Attitude toward Language Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Grammar Test</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.262</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results (R (40) = .26, P > .05) indicated that there was not any significant relationship between attitudes toward English language learning and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj. Thus the second null-hypothesis was supported.

**KR-21 Reliability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEFT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table 3, for attitude reliability as the number of students is 60, the mean is 400.717, the variance is 2345.800, and the KR-21 is .90 so this test is acceptable amount. For grammar tests reliability as the number of students is 60, the mean is 14.892, the variance is 5.043, and the KR-21 is .54 so this test is acceptable amount. And for the reliability of last tests GEFT as the number of students is 60, the mean is 11.900, the variance is 16.227, and the KR-21 is .74 so this test is acceptable amount.

**Construct Validity**

A factor analysis was run to probe the underlying constructs of the attitude, grammatical structure and GEFT tests. The SPSS extracted one factor which accounted for 53.05 percent of the total variance.

Factor analysis to probe the underlying constructs of the attitude, structure and GEFT tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Total Variance Explained for the extracted factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in Table 5 the attitude, grammar tests and GEFT tests loaded on the only extracted factor.
As displayed in Table 5 the attitude, grammar tests and GEFT tests loaded on the only extracted factor. Based on these results it can be concluded that for the present sample, these three tests tap on the same underlying construct although the Attitude seems to have the least contribution to this trait (factor).

3. Can GEFT predict students’ attitude toward learning English?
A regression analysis was run to predict students’ attitude by using GEFT as seen in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>R Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.159a</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>48.2243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), GEFT
b. Dependent Variable: Attitude

Based on the above Table, GEFT can predict only 2.5 percent of students’ attitude (R = .15, R² = .025). This small amount could be attributed to the fact that FI/D is a cognitive factor while attitude is an affective factor which may not be so correlated.

The Normal P-P Plot 1 indicated that the regression model enjoyed normal distribution because majority of the dots fell along the diagonal.

Normal P-P Plot: Attitude on GEFT
4. Can GEFT predict students’ performance on grammar tests?

A regression analysis was run to predict students’ structure by using GEFT as it is observed in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.547a</td>
<td>.299</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>1.8964</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), GEFT
b. Dependent Variable: Structure

Based on the results indicated in Table 7 GEFT can predict 29.9 percent of students’ structure (R = .54, R² = .199). This higher amount of correlation could be attributed to the fact that performance on grammar tests and GEFT are both cognitive factors.

The Normal P-P Plot 2 indicated that the regression model enjoyed normal distribution because majority of the dots fell along the diagonal.

The results obtained in this study show that field dependence- independence are related to the performance grammar tests of high school students. But there isn’t any significant relationship between attitude and performance grammar tests of high school students.

As field dependence has been associated with naturalistic second language acquisition and field independence with classroom learning (See Ellis, 1985; Brown, 2000; Carter, 1988), it seems natural for FI students to use more meta-cognitive strategies to enhance their grammatical learning. Similarly, FI students make more use of cognitive strategies including translation,
repetition, transfer, rehearsal, etc. This can also be attributed to conscious learning and the activities that can be found in formal classroom situations.

In regards to the students’ attitudes towards the English language the results revealed that besides supporting the idea that English should be the medium of instruction in the secondary schools and at least some subjects like Physics and Chemistry should be taught in English, they were of the view that the teaching of English should start as early as the first grade in the schools. For their attitudes toward the Western culture, the students’ findings revealed that more than half of them showed their interest in the culture of the English speaking World as represented by English-language films. A possible interpretation of these findings might be the result of social tendencies affected by globalization. On the other hand, most of the students, in the present study, had negative attitudes toward the importance of using the English language in schools. Concerning the students’ English language attitudes, on the other hand, interesting findings were obtained. With regard to their attitudes towards the social value of English, the findings reveal that whilst most of the students responded positively to the idea that “the development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well”, the majority of them responded negatively to "the use of English in government and business offices helps in getting things done easily".

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to explore the relationships of field independence-dependence, with EFL learner’s attitudes towards the English language and their performance on grammar Tests and to determine whether this field independence-dependence and attitude were related to the performance grammar tests of high school students. The results showed that there was significant relationship between field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj. So the first null hypothesis was rejected. No significant relationship was also found between attitude toward English and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj. Therefore the last two null hypotheses were supported.

And according to the last two questions because GEFT can predict 29.9 percent of students’ structure, so performance on grammar tests and GEFT are both cognitive factors. And at last because GEFT can predict only 2.5 percent of students’ attitude, so this small amount could be attributed to the fact that FI/D is a cognitive factor while attitude is an affective factor which may not be so correlated.

Limitations of the study

This study, like many other studies, has a number of limitations. The number of the participants was relatively small (N= 60). This limitation may be due to the lack of time of students in the school. Factors like this might limit the generalizability of the results of this study to other populations. The other problem lies in the fact that this sample was a convenient sample, not any randomly selected. This may also limit the generalizability of the results of the study to other contexts. Another limitation is that in this study just one high school is selected.
REFERENCES


EVALUATION AND CONTENT ANALYSIS OF “ENGLISH FOR AVIATION FOR PILOTS AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS” TEXTBOOK AS AN ESP BOOK

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Imam Khomeini International University

Javad Khalilpour
Allame Tabataba’i University

ABSTRACT
Books in language learning and teaching have an undeniable significant role. Since English language teaching is essential for air traffic controllers and pilots all around the world, the aim of this study is to clarify the role of a coursebook used in educating and training air traffic controllers and pilots. This study conducted an analysis and evaluation of an ESP book in aviation industry named “English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers” by Oxford University Press. The analysis of this book is done by responding to the five questions about skills, content, sequencing, sociolinguistic factor of variety of language and format. To do this, a series of checklists from “teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: Substance and Techniques” by Betty W. Robinett(1978), “Choosing your Coursebook” by Alan Cunningsworth(1995), and “Language Curriculum Design” by Nation(2010) were used. “English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers” is analyzed and evaluated as suitable book for both purposes of classroom book and self-study. Notwithstanding some weaknesses, the book can satisfy the needs and interests of students whom are pilots and air traffic controllers to do their job with the first goal of safety.

KEYWORDS: communication, English language, aviation, ICAO, skills, activity, content.

INTRODUCTION
Some catastrophic accidents happened from the very beginning of aviation industry that were caused by language problems such as language misusing, misinterpretation of language used, malfunctioning in means of communication, different regional or social dialects and accents, lack in language knowledge or language use. English language is the unique language of aviation all around the world which is used not only in routine flights, but also in an emergency situation. Having the English language knowledge is vital for the safe conduct of flights and passengers lives. For instance, if an emergency occurred the pilot must be able to utter as simple and fluent as possible the nature of the situation and on the other hand the controller has to understand it completely without any missing part and then must take the proper action in order to resolve the emergency or assist the pilot of aircraft. Hence since 2008 ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) published and regulated the ICAO language proficiency requirement for
operational level (level 4) to unify the globally use of English language in aviation industry by ATCs and pilots.

Sometimes the pilot or air traffic controller says a phrase that cannot be interpreted by the officer on the other side of the communication and then caused an accident or incident. For instance in Tenerife North Airport disaster the crash killed 583 people, making it the deadliest accident in aviation history in which the KLM co-pilot read back *WE ARE AT TAKEOFF* then the tower controller, who could not see the runway due to the dense fog, initially responded with "OK" (nonstandard phraseology), which reinforced the KLM captain's misinterpretation that they had takeoff clearance. The controller misinterpreted that they were in takeoff position and ready to begin the roll when takeoff clearance was received, but not in the process of taking off. The controller then immediately added "stand by for takeoff, I will call you," indicating that he had not intended the clearance to be interpreted as a takeoff clearance. Therefore one of the reasons in this crash was the use of ambiguous non-standard phrases by the KLM co-pilot ("We're at take off") and the Tenerife control tower ("OK").

Consider that in face to face interaction apart from listening and speaking skills, we have body language, facial expressions, etc in order to pass our intention to the hearer, but in aviation there is no other mean than listening skill and ability in radiotelephony communication which is more difficult, challenging and requires higher degree of language proficiency than face to face communication. In addition the sound quality may be poor; and there exists garbled voice, and background noises. Therefore a proficient aviator must be able to use his/her language in any unpredictable situation effectively.

Hymes (1972) claims that in order to achieve communicative goal, second language learners must learn to speak not only grammatically, but also "appropriately". Here in aviation English, this “appropriateness” is the matter that authors try their bests to achieve it by providing authentic, comprehensible, meaningful, contextualized instructional materials.

The goal of language learning is communicative competence. Therefore the aim of all language learning books is to teach learners communication. Apparently Aviation English communication is pilot-ATC, pilot-pilot and ATC-ATC communications.

The language proficiency requirements for Aviation English (AE) by ICAO apply to listening and speaking skills only and do not address the reading and writing. It is also worth to consider that nowadays the number of international flights, which fly over several different countries with variety of languages and accents, are increasing. Therefore the need for an international language like English and also its acquisition or learning is increasing too.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Fluency</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational 4</td>
<td>Produces stretches of language at an appropriate tempo. There may be</td>
<td>Comprehension is mostly accurate on common, concrete, and work related topics</td>
<td>Responses are usually immediate, appropriate and informative. Initiates and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>occasional loss of fluency on transition from rehearsed or formulaic</td>
<td>when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not prevent effective</td>
<td>community of users. When the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communication. Can make limited use of discourse markers or connectors.</td>
<td>situational complication or an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fillers are not distracting.</td>
<td>be slower or require clarification strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-operational 3</td>
<td>Produces stretches of language, but phrasing and pausing are often</td>
<td>Comprehension is often accurate in common, concrete, and work related topics</td>
<td>Responses are sometimes immediate, appropriate, and informative. Can start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inappropriate. Hesitations or slowness in language processing may</td>
<td>when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prevent effective communication.</td>
<td>community of users.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary 2</td>
<td>Shows only limited control of a few simple memorized grammatical</td>
<td>Sentence patterns.</td>
<td>maintain exchanges with reasonable ease on familiar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>structures and sentence patterns associated with predictable situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>are not always well controlled, errors frequently interfere with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with understanding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-elementary 1</td>
<td>Perform at a level below the Elementary level</td>
<td>Perform at a level below the Elementary level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational 4</td>
<td>Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the L1 but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding.</td>
<td>Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are used creatively and are usually well controlled. Errors may occur, particularly in unusual or unexpected circumstances, but rarely interfere with meaning</td>
<td>Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-operational 3</td>
<td>Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the L1 and frequently interfere with ease of understanding</td>
<td>Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns associated with predictable situations are not always well controlled, errors frequently interfere with meaning</td>
<td>Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics, but range is limited and the word choice often inappropriate. It often unable to paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary 2</td>
<td>Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, are heavily influenced by the L1 and usually interfere with ease of understanding</td>
<td>Shows only limited control of a few simple memorized grammatical structures and Sentence patterns.</td>
<td>Limited vocabulary range consisting only of isolated words and memorize phrases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: ICAO language proficiency rating scale for pilots and air traffic controllers (ICAO Annex 1)
Fillers are sometimes distracting. Users may fail to understand a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events. Generally inadequate when dealing with an unexpected turn of events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary 2</th>
<th>Can produce very short, isolated, memorized utterances with frequent pausing and a distracting use of fillers to search for expressions and to articulate less familiar words.</th>
<th>Comprehension is limited to isolated, memorized phrases when they are carefully and slowly articulated.</th>
<th>Response time is slow and often inappropriate. Interaction is limited to simple routine exchanges.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-elementary 1</td>
<td>Performs at a level below the Elementary level.</td>
<td>Performs at a level below the Elementary level.</td>
<td>Performs at a level below the Elementary level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time books are important resources for teachers in order to help students to learn the instructional material and they are basic and main sources of data for the users.

Oxford University Press published English for aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers after IACO regulated its operational level 4 rating scale and its deadline in 2008. The goal of the book is to train and educate not only the students of air traffic services and pilots, but also the current pilots and ATCS who are at work. Taking into account the ICAO rating scale, the researchers attempt to see this ESP book deals with six subskills of pronunciation, structures, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and interaction. The book suggests that it can be used either as a coursebook in a class or a self-study book.

**Objectives of the study**

Because of the essential and unique role of language proficiency in aviation industry as a means of communication, the researchers try to analyze the defined areas of ICAO language proficiency rating scale. The present study believes that having a broader and deeper knowledge of content materials can assist teacher, designers, trainers, ESP material developers, ATCs and pilots, and aviation authorities to discover new approaches to improve the quality of coursebooks and consequently the quality of teaching and learning and also to provide a newly established ways of teaching.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To conduct, the current research provides methods in analysis of the book: Language skills, general content, sequencing, sociolinguistics factors, format (impression) evaluation and seeks to respond to following questions:
1. Does the book integrate the “four skills”? is there a balanced approach toward the skills? (language skills)
2. Does the book reflect what is now known about language and language learning? (general content)
   a. Authenticity of language
   b. Appropriateness and currency of topics, situations, and contexts
   c. Proficiency level-is it pitched for the right level?
3. How is the book sequenced? (sequencing)
4. Does the sociolinguistics factors are mentioned in the book? E.g. variety of language-American, British, standard.
5. Is the book attractive, durable and usable? (format)

METHODOLOGY

Materials
The ESP coursebook “English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers” by Sue Ellis and Terence Gerighty is the main material of this study in which there are 8 units arranging from Preflight and ground movements to landing phase and on the ground again. The main purpose of the book is to develop communicative competence of pilots and air traffic controllers and their language production while they are on duty of control center or tower and in command of aircraft.

Instruments
To manage the analysis, series of checklists from the three mentioned books in introduction are used. “Teaching by Principles” by Brown(2001) and “Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching” by Richards and Rodgers(2001). and other books are implemented to assist the evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language Skills
According to content-based instruction, English language skills must be integral in drills and activities. “It is important to integrate all the skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar in an authentic context”, Larsen-Freeman (2011). Therefore beside integrity of skills, authenticity is salient too. An authentic activity makes the learner feel in real situation or real life condition. So it helps the learning process in the learners mind.

Activities should be in a way to make learning meaningful in a real context. Stoller (1997) believes that language activities should be in service of language skills improvement. This study conduct an evaluation on each of the ICAO rating scale skills in details based on different types of activities and their frequencies in the book.

Six ICAO language skills are: vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, fluency, comprehension, and interaction.
Vocabulary
As shown in ICAO rating scale in Table 1, pilots and ATCs must be able to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics and often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected situations. Table 2 illustrates the different types of drills and tasks which are presented in the book and their frequencies.

Table 2: Vocabulary Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair-work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and Choose</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Using pictures and maps</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and check</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Listen and write</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence completion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Listen and talk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question answering</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experience telling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paraphrase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Larsen-Freeman, Teaching should build on students’ previous experiences, therefore the book has two experience-telling which wants the students to talk about their real experiences in work.

As indicated in ICAO scale students can paraphrase the sentences when they lack in vocabulary knowledge. Only the last unit of the book has a paraphrasing activity. Paraphrasing is so important for pilots and air traffic controllers while they are working and they do not know the exact word or the other person does not understand a specific vocabulary, he/she must paraphrase the meaning of that word. In vocabulary activities of the book beside other types of activities, there are five listening activities that indicate the integrity of skills, likewise writing and speaking activities. According to Content-Based Instruction skills must be integrated in an authentic context. “Instructional materials should have authenticity and comprehensibility” Jack C. Richards. The most frequent activity is using map and pictures which are eight. These use visual memory of the learners in order to internalize target vocabularies.

In question answering activities also we can see integration of skills because they have writing and talking too. Activities have discussion and pair-work tasks which are in accordance with CBI. It is worth to mention that units 5 and 6 do not have vocabulary activities.

Pronunciation
Pronunciation is fundamental for comprehension, fluency and interaction. If the speaker cannot pronounce the sounds correctly, the hearer cannot understand and react properly. And also if there is no correct pronunciation there will be no fluency.

Table 3: pronunciation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Repeat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair work</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the activities that students are suggested to improve is recognition which has the most frequency through the book. When a person realizes or recognizes the missed item (here is pronunciation), before it, he/she must have comprehended the meaning. Therefore recognition indicates the comprehension of the students. In almost all of the pronunciation activities in the book, first there is a recognition task, then provided by an audio track In the CD to check and monitor the students recognized input. The teacher in the classroom can correct the learners’ mistakes or in case of self-study, the student can self-monitor him/herself.

Unit one is merely dedicated to ICAO numbers and alphabet pronunciation. Unit one is the only unit which has listen and repeat exercises (two activities) and there is no trace of repetition in other units. So repetition which is in support of behaviorism in second language acquisition is neglected among the book with the exception of unit 1 and follows the functional, interactional and cognitive method of teaching pronunciation, for instance, recognition and pair-work drills.

In teaching of pronunciation, the book seems to have a sequence and order. Unit one has numbers and alphabet. Unit two works on 2-syllable words stress pattern. Unit three dedicated to stress pattern in sentences, e.g. interrogative and declarative sentences. Unit four discusses how to pronounce /s/, /ʃ/, /θ/ phonemes and also stressed words in sentences. Unit five tries to teach vowels and some diphthongs. Unit six talks about how to read a broadcast in a correct phonetic form and a pairwork. The broadcast context is aviation that provides comprehensibility and authenticity to the activity. Unit seven has activities about 3-syllable words stress pattern and even 4-syllable words. Unit eight provides three ways of pronouncing regular past tense [ed] verbs and consonant clusters in words. Therefore the book has an easy-to-difficult order of activities and pronunciation content material.

**Structure**

Pilots and air traffic controllers must know and use the correct and proper forms (structures) of English while they are communicating. Not having the knowledge of structure and even more important, not having the knowledge of how to use it in aviation communication may cause problems, incidents or even accidents. The purpose of the book is to train pilots and air traffic controllers to reach operational level 4 in which error may occur but rarely interfere with meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap filling (completion)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Writing activity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rearranging scrambled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Underlining the correct</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td>form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pairwork</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Listen and complete</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Retelling the story</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and choose</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4: frequency table of structural activities**
Gap filling (completion) is the most frequent type of activity in structure parts, then matching and pair-work

Again pair-work is detected as somehow an important activity in this area through the book to be compatible with communicative competence and CBI. The book tries to practice and work on all aspects of communicative competence. Canale defined the four aspects of communicative competence as: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, strategic competence. For instance by pairwork activity the book works on sociolinguistic and strategic competence while here in structure section the main focus is on grammatical competence too.

In teaching structure, the authors provide other skills like speaking, writing, listening and interaction. Therefore here the book has integrity of skills too.

In each structure activity, after having enough exercised the tasks by learners, the book provides a small box in order to show the structural patterns of what the learner exercised. As it is known, this way of teaching grammar is called” induction”. So the book follows inductive teaching of structures. Functions are important in structure. Grammatical structures are fit to that specific function of the exercise.

In unit four, there is a structure box with no activity before and after it.

**Fluency**

ICAO: students must be able to provide sentences at an appropriate tempo and can make limited use of discourse markers and connectors. Fillers are not distracting.

The book seeks to teach the students the above goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>matching</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Multiple choice test</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair-work</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>underlining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and question</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sentence completion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question answering</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Picture matching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience telling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>reading</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pair-work, question answering and talk are thereof the most frequent activities in this area which are all communicative in nature. There are ten reading exercises in which students will learn their fluencies. Fluency in reading is different from fluency in speaking. The book mostly tries to improve reading fluency ability of the students and tries less in speaking fluency. This amount of frequency shows the weakness of the book that the most frequent activity in fluency section is reading. As mentioned only fluency in speaking is significant in aviation and there is no use of reading in aviation. Although fluency in reading can effect on fluency in speaking, there is not a
straight and complete relationship between these two types of fluencies. Two experience telling activities provide authenticity and contextualization.

Experience telling makes the environment contentful. By contentful, we mean there will be a relationship between language and work related real personal memories. Other students can add some points and comment on the told experience to have peer interaction.

On page 41, the book has a multiple choice test. Unit four has only reading fluency activity. Six listening activities depict the importance of this skill in obtaining fluency.

It is clear that in fluency section, the book has integrity of skills. For instance reading, writing and speaking as well (table 5 shows this fact).

**Interaction**

Pilots and ATCs can speak in an interactive manner; otherwise they will encounter a problem in their work. The learners should reach the level to check, confirm or clarify the misunderstandings. Responses are usually immediate, appropriate and informative. They can initiate and maintain exchanges even in unpredictable situations. Therefore students should learn interaction and its techniques and skills through 13 pair-work communicative activities in the book. Pair work is the most frequent activity in the book in this area. It is reasonable and logical because when the learner starts interaction there must be another learner or participant to interact. Therefore pair-work is relevant and appropriate to be the most frequent one.

Table 6: interaction activities and their frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair-work</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and check</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explanation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and answer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beside pair work activities, there are only four other activities among the whole book. This is another sign that interactive pair work activities are playing the major role in this area. The book demonstrates a good image of interaction for learners with its 13 pair work communicative exercises. It is clear from the table that first students are asked to listen to the audio, then check, answer or explain the heard voice. Listening is a comprehensive skill and speaking is a productive skill. Both are needed in interaction. So we have comprehension and production with each other. It is worth to mention here the significance of the role of interaction in aviation that if there is no capability to interact, ATCs and pilots will not work at all.

**Comprehension**

Comprehension is the most vital language skill for pilots and ATCs. If a pilot or an ATC cannot understand the meaning of the message correctly, the consequences will probably be dangerous and when they misunderstand the meaning, the situation will be even more dangerous.
Table 7: comprehension activities and their frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Answer the questions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Listen &amp; Match</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Find the difficult area</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Picture Matching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Choose</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Experience Telling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Check</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen &amp; Complete</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here in this book, comprehension skill is the same as listening to some extent. Six activities out of 11 types of activities throughout the book are dedicated to listening skill. It shows the significance of listening comprehension in aviation and the role of it in AE.

Again in this area the book has two experience telling activities show the authenticity of the book as an ESP book. Interestingly the book has two reading comprehension parts in which students attempt to improve their comprehension ability in reading skill too. The need for reading comprehension is much less than listening comprehension.

It is worth to mention that having the knowledge of different accents is necessary for pilots and ATCs, because pilots may fly over different regions and countries around the world and ATCs have variety of international over flight, arrival and departure flight in their area of responsibility with different accents and dialects. At least being familiar with the American and British English is necessary and needed. This book attempts to show some of the differences between them.

38 activities are in listening and 3 are in matching. This contrast shows that comprehension ability or skill must be learnt by listening tasks. If there is no comprehension, there will not be production and performance. Hence comprehension is the base of performance. By performance, it is meant interaction, speaking and writing of which this study discusses the interaction and speaking. In this area there are interaction, reading, listening, discussion and experience telling. Hence, as CBI method suggests, integrity of skills is clear.

Content
Willis and Willis have provided six questions that can help us to evaluate the curriculum in respect of belonging to task-based language teaching or not. Fives are appropriate in evaluation of the books. The answers of these questions are as follows:

1. The book engages the learner’s interests via interesting, work related and situational audio tracks and readings, etc.
2. Of course the focus of the book is on meaning.
3. The outcome of the book is getting ICAO operational level 4 examination.
4. To some extent completion is the priority of the activities of the book.
5. Activities are in authentic and real contexts.

Thus we can conclude that the content is task-based.
The students of this book are ATCs and pilots, so they have background knowledge of Aviation and English language. Therefore the proficiency level of the book is suitable for the level of the learners. In Krashen’s (1985) term it is i+1 in order to be effective in the acquisition process.

The learners are seeking to reach ICAO level 4 of language proficiency and the book’s goal is exactly the same. Therefore the content suits the needs of learners. As mentioned before the content suits the interests of them too. Ideas can help the learning of language and are useful to the learners. The idea content of this book is a specific academic subject (aviation English). As this book is an ESP course book, this idea content suits the interests and needs of the learners.

The content is aviation and the learners are adult pilots and air traffic controllers. So the age and content are appropriate.

**Sequencing**

The book consists of eight units. The first unit of the book is “Introduction to Air Communications”. As the name suggests, it is an introductory unit. It starts with the basics and teaches basic information in aviation and aviation English e.g. pronunciation standards.

The order of the book is chronological which starts from “Pre-flight”, then “Ground Movements” to “Landing” and “On the Ground” again.

Unit two begins with preflight checks and unit eight ends in Taxiing and getting to the gate. In the topics under the title of each unit, there are some non-routine situations that provide some emergency or unusual conditions in the field of aviation in order to prepare pilots and ATCs to be ready for them. Non-routine and emergency situations are inevitable and inseparable events in aviation industry.

Each unit has a Starter section which is accompanied by pictures and is followed by a kind of warm-up exercise that includes discussion, checking, matching, completion or reasoning and talking in pairs communicatively. At the end of the book, there are appendices. The first is “Test Yourself!” which is crossword puzzle for evaluating and testing vocabulary knowledge of the students’ lexicon (Chomsky’s term (1957)).

Then, there are the “Partner Files” which are used in pair work interaction tasks. After them, there is “Answer Key” which is the answers of the activities through the book. The book is used for self-study as well as a coursebook in a class. In former, the learner may need some of the responses which can be obtained from this part.

Finally, there is “Transcripts” which are used for CD audio tracks. At the end of each unit a section exists which is called “Output”. It is a kind of reading comprehension. Another part is “Over to You” that is an activity of discussion, thinking and giving opinions, telling experiences and real past stories. Responds to this part is not obligatory in classroom by the teacher. The book follows the linear approach to sequencing because has an easy-to-difficult order of providing the items and skills. This kind of sequencing (linear) is appropriate for the development of
vocabulary, structural items, fluency, pronunciation, comprehension and. Therefore once an item has been presented in a class, it has been learned and does not need focused revision (Nation, 2010, Language Curriculum Design). As the instructed materials will not be exercised again during the course, if a student cannot obtain that material completely or the matter of absenteeism is the disadvantage of linear approach. So each unit designed on the basis of previous knowledge of the students and knowledge provided in previous unit. Therefore the book helps learners make the most effective use of previous knowledge (learning burden). It is worth to mention again here that the integrity of skills through the whole book has a positive effect on each other for learning and so that interference effects are avoided. (Interference)

According to the fluency of the exercises in each of the skill areas, the book provides the best possible coverage language through inclusion of items. The book progressively covers useful language items and skills (keep moving forward). Teachers of this coursebook should be aware of aviation knowledge and is recommended to be an ATC or a pilot, and he/she can account of when the learners are most ready to learn the skill. So far the study covered these areas of content: 1. learning burden 2. interference 3. teacherability.

**Sociolinguistic Factor (variety of language)**

Variety of language is significant in aviation English because it is an international language which the participants are from different countries with different mother tongue and its own linguistic rules. They must learn, speak and understand the standard English being used in aviation. Books should provide materials in order to teach the learners this issue.

Throughout the book variety of English language is mentioned in different sections and in variety of forms. For instance, there is a part in the book that indicates the different pronunciations such as British and American. In other part there is a box which shows the different kinds of dictation of English, for example aerodrome/airport or aeroplane/airplane. There is standard phraseology in many situations in aviation radio telephony communications which there is no trace of it in the book.

**Format**

As the book is an ESP book, it is apparently a meaning-focused book. It focuses also to the skills of language proficiency of AE (ICAO), so it is language focused too, including the fluency in AE. Therefore it meets the four strands principle which is meaning focused input, language-focused learning, meaning focused output and fluency.

As mentioned above the input is based on meanings, because meanings are vital and essential in the aviation industry. So the book has comprehensible input. Activities aimed at increasing the fluency through the book in order to make learners use their knowledge receptively and productively. But honestly speaking it is the weakness of the book that the majority of these field activities are in reading.

In the 21st century, technology, beauty, colors and design are essential elements for the books to affect the reader (learner). Therefore publishers must focus on these issues to be influential and
successful. The book includes CD ROM and audio CD with attractive relevant effective radio telephony extracts. CD ROM has an alphabetical word list and interactive exercises in different colors.

The cover of the book is blue with a very attractive design. The three images make the front cover attractive. Each unit starts with pictures and their relevant exercises. All units are started with different real images with the exception of unit 3 and 8. These units are started by sign pictures. Each page of the book includes one color at least other than the color of the heading of exercises and their stems. So the book is multicolored. Different kinds of pictures are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real Image</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartoon</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aeronautical Chart</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

147 pictures in only 95 pages indicate that each page of this book has at least one picture. Real photos consist of peoples’ faces, aircraft in variety of angles, flights in different phases. Different incidental or accident situations like burst tire, ground crash, wild animal or fire onboard and also meteorological phenomena like volcanic ash and etc. Therefore the design of the book is attractive and pleasant for the readers. They will not be bored while they are studying this book.

As the book itself suggests, students can use this book as either a coursebook in class or self-study book. For this purpose, the book has the Audio CD, CD ROM and Answer Keys and a section in all units named Over to You.

The major content of boxes in the book is variety of language, structural clues and useful language tips.

If the teacher of the course with this instructional material intends to teach aviation English and general English via topics, he/she will not be able to use this book. Because the book does not have situational-topical unit titles, the units cannot be taught randomly, and the learners loose the other provided materials. The other reason for not being able to use the book randomly is the linear order of the book. The third reason is that the book follows easy-to-difficult way of material presentation.

Based on the purpose of the book which is to train and teach pilots and ATCs for higher and better proficiency according to ICAO operational level 4, the book is durable, but the design, pictures and images may need to be changed in future to include more recent images of that era. This book fits to the needs of pilots and ATCs in instructional issues. Instructional issues are those six language skills of ICAO, but not the needs of teachers completely, because the chronological order of units and easy-to-difficult way of providing materials.
The book could satisfy the interests of learners to some extent and not completely, because most learners are interested in situational unit titles (based on a research on Iranian air traffic controllers). Some situational topics in aviation industry is: sick passenger, runway incursion, excursion, shortage of fuel, fire, dangerous goods, pressurization, landing problems, strikes, communication failure and etc. therefore the problem is time sequential order of units.

CONCLUSION
The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate an ESP book in aviation industry named “English for Aviation for pilots and ATCs”. In this analysis some questions in the domain of the skills, contents, sequencing, sociolinguistic feature of variety of language and format were responded. In order to answer these questions a series of checklists from “Teaching English to speakers of other languages: substance and techniques” by Betty W. Robinett (1978), “choosing your coursebook” by Alan Cunningsworth(1995), and “Language Curriculum Design” by Nation were used.

It is vital for ATCs and pilots to recall ICAO operational level of English to avoid catastrophic accident resulted from lack of English knowledge. This knowledge consists of comprehension and production. In vocabulary sections throughout the book, according to frequency table of vocabulary activities, using picture and maps is the most frequent one. These use visual memory of the learners to internalize target vocabulary. Only the last unit of the book has paraphrasing. A pilot or an ATC should be able be to paraphrase in conditions when the intended word cannot be comprehended or cannot be recalled to say. An effective and influential book should work on paraphrasing because it is essential in the field of aviation, especially in abnormal and unusual situations while safety is the first issue at work. Totally, vocabulary activities are evaluated as compatible with modern methods in language learning and teaching, but with some lacks and weak points. Having natural pronunciation is necessary in aviation for the sake of safety. The major activity in pronunciation sections of the book is recognition which works on both comprehension and production.

There is an easy-to-difficult order of activities in pronunciation. Providing structural patterns in the book has an inductive way. Gap filling, pairwork and matching are the most frequent activities in the book. The book has integrity of skills through combination of different language skills like speaking, writing, listening and interaction in order to practice on structures. Fluency is the weakest point of the book, because the most frequent activity is reading which is irrelevant to the nature of aviation. Experience telling and pairwork provide authenticity and contextualization. As the nature of interaction is to have two participants to exercise, pairwork is the most frequent activity. The authors provided a god deal of interaction exercises in the book to learn interaction to the learners. Despite interaction in these practices the book has listening activity too. In the comprehension area, 38 activities in listening and 3 in matching were used. It shows that comprehension skill must be learnt by listening tasks. In a number of pages, the book tries to teach and present some tips in language variations between American and British English. Knowledge in variety of language helps the pilots and ATCs to work with persons that have different mother tongues.
The book follows linear approach to sequencing because has an easy-to-difficult order of providing items and skills. As evaluated in the discussion section, it has its own benefits and disadvantages. Finally in the domain of format and presentation, the book meets the few strands principle which in meaning-focused input, language-focused input, language-focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency.

REFERENCES
THE EFFECT OF PEER FEEDBACK ON COHESION IMPROVEMENT IN WRITING SKILL AMONG EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of peer feedback on cohesion improvement in writing skill among English as foreign language (EFL) learners. This study focused on using peer feedback as a teaching tool in order to improve cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners at Shokuh institute in Kashmar, Iran. The participants of the study were 87 upper intermediate EFL learners who were selected from the institute. The boys’ and girls’ groups studied separately; there were 20 students in male control group; 21 students in the male experimental group, and 23 students in each of the female experimental and control groups. The quasi-experimental design was used to examine the hypotheses of the study. The same process of managing classes was applied to all groups, but the students in the experimental groups received feedback from their classmates. Finally, after considering the statistical analysis, the results revealed that peer feedback can significantly improve the cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners. In addition, there was a statistically significant difference between the males and females in benefiting from peer feedback. The results of the study suggest that the teachers can use peer feedback as a teaching tool to improve cohesion in the students’ writing and improve their participation in their classes, but since the male students were less likely to benefit from the peer feedback process in comparison to the females, teachers must have more concentration on the male learners in order to improve their performance in the process of peer feedback.

KEYWORDS: Cohesion, Cohesive Writing, Peer Feedback

INTRODUCTION
Cohesion refers to the ways in which texts are 'stuck together', the ways in which sentences are linked or connected by various linguistic and semantic ties (Kennedy, 1998). According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), “the concept of cohesion is related to semantic; it means that there is a relationship between the meaning that exist in text and that define it as a text” (p. 48). Many researchers have highlighted the importance of text cohesion claiming that a
text stands as a text by means of cohesion. Without cohesion, sentences would be disjointed and would result in a number of unrelated sentences (Hinkel, 2001).

According to Bijami (2013), as writing process approach has changed the way of teaching writing from students' final products to the process of writing, peer feedback has come to take an important part in writing instruction. Moreover, based on this process oriented approach, there are many teachers of English who even believe that teaching writing skill to EFL learners is more complex than teaching other communicative skills (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2001). Traditionally, the teacher is the only one who has high knowledge to provide feedback to students' writing. But nowadays, peer feedback has been known as a critical technique for improving students' writing. EFL learners often feel stressful and anxious when writing in a foreign language and make a variety of errors or mistakes when writing. As a result, researchers and teachers have made an attempt to know how they can help students to minimize their mistakes in their writing. However, they also admit that it is impossible for them or any teacher to read and correct all the students' compositions on writing compositions because correcting written work is time-consuming, especially for large classes.

While the teacher feedback tends to generate more comments at the grammatical level, peer feedback can generate more comments on the content, organization, and vocabulary (Paulus, 1999). As well as beneficial effects on the quality of writing, peer feedback has advantages such as developing critical thinking, learner autonomy and social interaction among students (Yang, Badger & Yu, 2006). The practice of peer feedback allows students to receive more individual comments as well as giving reviewers the opportunity to practice and develop different language skills (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

Peer feedback with its advantages can be a good way to persuade learners to read and provide comments and suggestions for making improvement in their peers' writings before the last versions of their works are submitted to their teachers. Peer feedback works as an important tool in the process oriented approach to writing instruction because in addition to learners’ demands for enhancement of writing ability, it helps them understand their learning level.

Moreover, peer feedback can be a very good technique to make learners improve critical thinking and critical reading more than teacher feedback. To put it in another way, peer feedback helps students make good use of their own efforts to make their writings valuable and efficient (Macpherson, 1999). Nevertheless, despite of its role and impact on the process of writing, it seems that peer feedback has not been paid much attention in Iran.

The present study tried to discover if peer feedback could be used as a teaching tool in order to improve cohesion in the student’s writing skill. The study also focused on finding the effect of gender on students' cohesion improvement in writing owing to the implementation of peer feedback. The participants' performances in the pre-and post writing exams as well as their experiences in peer feedback give helpful insights to writing instructors. Findings of the present study could contribute to enhance the effectiveness of using peer feedback in writing classes.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RELATED HYPOTHESES

The present study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Does peer feedback have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners?
2. Is there any significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate learners’ cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback?

The following null hypotheses were proposed on the basis of the aforementioned research questions:

1. Peer feedback does not have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.
2. There is no significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate EFL learners’ cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Eighty seven upper intermediate Persian EFL learners from English classes in one of the institutes in Kashmar (the researcher’s hometown), named Shokuh, were the participants of this study who were selected by convenience sampling. To ensure that the participants were at the same level of proficiency, a Preliminary English Test was administered to them. Forty one male learners and 46 female learners were selected in each group. Their age ranged from 17 to 22. There were 20 students in male control group; 21 students in the male experimental group, and 23 students in each of the female experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation

Instruments that were used in the study are as follows:

The Preliminary English Test (PET): PET is a Language Proficiency Test designed for people who study English at an intermediate level. It was used for homogenizing the participants of the study. The test is divided into 4 sections: Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking. Reading and Writing sections were administered in this study. The allocated time for this test was around 35 minutes for Reading Skill including 35 items, and 30 minutes for Writing Skill including 8 items. In order to investigate the reliability of the PET, the Test Retest method was used. Therefore, the test was piloted in a time interval of two weeks with a group of 35 learners who had the similar characteristics with the participants of the study. The results showed that the correlation coefficient of the scores was (0.921), which was an acceptable reliability for the measurement instrument.

The Pretest: Students in both control and experimental groups took part in a pretest that was designed to assess the knowledge of cohesion among participants. Since there was not any standard test available for this purpose, this pretest was designed and standardized by the researcher. In order to determine the reliability of the Cohesion Test, in a pilot study, 17 questions have been completed by a group of 30 students other than the main sample. According
to Cronbach’s alpha index, the reliability of the test was 0.85, which indicated a high level of reliability for the test.

The Posttest: The posttest which administered at the end of the semester was the same multiple choice cohesion test that implemented as the pretest at the beginning of the semester

Procedure
In order to answer the questions of the research, the research was started by choosing 87 upper intermediate students from an institute in Kashmar. They were qualified enough in writing to be a part of this study. When all the students gave their consent to be part of the research, they attended a 30 minute English class, twice a week for a whole semester (18 sessions). These 30 minutes were a part of their routine class time in the institute. Students were selected from a group of 92 students in four classes of two female and two male ones. These students were selected through convenience sampling.

The students in each session asked to write about a topic that was provided from previous years standard TOEFL tests. Next, the students in the experimental male and female groups were asked to read their classmates' compositions and to give them some written feedbacks. The control group went through the same process except that they did not receive any feedback from their classmates.

Both control and experimental groups had teacher feedback, but the peer feedback was merely presented in the experimental groups. Therefore, this assured the researcher that the change in the students' performance was the result of the treatment in the experimental group. At the beginning of the semester students in both control and experimental groups took part in a cohesion multiple choice test, and at the end of the semester the students performed the same test as the posttest to see if the process of giving peer feedback to each other had any effect on improving their cohesive writing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
As there were two experimental and two control groups, and the first research question was “Does peer feedback have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners?”, t test and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were used in order to find the answer to this question.

The second question “Is there any significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate EFL learners’ cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback?” answered through using analysis of covariance too. The following data have been provided to answer these research questions.

Analysis of the Pretest
Table 1 demonstrates the mean scores of pretest in the control and experimental groups. There were 44 students in the experimental groups and 43 students in the control groups. According to
the table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the pretest mean scores in experimental and control groups. There was no significant difference in the scores of the experimental (M=11.93, SD=1.17) and control (M=12.21, SD=1.28) groups; t=1.491, p = 0.136. These results suggest that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups’ pretest scores.

Table 1: The Comparison of Pretest Mean Scores in the Control and Experimental Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>T Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>F value</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.204</td>
<td>0.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 demonstrates the mean scores of the pretest in the girls’ and boys’ groups. Forty one students in the boys’ group and 46 students in the girls’ group have been examined.

Based on this table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the pretest mean scores in boys’ and girls' groups. There was not a significant difference in the scores of boys’ (M= 12.21 SD=1.20) and girls’ (M=11.96, SD=1.20) groups; t = 1.372, p = 0.170.

Table 2: Comparing the Mean Scores of the Pretest in Both Girls’ and Boys’ Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>T Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>F value</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11.96</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.008</td>
<td>0.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Testing the First Hypotheses

Table 3 demonstrates the mean scores of posttest in the control and experimental groups. According to the table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the posttest mean scores in experimental and control group. There was a significant difference in the scores of experimental (M=14.09 SD=1.12) and control (M=12.42, SD=1.20) groups; t = -9.092, p = 0. These results suggest that the peer feedback really had an effect on improving cohesion in writing. Specifically, our results suggest that improving in the experimental group’s cohesion in writing was greater than the control group.

Table 3: The Mean Scores of the Posttest in the Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>T Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>F value</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14.09</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.154</td>
<td>0.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12.42</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a second attempt, in order to better see the differences between the experimental and control groups with controlling the effect of their pretest scores, an analysis of covariance was implemented. According to table 4, there was a significant effect of grouping on the students’ posttest scores, after controlling for their pretest scores (F (1, 84) = 213.248 P=0.000<0.05). Considering the eta coefficient in this model, there was a significant effect of being in the experimental or control group on improving cohesion in the students’ writing after controlling for their scores. As a result, the effect of putting students in two control and experimental groups was statistically significant and it can be concluded that Peer feedback improves cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.

Table 4: Analysis of Covariance Related to the Effect of Peer Feedback on Cohesion in Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>The Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Eta Coefficient</th>
<th>Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>293.280</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>146.640</td>
<td>107.956</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>175.430</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>175.430</td>
<td>129.151</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.970</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>289.661</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>289.661</td>
<td>213.248</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>114.099</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1.358</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18138.000</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1, compares the obtained scores in the Experimental and Control groups. In this graph, we can observe that the frequency of the higher scores in the EG is greater than CG. Therefore the significant difference between the two groups was concluded which was the effect of the treatment.

Figure 1: The Effect of Peer Feedback on Improving Cohesion in Writing among Learners
Testing the Second Hypotheses

In Table 5, the posttest mean scores of both boys’ and girls’ groups are demonstrated. According to this table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the posttest mean scores among boys and girls. There was a significant difference in the scores of girls’ group (M=13.54, SD=2.48) and boys’ group (M=12.98, SD=1.75); t (85) = -1.743, p = 0.081. These results suggest that the gender really has an effect on improving cohesion in writing through using peer feedback. Specifically, our results suggest that improvement in the female students’ writing cohesion is greater than the male students.

### Table 5: Comparing the Posttest Mean Scores in Boys’ and Girls’ Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>T Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F value</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13.54</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.005</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.98</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a second effort to better see the differences between the girls' and boys' groups with controlling the effect of their pretest scores, an analysis of covariance was implemented. According to Table 6, there was a significant effect of gender on the students’ posttest scores after controlling for their pretest scores (F (1.84) = 6.822 P = 0.011<0.05). This model was statistically significant and regarding eta coefficient in this model, there was a significant effect of gender in benefiting from the peer feedback process. As a result, it can be concluded that: Female upper intermediate EFL learners had better outputs “regarding improving cohesion in their writing” than male learners owing to implementation of peer feedback. Also Figure 2 compares the obtained scores in the girls' and boys' groups. In this graph, we can observe that the frequency of the higher scores in the girls' group is greater than boys' group; therefore, the significant difference between the two groups was concluded which was the effect of the treatment.

### Table 6: Covariance Analysis Related to the Effect of Peer Feedback on Improving Cohesion in Writing among Males and Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>The Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Squares Mean</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Eta Coefficient</th>
<th>Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>301.946</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.649</td>
<td>79.233</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>148.120</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>148.120</td>
<td>116.604</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td>0.417</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>293.185</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>293.185</td>
<td>230.803</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.666</td>
<td>6.822</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105.433</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.270</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18138.000</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

The findings of the present study, which indicates that using peer feedback as a teaching tool improves the cohesion in the students’ writing, are somewhat inline with the findings of Wakabayashi (2013) who accomplished a study with 25 Japanese university students. The study revealed significant increase in the mean scores of those who were benefited from peer feedback. Therefore, it was concluded that peer feedback improved the EFL students’ writing skill.

Furthermore, in another study in line the findings of this research, Maarof, Yamat and Li Li (2011) showed that engaging learners in critical evaluation and presenting peer feedback for the purpose of exchanging help for revision can enhance more successful and effective writing. According to the findings of the study it was also concluded that peer feedback could affect the cohesion in writing among EFL learners. Moreover, they concluded that peer feedback encouraged students to participate in the classroom activity and made them less passively teacher dependent.

Findings of the first research question also support the findings of Hyland (2003) who state that peer feedback is one of the effective ways to improve students’ writing, and it facilitates further writing development. Hyland and Hyland (2006), also propose that feedback is perceived as an essential element to help writers make better subsequent drafts, which is somehow inline with the findings of the present study.
Moreover, the findings of this study, which revealed that the female learners had more improvement in their writing owing to the implementation of peer feedback, were not in line with the findings of Aljamal (2006) who carried out a research to find out if there were any statistically significant differences between the achievement of the males and females on peer response in the learners writing skill, and he found no notable differences between the male group and the female group in their peer responses.

**CONCLUSION**

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of peer feedback on cohesion improvement in writing skill among EFL learners. The first research question inquired whether peer feedback had any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners. The results of the study indicated that the null hypothesis related to the first research question was rejected, and it was concluded that Peer feedback improved cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.

In addition, the second research hypothesis which reiterated that there was no statistical significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate learners’ cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback” was rejected due to the obtained results. Therefore, it was concluded that gender was an effective factor regarding the improvement in writing cohesion due to the implementation of peer feedback. As the result, the effect of gender was statistically significant and female upper intermediate learners had better outputs regarding improving cohesion in their writing than male learners owing to implementation of Peer feedback.

Like other studies, this research faced a number of limitations and delimitations which have to be considered while attempting to generalize its findings. First, the implemented sampling procedure was convenience sampling from upper intermediate EFL learners in an institute in Kashmar. Convenience sampling can limit the generalizability of the study’s findings (Creswell, 2003). Moreover, since there were two classes for each group, it was difficult to make the two classes conditions exactly like each other. Finally, concerning the delimitation which was set by the researcher, the present study was exclusively done on Iranian upper intermediate English learners, who were considered as EFL students.

**REFERENCES**


INVESTIGATING POLITENESS STRATEGIES FOR USING DISAGREEMENT BY IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS AT DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the influence of politeness strategies in different disagreement situations by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. The sample involved 50 Iranian students. They were divided equally into intermediate and advance group. A Discourse completion Test (DCT), consisting of five situations in which learners’ disagreement strategies was explored. The taxonomy from Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) was employed for counting and analyzing the utterances of disagreement from the responses. The findings of the study revealed that disagreement strategies are related to skills of language, EFL learners acquire pragmatic and linguistic knowledge. To help students realize maximum pragmatic success, teachers need to make their students fully aware of the specific speech act sets and the accompanying linguistic features to produce appropriate and acceptable complaint and other important speech acts. The major findings of this research that, intermediate and advance learners use the same type of strategies, however, they differ in the type and frequency of use of these strategies.

KEY TERMS: disagreement, politeness strategies, speech acts

INTRODUCTION
Defining different speech acts has been established since 1960 (Meijers, 2007), recently there has been a shift towards empirical studies which focus on perception and production of various speech acts by EFL or ESL learners. Flor and Juan (2006) regarded pragmatics as a "linguistic concept related to language use which involves speaker's intentions while communicating utterances as a reaction to Chomsky's abstract construct of language in which grammar played a predominant role"(p. 5). The present study was carried out to achieve the objectives, to identify politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners across different proficiency levels in showing disagreement and to find out the similarities and differences between at two different levels of proficiency (intermediate and advance learners). The findings will help Iranian English language teachers and syllabus designers to explain situations in which students may fail pragmatically and to develop material to handle these problems. The findings may provide the interactant, with knowledge and courage to handle disagreement without impolite or unpleasant conducts, this help the social interactants to developed richer and healthier relationship. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide some worthwhile knowledge into the teaching and training of communication skills in EFL courses. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), disagreement
by its nature is a face-threatening act which threatens the solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. Disagreement by its nature restricts the action environment of the addressee by the way of what he can say or do because it creates a slot in which an answer to the content of the disagreement is expected (Locher, 2001). Due to the complexity of pragmatic instruction and assessment, as well as widespread pragmatic variation, pragmatic instruction is still largely ignored in foreign language classrooms since classrooms attention, focuses mostly on linguistic features of the target forms, rather than the social and cultural aspects so essential to their use (Felix-Barderfer, 2004).

Therefore, based on the result of the other studies, there is a need for further research on the pragmatic competence of Iranian EFL students in all aspects.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical background

This part includes both theoretical and empirical structures. In the theoretical studies section, politeness and speech act theories are highlighted. The other section reviews empirical studies on the speech act of disagreement with the aim of providing a framework for the current investigation.

Pragmatic

The word "pragmatics" refers to "social speech" but in the field of disabilities it has taken on a wider meaning encompassing all skills that involve social interaction. In order to have meaningful interactions with people, one must have a desire to interact, recognize people as separate beings from one’s self, have the capacity for joint attention, physical perspective taking, mental perspective taking, tolerance for differences on the most basic level, understanding of giving and receiving nonverbal cues, and the ability to rapidly interpret and integrate all of this information. All living creatures both emit and interact with each other and survive. When two people communicate, they generally use both verbal and non-verbal language to give and receive signals (pragmatic language). Interpreting and understanding these signals and using inference enable us predict what the other person is feeling or trying to say (Theory of Mind). By understanding this information, conversations happen, relationships build, and social relationships can flourish (social interaction), (leech, 1983).

Politeness

The academic study of politeness was a new field when leech published his first paper on the subject-language and Tact- in 1977, shortly before Brown and Levinson's more extensive and influential study appeared in 1987: 'Universals of language usage: Politeness phenomena.' Since then, the field has grown enormously: Watts (2003) says that he has "a bibliography [on politeness] that contains roughly 1,200 titles and it is growing steadily week by week"(p. 83). There is now an international journal dedicated to this field: the Journal of politeness research, founded in the current year (2005).
Brown and Levinson’s seminal treatment of politeness (1987), reissued as a monograph in 1987 has remained the most frequently cited publication on language and politeness. Indeed, since its publication, in spite of heavy criticism, it has held its ground as the model that other writers turn to as the starting-point of their own research perspective. Leech (1983) own treatment of politeness in principles of pragmatics has also often been bracketed with Brown and Levinson (1987) as a pioneering, essentially Gricean treatment of politeness, and has been criticized in a similar way.

Speech act Theory

The speech act theory is largely attributed to the British Philosopher Austin (1962) who claims that many utterances, termed performatives, do not only communicate information, but are equivalent to actions. That is to say, through the use of these utterances, people do things for them; they apologize, promise, request, refuse, complain, etc. utterances that used to realize the above functions are known as speech acts. Just as linguistics have tried to understand how speakers might be able to produce an infinite number of sentences given a very finite set of rules for sentences, philosophers have tried to understand how an infinite number of sentences might reflect a very finite set of functions, the philosophers reasoned that the number of things we do with words is limited, we ought to be able to assign functions to utterances.

The problem with assigning functions to sentences is that speaker's intent and sentence's meanings are not always the same. Speaker intent may be more or less, or actually the opposite, of sentence meaning or function. Nevertheless, philosophers such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) have shown that it is possible to classify utterances into a very small set of functions. Austin's original insight was that stating or describing is only one function of language. In fact, he argued, statements do not even have any privileged position.

Empirical Background of the Study

Kotthoff (1993) looked upon disagreement and concession in German and Anglo-American disputes. The findings suggested that the preference structure can change once a dissent-turn-sequence is displayed. Concessions occur when interlocutors are unable to defend their position. This finding showed that "giving up a position that has already been argued for can also be face-threatening because it could be interpreted as submissiveness" (p. 213). It is obvious that interactants are after solidarity which keeps their face.

Nancy Bell (1998) in the paper "politeness in the speech act of Korean ESL learners" examined the production of three face threatening speech acts (disagreement, request, and giving advice suggestion) by a group of high beginning Korean ESL students. This study was conducted in the context of vocabulary grammar elective class which consisted of 11 students. The data which consisted of 29 speech acts including five requests, six suggestions, and eighteen disagreements was collected through audio or video taping of each class meeting. The main framework for data analysis was Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness strategies (five of 10 negative politeness strategies and two of 75 positive politeness strategies were used). By comparing the ESL Korean learners’ strategies they use when requesting and giving suggestion, different results obtained. The learners in this study used direct, bald on-record strategies in performing the speech act of
disagreement, but they revealed a high linguistic level and the ability to increase the politeness of the act when making request and giving suggestion. It was argued that sensitivity to status, which in the Korean context includes a great emphasis on age differences, is a major factor for these differences.

Vera (2010) explored the negotiation of (im) politeness carried out by Argentine speakers of English in the discourse of disagreement in simulated business meeting. For this purpose, a corpus consisting of 20 videotaped dyadic business simulations was collected. The participants' whose ages ranged between 20 to 50 years old were all business people with decisions-making positions in international companies and with an excellent level of proficiency in English. The data was analyzed from a socio-pragmatic perspective combining Watt's discursive model of relational work with the notion of Graduation and Engagement from Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). The analysis revealed that the speakers draw on a range of different discursive strategies to voice disagreement in business negotiations. These have been summarized into four sub functions, namely Contradictions, Challenges, Counterclaims, and Counterproposals. In the first phase of the negotiation, where participants take a stand and introduce their proposals, very few contracting and challenging acts were detected.

Shrif and Noor (2011) in their article "Disagreement Politeness among Adolescents" examined, some adolescents were deemed guilty of poor L2 spoken politeness due to their low proficiency level. Thus, to identify the extend of this factor, a contrastive study of disagreement politeness between L1 and L2 was carried out where a discourse completion test method [1] was adapted for data induction and taxonomy of disagreement [2] was adopted for data elicitation. Two variables, i.e. social distance and power difference were analyzed. Findings suggested both variables did significantly influence adolescents’ spoken disagreement politeness. The research concluded that a polite adolescent might not be bound to a language in adhering to politeness despite the variables.

Regardless of language, place formality, and topic of disagreement, an intuitively polite adolescent may adhere to disagreement politeness strategy. S/he may portray a better disagreement politeness when addressing a friend (-Power) at a formal situation (+Distance) while arguing a formal topic, as opposed to a friend (-Power) at an informal place (-Distance) on an informal topic. This may be due to the greater application of self-denigration in a situation with greater social distance. In a disagreement with someone of higher level of superiority like an educator, adolescents may use less tact depending on the severity of the face threatening situation. The adolescents have been placed under pressure to defend their positive face wants despite the positive power difference (+Power) and social distance (+Distance) (lecturer-student). In general, the students would show a greater disagreement politeness in formal situations (+Distance)/ (+Power). In an informal situation (-Distance) with lower level of superiority (-Power), the students would adhere the least to politeness strategies during disagreement handling.
RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES
The present study investigated the interface of politeness in the realization of disagreement in language data. Politeness is an important phenomenon in face-to-face interaction. Disagreement is an arena in which this key concept is likely to be observed. In so doing, the aim was to find answers for the following research questions:

1. What are the different disagreement strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in two different levels of proficiency? (Intermediate and advance).
2. Are there any differences between intermediate and advance Iranian EFL learners in expressing disagreement strategies?
3. What types of politeness strategies are employed by two groups?
4. Are there any differences between intermediate and advance Iranian EFL learners in using politeness strategies?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of this study consisted of 50 Iranian learning English at Shoukoh Institute in Iran, Astara. A community sample of 50 EFL learners participated in this study, comprising 25 males and 25 females, their age-range vary between 21 to 25. They were all EFL learners studying in language institutes in Astara.

Instruments
Two instruments were employed to obtain the research data. The English Language Proficiency Test (TOEFL Actual Tests 2004), (see appendix I) and Discourse Completion Test (DCT), (see appendix II). The English Language Proficiency Test was used to assure the homogeneity of the Iranian group in terms of their L2 proficiency. This test included fifty listening comprehensions, fifty structures, fifty written expression, and five reading comprehension texts consisting of fifty multiple choice items (see appendix I). Each item was assigned one point, and the overall scores were one hundred and fifty.

Procedure
The approach used in this study was survey based. In order to investigate politeness in the realization of disagreement, the participants in two groups were given DCT which consisted of five scenarios (see appendix II). The questionnaire used here presented a brief description of certain situations, which specified the setting, the social distance between interlocutors and their status relative to each other. When identifying the utterances of disagreement from the responses, the taxonomy from Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) were applied.

In this taxonomy, five types of disagreement: irrelevancy claim, challenge, contradiction, and counterclaim are recognized. Finally, the responses of the learners were compared with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze the collected data and find an answer for the imposed research questions, the research used SPSS program and frequency of each data at each proficiency level was determined. In this step, the actual disagreement realizations were analyzed. First, the occurrences of the features in question were counted for the intermediate and advance learners. Second, possible relationships between proficiency level and disagreement realizations were analyzed. Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) have identified four types of disagreement: Irrelevancy claims (IC), challenges (CH), contradiction (CT), and Counterclaims (CC). The strategies of avoiding explicit disagreement such as using positive marks, partial agreement and so on can indicate indirectness and being polite in the speech act of disagreement. Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) propose that there exist a fifth type in which disagreement type is the combination of contradictions followed by counterclaims.

Intermediate group expressed their disagreement implicitly (indirect level or off-record strategies) by use of mitigating devices and positive markers. It showed that even the intermediate learners were able to select a polite, conventionally indirect strategy in the L2 and they were careful about face wants of their interlocutors. This study was designed to address the important issue of pragmatic development of disagreement strategies in Iranian EFL learners. The findings of this study provide some evidence of relationship between the learners' level of language proficiency level and type of disagreement strategies. The findings indicated that remarkable components that used in both group were contradictions and counterclaims. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) term disagreement inherently threatens either the hearer's or the speaker's face-wants, and that politeness is involved in redressing those face threatening acts. This is in line with the findings of Pearson (1986) and Beebe and Takahashi (1989) that native speaker's strategies for expressing disagreement are generally characterized by mitigation, that is, by reducing the directness of the disagreement and with it the strength of FTA. Inappropriate performance of learners in different disagreement situations might be resulted from their linguistic limitations. This result is in accordance with the findings of Umar (2006) by Sudanese learners on the speech act of complaint and Jalilifar (2009) by Iranian subjects on request strategies. They found that lower proficiency learners may, to some extents, have pragmatic competence, but they lack sufficient linguistic competence to perform appropriately in a foreign language. The higher the proficiency level, the more appropriately they will utter their disagreements.

The results of this study indicated that disagreement is more sever when it personally threatens the interlocutors' feelings. If primary aims are politeness and maintenance of social harmony, then it would be predicated that fewer politeness markers would be used for less severe disagreement, and more politeness would be used for less severe disagreement. We can find that Iranian learners indirectly disagree with their interlocutors, and learners use more politeness in front of their professor, boss, and his/her friends. In the present study in some instances, this was the case, but not in all.
Table 1 above shows that in the advance level, participants used challenges with the frequency of (44%), counterclaim with the frequency of (28%), contradiction with the frequency of (24%), and contradictions followed by counterclaim with the frequency of (4%). The remarkable components in the intermediate level were challenges with frequency of (44%), contradiction with frequency of (36%), counterclaim (12%), Irrelevancy claim (4%), and contradictions followed by counterclaims (4%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disagreement</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy claims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenges</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions Followed by counterclaim</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Disagreement to the Supervisor
Table 2: Disagreement to Boss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Disagreement</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy claims</td>
<td>Intermediate, Advance</td>
<td>4%, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Intermediate, Advance</td>
<td>0%, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions</td>
<td>Intermediate, Advance</td>
<td>84%, 92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate, Advance</td>
<td>0%, 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions Followed by counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate, Advance</td>
<td>12%, 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that in the intermediate level, participants used contradiction (84%), contradictions followed by counterclaims (12%), and Irrelevancy claim (4%). In the advance level, they used contradiction (92%), counterclaim (4%), and contradiction followed by counterclaim (4%).
In the intermediate level, participants used contradictions followed by counterclaims (28%), Irrelevancy claims (24%), contradiction (20%), counterclaim (16%), and challenges (12%). The advance learners used counterclaim (36%), Irrelevancy claim (28%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (16%), and contradiction (12%), and challenge (8%).

Table 3: Disagreement to Friend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disagreement</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy claims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenges</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions Followed by counterclaim</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this situations intermediate level used counterclaim (40%), challenge (32%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (12%), Irrelevancy claim (8%), and contradiction (8%). In the advance level, they used counterclaims (56%), contradiction (16%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (16%), and Irrelevancy claim (8%), and challenge (4%).

Table 4: Disagreement to Classmate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disagreement</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy claims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenges</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions Followed by counterclaim</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3: Disagreement to Classmate

Table 5: Disagreement to the Younger sister

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disagreement</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy claims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenges</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterclaims</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradictions Followed by</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterclaim</td>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the intermediate level, participants used counterclaim (80%), Irrelevancy claim (12%), contradiction followed by counterclaims (4%), and challenges (4%). In the advance level, participants used counterclaim (48%), contradictions followed by counterclaims (16%), Irrelevancy claim (12%), contradiction (16%), and challenges (8%).
CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Finding of the study revealed that disagreement strategies are related to skills of language. That is, as learning progress, EFL learners acquire pragmatic and linguistic knowledge.

It was revealed that learners are more sensitive to the use of more politeness strategies in disagreeing to the boss, professor, and also their friends. It was found that EFL learners may have access to the range of speech acts and they may have enough pragmatic competence, but they may use just limited number of these strategies due to the lack of linguistic competence.

The use of counterclaims is the first most frequently used strategies, by Iranian EFL learners. It was revealed that with the use of counterclaims, speakers propose an alternative claim that does not directly contradict or challenge other's claim. The strategies of avoiding explicit disagreement can indicate indirectness and being polite in the speech act of disagreement. More importantly, even in the high proficiency levels (advance), EFL learners fail to act out different function of speech appropriately. So, EFL learners must be aware of foreign language pragmatic rules and socio-cultural constraints on speech acts as well as grammatical rules in order to have successful communication. Schmidt (1993) suggested that, if an English language learner is to acquire pragmatics; he/she needs to take into account linguistic functions and the context.

Teacher can develop pragmatic competence in L2 with different speech act set in the materials in their curriculum. Bardovi-Harlig (2003) states that "teaching pragmatics by increasing the pragmatic knowledge of the learners enables them to use and interpret socially appropriate language in particular situation. This in turn will help them to develop a higher level of confidence in their communication abilities"(p. 87).
We need to help our students develop pragmatic of English language norms in both EFL and ESL context.

Certain limitations were imposed on this study. First, the number of participants in this study was 50; the result of the study would be meaningful if we could have access to a large number of participants in different situations and places which might increase the acceptability of the results. Second in order to have clear idea about the issues of politeness strategies focusing disagreement, a comparative study of two different cultures, at different levels may be very beneficial, but this research was conducted only Iranian EFL context. Third if the production questionnaire were in a dialogue form instead, we had the chance of more intact disagreement forms and the results could be different. Results would have been much more reliable if an interview was conducted.

The delimitations of the study are as follow: first, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the wider population due to the relatively restricted number of respondents. Second, due to using DCT as a form of written open ended questionnaire with limited number of situations, the data for the present study was limited to this type of methods were used. If the production questionnaire was in a dialogue from instead, the research had the chance of more intact disagreement forms and the result could be different. The delimitations of this study were the number of context; more contexts would probably have allowed a more manageable data collection and more exhaustive data analysis and results.

REFERENCES


Discourse Completion Test
Five scenarios are described below in which you are expected to disagree with the speaker on different occasions. How would you respond? Please write out what you are to SAY in real life scenarios.

1. Your supervisor questions the originality of the term paper you submit. S/he says to you, "I'm sorry, but I don't think these ideas are yours." However, they are yours. In response, you will say, "………………………………………………………………………………………………………"

2. You work in a company. Your boss presents you with a plan for reorganization of the department that you are certain will not work. Your boss says isn’t it a great plan? In response, you will say, "……………………………………………………………………………………………………….."

3. Your friend makes the following comment on your thesis, "I think you should supply more data to support your arguments. You know, your conclusion is a little bit weak." However, you think that there has been enough evidence and the problem is how to give a better explanation of the data. In response, you will say,
4. In a seminar class on the effect of modern technology, one of your classmates says, "The so-called modern technology is endangering the environment. It causes too much pollution". However, you believe such problems are only temporary and can be solved gradually. In response, you will say

"………………………………………………………………………………………………………"

5. You are watching the movie Titanic with your younger sister at home. When the ship is about to sink and the first mate calls out, "Women and children first" to get on the lifeboat, your sister suddenly blurts out, "It's really unfair and prejudiced to women: we're no weaker than men. Why should women instead of men go first with the children?" In your opinion, women are, physically speaking, not as strong as men. Your response will be:

"…………………………………………………………
THE EFFECTS OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVING WRITING ABILITY OF INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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Dr. Reza Vahdani Sanavi  
Assistant Professor at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT
The present study was intended to investigate the impact of teaching two techniques on the writing proficiency of Iranian English as Foreign learners (EFL) in Tehran, Iran. To achieve this goal, the researcher selected 45 female intermediate learners of Royan Institute in Tehran based on their performance on the preliminary English test from 70 intermediate level learners. The participants were divided into three groups, two experimental groups and one control group. One experimental group was exposed to Form-Focused Instruction and the other experimental group received Conference Writing and the third group was randomly chosen as the control group. All of groups were tested prior to and after the training of the experimental groups. One way Anova was run to detect any possible differences among the means of the three groups. The statistical procedure indicated that, those students who received the Conference writing treatment outperformed the other groups. Some pedagogical implications were finally inferred in the end. Accordingly, teaching Conference Writing in the English class has a positive impact on the writing proficiency of intermediate EFL learners. It also helps the teachers to incorporate DA into the classes and identify the weaknesses of their learners and provide mediation when and where needed.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic Assessment, Interactionist, Conference Writing, Form-Focused Instruction

INTRODUCTION
Background knowledge
Dynamic Assessment (DA) is based on the theory of development proposed by Vygotsky (1986). When he was studying the development of children’s' mental abilities, he found out that what a child can do independently only showed a part of the child's full ability and assistance. He further claimed that mediation offered by a teacher can help a child to do more than it was expected of him/her. Based on Vygotsky’s theory, what the child can do independently showed a view of the child's post development, but what a child can do after mediation represents the child's future development.

Vygotsky named this difference between what a child can do independently and what the same child can fulfill with assistance, ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). Interaction in the field of the ZPD is a guidance for promoting that development. “According to DA theory, a good
instruction involves assessment and good assessment involves instruction” (Lantlof & Poehner, 2004, p. 2).

Vygotsky (1986) suggested a whole range of possible interactive interventions to be used during ZPD assessment, such as asking leading questions, modeling, starting to solve the tasks and asking students to continue and so on, but he produced no standardized procedure for the ZPD assessment. Vygotsky also made no particular distinction between ZPD assessment and static assessment in content-based learning area (Kozulin & Garb, 2002). The fully operationalized programs for DA of general cognitive functions were developed by Budoff in the USA and Feuerstein in Israel (see Lidz, 1987). Budoff (as cited in Kozulin & Garb, 2002) suggested DA as a better tool for classification of students and prediction of their future achievements, but Feurestein claimed that the goal of DA is to discover and actualize the students’ propensity toward cognitive change. Currently a wide variety of dynamic cognitive assessment procedures is available. What is united in all of these procedures is based on test–teach–test program. And what distinguishes them is the nature of “teaching” that occurs between pre and post-tests (Campione, 1996; Haywood & Tzuriel, 1992; Lidz & Elliot, 2000).

In the Iranian EFL context, despite new methods and approaches which have been successful in other EFL contexts all over the world, most of techniques used to teach writing skill nowadays are still traditional, i.e. the teacher focuses on the end product and does not lead the students through the process of writing (Birjandi & Malmir, 2009).

One of the ways to improve learners’ writing skill is the systematic feedback that learners may receive from teachers as it signifies the importance of learning as a process. To have such a formative feedback, through prompts and recasts and conference writing as means of DA, the learners can take the opportunity to actively involve in the process of learning as well as diagnosing the problems and reflecting upon them by means of systematic and effective feedback.

It should be mentioned that, DA is new to applied linguistics and not many practical investigations have been done in the area of language teaching and testing (Birjandi & Sarem, 2012). However, there have been some studies that have explored the applications of these procedures to L2 instructional contexts (Ableeva, 2008; Anton, 2003; Birjandi & Ebadi, 2010; Birjandi, Estaji & Deyhim, 2013; Kozulin & Garb, 2002; Lantlof, 2009; Pishgadam, Barabadi & Kamrood, 2011; Poehner, 2008).

Researchers have been especially interested in how assessment influences students’ learning strategies and leaning processes and since students want to proceed and succeed in their studies, they care to know what aspects of their performance are assessed and how. Not only do most assessment results arrive far too late to influence learning but also they are not in a form which can be used by learners to aid their development.

Assessment informs students about their strengths and weaknesses and indicates the following steps to take in the learning process. Through appropriate assessment, students can also make an
active contribution to their knowledge construction, which is beneficial to the learning outcomes. In this research, the researcher used CW as one DA technique and FFI as conventional technique for differentiated instruction, constructivist pedagogy and principles of DA in second language acquisition to address the writing needs of second language learners.

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of DA technique versus conventional technique on English language acquisition and differentiated instruction for intermediate level of foreign language female Iranian students in an Institute.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE
DA is an interactive approach to psychological or psycho-educational assessment that embedded intervention within the assessment procedure. Most typically, there is pre-test followed by an intervention and a posttest. This allows the assessor to determine the client or the students’ response to the intervention. There are a number of different DA procedures that have a wide variety of content domains. One purpose of DA is to determine if a student had the potential to learn a new skill. DA posits a qualitatively different way of thinking about assessment from how it is traditionally understood by classroom teachers and researchers.

As the researcher mentioned above, DA proceeds from an ontological perspective on human abilities, and it developed more than 80 years ago by Vygotsky. Poehner (2008) pointed out:

Vygotsky's research into the development of cognitive functions revealed that this process is not a matter of innate abilities growing into a mature state, but that it is the emergence of new ways of thinking, acting, and being that result from an individual's engagement in activities, where he or she is supported by cultural artificial and by interactions with others. In this way, the social environment is not merely the stage on which development plays out; it is in fact the driving force of development (p.1).

An important consequence of this view of mental abilities is that observing individual's independent performance reveals, at best, the results of past development.

The Vygostkian approach to education offered that teaching and learning had a leading role in development. This statement was not similar to many leading theories of education including that proposed by Piaget. Vygotsky (1978) suggested that instruction should not wait for developmental readiness, but rather, development happens when learners take part in activities that are beyond their current level of ability and the total combination of assessment and instruction can only be achieved when learner development becomes the aim of educational activities which is the major aim of DA.

If one wishes to understand the processes of development, to intervene, to help individuals overcome difficulties, and to support their ongoing development, then more observation of solo performance is insufficient. Instead, active collaboration with individuals simultaneously reveals the full range of their abilities and promotes their development.“In educational contexts, this
means that assessment (understanding learner's abilities) and instruction (supporting learner’s development) are dialectically integrated activities. This pedagogical approach has come to be known as DA” (Poehner, 2008, p.2).

Based on the critical review of DA, Sternberg and his colleague Grigorenko proposed that DA procedures were not only necessary to integrate assessment and instruction but also crucial for insights into the depth of individual's ability. They focused on the poor performance and the specific ways of supporting development. They argued that DA broadened the view of learners' knowledge and abilities and that enabled them to use the result of assessments more effectively and DA principles created a new generation of tests (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002).

**Models of DA**

Lantlof and Poehner (2004), proposed the terms interventionist and interactionist to describe the two kinds of mediation that DA researchers offered to educators. However, mediation can entail a wide array of support, ranging from standardized hints to dialogic intervention.

**Interventionist DA**

The first characteristic of interventionist approaches to DA is that the mediation which is given to educators is standardized. The instructors must follow a highly disciplined approach to mediation in which all prompts, hints and leading questions have been prepared in a hierarchical manner, from implicit to explicit, and are usually assigned a numerical value.

The followers of interventionist approach emphasized the incorporation of using psychometric terms which lead to maximizing the assessment objectivity. In this approach learners' performance is measured in a quantified form as scores (Poehner, 2008).

**Interactionist DA**

Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience: Feurestein and his colleagues (as cited in Poehner, 2008) conducted the work on the basis that human beings are not closed systems, they are open systems. They showed that with intervention one could develop the human cognitive abilities. Feurestein's theory called “Structural Cognitive Modifiability” (SCM) suggested that cognitive abilities of human beings are not the same as their biological specifications such as height and color of eyes, but rather they can promote in a variety of ways depending on the quality of interaction and instruction Feuerstein (as cited in Poehner, 2008) It was the same as Vygotskian theory that uniquely human forms of consciousness was rooted in participation in social activities. Feuerstein and his colleagues believed that in educational testing assessment, the ability of individuals begin to change and one can develop their abilities which are very different from their previous ability that they have shown. So this approach is far from the unstated belief that mental abilities were static (Poehner, 2008).

Feuerstein and his colleagues discussed that most education systems predicted the future functioning of learners based on their present performance, "ignoring the possibility that the predicted destiny may not materialize if powerful intervention take place" (Feuerstein et al., 1988, p.83).
In interactionist DA, the important thing is learner development. The flexible and dialogic nature of interactionist DA is used by instructors in classrooms.

**Interactionist DA in the Educational Setting**

Newman et al. (1989) investigated the development in the classroom setting within the framework of ZPD. They made an important difference between “assessment by teaching”, and “assessment while teaching”. They believed that in a traditional classroom, learning of students has hierarchies that constitute “a sequence of increasingly difficult tasks”. Deciding about how successful the learners are in the class is often measured by achievement tests at a particular stage in the teaching sequence. In assessment while teaching environments, instruction is not prepared according to 'a neat sequence of levels to be mastered in an invariant sequence with a single correct route to mastery'. Task and knowledge are chosen based on the teacher's assumptions about how they can be taught from simplicity to complexity, but when teachers and learners involve in instructional activities many unanticipated direction and invariable rates may happen (see Coughlan and Duff, 1994). Teachers always must be prepared for a suitable type of mediation and know how they can use it when learners started to mediate themselves.

**Theory in Use: ZPD**

Vygotsky (1986) developed the concept of ZPD. It is a way for the teachers to assist their students to have logical thinking and have a schema of scientific concepts which he refers to as a fabric of concepts.

The ZPD shows skills and concepts that a student can successfully obtain if the teacher provides with him/her the assisted performance. It is an important theoretical basis for differentiated instruction. The teacher can provide the students the classrooms with different ability levels, not only in terms of what they can do independently but also in what they can do under conditions of assisted performance.

To conclude, Vygotsky's ZPD shows us a new model of learning. Teacher gives various forms of mediation, and then by giving assistance, the ability of student may mature until it internalizes. There are two important factors in this process: first, teachers can accurately estimate the student's ZPD, the best measure of ZPD will be actual real-time student performance when the teacher has given her/him proper mediation (i.e., teacher observation and reflection). However, the teachers cannot deny the validity of assessment that measures independent performance. Second, the teacher should have given a proper reflection that acts upon this information to choose the right and proper instruction that is truly suitable for the student's ZPD, at least some part of the day must be dedicated to focusing on true learners' needs instead of performing regularly curriculum.

In this research, the researcher used two techniques of TBI( Task Based Instruction) in two classes: FFI & CW.

**Form – Focused Instruction**

The concept of FFI is related to TBI as a technique of developing grammatical competence within the frame of a communication language approach developed. FFI is not one method, but it
is a combination of methods grading from explicit and planned to implicit and reactive. Long and Robinson (1998) described FFI as a method that shifts our attention from meaning to grammar, similar to what happened in real life when a communication broke down.

**Conference Writing Instruction**

The researcher in this research tested a new line of inquiry and that is using the writer's conference as a jigsaw task, a two way information-gap task. It is a new way in which the researcher used the writing process as a tool for second language acquisition. As mentioned before, Lightbown (1998) saw one aspect of TBI as a teacher-student dialogue where by the student would self-correct oral grammar through incisive teacher questions. A conference between the teacher (the native or native-like English speaker) and the student (the English language learner) to go over a rough draft through the steps of the writing process for incorporating TBI into classroom considering the writing process.

Vygotsky likened written language to a conversation with a blank piece of paper, lacking both the expressive qualities of oral speech and a live interlocutor, he saw it a highly abstract form of communication that did not repeat the development of speech. Vygotsky (1986) stated that:

> Written speech is monologues, it is a conversation with a blank sheet of paper. Thus, writing requires a double abstraction, abstraction from the sound of speech and abstraction from the interlocutor …. Our studies show that the child has little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it. He feels no need for it and has only a vague idea of its usefulness (p.181).

How can the researchers use this theory in the field of second language acquisition and how can they make it possible for second language learners to improve their writing ability by using these principles? What role does grammar instruction have within the classroom? One proposed answer to these questions raised in the above paragraph is Task Based Instruction (TBI). It represents the middle ground between naturalistic forms of communicative language teaching focused on comprehensible input and traditional language teaching focused almost exclusively on grammar (Ellis, 2003).

In this method TBI through CW students produce discourse about writing. This discourse includes many elements such as content, language, text structure, purpose, reader, writer's intentions, graphic dimensions, etc. In addition to assisting in writing the text, the writing conference also helps the students to produce discourse about writing. This discourse strongly depends on the interaction with the teacher, being linked to the communicative situation in which it occurs, where the student, the teacher, and the text are co–presented. A CW technique can help students in mobilizing the concepts and the words that are needed to provide the written texts that they have produced.

In this research, the researcher uses TBI as a new method for improving the learners’ writing ability. There are two techniques which the researcher wants to examine in this research:
1) One manifestation of TBI/FFI as a teacher-student dialogue whereby the student would self-correct oral grammar mistakes through teacher questions.

2) A one-on-one conference between the teacher (the native or native like speaker) and student (the English language learner) to move a rough draft through the stages of the writing process that could be vehicle for incorporating DA into the classroom.

An Overview of Related Research Studies

A number of research studies have been done on Dynamic Assessment and language improving skills. In their paper titled "A comparative study of the impact of DA models on the writing ability and attitude of Iranian EFL learners" Hassaskhah and Haghparast (2012) revealed the results of their research. "DA is considered superior to traditional assessment approaches in that it takes into account the individual differences between the learners, additionally it is development-referenced."

Shrestha and Coffin (2011) published their study of DA and academic writing development. They found DA is an assessment approach that blends instruction and assessment. "It consisted interaction between tutor-researcher and two business students across various drafts in line with DA approach, the analyses of such interaction suggested that DA can help to identify and respond to the areas that students need the most support. They concluded that a learning theory-driven approach such as DA helps undergraduate students to develop their academic writing by responding to their individual needs.

In a quantitative study on the using of DA approach for promoting speaking skill of Iranian EFL learners, Shokuohi (2011) tested 80 adult English language learners. She divided the participants into three groups: the control group and the two experimental groups. One experimental group was taught conventional approach and the other was taught DA approach. The findings revealed that the experimental group that using DA approach outperformed the conventional one.

Garb and Kozulin (2002) designed and tested a Dynamic EFL Assessment in a population of at-risk students in Israeli which they concluded that the instructional value of DA lies in the fact that its results can be used for the development of individual learning plans for students with different learning needs. They confirmed that the paradigm of DA is useful not only in the field of general cognitive performance but also in other curricular domain as EFL learning.

In another research Pishghadam, Barabadi and Kamrood (2011) studied the impact of teaching DA and using prompts via developing software on Iranian MA students' reading skill and reported that the participants, when had had opportunity to become familiarized with these techniques and procedures, gained better scores in comparison with the time when they did not use these techniques. This study confirmed that DA in general was useful and helpful for the students.

It is concluded that these studies show outstanding results by teaching DA techniques on improving language skills.
RESEARCH QUESTION
The research question posed in this study is: Do types of instruction have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY
This section provides a thorough description of what was done to take us to the answer of the question posed in this study.

Participants
To investigate the efficacy of each commentary technique of conference writing and form focused writing five female classes including seventy participants in intermediate level were selected. They were students at Royan Institute located in Tehran, Iran. The students in the five classes were studying English “Interchange III” book. In addition, the entire participants had prior training in writing, as it was part of the skills taught by their text-books. A Nelson Quick Test was administered to make sure that the students are at the same level in general language proficiency. The researcher calculated the mean and variability for determining the statistical significance of difference among the five groups. After the scoring process, she compared the means of them by using one way ANOVA. She found out there were outliers, so they were crossed out from the research groups. And 45 participants were selected and divided into three groups: Group A and B as experimental ones and group C as the control group.

The treatment took place after the Institute class hours for group A, 25-30 minutes twice a week for two months and a half. But in group B they wrote their compositions as homework and then brought them to researcher, while group C did not receive any special feedback about writing.

Instrument
The Nelson quick test was used for homogenizing the participants of the study and the preliminary English test (PET) from Cambridge ESOL exams (writing section) was adopted in order to prove that three groups enjoyed the same level writing proficiency prior to the main study. For measuring the reliability of the Nelson test, the researcher used the KR-21 measurement and it was 0.88. (The result has shown in Table1 and Table 2). The researcher used the same PET writing test as the writing post-test at the end of the semester. The classes were held in twenty 105 minutes sessions within two-month and a half period.

Procedure
The study involved three groups of female Iranian adult intermediate learners, with two groups as experimental groups and one group as the control group. They were attending 20 sessions of general English training, and CW group after each session had mini conferences for 25-30 minutes to receive feedback about their compositions. In FFI group students wrote their compositions as homework and then brought them to the researcher to receive feedback and in the control group, they did not receive any special feedback in their writing task. The students’ level for writing proficiency was assessed before and after the training sessions to determine any changes made as a result of the treatments that they received. In order to avoid any threats to the
reliability of the scores, the pretest and posttest were scored by the researcher and a second scorer. The mean of the two scorers’ score for each participant was calculated and reported as the participant test score.

**Design**

The present study employed a quasi-experimental design in its quantitative approach to study the effects of performing FFI and CW techniques on the writing proficiency of two groups of female Iranian adult intermediate English learners.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Using quantitative approach of this study the researcher sought to find the answer to the following question: Do types of instruction have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

The data were collected through a quasi-experimental design and analyzed. The SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) software was employed to analyze the data collected from the control group and experimental groups.

**Nelson Test of General Language Proficiency**

The Nelson test of general language proficiency was administered to 70 students. Based on the mean of 37.93 and standard deviation of 8.27 (Table 4.3), 45 subjects were selected and divided into three equal groups for the main study. The KR-21 reliability for the test was 0.88.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Descriptive Statistics; NELSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way ANOVA was run to compare the means of the Conference Writing, Form Focused and Control group on the Nelson test in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study. Before discussing the one-way ANOVA results, it is worth mentioning that the three groups enjoyed homogenous variances on the Nelson-test, i.e. their scores did not show markedly different distributions. As displayed in Table 2 the Levene’s F-value of .036 was not significant (P >0.05).
Based on the results displayed in Table 3 (F (2, 42) = .0089, P >0.05; \( \omega^2 = 0.042 \) representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between means of the participants in Conference Writing, Form Focused and Control groups on the Nelson test. Thus, it can be claimed that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study.

As displayed in table 4 means of the learners in CW, FFI, and the control group on the Nelson test are 38.67, 38.93 and 39.07 respectively.

Another one-way ANOVA was run to compare the means of the students in the two experimental groups and the Control group on the pretest of writing in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study. As displayed in Table 5 means of the CW, FFI and Control group on the pretest of writing test are 12.86, 12.66 and 12.26 respectively.
The same writing test (PET) was given to the participants after the experiment was carried out. Based on the results displayed in Table 6, it can be concluded that there were significant differences between means of CW, FFI and control group on gained score of writing.

### Table 5: Descriptive Statistics; Pretest of Writing by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Writing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.867</td>
<td>2.2318</td>
<td>0.5762</td>
<td>11.631 – 14.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form Focused</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.667</td>
<td>2.0931</td>
<td>0.5404</td>
<td>11.508 – 13.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.267</td>
<td>2.3135</td>
<td>0.5973</td>
<td>10.985 – 13.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12.600</td>
<td>2.1784</td>
<td>0.3247</td>
<td>11.946 – 13.254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6: Descriptive Statistics; Posttest of Writing by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Writing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.467</td>
<td>1.7674</td>
<td>0.4563</td>
<td>16.488 – 18.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form Focused</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.067</td>
<td>1.3870</td>
<td>0.3581</td>
<td>15.299 – 16.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.133</td>
<td>1.4075</td>
<td>0.3634</td>
<td>12.354 – 13.913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.556</td>
<td>2.3602</td>
<td>0.3518</td>
<td>14.846 – 16.265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus it can be claimed that the null hypothesis of instruction that the types of instruction did not have any significant effect on the improvement of writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners was rejected, and as displayed in Table 6 the CW group showed a higher gained score on the writing test.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Findings and Conclusion

The first finding of this study indicated a rejection of the null hypothesis, as displayed in Table 4 the CW shows a higher mean score on the posttest writing in comparison with the other groups. Thus, there were statistically significant different among the experimental groups and the control group.

However, the results showed that in the field of Task-Based instruction there is slight difference between two techniques and using DA technique is a new way for assessing the students and it has completed the conventional method of testing.

The overall results of this study showed that using CW as means of dynamic assessment has a major influence on writing ability of the Iranian female adult EFL learners. The findings in this study supported that, what Haywood and Tzuriel (2002) had extracted from several conclusions of DA studies in the educational settings. Test performance improves after teaching or mediation. Almost always mediation leads to greater performance gains. e.g. Burns; 1991; Kester & Pena; 2001, Missiuna & Samuels, 1989 in apply DA in second language contexts.

The findings of this study revealed that DA is not a replacement for static assessment, but a procedure which complements traditional methods of assessing students.

The finding is similar to findings of Birjandi et al. (2013) showed that DA methods are in accordance with conventional methods and there is a slight difference between them. In addition, the findings of this study were different from Van Lier’s views (2006, as cited in Hassaskhah & Haghparast, 2012) that saw DA as a threat for dominating testing techniques or because it is too different from the static assessment (Sternberg & Grigrenko, 2002).

On the whole, the privilege of CW found in this study might have been due to the difference in the degree and nature of feedback and depth of metacognition of the learners in the process of assessment resulting in obtaining a deeper view of the criteria for assessment and thus a struggle for achieving those criteria.

As we saw in this research, the nature of collaborative CW between the teachers and students and the co–construction of the entire assessment scheme in the Conference writing group may have played a crucial role in developing the learners’ writing ability.
The results of this research indicated that only through interaction and assisted performance can new concepts and ways of thinking can be successfully assimilated into student's existing knowledge base (Bevridge, 1997; Delisi & Golbeck, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986).

Also this study presented another evidence for the effectiveness of getting the learner's involve in the process of assessment. However, what the findings of this study aligned with the literature was that from the two types of procedures, CW technique was significantly more effective in improving students' learning. This might have been due to the fact that CW, based on the feedback that the researcher provided the learner with, learners felt that they can improve their writing competence and build up their writing confidence in the following chain of reflection. Besides, students who used DA, liked activities more than before and stated that internalizing the rules and techniques got easier. Interacting with the teacher revealed students' improvement to themselves clearly and completely, thus their confidence in writing better in the future was built up, and the probability of transferring these experiences in the writing task to a future similar one or more complicated one was definitely reasonable unlike other assessments that set their aims on evaluating the students or providing feedback for their study, the ultimate goal of DA is promoting development.

The researcher hopes this study and similar studies help English teachers to perform better in their classes and help the students to write more accurately and promote their writing ability.

**Limitations of the study**

Second language acquisition is a complex process that typically spans over many years, but the study took place over a period of only two and a half months; therefore, it was difficult to extrapolate second language acquisition from such a short time frame. Furthermore, one of the major limitations of this study was the small number of participants which limits the conclusions drawn from the results of this study in terms of its generalizability.

**Pedagogical Implications**

The present study provided empirical evidence on the effect of DA approach on the complexity of Iranian EFL learners’ written production and could provide some pedagogical implications in the EFL contexts. Since the study came to a significant result, the researcher aimed to provide some suggestions or ways in order to introduce or improve DA approach in Iranian education context.

The findings supported the theory that dynamic assessment of writing ability is a valid method of improving writing skill. It complements static assessment by providing more elaborate information regarding the students’ writing profile (Birjandi et al., 2013).

DA technique may introduce some benefits to the field of writing in second language learning. Therefore, the findings of this investigation may be important for different groups of people within the field. That is to say, their application has to be investigated from the perspective of these beneficiaries of the research.
Foreign Language Learners

EFL learners will profit most from DA, because their writing ability can be more accurately assessed which can in turn lead to higher level of writing performance (Birjandi et al., 2013). If learners’ awareness about the benefits of DA technique is raised, it can result in higher degrees of motivation in conducting conference writing and thus improvement of their writing proficiency.

Language Teachers or Testers

Language teachers can also benefit from the results of this study. It provides language teachers with rationale to carry out writing group work activities in class to improve students’ writing skill with the focus both on meeting the objectives of the task and assessing the extent to which those objectives are met. It also helps the teachers to incorporate DA into the classes and identify the weaknesses of their learners and provide mediation when and where needed. Moreover, this study by providing practical guidelines in this method gives teachers more confidence to implement DA in to their classes (Hassasskhah & Haghparast, 2012).

Syllabus designers and material developers

This study may be helpful to syllabus designers who need to emphasize more flexibility. In DA, learners are the most important side of the educational program. If the syllabus is not in line with the needs of learners, teacher may take the syllabus designer’s role. Therefore, there should be enough flexibility in the syllabi to satisfy the needs of the students. This study may inspire the material developers to develop materials for writing course or workshops focusing on learners’ needs, give the possibility of diagnosing the problematic areas to the teachers, and make language courses more relevant to students’ needs (Birjandi et al, 2013).

ESP Teachers

In addition, the result of this study may be a great benefit and value to ESP teachers involved in teaching English for specific purposes in which they aim at improving the writing proficiency for a specific purpose. Since in ESP classes, the students' needs are the focus of attention, through interaction of both parties, the learners and the teacher can pave the path to meet the learners' needs. For such teachers it might be necessary to involve the learners in the process of assessment through conference writing to make themselves as well as the learners more sensitive about the needs and interests of the learners and thus, benefit more from the courses.

REFERENCES


THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSE OF BELONGING TO SCHOOL AND EDUCATIONAL JOY WITH ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY IN MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF AHVAZ

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ABSTRACT
The aim of current research was to determine the relationship between sense of belonging to school and educational joy with academic self-efficacy. The research is of correlation and predicting type. Statistical population included male high school students of Ahvaz, Iran from whom 180 people were selected using multi stage randomized sampling method. Data were collected using Sakiz's Sense of Belonging to School (2007), Educational Joy Subscale of Pekrun's Progress Emotions Questionnaire (2002) and Patrick, Hix, and Ryan's (1997) Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, and were analyzed by coefficient correlation and regression analysis methods. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between sense of belonging to school and educational joy with academic self-efficacy. Also, the results obtained from regression analysis in simultaneously entry showed that predicting variables could explain 37% of academic self-efficacy. Furthermore, all of predicting variables play a significant role in predicting academic self-efficacy. Given low level of some students' interest and motivation to course and school and also the high prevalence of learning disabilities and school leaving, the findings of this research could be used by mental health professionals and counsellors in therapeutic institutions and counselling centers.

KEYWORDS: sense of belonging to school, educational joy, academic self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION
Self-efficacy is a motivational factor which plays a critical role in academic involvement and academic achievements of students (Linenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). Academic self-efficacy is a construct referring to the role of individuals' self-effectiveness beliefs in their abilities, and that more they believe in their abilities, the better their abilities in learning activities is (Boroumand & Sheykhi Fini, 2011). Students with same knowledge, skills, and strategies show notable
differences in occupation, academic performance, and progression in academic tasks. A key motivation for these differences is self-efficacy beliefs. By obtaining some useful information, individuals develop opinions about their abilities for learning. Over time, these opinions become solidified and lead children to perceive themselves as able or less able individuals (Paris & Newman, 1990). Self-efficacy beliefs positively impact on students' use of self-regulate learning strategies, select and occupy career, resistance in difficult situations of task, academic motivation, and academic achievement (Sakiz, 2007). Beliefs, abilities and learning, previous experiences, attitudes, attributions, education style, and social background can affect on students' perceived self-efficacy (Schunk, 1990). Self-efficacy beliefs impact on behavioral (strength, effort, adaptive help seeking), cognitive (use of strategy), metacognitive (awareness of one own cognitions), and motivational engagement in academic tasks (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). When an engagement is done, learning and success that increase self-efficacy and, in turn, engagement, is followed. The results of previous researches show that individuals' beliefs affect on their learning abilities in their approach to new challenges. The students with high self-efficacy specify challenging goals for themselves and become firmly committed to those goals (Bandura, 1997). Perceived self-efficacy has effect on goal set behavior, effort and strength (Zimmerman, Bandura, Martinez-Pons, 1993), stimulate the use of learning strategies (Zimmerman, 2000b), determines the possibility of taking advantage of master opportunities, and impacts on selecting the learning environments (Zimmerman, 1989). Self-efficacy beliefs adjust learning behavior and affect on future expectations and academic achievement (Zimmerman, 2000a).

Sense of belonging to school is one of the factors relating to academic self-efficacy. Sense of belonging to school is a psychological need that leads to positive psychological outcomes (Anderman, 2003). In other words, sense of belonging to school refers to the extent which students feel integration with other peers in school (Gueto, Guerrero, Sugimar, & Zevallos, 2010). Researches showed that children with low sense of belonging to school led to feeling of estrangement, weak achievement and finally dropout. In contrast, high sense of belongingness leads to high motivation and scores (Juvonen, 2006). Academic emotion is one other constructs that seem to be related to academic self-efficacy. Academic emotions, as other more generic emotions, can be defined as temporal events in certain situation and specified time (Pekrun, 2006). The joy following learning, exhaustion due to class trainings and failures and angers due to difficult tasks are examples of academic emotions. Studies have shown that emotions such as joy, hope, pride, relief, anger, anxiety, shame, frustration, and boredom are significantly related to motivation, use of cognitive resources, learning strategies, self-regulation and academic achievement (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Pekrun (2006) examined the role of variable "teacher" in students' academic emotions and showed that positive reinforcement of teachers has a positive relationship with academic joy and negative relationship with academic anxiety, but academic pressure from teachers has reverse consequence. The relationship between emotions and teacher supporting of competence was significant. The relationship between academic joy and teacher's characteristics (close relationships) is confirmed. Students who perceived their math teachers as supportive, experienced higher academic joy; so, the relationship between teacher affective support with academic joy was positive and significant and with academic frustration was negative and significant (Sakiz, 2007). In several related studies, Goodenow examined the relationship between adolescents' sense of belonging and expectations, values, motivation, effort
and progress. In her first study, Goodenow (1993A) examined the relationship between the sense of membership to the school, the expectation of success, worth. The results showed that the sense of membership to the school was positively, significantly related to expectations of future achievements and academic value but was not statistically significantly related to academic effort or behavior. Goodenow mentioned that the relationship between academic effort and academic achievement may be mediated by motivation. In other research, Goodeknow (1993b) examined the relationship between sense of belonging-support, academic motivation, academic effort and achievement in adolescents. Students responded to Motivation environments Inventory Questionnaire of their particular area (expectation of success and educational value), sense of belonging, and personal support in four domains (math, social studies, English and Science), that sense of belonging and class support appeared as the most powerful and highest predictor of adolescents' educational values and expectations of success. Students' perceptions of teachers in terms of teachers' interest, support and respect for student, was the strongest factor associated with the efforts and progress of the students. Other research, Lang, Wong, Fraser (2005) found that teacher's friendly and perceived behaviors, such as listening with interest, being considerate, and sympathy, caused to increase the academic joy of chemistry students. These studies show that, regardless of cultural, developmental, educational, or gender differences, there is a positive relationship between teachers' affective attitudes and students' academic enjoy.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. is there a significant relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy?
2. is there a significant relationship between academic effort and academic self-efficacy?
3. is there a significant multiple relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic efforts with academic self-efficacy?

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

In this study, we sought to examine the following hypotheses:

1. There is a significant relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy.
2. There is a significant relationship between academic effort and academic self-efficacy.
3. There is a significant multiple relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic efforts with academic self-efficacy.

**METHODOLOGY**

*The statistical sample and population*

Current study is correlational and predicting. The statistical population of this research consisted of all first high school year male students of high schools of Ahvaz, Iran in academic year of 2014-15. The sampling method of current research was multistage random sampling method; in which, initially two areas among all schools of Ahvaz were selected, from each of which, two schools chose (totally 4 schools); and, then, in next stage, sample groups were randomly simple
selected in proportion to all existing first high school year students of that school; all of students of selected classrooms were used in the sample. Totally, 180 students of high schools of Ahvaz were sampled. In this study, research ethics were completely followed so that participants were ensured about confidentiality of information and they filled questionnaires with full consent and anonymously in a quiet environment.

**Research tools**

In this research, following questionnaires were used to collecting information:

**sense of belonging to school scale**

In present research, Sakiz's (2007) perceived sense of belongingness scale was used to measure students' perceived sense of belongingness. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. The sense of belonging to school scale consisted of 8 items (e.g. I am treated as respectful as others in English class) and the evidences of its reliability and validity are reviewed and confirmed. Sakiz (2007), using Cronbach' alpha, obtained .88 for reliability coefficient of sense of belongingness subscale from sense of belongingness scale. Also, he examined the validity of this subscale using confirmatory factorial analysis and the obtained results showed that the structure of this subscale has an acceptable fitness with data. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 71%.

**Pekrun's Academic joy Scale**

In present research, Sakiz's (2007) academic enjoy scale was used to measure students' academic joy. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. The academic enjoy scale consisted of 6 items (e.g. I enjoy of taking part in English class) and the evidences of its reliability and validity are reviewed and confirmed. Sakiz (2007), using Cronbach' alpha, obtained .83 for reliability coefficient of academic enjoy subscale from academic enjoy scale. Also, he examined the validity of this subscale using confirmatory factorial analysis and the obtained results showed that the structure of this subscale has an acceptable fitness with data. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 88%.

**Patrick's Academic Self-Efficacy**

This scale is designed by Patrick, Hix, & Ryan (1997); it included 5 items reflecting students' perceptions about their competency in performing class tasks. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. Migley et.al. (2000) reported .78 for the reliability of this scale using Cronbach's alpha. Hashemi Sheykh Shobani (2001), using Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown split-half methods, reported .65 and .59, respectively, for reliability. Validity of this construct has been proven in many studies. In another study by Haji Yakhchali (2012), Cronbach's alpha and split-half method were used to examine the reliability of this scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient and split-half for academic self-efficacy scale obtained .73 and .66, respectively, that indicates desirable and acceptable reliability of this test. Also, confirmatory factorial analysis was used to examine the validity of this subscale and the obtained results showed that all of items of academic self-efficacy scale have acceptable factorial loads.
bigger than .30 and have positive and significant load on their related factor in level of p < .0001. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 73%.

**Methods of data analysis**
The descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the obtained data. Mean, standard deviation, the largest and smallest scores were used in level of descriptive statistics, and correlation coefficient and regression analysis in simultaneously entry way have been used in level of inferential statistics.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**
Table (1) shows the descriptive indices related to the participants' achieved scores in research variable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dv.</th>
<th>Largest score</th>
<th>Smallest score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging to school</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic joy</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simple correlation coefficients between sense of belonging to school and academic joy are presented table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting variable</th>
<th>Criterion variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging to school</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic joy</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be seen in table (2), there is a positive significant correlation between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy (p = .001; r = .52). Also, there is a positive significant correlation between academic joy and academic self-efficacy (p = .001; r = .43).

In order to exploratory analyses, regression analysis in simultaneously entry way was used, in which academic self-efficacy as criterion variable, and sense of belonging to school and academic joy as predicting variables entered into the formula. The results of regression analysis is shown in table 3.
As it can be seen in table (3), based on results of multiple regression analysis and with simultaneously entry, multiple correlation coefficient for the linear combination of sense of belonging and academic joy with academic self-efficacy was RM = .61 and coefficient of determination was SR = .371 that are significant at level of p < .001. With regard to the results of table 3 and obtained coefficient of correlation, it is cleared that about 38 percent of variance of the variable of students' academic self-efficacy could be explained by the variables of sense of belonging to school and academic joy. Therefore, Given the importance and impact of academic joy and feeling of belonging to school on students' self-efficacy, it is recommended that ministry of education improves the background of students' sense of self-efficacy and attachment to school with regard to their interests and longings, revision of some certain theoretical and boring lessons, turning into motivational strategies through inclusion of functional and practical lessons, enrichment of educational settings and applying appropriate patterns of education.

CONCLUSION
The main aim of this research was to examine the relationship of sense of belonging to school and academic joy with self-efficacy beliefs. In general, the results of correlation analysis shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between sense of belongingness and academic self-efficacy, and also between academic joy and academic self-efficacy. The results obtained of testing this hypothesis are consistent with the results of Sakiz (2007), Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martin-Pons (1992). Students who enjoy the feeling of belonging to the school and had more education, higher education in the classroom demonstrated efficacy, is a high-risk behaviors among students. In line with our expectations in a positive sense with fun educational, academic self-efficacy was directly related. Sense of belonging is more conducive to experience positive emotions while its failure to experience negative emotions were derived from research findings Banystr and Leary (1995) were aligned. That is, students having higher sense of belonging to school and academic joy, expressed higher academic self-efficacy in class. Bond et. al. (2007) in their research named "social belongingness and belonging to school as predictors of academic performance and mental health," concluded that belonging to school is a supportive factor in positive academic outputs and reducing high risk behaviors among students. According to many researches have been done in this area, increasing the sense of belonging to school have positive relationship between and effects on students' motivation and self-efficacy, thereby, leads to their
academic achievements. Consistent with our expectations, sense of belongingness was positively, significantly related to academic joy, and directly with academic self-efficacy. Students who expressed higher sense of belongingness in class, experienced more academic joy, less frustration, and more academic self-efficacy in classes. Higher sense of belongingness would lead to experiencing positive emotions, while its nonexistence would lead to experiencing negative emotions, that these findings were consistent with Baumister and Leary's (1995) researches.

Academic joy is an active positive emotion that is experienced when engaging in a joyful, pleasant, satisfying task (Pekrun, 1992). Positive academic emotions may have positive effects on students' academic achievement by increased mediating of motivation and flexible learning actions (Pekrun et. al., 2002). For example, experiencing hope, joy, or proud can lead to increased academic self-efficacy, motivation and more engagement in tasks, while experiencing anxiety, sadness, frustration, shame, or anger can lead to worse motivation that could, in turn, lead to less engagement and more avoidance (Pekrun, 1992). In learning settings, lack of joy and interest to tasks would lead to feeling of boredom along with feeling of despair and separation of activities (Hamilton, 1983).

Limitations of the study
Among the limitations of the present study was that the study was conducted on male high school students. Therefore, generalization to female students or lower levels is not possible. In this study, questionnaires were exclusively used. Because of this reason, there may be a bias in obtained information. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to other cities and cultures.

REFERENCES


A CLOSE LOOK AT LESSON PLAN, LANGUAGE AND POWER
IN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT
The social language forms of English as foreign language (EFL) teachers help them dominate their students through the application of lesson plans in a classroom context. The present review paper attempts to examine the classroom lesson plan, language and power in teaching English in a foreign language classroom by reviewing the application of a lesson plan in an EFL class, language, power and lesson plan and presenting some evidence for techniques of power in pedagogical interaction. It studies language and power across the application of a lesson plan in the EFL classroom context, the paper concludes that how the lesson plan of a foreign language teacher shapes the classroom discourse and power and how language teachers in turn have the capacity to create and impose discourses. The article concludes that the lesson plan and teacher’s talk play a crucial role in the exercise of power through the language of classroom teacher and both language teachers and mentors can benefit from the role of the lesson plan in the classroom context and finally recommends the future generation of digital classroom lesson plans.

KEYWORDS: Critical Discourse Analysis, Lesson plan, language and power, TEFL, mentoring software

INTRODUCTION
Within the different cultural contexts of modern society the concept of power and its manipulation and persuasive form is omnipresent. Power has also been studied in the educational context by many authors who have evidenced its importance not only within a particular community but also in any place in which interaction occurs (Ramos, 2004). Power from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective is a principal condition of educational context; it is not static but dynamic and is generated as a natural effect of human beings’ interactions and circulates among participants (Orellana, 1996; Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Fairclough, 2003; Ramos, 2004)

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According to Fairclough (1989) “different approaches to the study of language have been developed such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence, conversation analysis and discourse analysis” (p. 6). He claims that that “these approaches have failed to give appropriate consideration to the social aspects of language” (Fairclough 1989, p. 13); therefore, he proposes critical language study (CLS) as an alternative orientation to language study. While making some use of all of the aforementioned approaches, the proposed approach attempts to go beyond them and provides a synthesis of necessary theoretical concepts and analytical framework for doing critical analyses (Fairclough 1989, p. 14). This approach focuses on social interactions analyzing linguistic elements to show the hidden agendas and effects they bring about (Fairclough 1989, p. 40). Critical discourse analysts focus on “relations between discourse, power, dominance and social inequality” (van Dijk, 1993, p.249) and how discourse (re)produces and maintains these relations of dominance and inequality. Because of their concern with the analysis of the “often opaque relationships” between discourse practices and wider social and cultural structures, CDA practitioners take an “explicit socio-political stance” (van Dijk, 1993, p.252). In this respect, CDA is different from the other main, and more descriptive, approach to institutional discourse, conversation analysis (CA).

What is the role of language in CDA in relation to power? One way to answer this question is to show how the power is exercised in the society. According to Fairclough (1989) power in any society is exercised by means of two instruments: coercion and consent (p. 33). He contends that ideology is the primary means of manufacturing consent which is presented through the channel of language (Fairclough 1989, p. 17).

In an EFL classroom, language is a means of interaction for teaching, learning, classroom management, creating motivation and etc. According to Schiffrin (1994) such complicated interactions are signaled, constructed, and delineated not only by one’s linguistic structure and communicative style but also by subtle and elaborate features of social identity, affect, and implied meanings that reflect both broad social features like role relationships and more narrow social meanings like interpersonal significance (Cited in Ball 2005, p. 64). These features of language, teachers application of lesson plans, classroom discourse and the teachers and students perceptions grow together to form the phenomenon of interactional power in the EFL classroom environment.

APPLICATION OF A LESSON PLAN IN AN EFL CLASS

Many researchers such as James (1992) and Knop (1982) have offered the importance of lesson plans for planning foreign language lessons. On the other hand many foreign language programs of language institutes, colleges and universities are designed to help students achieve certain goals. Typically, these goals include listening comprehension (and, sometimes viewing the comprehension in listening), speaking and writing ability, understanding the culture(s), the perspectives of different cultures, the history or literary traditions of the people who speak the language (Rifkin, 2003, p.169).
Any language program has definite features, for example according to Swaffar, Arens, and Byrnes (1991) as typical teaching strategies, students should be provided with opportunities to use the language to express personalized meanings and to listen, view, and read authentic texts; the students are also required to study grammar outside of class so that communicative activities could be emphasized during the class time (Rifkin, 2003, p.169).

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages has recommend ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), Proficiency Guidelines National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006), (refer to Appendix A) for all levels of instructions because they offer an appropriate framework for the organization of the foreign language curriculum. The language teaching field needs the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as a series of descriptors identifying degrees of success in communication in each of the four language skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

There is plenty of evidence from foreign language curricula, lesson plans, students’ textbooks and the literature Pasternak and Bailey (2004), Nakata (2010). This shows that teaching English language proficiency is planned and organized to suggest that English language proficiency is an important aspect of EFL teaching plans and teacher proficiency. Pasternak and Bailey offer a convincing look at “language teacher proficiency”. They believe There are varying degrees of language teacher proficiency and whether or not a teacher is proficient depends on how we define the multifaceted construct of proficiency (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004, p. 163). According to Omaggio-Hadley (2000) teachers need to spend a lot of attention to both the development of students’ receptive and productive skills. For the productive skills of speaking and writing, Omaggio-Hadley also has suggested the teachers to provide instruction that balances the development of students’ speaking or writing fluency and the development of accuracy of not only grammar, but also syntax, pronunciation and intonation, lexicon, etc. (Rifkin, 2003, p.170). While planning and organizing a lesson plan, foreign language teachers should focus on both accuracy-focused activities and fluency-focused activities Richards (2002, p. 13). According to Oxford (1999) “if only accuracy-focused activities are practiced some students may drive away from language studies and if too many fluency-focused activities are applied students may fail to develop an understanding of the grammar and syntax of the target language and the lack of mastery of syntax and grammar may eventually slow down their desire to reach higher levels of language proficiency and some students develop this type of anxiety into permanent anxiety” (pp. 58-67). Therefor a lesson plan needs to shape a balance of accuracy-and fluency-focused activities. National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006) which provide standards for foreign language learning in this century recommend some proficiency guidelines that offer foreign language teachers a framework of functions or task hierarchies that can be used to construct a curriculum, leading learners from task to task as they improve their skills at using the target language to communicate. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (National Standards, 2006) provide teachers with direction as to what the content of courses might be. (See Appendix A)

According to Fox and Diaz-Greenberg (2006) the national standards represented an important modification in the understanding of the teaching and learning dynamic this is reflected in the
adaptation of the national standards, which have shifted from an emphasis on teaching to a focus on learning. This way, students become more important actors—as primary clients, consumers, and learners.

As Conrad (2011) explained the most important factor in what a student learns is what the student does, not what the teacher does. Therefore, [his] approach to teaching is to give primary attention to the activities the students can engage in that will best help them achieve the course goals and outcomes, rather than what [he] as the teacher will do. [His] focus is on choosing what reading, what homework assignments, and what projects will present them with opportunities to learn. (p.1)

The national standards present five broad areas known as “Five Cs” for foreign language learning: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Each “C” which is supposed to be a standard area has a few sub goals that are content-oriented (see Appendix A). The standards provide foreign language teachers approximately at many levels of instruction with direction as to the types of content they can use to fill their curricula. For example, according to the standards for foreign language learning available on line at: (http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf) for the first “C” or communication the first standard is that: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

This standard focuses on interpersonal communication, that is, direct oral or written communication between individuals who are in personal contact. In most modern languages, students can quite quickly learn a number of phrases that will permit them to interact with each other. In the course of their study, they will grow in their ability to converse in a culturally appropriate manner. So for example with this standard at:

Grade 4: Students ask and answer questions about such things as family, school events, and celebrations in person or via letters, e-mail, or audio and video tapes.
Grade 8: Students exchange information about personal events, memorable experiences, and other school subjects with peers and/or members of the target cultures.
Grade 12: Students exchange, support, and discuss their opinions and individual perspectives with peers and / or speakers of the target language on a variety of topics dealing with contemporary and historical issues.

Guidelines for language teaching create conditions for successful language teaching and learning that is why creating a lesson plan help language teachers to visualize the different steps of language teaching.

**LANGUAGE, POWER AND LESSON PLAN**

Teaching according to Haynes (2010) is considered to be a three-step activity. The first step consists of planning and preparation activities – required before teaching a class; the second activities consist of classroom management, teaching and learning in the classroom; and the third
activities consist of assessment, with associated activities such as recording and reporting, and evaluation that take place after the lesson (p.1). The metaphor of teaching as a three-step activity does, however, have some disadvantages. It encourages one to think that the third step – assessment, evaluation and review – is the end of the process and it discourages us to think about the growing critical awareness of language (Haynes 2010, p.1).

According to Fairclough (1989) the following reasons can help us to infer that it is essential to focus on critical language study (CLS) in the development of a lesson plan in an EFL class:

1. Fairclough (1989) cares about how CLS might contribute to the emancipation of those who are dominated and oppressed in our society. (p.233)
   • In developing a lesson plan teachers need to know how CLS might contribute to the emancipation of students who are dominated and oppressed in an EFL classroom.

2. He argued that critical language awareness, based upon CLS, should be a significant objective of language education, and there are some suggestions about methods for developing it. The main reason for this choice of focus is its current relevance, given the major changes in educational policy and practice which are being implemented or planned. (p.233)
   • Language awareness, based upon critical language study (CLS), should be one of the objective of lesson planning, and we need to research the suggestions about methods for developing it. The main reason for this choice of focus is its current relevance, given the major changes in educational policy and practice which are being implemented or planned.

3. He also said that one of his purposes in writing … was to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation. (p.233)
   • This article helps increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of students by teachers, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.

4. He supports the fact that from the perspective of CLS, there is nothing to object to in the idea that the development of children's language capabilities requires that they and their teachers have some 'model' of language, but the view of language and discourse is radically different from the instrumental conception (task-oriented language teaching). And since CLS ascribes richer and weightier social significance to language, it has a correspondingly wider view of language education. (p.237)
   • Since the development of children's language capabilities requires that they and their teachers have some 'model' of language, from the perspective of CLS the development of the lesson plans should be focused on.

5. Fairclough (1989) has recommended the following terms of references for a 'model' of language
   1) A model of the English language, whether spoken or written which would (i) serve as the basis of how teachers are trained to understand how the English language works; (ii) inform professional discussion of all aspects of English teaching. (p.237)
2) The principles which should guide teachers on how far and in what ways the model should be made explicit to pupils, to make them conscious of how language is used in a range of contexts. (p.237)

3) What, in general terms, pupils need to know about how the English language works and in consequence what they should have been taught and be expected to understand on this score at age 7, 11 and 16. (p.238)

6. He also agreed that education, by contrast, is not just passing things on (though it is partly that); it is developing the child's critical consciousness of her environment and her critical self-consciousness, and her capacity to contribute to the shaping and reshaping of her social world. (p.238, 239)

7. He also concludes that 'language awareness' should be an element in the school, curriculum though the content of existing language awareness programmers is generally by no means critical! (p.239)

8. He recommends us how children should be taught about language and suggests a four-part cycle: (p.242)
   (i) Reflection on experience: children are asked to reflect upon their own discourse and their experience of social constraints upon it, and to share their reflections with the class.
   (ii) Systematizing experience: the teacher shows the children how to express these reflections in a systematic form, giving them the status of 'knowledge'.
   (iii) Explanation: this knowledge becomes an object of further collective reflection and analysis by the class, and social explanations are sought (level 2 of language awareness above).
   (iv) Developing practice: the awareness resulting from (i)-(iii) is used to develop the child's capacity for purposeful discourse. (p.242)

9. An example by Fairclough (1989) is that: “One focus might be children's experience of writing, with the aim of extending their capacity to use written language into domains which the majority of people are conventionally excluded from, such as the writing of history. There is nothing novel about this exercise; it is the sort of thing that many English teachers do. But what they do not generally do is systematically tie it to the development of critical awareness in the way I am suggesting.” (p.243)

10. In terms of the cycle, Fairclough (1989) believes that the teacher might proceed with the exercise as follows: (p.243)
   (i) Reflection on experience: ask the children to think about and describe the purposes for which they use writing as opposed to speech, what they think writing 'is for', purposes for which writing is used by others but not by them, and their perceptions of which uses of writing have most social prestige (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).
   (ii) Systematizing experience: present a systematic account of differences of function between speech and writing, the social prestige of venous uses of writing, and the distribution of access to prestigious uses (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).
   (iii) Explanation: use (i) and (ii) as the basis for class reflection on the social reasons to access to prestigious uses of writing being restricted; focusing upon history, and social
constraints on who writes history, as well as its subject matter, the language in which it is written, and so forth (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).

(iv) Developing practice: set up a history-writing project for the children, in which they are encouraged to stretch or break conventions for history writing by: (a) writing a history of a grouping, such as women or children in their local community, whose history is not normally written; (b) wanting in a language, such as one of the minority languages or a non-standard variety of English, which is not normally used for such purposes; (c) being serious historians themselves, by writing for a real purpose rather than just as an exercise - they might be encouraged, for example, to place copies of their histories in a local library (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).

Finally To sum up, Fairclough (1989) has suggested on the basis of his two guiding principles the development of children's language capabilities should proceed through bringing together their existing abilities and experiences, their growing critical awareness of language, and their growing capacity to engage in purposeful discourse. (Fairclough, 1989, p.244)

EVIDENCE FOR TECHNIQUES OF POWER IN PEDAGOGICAL INTERACTION

In classroom communication the teachers control the students through the discourse they construct. One can simply examine language and power in a TEFL setting, showing how classroom communication is shaped by discourse and how teachers in turn have the capacity to create and impose discourse. In this section an example of teacher-student talk is examined through the teacher’s lesson plan to show some forms that “discourse as social control” takes within the context of the classroom. Table 1 is a lesson plan of the fifth session of a twenty-session advanced foreign language class of an EFL teacher, each session lasts for one hour and thirty minutes.

Table 1: The lesson plan of the fifth session of Advanced Part One Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Part One</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time(min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Warm Up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Review &amp; oral evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spotlight On Testing Part 2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Classroom Resource Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Classroom Work Book</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Classroom Text Book</td>
<td>11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teacher's Recourse Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assignments for the next session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Warm Down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The lesson plan of the fifth session of a twenty - session advanced foreign language class of an EFL teacher, (Retrieved with permission from Payampersa Language Institute, Zarrinshahr, Isfahan, Iran, www.payampersa.ir, Class ID: 4980).
The lesson plan (Table 1) shows the tendency of the teacher or the mentors of the institution in teaching and controlling the language teaching in the EFL class. The items of exercises are chosen and written in the order the teacher or the institution has preferred.

The following selected observed discourse is based on the recorded film and the present lesson plan of the teacher in table 1.

Table 2: An extracted classroom interaction between the teacher and the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Teacher:</th>
<th>Student:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>the previous session we practiced how to talk about “things we have in common” &amp; “things we have which are different”. Any questions? O.K. Let review and practice on some sample sentences. Please repeat after me: “Juan’s been to Brazil, and so have I.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>All Students repeat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>He tried snowboarding, but I haven’t.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>All Students repeat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Now. We’re going to review the previous session exercises we were doing last session on “things we have in common” &amp; “things we have which are different”. Ok let’s have a dialogue with our partners by using the expressions on page nine exercise 3 and talk about things we have in common &amp; things we have which are different from each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Which one should we talk about first “things in common” or “things different”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>It really doesn’t matter which one. … Yes, Saddi can I help you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Can we first practice the sentences on “Synonyms in context” in exercise 2, and then review your exercise 1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>It is a wonderful idea, but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first because it is part of the lesson plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes, thank you.</td>
<td>(Saddi agrees with the teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ok. Let’s start.</td>
<td>(… Students start pair work … and the teacher walks among the students and gives feedback to the students.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (Retrieved with permission from the recorded film from Payampersa Language Institute, Zarinshahr, Isfahan, Iran, www.payampersa.ir, Date: February 3, 2015, Time: 20:00 to 21:30)

DISCUSSION

The lesson plan (Table 1) shows the tendency of the teacher or the mentors of the institution in teaching and controlling the language teaching in the EFL class. The items of exercises are chosen and written in the order the teacher or the institution has preferred. The teacher has the lesson plan before the class starts and the students of the class are not aware of the teacher’s lesson plan which is a constraint on the students. By these features the teacher practices power and teaches English as foreign language in the classroom. In this sample lesson plan the time spent on warm up or warm down have been considered to be short which is a controlling feature. According to Thomas et al. (2004) “Language has a key role in transforming power into right and obedience into duty. Some scholars would go further and say that language is the arena where the concepts of right (both in the sense of entitlement and in the sense of what is morally acceptable) and duty are created, and thus language actually creates power, as well as being a site where power is performed.” (p.10). In this lesson plan the time allowed to be spent on warm up or warm down is short to control the classroom talk so that more time is spent on the application of
language for other items in teaching English as foreign language. The lesson plan controls the amount of classroom interaction between the EFL teacher and the students. So the time, the order and the kind of lesson plan items are all the controlling features of the classroom interactions and of course the connection between language use and unequal relations of power particularly in EFL classroom. A lesson plan shows how the conventions for teaching and learning among the institutions, teachers and the students represent common sense assumptions which treat authority and hierarchy as natural. The teacher knows about teaching and learning but the students don’t. The teacher is in a position to determine how a learning and teaching should be dealt with but the students aren’t. It is right and natural that the institutions and the teachers should make the educational decisions and control the course of teaching and learning and the students should obey and cooperate. A well-organized lesson plan can make teaching English more powerful and control the forms of language that are used. The proponents of learner-centered pedagogy believe that teachers and learners should share power and that learners should have more control over their educational process (Nunan, 1988). The proponents of other pedagogies may have other beliefs, whatever they are the lesson plan plays an important role in the use of language in the classroom and control of power.

In this discourse sequence (Table 2) which is based on the present lesson plan of the teacher in table 1, the teacher’s or the mentor’s tendency in operating the class has been presented. The teacher tries to attempt to establish some continuity between the last session’s work and the task he wishes the students to engage in, (turn (1)). Prior to engaging the students in the task, the teacher checks their understanding and their ability in producing the correct structures of the task by eliciting from them what he thinks are the main features they should bear in mind, by providing feedback (turns (2), (4), (9),). In turn (9) the teacher refrains from providing direct answer himself, because in this way he can both check the students’ knowledge and help present this knowledge as something owned by the students as well as himself. By the way, learners should get involved with new knowledge if they want to consolidate their own understanding. And this is achieved through trying to use this knowledge on their own. According to Mercer (1995), “in order to be successful in the process of creating knowledge in classrooms, themes must emerge and continue, teachers should offer, accept and revisit explanations and understanding must be consolidated” (p. 68). In sequence 1, the teacher tries to make students focus, review and produce structures such as “and so have I”, “but I haven’t”, “neither do I”, “nor am I”.

One reason is that according to Richards (2002) it is now accepted that models for oral interaction cannot be based simply on the intuitions or applied linguists and textbook writers should be informed by the findings of conversation analysis and corpus analysis of real speech and the frequency of fixed utterances or conversational routines in spoken language has been revealed to be important. (p.17)

In his lesson plan (Table 1), the teacher tries to control the students by asking them to focus, review and produce the intended structures by classroom pair work. Moreover, there are some features that, not only show the teacher’s control over the students, but also enact this very control. For example, in turns (8), (9) the teacher controls the student very politely and does not
let the student change the direction of teaching and the teacher’s tendency by saying “It is a wonderful idea, but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first because it is part of the lesson plan.” This way the teacher places constraints on what the student should do. Here the exercise of power is polite, direct and intentional. The student is persuaded and accepts the constraint because he was encouraged by the sentence “It is a wonderful idea” and then the student is persuaded by “but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first” and the teacher probably stops the student(s) from changing the direction of language teaching by saying “because it is part of the lesson plan” and the students follow the teacher’s tendency and the lesson plan. In this sequence a technique of power is applied in which language is given a central role. According to Foucault (1983) these “techniques of power” are pervasive in the classroom. This sentence according to Fairclough (1989) is a kind of “discourse which involves the more or less self-conscious application of social scientific knowledge for purposes of bureaucratic control” (p.213).

CONCLUSION

This article has outlined why the topics of the lesson plans, language and power might be worth studying in the context of EFL classroom and why we are assuming that the three topics are related. This review article has tried to show that at some ways the lesson plans, language and power are related. The study of language in the context of EFL classroom is worthwhile because it is such an important part of all our language teaching. The classroom discourse which is created by teachers by planning and applying the lesson plans in the classroom helps teachers to dominate students scientifically, educationally and more socially accepted.

Lesson plan and teacher’s talk seem to play a crucial role in the exercise of power through the language of classroom teacher. Thus classroom discourse of the teacher which has risen from the application of preplanned lesson plan may directly and coercively enact power, through the teacher’s directive discourse, and through the applicable laws and regulations of lesson plans, or the pre planned instructions by the teacher or the mentor of the institution via language teachers. Power may also be manifested more indirectly in discourse, as representation in the form of an expression, description, or legitimation of powerful actors or their actions and ideologies. Power may also be manifested more indirectly in the teacher’s discourse and the application of the lesson plan because the time, the order and the kind of lesson plan items are all the controlling features of the classroom interactions and of course the connection between language use and unequal relations of power particularly in EFL classroom. The time, the order and the kind of lesson plan items forces the language teacher to produce special expressions or descriptions in the classroom. The presence of the lesson plan also legitimates the teacher’s activity and discourse in the classroom. The teacher’s knowledge, lesson plan and his authority seems to have made the teacher, the powerful actor of his classroom actions and ideologies or the mentor’s ideologies and the mentor’s expected classroom actions and discourse via the classroom teacher.

Another implication is that language teachers and the EFL mentors can learn a great deal about how EFL classroom discourse is structured, how it functions, and what the most widespread, but
sometimes invisible, assumptions about different lesson plans, groups of students and teachers in the classrooms are.

Language teachers can also find this knowledge valuable because it contributes to their understanding of themselves and their relationships with students, their lesson plans and the institution. Knowledge about the lesson plans, language and power may enable language teachers to make choices in their language use which make them feel better about themselves. Language teachers can also find knowledge about the areas discussed in this article valuable because it can be used to challenge what they perceive as unfairness in the classroom.

The next implication is that the mentors and language trainers can show and teach the importance of the socially accepted language forms of EFL language teachers through the application of lesson plans in a classroom context by using the critical discourse analysis of language that the lesson plans can give to pre service, in service and advanced teachers. For example if the language teachers are younger than the language learners or as old the learners the correct and socially accepted domination of the learners by the teachers would be useful to control and teach the students.

Language teachers in universities, schools, language institutes and other educational institutions use their lesson plans and language with a variety of aims and goals especially for the educational ones. A typical example of one of these goals is to lead the students’ learning tasks and activities along guidelines specified by a curriculum or a teacher’s or the institution lesson plan, and to construct a version of educational knowledge, i.e., a metalanguage, which is believed to be important for the negotiation of each of the educational topics and subjects taught in the classroom context.

For further research, it is recommended to create a mentoring computer software and place the digital lesson plans and the controlling educational materials on the monitors and show and apply the lesson plans in the classroom context and research the manipulation of power through the application of more tangible lesson plans for the language learners. In this case the mentors can develop the lesson plans and more advanced and detailed new plans can be prepared and applied in the classroom and new directive discourse can be taught to the language teachers by closely looking at the digital lesson plans, language and power in EFL classrooms.

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APPENDIX A

The “Five Cs” of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning*

Goal 1: Communication
Standard 1.1- Interpersonal Communication: Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feeling and emotion, and exchange opinions.
Standard 1.2 – Interpretive Communication: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
Standard 1.3 – Presentational Communication: Students present information, concepts and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Goal 2: Cultures
Standard 2.1 – Practices and Perspective: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.
Standard 2.2 – Products and Perspectives: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Goal 3: Connections
Standard 3.1 – Knowledge of Other Disciplines: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.
Standard 3.2 – Distinctive Viewpoints: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

Goal 4: Comparisons
Standard 4.1 – Nature of Language: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.
Standard 4.2 – Culture: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Goal 5: Community
Standard 5.1 – Beyond the School Setting: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.
Standard 5.2 – Life-long Learners: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

ABSTRACT
The receptor language and culture entail obligatory features that shape the possible interpretations of the translation, as well as extending the meaning of the translation in directions other than those inherent in the source text. Adopting Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with particular emphasis on the framework of Fairclough (1989), the present investigation was an attempt to shed light on the relationship between language and ideology involved in translation in general, and more specifically, to uncover the underlying ideological assumptions invisible in texts, both source text (ST) and (TT), and consequently ascertain whether or not translators’ ideologies are imposed in their translations. The corpus consisted of the full text of the source text and two different Persian translations of the book: An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives by Abbott and Pamela. In this investigation, a detailed contrastive, comparative study at the micro-level included explanation of lexical items and grammatical choices conducted to examine, describe and subsequently interpret the patterns at the macro level in English source text and its Persian translated versions. From the finding of the study We realize just how important it is to be conscious of the ideology that underlies a translation. It is essential to know what the translator has added, what he has left out, the words he has chosen, and how he has placed them. Because behind every one of his selections there is a voluntary act that reveals his history and socio-political milieu that surrounds him, in other words, his own culture.

KEYWORDS: CDA, Ideology, Translation Studies, Feminism, cultural turn, Discourse
INTRODUCTION

“Translation study is classified as the new academic discipline related to the study of the theory in addition to phenomena of translation. By its nature it was multilingual and also interdisciplinary, surrounding languages, linguistics, communication studies, philosophy and numerous types of cultural studies.” (Munday, 2001, p.1). “How must we know when a translation can be good? This straightforward question lied in the middle of all concerns along with translation criticism. But not only this, in wanting to assess the grade of a translation one additionally addresses the heart of virtually any theory of translation, i.e., the question with the nature of translation or maybe, more specially, the nature with the relationship concerning a supply text and its translation text.” (House, 2001, p. 243).

“The study of translation in charged political contexts illustrated the relationship between discourse and power, and showed that, as a site where discourses meet and compete, translation negotiates power relations. But the working of power is not simply “top down” a matter of inexorable repression and constraint: instead, translation, like other cultural activities, can be mobilized for counter discourses and subversion, or for any number of mediating positions in between.” (Gentzler&Tymoczko, 2002, p.xiv) Thus, the main aim of CDA within TS is to disclose the underlying and often implicit ideological and power relations in spoken and written discourse. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p.258) described the aim of CDA as to make the "ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them" more visible. Within CDA, this was often done on such basis as discourse in one language and one culture. With regards to translation, however, “textual functions, ideological contexts, and root relations involving power employ both for the source text message and culture also to the target text and also culture” (Schöffner, 2004, p.16).

In TS, certain aspects of CDA have been applied to analyze the ideological motivations behind translators’ text linguistic choices in the TT and the translator’s role in the interpretation process of the intended meaning of the ST and the production of a new TT. The main purpose of this research was to employ Norman Fairclough’s model (1989) as a framework for CDA in the analysis of TTs in translation of one single sociology book titled “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” written by Pamela Abbott & Claire Wallace in English. Finally, the present research mainly attempted to learn the main ideological assumptions veiled inside the text messaging, equally source text (ST) and target text (TT), therefore to make sure whether the translators’ ideologies were added to their particular translations; in other words, to recognize where translators according to their own ideological concepts used various techniques from what the author used inside the text.

“Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) also mediated among linguistic structures as evident in text and the social, political, and historical contexts of text production and reception.” (Schöffner, 2004, p.22). This research studied the textual or discursive manifestations of power structures and ideologies and their specific linguistic realizations at lexical and grammatical levels on the basis of Fairclough’s model. This research tried to answer the following questions:
LITERATURE REVIEW

The field of critical discourse analysis

“Critical discourse analysis provided theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains.” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, P.71). Critical discourse analysis was viewed as integrating (a) analysis of text, (b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption and distribution, and (c) sociocultural analysis of the discursive event (be it an interview, a scientific paper, or a conversation) (Fairclough, 1995, P.23).

Critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough

Fairclough (1995a, p.135) applied the concept of discourse in three different ways. “1) discourse described language use as social practice. 2) discourse was understood as the kind of language used within a specific field, such as political or scientific discourse. 3) discourse was used as a count noun (a discourse, the discourse, the discourses, discourses) referring to a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective. For example, a feminist discourse, a neoliberal discourse, a Marxist discourse, a consumer discourse.” (As cited in Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, PP.77-78). His model was based on the assumption that language was an irreducible part of social life. The dialectic relation between language and social reality was realized through social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse) and social structures (languages) (Fairclough, 2003, P.24).

In his research, Fairclough attempted to uncover ideological and power patterns in texts. Fairclough provided a tripartite framework for the analysis of text and discourse: 1) the linguistic description of the formal properties of the text; 2) the interpretation of the relationship between the discursive processes/interaction and the text, where text was the end product of a process of text production and as a resource in the process of text interpretation and lastly, 3) the explanation of the relationship between discourse and social and cultural reality.

Description, interpretation, explanation

“Description was the first stage of the CDA, which included the analysis of the texture of texts” (Fairclough, 2003, P.158). “Formal textual elements related to the social world according to three types of value: experiential, relational and expressive. The experiential value was concerned with the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world (content, knowledge and beliefs). Relational value reflected the social relationships, which were enacted via text in discourse. Expressive value showed the producer’s evaluation of the reality (attitude towards subjects and social identities)” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 112). Interpretation deals with the understanding of meaning embedded in texts. The level of interpretation was concerned with participant’s text production and text interpretation (understanding). According to Gee (1999, p.17) “was the knowledge of language plus action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools and places of events that are recognizable to people as a particular type of identity that may engage in a particular type of activity. The explanation stage in CDA saw discourse as a part of processes of social struggle and power relations. It showed how discourses were determined by social structures and what reproductive effects discourses have on those structures.
Political discourse analysis: topics and methods
Political discourse analysis was concerned with the analysis of political discourse. Political discourse has been described as “a complex form of human activity” (Chilton & Schäffner, 1997, p.207). Political situations and processes can be linked to discourse types and levels of discourse organization by way of four strategic functions as an intermediate level. She proposed the following four functions: “(i) coercion; (ii) resistance, opposition and protest; (iii) dissimulation; (iv) legitimization and delegitimization.” (Schäffner, 2004, p.3).

Translation and CDA
Main characteristics of the field
The first business of the translator was to translate. A text may therefore be pulled in five different directions, as followed: “(1) the individual style or idiolect of the SL author. When should it be (a) preserved, (b) normalised (2) the conventional grammatical and lexical usage for this type of text, depending on the topic and the situation. (3) Content items referring specifically to the SL, or third language (i.e. not SL or TL) cultures.(4) The typical format of a text in a book, periodical, newspaper, etc., as influenced by tradition at the time. (5) The views and prejudices of the translator, which may be personal and subjective, or may be social and cultural, involving the translator's 'group loyalty factor', which may reflect the national, political, ethnic, religious, social class, sex, etc. assumptions of the translator” (Newmark, 1998, p.5).

Translation, ideology and power
Ideology, for Fairclough, was ‘meaning in the service of power’ (Fairclough, 1995b, p.14). More precisely, he understood ideologies as constructions of meaning that contribute to the production, reproduction and transformation of relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992b, p.87). “In the 1950s and 1960s, practicing translators began consciously to calibrate their translation techniques to achieve effects they wished to produce in their audiences, whether those effects were religious faith, consumption of products, or literary success. In short translators began to realize how translated texts could manipulate readers to achieve desired.” (Gentzler & Tymoczko, 2002).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1) To what extent do the translators change the ideological position of Abbott and Wallace in the translations of the book: “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” with recourse to Fairclough’s model for CDA?
2) Which translation strategies produce which results and which effects?
3) Which particular sociocultural and ideological constraints influence the translation policy in general and the target text production in particular?

METHODOLOGY
Corpus of the study
Identifying regularities in the behavior of several translators at the same time in the same culture can help to establish which particular general concept of translation prevailed in a particular community at a particular time. An empirical and historical perspective also allows to study the
dominant ideology in the translations of the book “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” in two different period of time, one of them in 1997 (in the Second decade of Islamic Republic) and the other in 2001 (in the Third decade of Islamic Republic) with considering the knowledge of people about the feminist perspectives.

The data for this research are the translations of the book “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” and also ‘pretexts’, e.g. translator’s prefaces, footnotes, the whole discourse on translation. This research has thus paved the way to developing a history of translation and a sociology of translation in the second and third decades of Islamic Republic. The researcher believed that the selected book provides for the analysis and comparison of an original and its translation on three different levels: the ideology of translators, the ideology of authors of the book and “translation equivalence”. “Equivalence” is the fundamental criterion of translation quality.

In seeking the above-mentioned objectives, an illustrative corpus of the two full-text Persian translations of one single politically sensitive book titled "An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives" written by Pamela Abbott and Claire Wallacel in English had been determined. Thus, the material employed in this kind of research had been separated into three groups:

Theoretical framework
This research in Fairclough’s (1989) model framework is concerned with the dominant ideology in translation with trying to find out what happens in the mind of translators. The CDA framework described in this thesis was based on three stages of analysis defined by Norman Fairclough (1989), i.e. description (text-linguistic analysis), interpretation (assigning pragmatic values to textual features) and explanation (the social and situational context in terms of power and ideological struggle).

Procedure
The researcher read some chapters of the selected book randomly and compared it with the available translations in the second and third decades of the Islamic Republic of Iran to see how the ideologically loaded lexemes were rendered in Persian language considering the socio-cultural and ideological nuances of the time. The researcher use Fairclough's model as the basis for the analyzing the ideological effects of the translators in the two translations of the book "An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives”. The analytical model involves 97 sentences for analyzing the vocabulary and 50 sentences for analyzing the grammer that surveyed at the micro and macro levels.
Collecting the data
Data collection of the present research starts by presenting examples of authentic translations of the book "An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives." In the second and third decades of Islamic Republic, commenting on them from the point of view of TS. These examples political effects caused by specific translation solutions; the processes by which information is transferred via translation to another culture; and the structure and function of equally valid texts in their respective cultures. After a brief survey of the discipline of Translation Studies, chosen parts in the first and the second translation has been critically studied to determine the frequency of translation strategies, The translators may have used strategies to make the text correspond to the genre conventions that apply in the target culture, or to compensate for different background knowledge or sensibilities of the new addressees.

Be that as it may, the more or less subtle differences between the English and the Persian language text reflect different ideological phenomena, both texts thus serving as windows onto ideologies in the two political cultures. These differences based on CDA rules, however, was presented in tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In this research in interpreting the translator's intention and procedures, the researcher was here not criticising them but attempting to understand why he had used these procedures.in considering the ideology of translated texts, the researcher did not take the points successively; He grouped them selectively under general heads: on the basis of Fairclough; s(1989) at the micro level he studied experiential, relational and expressive values and at the macro level surveyed interpretation and explanation.

Micro level analysis
Description: text analysis
Fairclough (1989) explained three values with regard to studying vocabulary and grammar at the micro level. The three values of analysis were experiential, relational and expressive. This part of the paper starts by presenting examples of authentic translations of selected book, commenting on them from the point of view of TS. These examples show the method of researcher in data analysis. Table 1 below shows the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in Experiential values of vocabulary analysis.fairclough’s (1989) gives four major cases for experiential values of vocabulary analysis: synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy and overwording.

As Table 1 shows that in TT2 Najm Aragi in the third decades of Islamic translated all 97 items of the ST into overwording (23 items); hyponymy (31 items); synonymy (31 items) and antonymy (3 items),and in comparison with TT1in the second decades of Islamic Republic as it has been shown in table 1 KHorasani and Ahmadi translated all 97 items of the ST into overwording( 26 items); synonymy (70 items) the frequency of the data revealed that in the third decades of Islamic Republic changing of writer’s ideology of the selected book are far more than second decade. In fact, unlike the other approaches the researcher had examined, in the third decade of Islamic Republic feminism was an overtly political approach and can attack other
approaches for their false assumptions about women. It also seems, on the whole, ideologies of femininity and women’s assigned role in the society all play key roles in translation of feminist works in the third decades of Islamic Republic.

Table 1: Experiential values of vocabulary analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Translation strategy</th>
<th>TT1 frequency</th>
<th>TT1 percentage</th>
<th>TT2 frequency</th>
<th>TT2 percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overwording</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26/80</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23/71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hyponymy</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Synonymy</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>72/16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Antonymy</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3/09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Experiential values of grammar analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Translation strategy</th>
<th>TT1 frequency</th>
<th>TT1 percentage</th>
<th>TT2 frequency</th>
<th>TT2 percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Positive sentence</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Negative sentence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Passive sentence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Active sentence</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 3 and 4 below show the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in relational values of vocabulary and grammar analysis; Relational values of vocabulary analysis included Three items: formality, informality and euphemistic expression and Relational values of vocabulary included three modes: Declarative, Imperative, Question.

Table 3: Relational values of vocabulary analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Translation strategy</th>
<th>TT1 frequency</th>
<th>TT1 percentage</th>
<th>TT2 frequency</th>
<th>TT2 percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Formality</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57/79</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58/76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Informality</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21/64</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Euphemistic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18/55</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25/77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables 5 and 6 below show the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in Expressive values of vocabulary and grammar analysis.

### Table 5: Expressive values of vocabulary analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Translation strategy</th>
<th>TT1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>TT2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Declarative Mode</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Imperative Mode</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6: Expressive values of grammar analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Translation strategy</th>
<th>TT1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>TT2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ideologically Contrastive</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>26/80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classification Scheme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Macro level analysis**

*Translator judgments*

At this level of investigation, the researcher concentrates on other research that deals with cultural difference and with the interface between the source culture and the foreign linking ideology dominant discourse to translation strategies.

At the beginning of the book that had been rendered by Najm Aragi there was the preface of the translator about the book of “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” and its authors. The analyses of this preface show that the Iranian feminist translators are very open about flaunting their manipulation of texts. Najm Aragi as the translator of the selected book of this research in the third decades of Islamic Republic is also explicit in stating that the aim of her book on feminism and translation is to cast the widest net around issues of feminism in translation and, through feminism, to move translation studies closer to a cultural studies framework. Najm Aragi in particular highlights the power relations in the translation of the colonized peoples and takes translation studies to task for its Western philosophical and ideological bias before the revolution.

The other translation of the same original book “An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives” was translated by Khorasani and Ahmadi in the second decade of Islamic Republic when Islamic revolutionary movement was dominant in translating the works especially the feminism books. The strategies that had been used in the translation show that among of this
translations some of the words often accompanied by justificatory footnotes. All of these footnotes in this study, looks at the language of the TT and sees cultural implications in the choices made, in this case, the researcher has examined a footnotes that has been translated in the second decades of Islamic Republic. It is also clear from this brief analysis of these footnotes that a whole range of interacting factors are at work. These include the perhaps inevitable dislocation of the source culture, the translation of the feministic works in Iran and the location of the patronage of feminism within Iran in the second decade.

Translators strategies
At macro level, the following examples were presented by researcher to show his method in analysis of translator’s strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Target Text1</th>
<th>Target Text2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The working class is made up of service personnel and manual workers e.g. <em>waitresses</em>, cooks, car mechanics, bricklayers, dustmen and so on.</td>
<td>طبقه کارگران کارکنان خدمتی و کارگران بیشتر تشکیل می شود.</td>
<td>طبقه کارگران از کارکنان خدمتی و کارگران بیشتر تشکیل می شود.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of the table 7, the word "waitress" in the ST is translated as "پیش خدمت زن" in TT1 and "پیش خدمت" in TT2. The word "waitress" means a woman whose job is to bring the food to customers at their tables in a restaurant. All societies have a division of labour based on sex work that is seen as women’s work and work that is seen as men’s work; labour is gendered. However, the nature of the work that is done by men or women varies from society to society and has changed historically in Iran. The word "پیش خدمت" deleted in TT2 and had been replaced by the word "پیش خدمت " in the third decade of the Islamic Republic is incompatible with the meaning of the word waitress. Antonymous translation of the word "waitress" in TT2 showed that the property of this word conform to the social system in which it exists. In Iran working in restaurant are frequently undertaken by men either alone or alongside their wives. Thus, Najm Aragi by using the dominant social system of that period as the yardstick which working in restaurant are frequently undertaken by men so, she translated the word "waitress " in the TT2 AS "پیش خدمت " It was also clear that such fluidity of meaning was on the base of cultural model, that gender conferred certain essential feminine and masculine traits is constructivist feminism, which asked women (and men) to consider what it meant to be a woman to consider how much of what society had often deemed to be inherently female traits are in fact culturally and socially constructed.
As stated in table no 8, the word "pub" in the ST refers to a public house, informally known as a "pub", is an establishment licensed to serve alcoholic drinks for consumption on the premises in countries and regions of British influence. This word that is unlawful and religiously prohibited in Islam the translators deleted the meaning of the word in TT1 (in the second decade of Islamic Republic) and TT2 (in the third decade of Islamic republic). The deletion of the meaning of the word “pub” showed that First: this word was ethical corruption and violated the criteria of press law for publication. Second: One of the pillars of the revolution was to resist against the cultural imperialism of the West and ensure cultural independence through “construction of an indigenous and authentic Islamic model of modernity and progress in Iran.” Thus TT1 and TT2 was translated on the base of Islamic model by the translators of the second and third decades of the Islamic Republic. Third, however, both translators in TT1 and TT2 operate in contexts which are shaped by social aims and ideologies, which is particularly obvious in the field of politics.

CONCLUSION
This research showed that Persian translators seek to emphasize their identity and ideological stance in the translation project. One of these, Najm Aragi, a translator of feminist works, is openly assertive about the manipulation this involves: The feminist translator, affirming her critical difference, her delight in interminable re-reading and re-writing, and shows the signs of her manipulation of the ST in her translation. The more or less subtle differences between the English and the Persian text reflect different ideological phenomena, both texts thus serving as windows on to ideologies in the two political cultures.

This research showed that CDA is a helpful tool in the translation process of political texts. The CDA integration in translation was a very new field within TS and had not been researched extensively. In the production of the TT; the translators in some sentences adopt a neutral stance and reproduce the text with no ideological implications in the TL. And also in some sentences as discussed in table 8, the translators embed their ideological stance in the choice of certain linguistic and grammatical patterns, which then created a different meaning in the TL and which created the target reader’s assumptions of the TT, not allowing the target reader to access the original ST meaning.

In this research the CDA framework applied to TS in three ways: a) as an auxiliary tool for critical analysis of the ST prior to the translation process, b) for the analysis of the translator’s
The results of the TT analysis showed that The views and prejudices of the both translators, were personal, subjective, social, cultural, involving the translator's group loyalty factor, which reflected the national, political, ethnic, religious, social class, sex, etc. assumptions of the translator in the second and third decade of Islamic Republic. Admittedly, the examples that the researcher discussed in the present research were extreme cases. Not all translations show differences to their source text in such a drastic way, but the researcher chose them deliberately to raise our awareness to the variety of factors that are involved in translation.

Limitations of the study
A limitation that the researcher confronted was that there were just two translations of the same book by two different translators, one by Manizheh Najm Araghi and the other by Maryam Khorasani and Hamid Ahmadi.

REFERENCES


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M.A. graduated in translation studies from IAU CTB.
THE CONTRIBUTION OF STUDENT TEAMS-ACHIEVEMENT DIVISIONS (STAD) TO TEACHING ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS TO INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of Student Teams- Achievement Divisions (STAD) as a cooperative learning (CL) technique in enhancing Iranian EFL (English as a foreign language) learners’ knowledge of collocations. Sixty-four intermediate learners in two intact groups were selected as the participants of this study. They were proved homogeneous after administering the Preliminary English Test (PET) and then were assigned as an experimental and a control group. Each group took a researcher-made, validated pretest of collocations at the outset of the study whose reliability was estimated as 0.83 through Cronbach alpha. The experimental group received collocation instruction according to STAD procedures while the control group was exposed to an individualistic instruction. The content of the instruction was in accordance with the content of learners’ course book, followed by a set of researcher-made collocation tasks performed by both study groups after receiving the instruction. At the end of the eight-session treatment, the same researcher-made pretest was administered as the post-test and the students’ performance was analyzed through an independent samples t-test. The results of data analysis showed that STAD is a significantly effective cooperative technique in bringing about improved collocation performance. In fact, the finding of this study is hoped to help language teachers to find an appropriate way through which CL can be implemented in one of its most effective techniques, namely STAD.

KEYWORDS: STAD, Cooperative language learning, English collocations, Intermediate learners

INTRODUCTION

The issue of learner-centered activities in the classroom has been regarded as an indispensable matter of concern for quite a while for those responsible for guaranteeing the best for instructive frameworks. Cooperative learning techniques, developed on the basis of learner-centered methodology, give learners chances to take more active parts in their own particular learning.
this learning method, small groups of students work together to achieve a common goal. In fact, cooperative learning is a successful teaching technique in which small teams, encompassing students with different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to jointly improve their understanding of a subject (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

There are different ways through which group work or cooperative learning can be applied by classroom teachers. Student teams-achievement divisions (STAD) is one of the techniques developed by Slavin (1987) in which students are assigned to four- or five-member learning teams that are heterogeneous in terms of proficiency level, sex, and ethnicity. This technique is based on fostering students’ motivation for learning by focusing on cooperation between the members of different teams. In other words, it is focused on team cooperation and does not include individual competition (Slavin, 1987). However, most research on STAD is limited to fields other than language and a limited number of studies have dealt with language macroskills. In fact, very few studies have focused on the effectiveness of STAD for teaching language components, such as grammar, vocabulary, and collocation in particular.

Collocation is perceived as a significant component of language use and communication and can be discriminators of native speakers from non-native speakers (Koya, 2006; Nation, 2001; Wouden, 1997). Studies have shown that L2 learners are not confident in the use of collocations (Burgschmidt & Perkins, 1985, as cited in Howarth, 1998) and that the collocation challenge is more critical than general vocabulary problems (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993). In order to help learners cope with challenges in learning difficult aspects of language, including collocations, researchers have turned attention to the effect of learner-learner interaction since 1980s.

Research results have revealed that cooperative tasks are more likely to create better language learning opportunities and specifically more vocabulary learning opportunities compared to individual tasks (Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). Similarly, the existing studies show that interaction, either between learners (Adams, 2007) or between a learner and a teacher (Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994; Gass & Alvarez Torres, 2005) has the potential to enhance vocabulary learning. Accordingly, learners should be provided with numerous opportunities to engage in interactive activities rather than passive learning. STAD is believed to pave the way towards reaching this objective.

Seeking for an appropriate learner-centered and cooperative methodology at one hand and considering the complexity of collocation learning, on the other hand, were assumed as the major problems based on which the present study was conducted. In a nutshell, this study is believed to get a more critical look to the viability of STAD, a cooperative teaching technique, or the conventional individualized methodology in improving Iranian EFL learners’ collocation learning.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**
To achieve the purpose of this study the following research questions were proposed:

1. How does STAD affect Iranian EFL learners’ collocation learning compared to the conventional individualized methodology?

1. What are the perceptions of Iranian EFL learners towards cooperative learning, specifically, STAD?
Does STAD have any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS
The above research questions led to the statement of the following null hypothesis:

STAD does not have any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
Participants of this study were sixty-four Iranian intermediate EFL learners studying in Simin Language Institute in Iran. They were in two separate classes, encompassing both male and female learners, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty one. One class was assigned as control group, and the other one as experimental group, each including thirty-two subjects. The students in the experimental group were further divided into eight STAD groups based on their performance on a general language proficiency test, namely PET (Preliminary English Test). Accordingly, each STAD group consisted of four members: (a) one learner with a high PET score, (b) another with a low PET score, and (c) the two others with average PET scores. The test was also used to confirm the homogeneity of experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation
The instruments used in different stages of the current research were: (a) a language proficiency test (PET), (b) a researcher-made pre/post-test, and (c) seventy collocations to be used in treatment followed by researcher-made collocation tasks.

The Preliminary English Test (PET)
The Preliminary English Test (PET) is a test of language proficiency by University of Cambridge ESOL Examination which covers all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The speaking section which contained four parts was excluded in the present study for practicality purposes, namely the ease of administration and ease of scoring.

The Pre/Post-test
The pre-test and post-test were the same in the present study and developed by the researcher based on the collocations students learned during the treatment. The test had four parts, including 40 items on the whole measuring the students’ knowledge of both lexical and grammatical collocations. For obtaining the content validity of the test, the researcher got the help of an experienced EFL teacher majored in TEFL and two professors with ten years experience in TEFL. The reliability of the test was also determined as 0.83 through Cronbach Alpha in a pilot study. The learners in both study groups took the pretest before receiving the treatment. After eight sessions of learning collocations they took the posttest, and the results underwent data analysis to find out whether STAD had any significant effect on learners' collocation learning or not.
Collocation Tasks

A total number of seventy English collocations were used for the instruction. Some of them were selected from the learners' textbook, New Interchange Two, and some others from Oxford Collocations Dictionary. All seventy collocations were taught to both control and experimental groups in eight sessions. Each collocation was proposed with an example, and the examples were mostly taken from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Longman Exams Coach, Oxford Collocations Dictionary, Oxford Advanced Dictionary, and Oxford Students Dictionary.

A researcher-made task was also used to evaluate students' collocation learning at the end of each session. Accordingly, eight tasks were used for the purpose of this study. The content of each task was based on the collocations students learned in each session, and each task was made up of three parts, namely part A (review), part B (reception and production), and part C (production) to be used in eight sessions. The reliability of each task was computed through KR-21 formula in a pilot study. The tasks were given to both control and experimental groups at the end of each session to evaluate their achievement.

Procedure of the Study

STAD is one of the techniques of cooperative learning in which students are divided into groups of 4-5 members. Based on this technique, the teacher presents the lesson and then gives the students in each group a test based on the content of the instruction. The average of the students' score in each group is the score of STAD group. Accordingly, the STAD groups will be classified to Good Team, Great Team, and Super Team with respect to their scores achieved at the end of each session (Slavin, 1994). This way of grouping is believed to motivate the members of each group to get high scores in order to be introduced as the Super Team. In other words, students can be encouraged to participate more actively and to be responsible for their own learning through helping their teammates (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). To apply this technique in the present study, the following steps were taken:

A test of language proficiency (PET) was administered at the outset of the study to find out if the participants were homogeneous or not. The analysis of the data revealed that the control and experimental groups were homogeneous in terms of their language proficiency.

The students took a researcher-made pre-test of English collocations in the second session. The test was aimed at determining the participants' knowledge of English collocations before receiving the treatment. The experimental group was divided into eight groups/teams of four members based on their performance on the PET so that each group encompassed one student with a high PET score, one with a low PET score, and two students with average scores in PET test. After grouping the participants the researcher explained the procedures of STAD to the students in the experimental group.

Eight to nine collocations were taught to both control and experimental groups in each treatment session; therefore, seventy collocations were taught on the whole. After teaching the collocations, students in both groups were assigned to do the related tasks. Tasks were given to students at the end of each session to evaluate their achievement. They were performed collaboratively in
experimental group so that each team member was involved in a joint activity whose result was attributed to individual members’ activities. This was believed to motivate each student to try his/her best to perform the task (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1998). The teacher collected the completed tasks and corrected them for the following session. Accordingly, at the beginning of the following session, the teacher announced the rank-ordered STAD teams based on their scores on the task as Good, Great, and Super Teams.

Each participant in the control group did the task individually. In other words, each student was responsible for his/her own learning, and there was no team cooperation in control group. After eight sessions of treatment, the post-test was given to both study groups. The students took the post-test individually in both control and experimental groups. The results of the test underwent data analysis to determine if there would be any significant difference between the control and experimental groups in terms of collocation learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
To prove the homogeneity of study groups in terms of their knowledge of English collocations, a pretest was administered at the outset of the study. The descriptive statistics of participants’ scores in the two experimental and control groups on the pretest were computed and presented in Table 1. The table shows that the mean and standard deviation of the experimental ($M = 26.78$, $SD = 2.48$) and control ($M = 26.63$, $SD = 2.75$) groups are not far from each other on the pretest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.78</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.63</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of independent samples t-test for comparing the two groups’ mean scores on the pretest are provided in Table 2 below. The table shows that the equality of variances was proved because $p$ value of Levene's Test (.42) was more than .05.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Variances</th>
<th>T-test for Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$F$</td>
<td>$Sig.$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.646</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, test results as appeared in Table 4.6 failed to find any statistically significant difference in means between the two groups on the pre-test ($t_{(62)} = .238$, $p = .81$, $p>.05$) since the $t$-observed (.238) was lower than the $t$ critical (2.00), and $p$ value (.81) was larger than the selected significant level for this study, .05. Therefore, the two groups were proved homogeneous in terms of knowledge of English collocations at the beginning of the study and before receiving any instruction.
Investigating the Research Question

To answer the research question of this study that asks whether or not STAD has any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations, the descriptive statistics of participants’ scores in the two experimental and control groups on the post-test were computed and presented in Table 3. As the results reveal, the students in the experimental group ($M = 37.03, SD = 2.08$) outperformed those in the control group ($M = 34.16, SD = 2.98$) on the post-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37.03</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34.16</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, independent samples t-test was used to compare the two groups’ mean scores on the posttest. The results are provided in Table 4. As the table shows, the $p$ value (.002) in Levene's Test was less than .05, indicating that the variances were not equal. Therefore, the data in Row “Equal variance not assumed” was analyzed to test the hypothesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Variances</th>
<th>$T$-test for Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$F$</td>
<td>$t$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>10.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td>4.466</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that independent samples t-test detected a statistically significant difference in mean scores between the two experimental and control groups ($t_{(55.45)} = 4.46, p = .000, p < .05$). This means that the $t$ value (4.46) was greater than the $t$ critical (2.00), and the $p$ value (.000) was higher than the selected significant level for this study (.05); consequently, the first null hypothesis as “STAD has no significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations” was rejected, and it could be claimed that STAD affects Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations.

The results of quantitative data analyses showed that STAD had a serious impact on the collocation performance of the participants when their pretest and posttest scores were compared. In other words, the experimental group participants’ collocation achievement was improved after receiving the treatment. The obtained results are consistent with the results obtained from other
studies investigating the effectiveness of the cooperative teaching techniques including STAD (Alijanian, 2012; Durukan, 2011; Mohseny & Jamour, 2012; Nazir Khan & Inamullah, 2011; Razavi, Nakhle, & Naghavi, 2012). All of the above researchers have found that the cooperative teaching techniques in relation to the language learning of the learners were more effective than the traditional, individualized techniques.

Such a result can be accounted by the positive interdependence and the individual accountability principles of the cooperative teaching. The fact is that the group members worked collaboratively to enhance the performance of their own and others. They achieved intersubjectivity because they agreed on the way to accomplish the task at hand and cooperated with each other to meet the purpose. This success can be also attributed to the group autonomy achieved by the cooperation of the members, as well. The idea is that in the experimental group, members of each group were encouraged to complete the tasks autonomously which means that learners in CL were active learners who were learning on their own (Pritchard, 2009).

CONCLUSION
The results of statistical analyses indicated that STAD participants are more successful in comparison with the control group participants in improving their collocation performance. Perhaps one major justification for coming to this conclusion is the fact that learners in cooperative groups including STAD get peer motivation and assistance from their more skilled friends. They may see that their commitments are expected and appreciated for the whole group. Their peers are accessible to help them when they need a specific response to an inquiry or answer for a problem. When a partner produces an inappropriate response, the more capable learners in the group can clarify the reasons why that answer is not satisfactory, and this clarification can lead to cooperation among group partners which can advance deeper learning of materials through clarification, elaboration, or mental interpretation which takes place throughout this collaboration.

The contrast between STAD and individualistic instruction in the present study is identified with the fact that STAD was focused around cooperative learning with the positive communication among peers in the group while the control group was focused around conventional learning with the absence of communication among peers which may explain the distinction in the significance of these two pedagogical techniques. Group rewards as one of the focal ideas of STAD cooperative learning technique can have a powerful impact on learners’ achievements, especially collocation performance which is a challenging task. Consequently, the advantage of STAD can likewise be seen from a behavioral learning theory perspective which is based on the assumption that learners would persevere with tasks that give a prize, and learners would neglect working on those assignments that have no reward or retribution (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998).

Perhaps another conceivable reason that learners in the STAD group were more successful than those in the control group is that individual learning and practice in conventional teaching lacks interpersonal feedback in the practice. Besides, the learning circumstances might cooperatively
empower learners to process data more profoundly than the individuals who are learning the information on their own.

Implications of the study

The undertaking of the present study was an effort to localize the suggested practice of CL techniques on the Iranian EFL learners to seek scientifically the superiority of the STAD strategy in their collocation performance. The obtained results can be considered as illuminating guidelines first and for most for language teachers, the main decision makers in the classroom. In fact, the findings help teachers to select the best ways the techniques of CL can be implemented for the learners.

Furthermore, this study suggests that teachers need to carefully monitor levels of learners and patterns of interaction within the groups in their classrooms and make sure that all students have an equal chance of sharing their ideas and views in the group. The STAD technique minimizes listening time, and makes students responsible for their own learning. Given that each group needs its members to perform well in order for the whole group to succeed, this technique maximizes interaction and establishes an atmosphere of cooperation and respect for other students. Taking these into consideration, teachers need to let the students think through and discover the effective ways of cooperating and delivering the task content to the peers.

Moreover, what is of significant importance in this process is for materials developers to take into account the cooperative principles according to which learners can interact with each other much freely. In other words, materials developers should consider the importance of having interactive and cooperative techniques when designing materials for foreign language students.

Suggestions for further study

The present research focused on general analyses of the effectiveness of STAD with regard to Iranian EFL learners’ collocation learning. Future studies can focus on the investigation of a number of teaching methods alongside the cooperative methods. Also, future researchers can examine other types of cooperative teaching methods in addition to STAD such as Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), Group Investigation (GI), and Jigsaw Procedure. Moreover, the present research focused on the collocation learning via STAD technique. Further studies can be done to investigate the contribution of STAD to teaching other strings of words, such as idioms, or proverbs.

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THE PERSPECTIVE TOWARD INTERPRETING OF TABARSI'S MAJMA-OL-BAIAN

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ABSTRACT
Interpreting the Quran was started from the starting years after the death of Prophet Mohammed and until now different interpreters have been writing and interpreting. One of these interpreters is "Majm-Ol-Baian" interpreter which Sheikh Tabarsi wrote it in 6th AH. Tabarsi utilized the seven sciences of Quran's sciences for writing "Majma-Ol-Baian". Tabarsi utilized the poem evidences for explaining the concepts of phrases and meaning of words, mentioning the reasons of different readings, spelling the words and phrases, describing the rhetoric points and proving the perspectives and theories in different last fields. The methodology which was used through the present article is to interpret the Sheikh in Majma-Ol-Baian is “Conceptual and literal”. The result of the administered studying indicated Sheikh Tabarsi states from Quran’s sciences in seven techniques in the starting points of interpretation and then enters the interpretation discussion of each chapter. The research's conclusion stated that different reasons, vowels of words and sentences and theories were used in different fields by using the poem evidences for writing “Mama-Ol-Baian.”

KEYTERMS: Quran, Interpretation, Tabarsi, Majma-Ol-Baian, Poem Evidences

INTRODUCTION
One of the important Islamic sciences which is complete than the other sciences is interpreting science of Quran and God’s statement, and different complete attempts have been done for discussing about comprehending it and is counted as the example of higher education (Eslami, 1995). But interpreting books are the writings of Islamic scientists are more than expected and worthwhile interpretation “Majma-Ol-Baian” is the masterpiece and the selected work of Abu Ali Fazl Ebn Hasan Tabarsi one of the ten selected works of Quran’s interpretations. Undoubtedly, Quran was descended in Arabic language in Saudi Arabia Island the environment where there were different and famous theologians and preachers and poets. Therefore, the phrases and statements which are come in Quran have been reflected in the poems of informed and Islamic poets, so for people who want to understand Quran and know what the words and phrase mean, they can understand the meaning of them by referring to poems of those poets; therefore, Sheikh Tabarsi mentioned the poems of some poets for making familiar the words and phrases and this work closes the reader to understand the different dimensions of understanding the meaning of words, and on the other hand it shows us that how Tabarsi understood the Arabic literature (Eftekhari, 1999). Amin Ol Eslam or Amin Oddin Abu Ali Fazl Ebn Tabarsi was born in 469 of Ghadr in Mashhad. He set off Najaf for continuing his studying and in the last period of his life came back to
Sabzvar and he passed away in 548 of Ghadr in 80th. The important and famous quotation is that he passed away in Sabzvar and then his body was taken to Mashhad and entombed around the shrine of Imam Reza, but some others believe that he has been entombed in Sabzvar (Afandi, 1994).

**REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

*The importance of poem evidences near the interpreters*

Academic authors use hedges to reduce and minimize the potential threat new claims make on other researchers by soliciting acceptance and challenging their own work (Aboulalaei, 2013).

Hedges can show not only a speaker's uncertainty but a variety of social meanings. It has been detected that hedge never state uncertainty, impression, warmth, or any other social function in the abstract. They do so, only as they become mobilized in the concrete arenas of everyday talk, as forms of situated practice (Dixon & Foster, 1996).

According to Holmes (1984 and 1990 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013), boosters are seem to play a crucial role in producing and creating conversational solidarity. Hedges and boosters draw attention to the fact that expressions do not just commitment ideas, but also the author's attitude to them and to readers (Halliday, 1978 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013).

According to Aboulalaei (2013), range of studies have shown the pragmatic importance of hedging as a resource for stating uncertainty, skepticism and deference in academic contexts and texts, but researcher still known little about how it functions in specific academic domains. And boosters emphasize the power and force of propositions and show commitment to expressions, so asserting the author's conviction and restricting the negotiating space available with colleagues, effecting interpersonal solidarity and membership of a disciplinary in-group. Boosters allow authors to negotiate the status of their information, aiding to establish its perceived truth by presenting it as consensually given (Aboulalaei, 2013).

As Hyland found (1998a), hedges and boosters are response to the potential negotiability of claims and an indication of the author's acknowledgement of disciplinary norm of special argument. They work to stabilize and balance objective information, subjective evaluation and interpersonal negotiation, and this can be an important and powerful persuasive factor in gaining acceptance for claims.

Hedges are used by academic authors to show and express underlying attitudes and strength of commitment or claim which means that hedges can be used to avoid opposition to a proposition (Hyland, 1998b, 1996 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013).

One of the important functions of hedges is to contribute to a relationship by altering and changing readers to the author's perspective and view towards both propositional information and to the readers themselves (Hyland, 1998 as cited in Isabel, 2001).
As Isabel mentioned (2001), the important reason for paying attention to text linguistic cues or devices is that use of a meta-language in the analysis of the language itself may facilitate access to the propositional content and construct meaning. Finally, Science students tend to prefer an approach to textual analysis that draws upon concrete points taught, if possible in an explicit, rational and objective way. And hedging devices are a common strategy for mitigating and modulating academic discourse.

According to Isabel (2001), hedges can be used to state the writer's attitude(s) to both proposition (i.e. content) and readers (i.e. peers). The term "hedge" is utilized by Hyland (2000:87-88): “Hedge?...?like possible, might and perhaps?...? represent explicit qualification of the writer's commitment. This may be to show uncertainty, and indicate that information is presented as an opinion rather than accredited fact, or it may be to convey deference, modesty or respect for colleagues' views”

According to Moreno and Suárez (2008), the following example is a positive critical act which the single italicized and underlined text contains evaluative material on the meta-discoursal plane: “Reader of ELT may be especially interested in the long chapter centered on the Ruskin-Whistler controversy”. In above example the modal verb may is used to soften slightly the power and force of proposition stated and expressed by the author by adding the extra meaning of tentativeness. The meaning of the expression becomes something like: “it is possible but not guaranteed that reader of ELT will be interested in the aspect of the book commented upon.” But the important factor here is that without this modal item, a hedging plane or devices, the prediction would have been expressed in very categorical terms [Readers of ELT will be especially interested in…], showing the author's strong belief in it. In above example the modal item may can also be put or situated on the meta-discourseal plan since the epistemic meaning added by it affects, or modifies, the meaning of the entire proposition without adding or annexing any new propositional content to the text (Aboulalaei, 2013).

context, hedges and boosters
Holmes (1990) has examined a number of linguistic forms widely recognized as potential 'hedges' in Lakoff's sense (i.e. attenuators or mitigations of the strength of a speech act) and the conclusion has been consistent: linguistic forms are complex and the functions they state cannot be specified in a social and textual vacuum.

As Hyland (1998b) states, hedges and boosters can be found together in stretches of discourse where authors look for creating different rhetorical effects. Authors must socially mediate their arguments, discussions, shaping their evidence, observations, data, and flashes of insight into their community. In so doing, they are contemporary negotiating a harmonious relationship with their readers, framing their arguments in conformity with disciplinary expectations concerning appropriate author involvement and interpersonal conduct. Hedges are one of the most studied parts of their audience-oriented aspect of claim design.
According to Hyland (1998b), the special ways that authors conceptualize problems, generate inquiry, approach their objects of study, and persuade their colleagues are likely to influence the ways they employ hedges and boosters in their discourse.

Hyland (1998b) concluded that, the results show and suggest a general division between Philosophy, Marketing, Linguistics and Sociology on one hand, and Physics and Engineering on the other, with Biology occupying the middle ground, and this distinction is illustrated by the fact that over 70% of all hedges occurred in the humanities social science papers and they were over twice as frequent in Philosophy, Marketing and Linguistics, as in Physics and Engineering. And the most frequent hedges are may, would and possible and the most frequent boosters are will, show and the fact that. Of course epistemic verbs such as suggest, indicate, assume and seem are also heavily used as hedges.

According to Nash (1990 as cited in Hyland, 1998a), authors present their work and articles in various ways partly because they have different sorts of work to present, but also since they are presenting it to people with various ways of seeing and explaining the world. In other words, since academic or article writing is a form of knowledge-making, differences in the types of problems studied and ways of addressing them should aid account for disciplinary variation.

Isabel believed that(2001), in recent years research has also been concerned with the study of the use and utilizing of hedges and boosters in different academic genres, disciplines such as research articles (Hyland, 1999, 1998; Aboulalaei, 2013); scientific letters (Hyland, 2000, chap.6: 1999) and book reviews (Hyland,2000, chap. 3).

According to Isabel (2001), the results obtained indicate that hedging plans in English articles are almost double those in Portuguese articles. The structure of discourse of English articles may partly dictate the utilizing of hedges. English tends to use and utilize more hedge than Portuguese. Moreover, although the article genres need a relative uniformity, it appears that language conventions can change between writers with different cultural background.

As Hyland explained (2000 as cited in Isabel, 2001), in academic English, hedging devices mark the author's attitude to both proposition (i.e. content) and audience and are therefore an important and pervasive part in academic discourse. However, L2 learners seem to have some difficulty assessing qualification and certainty in the author's commitments to a claim and sometimes fail to notice hedges. So it is expected that by becoming familiar and getting acquainted with hedging, as a relevant discourse convention in academic writing, reading of academic texts and articles might be facilitated.

Orta, Miiän, Sanz and Duenas (2006) concluded that, disciplinary affiliation appears to be an important determinant in the use of interpersonal meta-discourse strategies, in Research Articles from the four examined disciplines; Business, Applied Linguistics, Urology and Food Technology. Finally, the exploration and description of meta-discourse from the point of view of genres in contrast seems to hint in the following direction: the similar meta-discourse features may have conventional and institutionalized uses that change from genre to genre; that is, there
are important differences, in terms of frequency and function, in the way competent members of a certain disciplinary community use metadiscoursal plans and devices. Such fundamental differences both distinguish the genres and help to explain and describe the differences in metadiscourse use.

It was manifested that hedges and boosters were almost equally used in the Introduction and Conclusion parts of the research articles sampled, and most of the scholars have explored frequency and functions of hedging according to genre and various rhetorical sections of scientific papers (Maurie, 2008).

According to Maurie (2008), Psychology writers appear to be detached while mass communication authors seem more committed. The important problem here is that the topics of Research Articles apparently influenced the commitment and detachment of the authors. Research Articles are direct for researchers to propose new ideas which are likely to support or contradict findings of other scholars; so, authors employ cautious language as the acceptance of their research contributions depend largely on how these are presented to the academic community. Utilizing cautious language means mitigating the strength of a proposal by developing and increasing or decreasing its illocutionary power via hedging and boosting devices (Vassileva, 2001 as cited in Mojica, 2005 in Maurie, 2008) which serve three main rhetorical functions: 1) threat reducing strategies… to point distance and to avoid absolute expressions; 2) strategies to accurately reflect the certainty of knowledge ; and 3) politeness strategies… between authors and readers (salvager-Mayer, 1997, p.106 as cited in Maurie,2008).

According to Flowerdrew (2001 quoted in MagaliPaquetd, 2008), there are three areas of difficulty in learner academic writing, (i.e. collocational patterning, pragmatic appropriacy and discourse features). Collocational patterning has to do with academic learners and university students’ lack of familiarity with the typical lexico-grammatical environment of words “(e.g. we have performed a survey. A questionnaire has been conveyed to the public).” Pragmatic appropriacy concerns the author’s attitude and view to his/her message, as realized via modal verbs, modal adjuncts, boosters, hedges, etc. Discourse features or parts are lexical and structural items in context.

As Vázquez and Giner (2008) discussed, there has been a growing interest lately in hedging and the motivation for its use and employing in academic/scientific writing. The interest is concentrated on that hedges are really employed in scientific discourse, which is thought to be above all rational and neutral. This is connected with the fact that scientific discourse obeys the some mechanisms as ordinary everyday communications do, although it wants to hide this, more or less successfully, by employing a code of its own.

Various disciplines accept and deal with different data and hence, show different amounts of boosters in their discourse (Vázquez & Giner, 2009). In writing academic articles, there are two important factors that affect the writing; that is, to write article writers should attend them, since these factors help them to express their meaning with certainty or doubt. Sometimes it is easy for
According to Isabel (2009), becoming familiar with hedging as a writing convention of academic English may facilitate reading or writing academic texts. The most commonly used and utilized hedges in academic discourse are modal verbs (*may/might, can/could, would, should*), lexical verbs (*suggest, indicate, appear, believe*) and adverbs (*possibly, probably, likely*) (Ewa, 2010).

According to Amiryousefi and EslamiRasekh (2010), one of the important factors, which affect the use and distribution of meta-discourse marker, is genre. And texts can be grouped into one genre or another based on their key linguistic or rhetorical dimensions. Meta-discourse is one such part. Texts can be analyzed and grouped based on various kinds of interactions they produce with their readers, and various kinds of persuasion sought by authors or speakers. Genre is defined as communicative events or phenomena specified by a series of communicative purposes and feature recognized by the members of community (Swale, 1990 as cited in Amiryousefi & Eslami Rasekh, 2010).

According to Maurie (2008), commitment and detachment in one's claims are linguistically revealed in the use of hedging and boosting plans and devices. The authors' tendency to utilize strong language to show commitment imply the need for the inclusion of lessons on hedging and boosting in research writing topics and subjects as well as the need for students to be more exposed to the conventions of research writing.

According to Aboulalaei (2013), academic writing is created by paying special attention to the specific constraints or conventions of different disciplines. These constraints condition the resources used by academic writers in their different disciplines. Scholar’s work is reflected in academic discourse through a selection of linguistic elements; and this selection is made by following the conventions or rules of a particular discourse community. These conventions might ensure academic writers that their work will actually be recognized by readers and accepted by their colleagues in that discourse community. As Vartalla (2001; 248) states, “different disciplines may not be altogether uniform when it comes to frequency, forms, and variety of hedges”. In this way, hedges and boosters in Medicine may not present the same occurrence as in Linguistics or Chemistry.

Quran was descended in Saudi Arabia when the able poets and eloquent had been grown up. Using the strange and unfamiliar statements was common among them. Even though they discussed and disputed with each other, and it was possible that some referees were executed for analyzing the poems. Using these statements and words and strange interpretation was strange. Undoubtedly, whatever the poet closed to the urban ethic, using the strange and unfamiliar interpretation was less in his poems, but since the Arabs liked the poem, the way was not closed for desert poets and they went with full-haversack of poems to Okaz Bazzar and sold their reserve. In this situation and through the period of time Quran shined its bright lights on the island of Saudi Arabia.
People who like the great and pretty speeches were attracted by these speeches, and on the other hand while Quran was descended in Arabic, but there are some words and phrases which are non-Ghoreish. In Quran, we can see that there are some words which are not common Ghorei shian words (Like: ZAMHARIR, and. which was taken from TEI Tribe) (Tabatabaei, 1992), and this caused that the great difference was happened among the tribes in understanding a verse, and each one had the different interpretation about the used word and because of this the interpretations’ styles which were divided to two parts were created; the first one was Mecca Interpretation style with leading of Abdullah Ebn Abbas and the other one was Iraq and Basra Interpretation with leading of Abdullah Ebn Masud (Kariman, 1996).

The interpretation work was being increased because of Muslims’ interesting to Quran. It was natural that by passing the time from Prophet Mohammed’s massage and companions and followers, these differences were increased. Therefore, the interpreters attended to Arabic poems for claiming the correctness of their interpretation and put it as their firm rope to prove their claim and interpretations like Alkeshaf Zomokhsery and Majma Ol Baian Tabarsi and Jame ol Javame are counted like them.

As we saw, mentioning the poem evidences are so important for people to access the correctness of verses, and this issue was not limited to Quran just. By passing the time, the Arabic scholars entered this to Arabic Grammar which Seibieh started it by writing the valuable book in the names of Alketab, and then stating the grammar without considering the poem evidence was abolished, and the Arabic Grammar was changed to poem, which Alfihe Ebn Malel is the great evidence for this. People like Ebn Aghil and Jamal eddin Ebn Hesham Ansari and Siuti and others who were the professor of Arabic Grammar wrote books in explaining poems and knew it suitable and because of that people who surrounded the Arabic poems and recorded them in their mind impacted more on Arabic Literature (Kariman, 1996).

Reason of Compilation

In introduction of Majma-Ol-Baian Fi Tafsir Al Quran (corrected and suspension by Seied Hashem Rasuli Mahallati), the story of heart attack of Sheikh Tabarsi was mentioned by Mohsem Hoseini Ameli in Mostadarak Ol Vasael and Mostanbet Ol Masael written by Haj Mirza Hosein Noori Tabarsi died in 1320 Nuclear Calendar. (Haj Mirza Hoseini quoted the story from interpretation book of Kabir Monhej Al Sadeghin fi Elza Al Mokhalefin compiled by Molla Fath Allah Kashani). The story is that: Sheikh Tabarsi fainted and after washing out him and entombed him, suddenly among the grave his heart started to palpitate and understood that he was alive, in that time he avow that if he would be alive he would write the interpretation of the great book, in that time a robber stole the shroud of Sheikh. The Sheikh got him and told him: “bring me a cloth and take this shroud.” After that, the Sheikh started to write the interpretation (Kariman, 1966).

METHODODOLOGY
The interpreting methods of Sheikh Tabarsi in Majma Ol Baian
Sheikh Tabarsi states from Quran’s sciences in seven techniques in the starting points of interpretation and then enters the interpretation discussion of each chapter, and the titles of seven-title techniques are as follow:

First technique: the number of Quran chapters and profits of knowing it, their narrators in cities
Second technique: the names of famous readers and their narrators in cities
Third technique: stating the meaning of interpretation and gloss
Forth technique: stating the names of Quran and their meanings
Fifth technique: stating the summary of Quran’s sciences
Sixth technique: news in Quran’s wisdom and its fans
Seventh technique: in stating what is totem for Quran’s reader

Style and method of interpreting of Sheikh in Majma-Ol-Baian is “Conceptual and literal.”

The order of studying
- Discussing about each chapter’s Mecca and Medina
- The number of verses of chapters and the existed differences
- The names of chapters and their appellations
- Stating the chapters’ scholarship which was mentioned by Obaia Ebn Kaeb from Prophet Mohammed
- Stating the reading differences by mentioning the reason of accepting the famous quotation
- Discussing the words and substances of verses and their derivation mean and flections
- Justifying the vowels of words and sentences and their compounds
- Stating the reasons and reasons of descending
- Writing the meaning, verdicts and verses’ gloss

All these discussions have been come in the name of Algharaea, Alhojat, Allogat, Alearab and Almaena, and sometimes for interpreting the verse of Quran from other verse was used and the corroborant states its perspective. About verses of verdicts which are about 500 verses, Sheilh states the statements of other Islamic religious, and then he states the Shi’s idea and in that time he states his perspective as the judgment. His perspectives show his skillful in jurisprudence.

The characteristics of works and scientific personality of Tabarsi
A: Free thinking and looking up
The Sheikh is free thinking and looking up, and the situation helped him to access the scientists and huge awareness. These people try to get any information and analyze the pros and cons.
B: Research sincerity, fairness in writing
Sincerity in research, fairness in research, mindedness in quotes sayings and designing the others’ ideas by attention to different perspectives are the other summit in scientific and research life of Tabarsi.

CONCLUSION
According to findings of Tabarsi, it can be added that Tabari has also given the above interpretation and that according to Tabari the verse is intended for the group of Jews and Christians who are living at the time of the Mahdi. The author then mentions a tradition in favor of this view and says that Ali ibn Ibrahim reports in his tafsir from Shahr ibn Hushab who reports from Hajjaj ibn Yusuf 1 who said: "This verse surprises me. When I order the death of Jews and Christians and when their throats are being slit, I wait for them to say something but I never hear anything from them on this subject before their death. Their lips do not even move." I said: "May God guide the Amir, the meaning of the verse is not this." He asked: "What is the meaning then?" I said: "Isa ibn Maryam will descend to the earth before the Day of Judgment and will pray behind the Mahdi." 2 He said: "From which source do you state that?" I said: "Imam Baqir related this to me". Some asked to Shahr: "What was your purpose in saying this to him?" He said: "I wanted to irritate him".Tabarsi used the seven sciences of Quran in writing “Majma-Ol-Baian”. Tabarsi used the different reasons, vowels of words and sentences and theories in different fields by using the poem evidences for writing “Mama-Ol-Baian.”

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ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATIONAL GOAL ORIENTATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG IRANIAN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
Recent studies about achievement motivation mostly focus on individuals’ goals in academic situations which might affect educational behaviors and students’ academic achievement outcomes. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between motivational goal orientations and academic achievement of high school students of Shiraz, Iran. In total, 835 high school students of Shiraz participated in this study. The participants filled in the Inventory of School Motivation. The Grade Point Average (GPA), mathematics and English final exam scores of the students were gathered. The data were analyzed through Pearson correlation coefficient. The analysis of the data indicated that the GPA had a positive meaningful relationship with competition, effort and social concern goals and it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. The score of mathematics and English had a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal and it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. Different motivational goals orientation can have significant effects on students’ academic achievement outcomes. The implication of this study is that it helps the officials of the education systems and families to be more cognizant of the students’ goal orientations in their schooling and to pave the way for students to achieve their goal and improve their educational performance.

KEYWORDS: Motivational goals orientation, Academic achievement, Student’s motivation

INTRODUCTION
Trainers, teachers and parents consider motivation as the key to successful educational performance (Watkins, McInerney & Lee, 2002). One of the most important areas of research in educational researches is the effect of students’ motivation on educational outcomes. Motivation can be conceptualized as the student’s energy and drive to get involved in learning (Criss, 2011),
and it also plays a big role in the interest of students in school, education and enjoyment of it (Martin, 2003; Ali & McInerney, 2006). Motivation is also one of the psychological bases of students’ achievement (Ali & McInerney, 2006; Nolson, O’Mara, McInerney & Dowson, 2006) and it leads students’ goals orientation (McInerney, McInerney & Dowson, 2005; King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011; Maehr & Zushu, 2009). Recent theories in achievement motivation mostly focus on individuals’ goals in academic situations which might affect educational behaviors, cognitive processes and achievement (McInerney, Maehr & Dowson, 2004; McInerney, 2004; McInerney & Dowson 2003; King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011). One of these theories is Maehr’s Personal Investment Theory. From its inception, personal investment theory was developed to be a cross-culturally relevant model of students’ achievement goals. In this model, four types of goals are proposed to be important in understanding student motivation in school: mastery goals, social goals, performance goals, and extrinsic goals. Each of these goals, in turn, is comprised of two facets (King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011) (See Table 1). Different motivational goals can have significant effects on students’ achievement outcomes (Elliot & Church, 1999; McInerney, 2008; Pintrich, 2000; King, Gatonice & Watkins, 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement goal</th>
<th>Facet</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Sample items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mastery goals</td>
<td>Task involvement</td>
<td>interest in the task</td>
<td>“The more interesting the schoolwork the harder I try.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>willingness to expend effort for schoolwork</td>
<td>“I always try hard to understand something new in my schoolwork.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performance goals</td>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>competitiveness in learning</td>
<td>“I like to compete with others in school.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social power</td>
<td>seeking status through group leadership</td>
<td>“I like being in charge of a group.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social goals</td>
<td>Affiliation</td>
<td>belonging to a group when doing schoolwork</td>
<td>“I can do my best work at school when I work with others.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>concern for other students</td>
<td>“I like helping other students with their School work.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Extrinsic goals</td>
<td>Token</td>
<td>seeking tangible rewards for schoolwork</td>
<td>“Getting a reward for my good schoolwork is important to me.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
<td>seeking social recognition for schoolwork</td>
<td>“I work best when I am praised in school.”</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Studies showed that achievement goals are related to outcomes such as self-esteem, general well-being, socio-emotional functioning, learning strategies (Wolters, 2004), self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 2000), grades (Elliot & Murayama, 2008), emotions in school (Pekrun et al. 2006, 2009), self-related beliefs (Pajares, Brinter & Valinte, 2000), and other valued educational outcomes (Elliot, 2005).

Ali and McInerney (2003) found that a positive relationship exists between effort goals, GPA and achievement in English but there is a negative relationship between task, effort and GPA.
Similarly, social power goal is a strong negative predictor of English and mathematics scores. Also receiving rewards was a strong positive predictor of GPA in some groups.

Sulimon and McInerney (2003), found that for Lebanese students and non-Lebanese students living in Australia, task and effort goal is a strong predictor of science and English achievement but social power, competition, social concern, praise and token goals in both groups are not predictors of students’ academic achievement.

Most of the recent studies in western countries about motivation are concerned with motivational goals but a few studies have been carried out in Iran about this subject. Regarding the role of students’ motivational goal orientations in academic achievement and considering the fact that one of the most significant problems of Iranian students is lack of motivation (Sobhaninejad & Abedi, 2006), the investigation of the relationship between motivational goals and academic achievement in Iran seems necessary.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

Is there any meaningful relationship between students’ goal orientations and academic achievement?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

In total, 835 students of Shiraz high schools participated in this study consisting of 420 males and 415 females. Among them, 260 students (31.2%) were in the first grade, 274 students (32.8%) were in the second grade, and 301 students (36%) were in the third grade of high school.

**Instruments**

The Inventory of School Motivation (McInerney & Sinclair, 1991, 1992; McInerney et al., 1997; McInerney, Yeung, & McInerney, 2001) was devised as an exploratory instrument through which a range of motivation salient constructs drawn from Maehr’s Personal Investment (Maehr, 1984; Maehr & Braskamp, 1986) model could be identified in educational settings across a large number of different groups. There is a lot of empirical evidence drawn from both exploratory and confirmatory factor analytic studies for the validity and reliability of scales drawn from the ISM (see, for example, McInerney et al., 1997, 2003). Inventory questions are related to the perceived behavioral goals, with each having two elements:

- **Task (Mastery):** Task involvement (e.g., “I like to see that I am improving in my schoolwork”) and Effort (e.g., “When I am improving in my schoolwork I try even harder”).

- **Ego (Performance):** Competition (e.g., “I like to compete with others at school”) and Social Power (e.g., “I work hard at school to be put in charge of a group”).

- **Social solidarity:** Affiliation (e.g., “I prefer to work with other people at school rather than
Other results indicate that mathematics score has a positive relationship with effort (r=0.20, p<0.05), social concern (r=0.08, p<0.01), and competition (r=0.09, p<0.01). In order to examine the academic achievement variable, we gathered the GPA, English and mathematics final exam scores of the students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

99.76 percent of the students (848 students) answered the questionnaire. The average age of the students was 17, and most of the students were between 16 and 18 years old. As it can be seen in Table 1, in all scales the mean is higher than the median. The range of the mean is between 3.29 (Social power) and 4.42 (Task). The range of the standard deviation is between 0.60 and 0.96. Also the range of the correlations of the instrument subscales is between 0.23 and 0.61.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Task</td>
<td>4/42</td>
<td>0/60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/47</td>
<td>0/36</td>
<td>0/23</td>
<td>0/34</td>
<td>0/38</td>
<td>0/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effort</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>0/79</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/42</td>
<td>0/27</td>
<td>0/49</td>
<td>0/28</td>
<td>0/26</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Competition</td>
<td>4/04</td>
<td>0/82</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/31</td>
<td>0/35</td>
<td>0/38</td>
<td>0/38</td>
<td>0/33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social power</td>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>0/96</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/30</td>
<td>0/50</td>
<td>0/50</td>
<td>0/45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Social concern</td>
<td>3/82</td>
<td>0/81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/34</td>
<td>0/27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Praise</td>
<td>3/97</td>
<td>0/86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/34</td>
<td>0/27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Token</td>
<td>3/51</td>
<td>0/94</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0/61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All correlations are meaningful at p < 0.05 level

The findings indicated that a meaningful difference existed between girls and boys in “Social concern” (p < 0.01, t=-3.69), “Praise” (p < 0.01, t=-4.97), “Task” (p < 0.01, t=-6.34) and “Effort” (p < 0.05, t=-3.90) scales. The average of these scores was higher in girls than boys, while there was no significant difference between boys and girls in “Competition”, “Social power” and “Token” scales.

Pearson correlation between the Inventory scales, the students’ GPA and their final exam scores in mathematics and English was calculated to investigate the relationship between motivational goals orientation and academic achievement. The results showed that there was a positive meaningful relationship between the students’ GPA, effort (r=0.20, p<0.05), social concern (r=0.08, p<0.01), and competition goals (r=0.13, p<0.01) and there was a negative meaningful relationship between the students’ GPA, social power (r=0.09, p<0.01), and token goals (r=0.09, p<0.01). Other results indicate that mathematics score has a positive relationship with effort goal.
their efforts will finally lead to getting a good grade from their teachers and therefore the GPA (r=0.16, p<0.05) and there is a negative meaningful relationship between mathematics score and social power goal (r=0.12, p<0.05). Also this study showed that English score has a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal (r=0.13, p<0.05), and it has a negative meaningful relationship with social power (r=0.12, p<0.05) and token goals (r=0.11, p<0.05) (Table 2).

Table 3: Pearson correlation between motivational goals and academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Task</td>
<td>4/42</td>
<td>0/60</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effort</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>0/79</td>
<td>0/52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social Concern</td>
<td>3/82</td>
<td>0/81</td>
<td>0/36</td>
<td>0/50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Competition</td>
<td>4/04</td>
<td>0/82</td>
<td>0/40</td>
<td>0/45</td>
<td>0/36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Praise</td>
<td>3/97</td>
<td>0/86</td>
<td>0/40</td>
<td>0/40</td>
<td>0/35</td>
<td>0/41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Social Power</td>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>0/96</td>
<td>0/24</td>
<td>0/29</td>
<td>0/28</td>
<td>0/32</td>
<td>0/49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Token</td>
<td>3/51</td>
<td>0/94</td>
<td>0/28</td>
<td>0/27</td>
<td>0/25</td>
<td>0/33</td>
<td>0/60</td>
<td>0/45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. English Language</td>
<td>15/00</td>
<td>4/09</td>
<td>0/00</td>
<td>0/13</td>
<td>0/00</td>
<td>0/05</td>
<td>0/06</td>
<td>0/09</td>
<td>0/11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Mathematics</td>
<td>15/19</td>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>0/01</td>
<td>0/16</td>
<td>0/04</td>
<td>0/05</td>
<td>0/03</td>
<td>0/12</td>
<td>0/10</td>
<td>0/66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. GPA</td>
<td>16/41</td>
<td>2/55</td>
<td>0/06</td>
<td>0/20</td>
<td>0/08</td>
<td>0/13</td>
<td>0/03</td>
<td>0/09</td>
<td>0/09</td>
<td>0/73</td>
<td>0/78</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P<0.01 *p<0.05**

CONCLUSION

Given the importance of students’ motivational goals in academic achievement, this study was conducted to bridge the existing gap in the discovery of possible relationships between students’ motivational goals and academic achievement criteria. The students of first, second and third grades of Shiraz high schools completed the Inventory of School Motivation. The academic achievement criteria, the students’ English language and mathematics final exam grades and also their GPA were taken into consideration. The total score of the students on ISM indicated that they were relatively motivated (McInerney, 2008; McInerney, Yeung & McInerney, 2001). Task goal was the highest valued motivational variable which was in line with the result of the study conducted by Ali and McInerney (2005) and McInerney (2008). The results of this study indicated that the students’ GPA had a positive meaningful relationship with effort, competition and social concern goals, but it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. The results of this study were consistent with those of Yousefi, Ghasemi and Firouznia (2009) and with those of Amrai, Elahi Motlagh, Azizi Zolani and Parhoun (2011). Also mathematics score had a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal while it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. Other findings of this study indicate that there is a positive meaningful relationship between English score and effort goal but there is a negative meaningful relationship between English score, social power and token goals. This finding was consistent with that of Ali and McInerney (2005), Ali and McInerney (2006) and Sulimon and McInerney (2003), McInerney, Yeung & McInerney, 2001. In interpreting these results, we can say that one of the characteristics of motivated students is that they make a lot of efforts to do their tasks, learn new subject matters, and solve difficult problems. It is obvious that their efforts will finally lead to getting a good grade from their teachers and therefore the GPA.
can be considered a yardstick for students’ efforts in school. Findings of this study indicated that effort as a criterion for motivation has positive relationship with students’ GPA. Although this relationship is weak, it is theoretically in line with the relationship between effort and GPA. The positive relationship between social concern and GPA was as predicted theoretically. Motivated students are not only worried about their achievement but they also feel satisfied when their friends are successful in doing their tasks. The findings showed that this motivation feature has positive relationship with the students’ GPA. Being ranked the first in class and having a sense of superiority over others is among the features of the competition dimension of motivation. It is assumed that those who have a high score in this dimension, their GPA is an indicator of their achievement. In this respect, the findings were in line with the theoretical orientation of this study. A possible explanation of why the relationship between these two dimensions and the GPA is weak is that the GPA is not a solid criterion for assessing students’ effort. In some courses, some scoring standards might not be met on the part of the teacher and the students might get good grades without making any effort. Since the GPA is determined based on teacher-made tests, non-standardness of these tests and the difference between scoring criteria in different courses (e.g. English and mathematics) might be a reason for the weakness of these relationships. Anyhow, these relationships were in line with those of the studies done by Ali and McInerney (2005), Ali and McInerney (2006), and Suliman and McInerney (2003). Since there was a high correlation between competition and the students’ GPA, we can say that if competition is in line with students’ literacy, they should be encouraged but if they are indulged in one-dimensional aspect and surpass other students by gaining better grades, it is an alarm for education authorities and other sections of the society. We can also say that students who spend their time on side issues are weaker than others because they would like to assume leadership and superiority to others which should be replaced by cooperation and friendliness. The comparison between two groups of male and female students indicated that girls have more motivation than boys in “Effort”, “Social concern” and “Task” subscales. The possible reason for this issue is the greater accountability of girls and their future responsibility like maternal duties. The limitation of this study was that the students’ final exam scores were used as academic achievement criteria. These tests are not standardized and therefore their validity and reliability might not be appropriate. Also these tests are highly dependent on the test evaluator’s opinion and the scores might reflect the evaluator’s emotional aspect of scoring. Since this study was limited to students of high school, generalization about other grades should be made with caution. According to the mentioned limitation, we suggest that researchers use the scores of the standardized tests in their future studies as academic achievement criteria.

REFERENCES


REFLECTIVE TEACHING AND USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AMONG EFL INSTRUCTORS

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ABSTRACT
This study sought to investigate the relationship between the use of technology and reflective teaching within the Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Use of educational technology in this research was defined as employing means such as email, the Internet, blog, electronic databases, electronic journal, Learning Management System, and podcast to do class activities. An analytic survey method was used and the data were gathered through a questionnaire. A total sample of 100 participants including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at English departments in Azad University branches in Shiraz, Iran and some surrounding towns as well as 50 teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute were selected through purposive sampling. Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test techniques were used for data analysis. The findings showed that there was a significant relationship between use of educational technology and reflection on teaching among English instructors in both educational contexts. This means that according to what they have reported, the more they used educational technology in teaching, the more reflection on teaching would be the results. Furthermore, the findings revealed that gender did not significantly influence use of educational technology and reflective teaching. The results of the present study indicated that reflection and educational technology are two complementary factors to facilitate teacher's practices and increase their professional progression as well.

KEYWORDS: reflection, reflective teaching, educational technology, gender difference

INTRODUCTION
Within the field of education over the last few decades, a gradual but marked shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on traditional teaching and greater stress on reflection and reflective teaching. In a word, language teaching has progressively moved towards reflective teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Prabhu, 1990). According to the definition given by Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, “reflective teaching is an approach to teaching and to teacher education which is based on the assumptions that teachers can improve
their understanding of teaching and the quality of their own teaching by reflecting critically on their own practices. In teacher education programs, activities which seek to develop a reflective approach to teaching aim to develop the skills of considering the teaching process thoughtfully, analytically and objectively, as a way of improving classroom practices” (p. 451). In the same vein, reflective teaching involves teachers’ learning how to subject their beliefs to critical analysis and taking responsibility for their actions. That is why providing teachers with opportunities to use conscious reflection is crucial (Farrell, 2001).

Reflective teaching is a series of actions of cautious attentions in education which assist teachers to resolve the problems of teaching that they encounter in the class. In addition, with receptive viewpoint in teaching, instructors will enhance their teaching abilities as well as self-efficacy (Dewey, 1933). With a reflective approach, teachers and instructors of English as a second or foreign language are given opportunities to think about what they are doing, ponder on their past experience and current experience they are involved in their classroom practice to make connections between theory and practice, decide about necessary changes to improve attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices in order to bring about a match between teaching procedures, activities, and techniques and their student’s learning styles and needs. In a nutshell, teachers can play the role core educational decision-makers (Pacheco, 2005). Using reflection as an integral part of teacher's practice is one method of professional development in education (Calderhead & Gates, 1993). According to Dewey (1964) reflection is a vital tool for teaching because it allows us understand where our status are when we perform as a teacher. It changes actions that are only appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action. Reflective practice on teaching assists practitioners to enhance professional progression (Killon & Todman, 1991).

On the other hand, technology has been an increasingly attractive concept within the field of education for the past decades. Instructional technology is supposed to support and promote the teaching-learning environment or even bring about some ground for promotional modifications in educational practices (Duad, 1992; Pop & Golub, 2002; Sells, 2011). Moreover, technological tools such as computer mediated communication (CMC) enhancing thinking critically, developing collaboration and reflective practice in learning and teaching context as well (Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Kessler & Bikowski, 2010; Miceli, Murray & Kennedy, 2010; Tang & Lam, 2014; Waltonen-Moore, Stuart, Newton, Oswald, & Varonis, 2006). Thus, the development of instructional technologies contributing to richer options facilitates reflective teaching and learning (Bosch & Cardinale, 1993). In spite of the bulk of research findings revealing the merits of teachers and instructors’ wide-spread use of technology, it has not become deeply integrated into typical curriculums yet.

While reflection on teaching is an absolute precondition for instructors to enhance effectiveness of his or her teaching (Dewey, 1916) it is of high significance for them when deciding to infuse technology into their teaching. Instructors should consider technology as an indispensable part of instructional delivery. Thus, it is so crucial for instructors to know how effectively integrate technology in relation to teaching and learning context, i.e. they should be able to evaluate the appropriateness of any technological tools to understand whether they are compatible with their lesson plan and learning results, and allowing them to promote the evaluation of instruction, aims
RELATED LITERATURE
The basic idea of reflective teaching originated from John Dewey (1933) who made a difference between ‘routine action’ and ‘reflective action’. Dewey argued that routine action is focused on convention, custom, and authority and circumstances, while reflective action involves pliability, self-valuation analysis and social awareness. He asserted that: “...quality educators and education cannot be derived from the imitation of techniques that have worked in the past, but rather teachers should be trained in analyzing and defining principles behind the techniques. In short, it is theorized that the more teacher reflectivity, the better the quality of teaching" (p. 89).

Furthermore, Shon (1987) claimed that reflective teaching involves looking at what you perform in the classroom, deliberating on why you do it, and pondering about whether it is effective, i.e., self-appraisal and self-monitoring process. Wood and Stevens (1988) have emphasized that through selecting a systematic and critical approach, reflective teaching involves teacher in examining, analyzing, assessing, modifying and enhancing their practice. In light of this, Zeichner and Liston (1996) claimed that reflective teaching causes teachers to pay attention to the educational and cultural conditions of their teaching as well as school modifications and be responsible for their professional growth. Additionally, it engaged teachers in analyzing, planning, trying to resolve the difficulty of classroom, schools, and questioning regarding beliefs and values in their teaching context.

Reflective teachers build possible connections between the requirements and learners’ particular actions. Teachers undertake a rational reflection’s process, examination and explanation to enhance their teaching, which in turns, in several ways indicated the learning processes which was anticipated from students. A reflective instructor converts perceptions into active change, and considered what s/he performs from diverse aspects to the extent possible as well as finding new solutions through self-appraisal as outlined by Jonassen (1999). Richards (1990) sees reflection as a key component of teacher development. He indicated that self-inquiry and critical thinking can help teachers move from a level where they may be guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine, to a level where their actions are guided by reflection and critical thinking.

In recent years, educational technology has gained a noticeable place in the revolution of education, offering more choices for both learners and teachers and also cause pliability in the context of teaching and learning. Tomei (2002) defined educational technology as "the application of behavioral and physical sciences concepts and other knowledge to the solution of problems”. Through applying technology pedagogical, educational occasions enhanced which cause to empower instructor to have sufficient time for arrangement, planning of teaching and so meet the requirements of the students. Moreover he stated that teacher's use of technology in the context of the teaching leads to involvement of learner's utilization of technology and also it assists students to attend to the relationship between what the instructor is teaching and the technology being employed. So, the perception of learners regarding learning is increased, which
in turn, result in making them ready for technology based- society (Majed, 1996). In a study, Yang (2009) investigated the application of blogs as a reflective device in the instruction processes of English as Foreign Language (EFL) student teachers, who wanted to learn to teach English for future development in Taiwan. The findings of the study revealed that participants regarded technology a beneficial tool for reflecting and contacting, talking with each other. The study also pointed out positive remarks regarding the application of blogs as a means to offer and enhance critical reflection of EFL teachers.

In another study, Insuasty and Zambrano castillo (2010) sought to explore how student teachers' using journal keeping and blog group discussions could enable them to become more reflective practitioners. The findings of the study indicated that student teachers increased their understanding regarding what reflective teaching said implicitly and most of their journal entries mainly emphasized on assessing teaching, identifying and solving difficulties, demonstrated reflective origins as well. In another research by Sardegna and Dugartysyreenova (2014) the researchers sough to determine pre-service foreign language teachers’ (N=25) attitudes about the importance and helpfulness of utilizing technology-increased activities (discussion forums, blogs, wikis, e-portfolios, videotape recordings) in a method course, and their comprehension regarding how these activities improved their learning. Participants had an idea that the technology-oriented activities offered enhanced occasions to have a more rich and different. Interactions, peer feedback, reflection and promoted a deeper understanding as well as greater realization of the value of technology-enhanced practices.

Hajizaedeh (2011) examined the effect of blog on reflective practice of male and female Iranian college students. Forty students kept voluntary blogs in their free time throughout a semester participated in the study. The students usually wrote about everyday activities, but they also used their blogs to write their reflections about their language learning. The findings suggest that blogs could be one tool for teachers to use in order to encourage students to reflect on their learning.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
Reflective teaching and technology are two important issues in educational environments in general and EFL contexts in particular. Reflection in general and "Reflective Pedagogy" in particular are the missing elements of Iranian academic realm. Iranian academic realm entails both university and institute contexts. Both contexts assist learners to develop English professionally as a foreign language. There have been few research on these issues in a variety of EFL contexts, and also have received little attention in two Iranian sub context. Furthermore, most studies conducted on technology in language teaching in Iran, have concentrated on the use of instructional technology to enhance learning quality and strengthening related variables as well as student's reflective thinking and reflective learning. Given the above options, it seemed necessary to conduct such as study in Iran which assists instructors how to applying reflective teaching and using educational technology to enhance efficiency of their teaching practices and promote reflection on teaching as well.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1) Could instructors’ reflective teaching be related to their educational technology use in Iranian EFL sub-contexts?
2) Is gender related to instructors’ reflective teaching and technology use?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of in this study consisted of 100 male and female EFL instructors including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at the department of English in Azad University branches in Shiraz and some surrounding towns and 50 EFL teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute. The instructors were arranged based on their rank in the university, namely professor, associated professor, assistant professor and lecturer. Purposive sampling was used in this survey.

Instruments
The necessary data for this study gathered by means of questionnaire on reflective teaching and use of educational technology. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher with respect to the requirements of answering the stated research question. As it was mentioned before, the researcher worked on data to be collected with questionnaire among instructors at the variety of Azad University branches and teachers at the Iran Language Institute. The questionnaire considered of 44 questions and consisted of two parts. The first one is related to personal attitudes, and the second is allocated to questions centering upon the application of reflective teaching, educational technology, and considering both issues. A five–point Likert type scale has been designed. The five options "never", "seldom", "sometimes", "frequently" and "quite frequently" was designed to scale the participants' responses in a multiple-choice test format. Each response has its point ranging from 1= never to 5= quite frequently (see the questionnaire in the appendix).

Procedures
Data collection procedures
100 EFL instructors including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at the department of English in Azad University branches in Shiraz and some surrounding towns and 50 EFL teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute took part in this survey during the academic year of 2013 within 4 months. Participation was voluntary and no remuneration was suggested. The data were collected from the questionnaire and utilized for SPSS. Before, the above mentioned questionnaire was given to each teacher, they were asked to fill out the questionnaires in all honesty and meticulously since their careful completion would definitely contribute to obtaining real data which is crucial for more accurate findings and the information would be kept confidential. Respondents answered the questions in two parts: In part A they filled up their demographic details such as gender, current level of study, program of study. In part B respondents indicated their reflective teaching and use of technology.
Data analysis procedures

To analyze the data the statistical package for the social science (SPSS) Version 16 were utilized. Also, researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive part frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were utilized to indicate the demographic details. In the inferential statistics to determine the differences between use of technology and reflective teaching based on gender in these two sub context an independent sample t-test was run. To determine the correlation between instructors reflective teaching and use of technology the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following the main objective of the study, the first research question was set out to explore whether there was any relationship between instructors’ use of technology and their reflective teaching in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole, and in each context separately. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to examine this relationship. The results are tabulated in tables below.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Dependent</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective teaching</td>
<td>Correlation 0.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sig 0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated by the results presented in table 1, the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.906, which is highly significant. The findings show that there are positive and direct significant relationships between technology and reflective teaching. Therefore, in both teaching sub context as a whole, the more the EFL instructors used technology, the more reflective teaching will be and vice versa.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in institute context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Dependent</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective teaching</td>
<td>Correlation 0.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sig 0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the data in the table 2, the results of Person Correlation Coefficient is also positively and highly significant as well. Results indicate that technology is significantly and positively correlated to reflective teaching, i.e. considering institute context, increasing in using technology contributing to enhancing reflective teaching and reversely.
Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in university context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Dependent</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective teaching</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>0.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sig</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 indicates that the relationship between technology and reflective teaching was again positive and highly significant. This revealed that in the context of the university, EFL instructors who used more technology achieved higher level of reflective teaching and vice versa.

The second research question was referred to investigate whether gender had any effect on technology and reflective teaching use respectively. First in the context of the university and in that of institute on the whole, and then individually in per of them. Using an independent sample t-test intended to determine whether the two variables are influenced by gender. The findings are depicted in the following tables.

Table 4: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results displayed in the above table indicate that on the whole, in spite of the fact that the mean scores of male group were slightly more than the female ones. This showed a relatively more technology use by male group. However, analysis of an independent t-test revealed that these results were not statically significant (as shown in table 4).

Table 5: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in institute context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>0.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the findings given in table 5, although the mean score of the male group, compared to that of female, was found more, i.e., the use of technology by male group was partly more than the female ones in institute context. Yet, this partial difference was insignificance as well.

Table 6: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in university context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>0.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data presented in Table 6, considering the mean scores of both female and male groups, despite that of male group were higher than that of female. That is, in compassion by female the males' application of technology was slightly higher. However, Findings reveal no significant difference between male and female groups regarding using technology in the context of university.

**Table 7: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the fact that the mean score of the male group was relatively more in compassion with female one, the independent samples t-test results in Table 7 illustrates no significant difference between the two groups of instructors regarding the use of reflective teaching in their class management.

**Table 8: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in institute context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows that even though the mean score of the female group was little more than the female one, there are non-statistically significance differences between the mean scores of the both groups as regards using reflective teaching in institute context.

**Table 9: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in university context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As above table demonstrates, comparing the mean scores of the male group with that of the female one showed that male instructors had more tendencies towards reflective teaching. However, the observed difference between the gender groups was not significant.

**Discussion**  
The present study aimed at broadening our understanding of the implication of reflection and reflective teaching practices and the efficiency of educational technology and addresses the question of whether the Iranian EFL instructor's use of educational technology tools could lead to enhance and facilitate reflective teaching practices. Reflection and reflective teaching considered as important and significant factors in teaching context in both public and private university. Educational technology can also significantly affect teaching and teacher's effective practice.
inside classroom. Based on the findings of the present research on one hand reflective teaching assist instructors to make connection between theory and practice and also enhancing the efficiency of teaching practices, on the other hand applying educational technology also boost the effectiveness of teaching practices. In addition through applying educational technology teachers can reflect on their teaching and if necessary make any modification on the instruction or strategies of teaching. The present findings are in line with the previous research which showed that university teachers considered technology- increased such as activates useful for binding theory and practice, improving thinking critically, and enhancing professional development activities and for promoting reflective practice as well (Sardegna and Dugartysyreenova, 2014; Yang, 2009). Broadly speaking, since education moves progressively towards the promotion of efficacy of teaching, use of educational technology was a necessity in the context of teaching in general and reflective teaching in particular. Iranian EFL instructors appreciate the status of technology along with other aspects of teaching. Reflection is also crucial in teaching therefore this new methods of teaching is developed increasingly as well in Iranian academic realm.

CONCLUSION
The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL instructors' use of educational technology and reflective teaching. The results indicated that there is a high and positive correlation between these two variables. It is self-evident that technology played an important role in teaching and reflective teaching as well. The application of educational technology assist teacher to increase the productiveness of teaching practices and instructional strategies. While technology is of high significance in the context of teaching, the need for reflection is also have significant role to promote the effectiveness of teaching. In light of this technology can significantly benefit teachers to reflect on their teaching and analyze, examine their instruction, methods, lesson plan, and students to make rational decision and also make any necessary changes in the context of teaching.

Limitations of the study
The present research has some limitations preventing it to propose completely developed as goes with other similar studies.
1. The researcher could not check if the reflective participants pursue the reflection principles knowingly or just by their insights, because the reflectivity status of the teacher was showed by a questionnaire. In other words the researcher could not conduct interviews for data collection triangulation purposes due to non-availability of the participants.
2. As the teachers did not cooperate in collecting research data through questionnaire, the researcher spent much more time for about four months in gathering research data.

REFERENCES


THE COMPARATIVE EFFECT OF TWO SCAFFOLDING STRATEGIES ON INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT
This study was an attempt to seek the impact of scaffolding on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners. To fulfill this purpose, 60 language learners studying English at Parto institute, in Tehran, Iran were considered as the participants. Participants including males and females between 20 to 50 years old were divided into four classes and each two classes formed one of the experimental groups. After assuring of the homogeneity of students through a pre-piloted Preliminary English Test (PET) in terms of their English proficiency in general and reading comprehension in particular, scaffolding strategy (question answering) was applied for one group and scaffolding strategy (question generating) was used for the other group. After running the classes, a pre-piloted reading section of another PET test was administered to both experimental groups as the posttest. The data analysis showed there was not any significant difference between the effect of the two scaffolding strategies (question generating and question answering) on reading comprehension of EFL learners. Results of this study have implications for language learners, helps the learners' autonomy and independence in learning and keeps students on task, and for language teachers, guide students to have more collaboration, discussion, group work, get learners engaged in learning by both initiating & sustaining their interest.

KEYWORDS: Scaffolding, Reading, Reading Comprehension, Question Answering, Question Generating

INTRODUCTION
According to Farhady (2005), “Reading is one of the most useful and necessary skills for daily life. People usually read because they want to obtain information about a specific subject" (p. 1). Farhady further maintains that there are various purposes for reading such as getting facts, exchanging ideas, enjoying leisure time, or expressing feelings. Therefore, most people obtain
new information or ideas through the process of reading. "Given the importance of reading in our daily lives, there is little wonder why assisting English language learners in understanding reading comprehension texts has always been a major preoccupation for reading researchers and teachers" (Baleghizadeh, 2011, p.1669).

According to Alexandar (1996), instruction can be effective in providing learners with a repertoire of strategies that promote comprehension monitoring and foster comprehension. For students to become motivated strategic users, they need “systematically orchestrated instruction or training”. (Alexander, 1996; Kasper, 2000; Singhal, 2001; Van Wyk, 2001) believe that in order to meet the reading needs of students within the 21st century, educators are pressed to develop effective instructional means for teaching reading comprehension and reading strategy use. Rosenshine and Meister (1992 cited in Larkin, 2002) state that A very useful strategy to optimize student learning is scaffolding which provides a supportive environment while facilitating student independence. Scaffolding is a process in which students are given support until they can apply new skills and strategies independently.

Thus, this study aimed to investigate the comparative effect of two scaffolding strategies, question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Due to the shift in the nature of teaching methodologies towards student’s self centeredness in learning situations, the professionals are constantly seeking for implementing teaching methods to shift the responsibility of learning task to learners. Among many strategies, in this regard scaffolding is one of the principles of effective instruction which enables teachers to accommodate individual needs. Scaffolding is a metaphor to describe the type of help offered by an expert (such as a tutor or parent) to support a student to carry out the task that the student is initially unable to accomplish independently (Wood, Bruner, & Ross 1976).

The researcher as an EFL teacher and learner, has noticed EFL learners' struggle to cope with comprehending a written passage, and has been on the look for a way or technique to facilitate the task. Having this objective in mind the researcher decided to apply scaffolding strategies to help the learners to improve the reading comprehension abilities. But, in spite of the existence of numerous scaffolding strategies in this field, no research has been done to the best of the researcher's knowledge to investigate the comparative effectiveness of question answering and question generating to reveal the privilege of one strategy over another in improving reading comprehension of EFL learners. Therefore, the present study was an attempt to investigate which one of the scaffolding strategies would improve the learners’ reading comprehension more.

**Scaffolding**

Benson, (1997 as cited in Lipscomb, Swanson, West, 2004) stated that, scaffolding was developed to describe the type of assistance offered by a teacher or peer to support learning. In the process of scaffolding, the teacher assists the student master a task that the student is initially unable to do it independently. The teacher helps with only those skills that are beyond the student’s capability. Allowing the student to complete as much of the task as possible is an important point of scaffolding. Teacher only helps the student with tasks that are just beyond his current capability. Student errors are expected, but, with teacher feedback, the student is able to
achieve the task. When the student takes responsibility for the task, the teacher begins the gradual removal of the scaffolding, which allows the student to work independently. He continues that Scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know.

**Reading comprehension**

Reading comprehension is the act of understanding what you are reading. "Reading comprehension is an intentional, active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing"(Brummitt-Yale, 2008 p.2). Papalia (2006) also believes that “Reading comprehension entails more than knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. It also requires ability to perceive the exact nature of the passage being communicated-a deeper form of understanding sometimes called 'reading between the lines'. "Students must learn to detect mood and intentions as well as factual detail” (p.74).

According to Snow (2002), "reading is a process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language". (p.11)

**Reading**

Similarly Hughes (2007) says that reading is a complex interaction between the text, the reader, and the purposes for reading, which are shaped by the reader’s prior knowledge and experiences, the reader’s knowledge about reading and writing language and the reader’s language community which is culturally and socially situated

**Question generating (QG)**

It is the purposeful posing and answering of questions about what is read especially to make inferences or uncover details (why, what, where, when, etc) and specific information needed to deeply analyze the body of knowledge process (Researchprécis, 2004). According to the "Generating Question"(2007), the generating questions strategy involves requiring students to read a specific text to create questions and elicit important information from the passage, and answer their questions.

Asking students to create their own questions about a reading passage encourages them to read more actively and helps them to focus their attention on key ideas.

**Question answering (QA)**

According to Raphael (1986), it is a reading comprehension strategy that was developed to "clarify how students approach the tasks of reading texts and answering questions"(p.206-221).It encourages students to be active, strategic readers of texts (Raphael, 1986)

Raphael (1986) continues that,Question Answer Relationship (QAR) is a useful tool in providing a basis for three comprehensionstrategies: locating information, determining text structures and how theyconvey information, and determining when an inference would be required. It initially helps children understand that information from both texts andtheir knowledge base. It helps students search for key words and phrases to locate the appropriate information for answering
questions. Finally, QARshelp students recognize whether or not information is present in the text and, if not, that it is necessary to read between or beyond the lines to answer the question. Raphael, T.E., & Au, K.H (2005 cited in "The Reading Teacher", 2005) described that how Question Answer Relationships can provide a framework for comprehension instruction with the potential of closing the literacy achievement gap. According to the site "Reading Rockets", there are some steps in order to help students make use of QAR:

- **Right There Questions, Think and Search Questions, Author and You, On My Own**

### Research Question and Hypothesis

**Question:** Is there any significant difference between the impact of question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension?

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between the impact of 'question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

### Methodology

#### Participants

Sixty Iranian intermediate students of Parto Institute, in Tehran were non-randomly selected to participate in this study. The participants formed intact groups including males and females between 20 to 50 years old were divided into four classes and each two classes formed one of the experimental groups.

#### Instrumentation

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following instruments were utilized:

**PET Test**

Preliminary English Test was administered to assess the language ability of the participants. In this study, the sample of the test which was used included three sections of reading, writing, and listening. The reading section of this language proficiency test had 35 items. For the writing section, there were three parts including five sentence transformation items in the first part and in the other two parts, students were required to write one essay for each part; in other words, in the second part students were required to write a short communicative message about 35-45 words, and for the third part, they were required to write a longer piece of continuous writing about 100 words. The allotted time for the PET reading and writing parts was one hour and 30 minutes.

In the listening section, students were required to answer 13 three-option multiple-choice items and six filling-the-gap items and six true/false items. The allotted time for the PET listening part was 30 minutes. It is necessary to mention that with the aim of saving time, the researcher used only reading, writing, and listening parts of the PET. Moreover, the main focus of the study was reading comprehension, thus the speaking section was not administered in this study.

Therefore, the Reading section had 35 marks, listening section had 25 marks.
The writing section had 25 marks. The total mark was out of 85. Before the main administration, the test was piloted on 30 students at intermediate level with the same characteristics of the target sample. The item characteristics including IF and ID were calculated. Items with item facility beyond 0.67 and below 0.33 and items with discrimination value below 0.4 were eliminated. Reliability estimated 0.82. There were 3 malfunctioning items and were excluded, two questions in reading and one in listening. After removing malfunctioning items the reliability was estimated as 0.84. The allotted time for answering the remaining 62 items and the two tasks of writing was two hours.

The first section of the writing was rated according to the writing scales of PET test. The writing sections 2 and 3 of the test were rated by two different raters, the researcher and another trained instructor and to make sure of the consistency between the two raters the inter-rater reliability was estimated (r=.466, p=.009<.05 for writing part 2 and r=.654, p<.05 for writing part 3). Therefore, the mean of the two raters' scores for each individual was estimated for further analyses.

### Pre-treatment test

The revised PET test was administered and the PET reading scores of the two groups of learners were compared to make sure that they were the same with respect to their reading comprehension ability before the start of the study.

### Post-test

In order to check the improvement of reading comprehension of the participants after receiving scaffolding strategies instructions in reading, the learners were given another version of PET reading comprehension test. But prior to the administration of the post test, it was piloted on 30 learners who were similar to the main sample, and item characteristics were probed and reliability was 0.72, as the result four malfunctioning items were deleted from the test and the reliability turned out to be 0.75.

### Procedure

This study was composed of a pilot study and a main study. In the pilot study the PET test was administered on 30 EFL learners with similar characteristics to the main sample. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine item characteristics as well as the reliability and gain some insight about the problems that the participants might encounter in the test administration. Also, another version of a PET reading test was piloted on a similar group of learners.

In the main study there were fifth stages. In the first stage the PET test was administered to ensure the homogeneity and assess the language proficiency of the participants in both classes. Then the reading scores of two groups were calculated and compared by Man Whitney U test, to make sure that the two intact groups were homogeneous regarding their general English proficiency in general and their reading comprehension proficiency in particular.

In the third stage, the treatment stage, the participants in the two groups received different treatments within 10 sessions; therefore, in one group question answering, and in another group,
question generating techniques were practiced every session. In the fourth stage, after 10 sessions of treatment there was a reading post –test, in order to reveal any possible improvement in reading comprehension abilities of the learners after receiving instruction in both groups. Thus the learners took a reading test which was piloted before. In the fifth stage, to determine whether there was any significant difference in reading ability of the learners, hence comparing the effect of the two treatments on the reading achievement of the learners, a t- test was conducted to reveal the significance of the difference between the two groups' mean scores.

The Treatments
Treatment in Question answering group
There were 30 intermediate male and female students in the first group. The condition of both groups regarding the time of the class (90 minutes) and the course book of the Institute (Four Corners 3) were the same. Four Corners 3 included 12 units with four integrated skills in which three units were being taught during 15 sessions of the class. Therefore, three reading sections of the units (1 to 3) followed by questions were being taught during the term as one of the practical sources. The teacher also taught some texts from Interchange2 (2005) which contained 16 units with four integrated skills but teacher just taught units (8, 9, 13) followed by some questions. She selected three short stories (p. 6, 8, 18, 22) with exercises from 'Steps t Steps to Understanding' to work on as the practical source during 10 sessions of treatment. All these sources were appropriate for intermediate level. In order to work on a Question answering strategy the research taught texts through the following steps:

For the first step in the first session, the teacher allocated 60 minutes
For introducing the Question Answering strategy explained that questions could be part of the reading lesson and previewing questions could help students focus on reading, then in order to show the relationship of questions to answers she hung a large chart in the class and introduced it to the students. She modeled how each level of QAR could be identified and answered. She said Questions on the chart were divided into four categories as follow and explained the definition for each category:

**Right There:** the answer is found in the text, usually as a phrase contained within one sentence.

**Think and Search:** while the answer is in the text, the student is required to combine separate sections or pieces of text to answer the question.

**Author and You:** as the answer is not directly stated in the text, the student draws on prior knowledge as well as what the author has written to answer the question.

**On Your Own:** requires students to think about what is already known from their reading and experience (prior knowledge) to formulate an answer (Rafael, 1982)

As the second step the teacher gave each student one copy of the text from the Interchange 2 and modeled the sample for the class. First she read the text aloud for students, then she read question aloud for the class and underlined the keywords of the questions. Finally, she read the text again in order to find the answers. She taught how to answer the questions according to Question Answering strategy depicted in the chart, explained each question and each answer in details according to the chart, categorized the questions and justified why each question related to
In the second and third sessions of the class teacher reviewed the strategy and asked students to work on another text in small groups to write different questions within the group, then they read aloud their answers for the class. The teacher corrected their answers and explained the category of the QAR for each question, gave them some feedbacks, examples or any explanations needed. For the other 7 sessions, students were exposed to different texts from Interchange 2 by Richards (2005), Four corners 3 by Richards and Bohlke (2012) and some texts that she selected from' Steps For Understanding’ by Hill (2005) as the practical source and were supposed to do the task independently by adopting Question Answering strategy on different samples as mentioned before and if necessary the teacher gave more explanations and clarifications of the answers.

Question generating
There were 30 intermediate male and female students in the first group. The condition of both groups regarding the time of the class (90 minutes) and the course book of the Institute (Four Corners 3) were the same. The Four Corners 3(2012) included 12 units with four integrated skills in which three units were being taught during 15 sessions of the class. Therefore, three reading sections of the units (1 to 3) followed by questions were being taught during the term as one of the practical sources. The teacher also taught some texts from Interchange 2 (2005) which contained 16 units with four integrated skills but teacher just taught units ( p. 8, 9, 13 ) followed by some questions. She selected three short stories (p. 6, 8, 18, 22) with exercises from' Steps to Understanding’ to work on as the practical source during 10 sessions of treatment.

For the first step of the first session in the second group, the researcher introduced the Question Generating strategy in 60 minutes.

She gave a text from Interchange 2 to each student ,she modeled the text as she wrote the title of the passage on the whiteboard and asked students to think about the title that left them with unanswered questions, and sometimes she suggested a question such as what does the title show? What does it refer to? She then encouraged students to raise more questions about the title. On the second step, the teachers explained that for a better understanding of the events or story's characters and improve comprehension; the reader should ask questions as s/he reads (during reading). Then she directed them to a text and read the text aloud and modeled questioning process as she was reading it sentence by sentence, she made different questions and wrote them on the board and asked the students to add any questions of their own, during which she made comments on those parts of the story that contained the answers to the questions .while making questions students might have some difficulties, teacher helped them to make correct forms. On the next step the teacher had students share the text they read in small groups and encouraged them to discuss some of the unanswered questions they made in their mind such as why a particular character made that decision or what would have happened to the character if the story had continued. They could also finish the story or text as they liked or guessed. As she finished all the steps and students understood the strategy, she asked them to remember this strategy for the next sessions.
In the second and third sessions of the class teacher reviewed the strategy and asked students to work on another text in small groups to write different questions within the group, then they read aloud their answers for the class. The teacher corrected their questions, gave them some feedbacks, examples or any explanations needed.

For the other 7 sessions, students were exposed to different texts from Interchange 2 by Richards (2005), Four corners 3 by Richards and Bohlke (2012) and some texts that she selected from 'Steps For Understanding' by Hill (2005) as the practical source and were supposed to do the task independently by adopting Question Generating strategy on different samples as mentioned before and if necessary the teacher gave more explanations and clarifications of the answers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This study was an attempt to explore the comparative effect of scaffolding strategies on EFL intermediate learners' reading comprehension.
The reliability after removing three malfunctioning items turned out to be as high as .84

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing1 (Rater1)</th>
<th>Writing1 (Rater2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing1 (Rater1)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing1 (Rater2)</td>
<td>.466**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing2 (Rater1)</th>
<th>Writing2 (Rater2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing2 (Rater1)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing2 (Rater2)</td>
<td>.654**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, the correlation between the two raters' writing scores part 2 turned out to be significant (r=.466, p<.01).
The correlation between the two raters' writing scores part 3 turned out to be significant (r=.65, p<.01).
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the pretest reading scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Skewness ratios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QApretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>1.931</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QGpretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.33</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>-1.246</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2, the skewness ratio for the QG exceeds the normality range of ±1.96, hence the normality condition was violated, and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was run instead. The following graphs show the distribution of the pretest scores:

Figure 1: Histogram representing the QA pretest scores distribution

Figure 2: Histogram representing the QG pretest scores distribution
The following tables were generated to compare the pre-test scores through Mann-Whitney U test:

Table 3: Ranks of the pretest scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>grouping</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reading pretest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.78</td>
<td>833.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QG</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33.22</td>
<td>996.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 shows, QG group gained a higher mean rank compared with the QA group.

The following table shows the significance of this difference:

Table 4: Mann-Whitney test on the pretest scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading pretest</th>
<th>Mann-Whitney U</th>
<th>Wilcoxon W</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>368.500</td>
<td>833.500</td>
<td>-1.220</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Grouping Variable: grouping

As Table 4 shows, the difference between the two groups' reading abilities turned out to be non-significant at the outset (M=368.5, p=.223>.05). Therefore, the homogeneity of the learners with respect to their reading comprehension prior to the treatment was ensured.

Before administering the posttest, another version of the PET reading test was piloted on 30 subjects with similar characteristics of the main sample. Then item characteristics were calculated and items with facility index beyond 0.67 and below 0.33 and items with discrimination value below 0.4 were eliminated, as a result 4 items were found to be malfunctioning and were removed from the test. Reliability of the test turned out to be 0.72, and then the reliability was estimated at 0.75 shown in the following table:

Table 5: Reliability Estimates of the post test before and after Removing Malfunctioning Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>CronbachAlpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Removing Malfunctioning Items</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Removing Malfunctioning Items</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test the null hypothesis, a t test had to be run between the two groups’ posttest mean scores. But, firstly the normality condition had to be checked:
Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of the posttest scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Skewness ratios</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.9333</td>
<td>1.98152</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QG posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.6333</td>
<td>1.69143</td>
<td>-.155</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 6, both sets of scores were normally distributed as the skewness ratios were both within the normality range of ±1.96. Therefore, a t test was legitimate to run. The following tables show the result thereof:

Table 7: Group Statistics of the posttest scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>reading posttest</th>
<th>grouping</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.93</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QG</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.63</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 7 depicts, Question Generating gained a higher mean score compare with Question Answering. The following table shows if this difference was significant:

Table 8: Independent Samples Test on the posttest scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading posttest</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Differences</th>
<th>Std. Error Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-1.47</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-1.65, 0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td>-1.47</td>
<td>56.605</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-1.65, 0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in Table 8 the variances of the two sets of scores turned out to be homogeneous (F=1.36, p=.24>.05). Therefore, with this assumption met, the first row of the table was referred to in order to see the result of the t test. As the sig value under t test turned out to be .147, larger than .05, it is concluded that the two groups were not significantly different in their posttest performance. Hence, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected.

The following bar graph visually shows the mean scores of the two groups on the posttest:
The application of statistical analyses revealed that the learners did not improve from these two strategies and there was no significant difference between the effectiveness of question answering and question generating in promoting learners’ reading comprehension. The results are in line with findings of (Fadakar, 2013) who investigated the impact of scaffolding on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners and found that scaffolding had no significant effect on the reading comprehension of intermediate EFL learners. However, these results are in contrast with a number of researchers’ findings who confirmed that scaffolding strategies enhance reading comprehension of the learners (Martin & Rose, 2007; Dorkchandra, 2013; Hui-Chin Yeh & Pei-Yi Lai, 2012; in Humphries, 2011-2013; Hui-Chin Yeh & Pei-Yi Lai, 2012; Johnson, 2014; Wagoner, Smith, 2014). Also, here is another research by Hemmati and Bemani (2013) who worked on Comparing Effect of 'Summarizing', 'Question-Answer Relationship', and 'Syntactic Structure Identification' on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL students and revealed that QAR strategy led to better comprehension of reading texts which is in contrast with the researcher findings.

On the whole, this study revealed that scaffolding in its general sense did not affect students’ reading comprehension which runs counter to the research conducted by Martin and Rose (2007) in which they applied scaffolding strategies for teaching reading and writing and achieved spectacular improvements in student outcomes.

It is needless to say that although comprehension is accepted as a process which is time-consuming and difficult to master, readers are not reading unless they comprehend (Haji Maibodi, 2008) which in turn calls for motivation. Therefore, one can ponder over issues such as what kind of texts teachers use in the classroom, how they create reading purposes for those texts, and in what ways they encourage students to read those texts.

The researcher agreed with what Yen-Chi Fan (2010) mentioned in his research that although implementing comprehension strategy instruction for one semester may help learners adopt some
degree of strategic reading behaviors, but it takes long-term efforts and practices for EFL learners to fully develop their strategic reading abilities. Walqui (2006) added in "Scaffolding Instruction for English Language Learners" that for our English learners we need to use scaffolding strategies more extensively, continuously building scaffolds as the need arises, and we need to communicate their purpose and uses to students. While for the native speaker two tasks may be sufficient to understand and practice a concept, the English Language Learner may need four or five different tasks to achieve similar competence. It will take teachers of English Language Learners longer to teach their units, and they may not be able to teach as much in terms of detailed content.

The researcher found these two strategies useful and motivating for learners but she came to the conclusion that as (Haji Maibodi, 2008) mentioned, it is very time-consuming and difficult to master them especially in classes in which teachers have time limitations, but she believes scaffolding improves learners comprehension if teachers make use of these strategies more than 10 sessions to master its techniques, sure more signification will turn out.

Based on the procedure adopted in this study, the researcher speculates that even more than 10 sessions of instruction may have been needed to improve the learners' reading comprehension significantly and/or to reveal a difference between the impact of the two strategies of scaffolding.

**CONCLUSION**

This study tried to investigate the effect of two scaffolding strategies on intermediate EFL learners’ reading comprehension. In order to do this, 60 students who were in four intact classes were assigned into two experimental groups.

After the instructional period through which one experimental group received scaffolding question answering reading strategy and another experimental group received question generating strategy, both groups took a reading posttest. The comparison of their mean scores revealed that there was not any significant difference between students' Question Answering strategy and Question Generating strategy on Reading comprehension of EFL learners'.

**Limitations**

Certain limitations were imposed on this study. First, the age and gender of the participants were a source of difference because students were not exactly at the same age or the same gender since the institute where the study was carried out had a co-educational system. Therefore, generalization of this study to other age ranges in communities of EFL learners would not be appropriate without further research.

Second, there were limited numbers of students in each class in the institute; therefore, teacher should have at least four classes in order to have enough sample size for this study. This division which was imposed on the researcher might have had an influence on the outcome of the study as the classes were not held at the same hour.
REFERENCES


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THE IMPACT OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING ON IRANIAN LOWER INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNER'S SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS AND AUTONOMY

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ABSTRACT
This study explored the effect of employing smart board in enhancement of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking and listening skills. Forty lower-intermediate EFL students were selected from Kashmar, Iran. They were assigned to control and experimental groups. Participants in experimental group were provided with a smart board as a teaching tool while those in the control group were taught using a traditional white board. Smart board was found as an effective tool in educational contexts which can significantly influence learners' academic performance and autonomy. These results provide pedagogical implications for utilizing smart board as an effective educational tool in EFL contexts where technology will replace traditional teaching techniques and even teachers; as a result autonomous EFL students will learn independently from their teachers.

KEYWORDS: autonomy, test battery, smart board, digital pen.

INTRODUCTION
Background
Speaking and listening are categorized as oral communicative skills which are considered of great importance in the contexts of English as a foreign language (EFL). Since the main purpose of learning a foreign language is communication, searching for new techniques which help learners enhance their oral skills, listening and speaking is important (Khosravani, Khosravani & Ganji Khoosf, 2014). Several techniques and tools have been introduced and employed in EFL settings in order to enhance students' speaking and listening skills. With the advent of technology
EFL contexts have experienced significant changes. Technology has changed every aspect of human life in general and his/her foreign language learning (FLL) process, in specific. According to Haider and Chowdhury (2012), the emergence of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has resulted in significant changes in the arena of language teaching and learning starting from the use of innovative learning materials to the widening of interaction patterns among a huge and diverse community of learners. There have been arguments with respect to the advantages and disadvantages of CALL, though the trend of employing computer assisted tools in language teaching is increasing throughout the world (ibid). CALL has played a key role in personalizing education (Ghalami Nobar & Ahangari, 2012). Only when learners are able to take benefit from each learning opportunity rather than simply responding to different stimuli from the teacher can they be skilful manipulators of language in their language learning process (Ying, n.d.). The situation demands the urgent need of enhancing learners' initiatives and learner autonomy (ibid).Schmenk, (2005) states that: ‘The popularity of learner autonomy may be at least partially related to the rise of computer technology and the growing importance of computers in language learning environments worldwide’ (P.107).

Hence due to the popularity of computer use in EFL contexts the present study aims at exploring the effect of CALL on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' task-based listening speaking and autonomy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Haider and Chowdhury (2012) conducted a study based on a survey of the Communicative English Language Certificate (CELC) course run by the Foreign Language Training Center (FLTC), a project under the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh. Their study was done on 425 learners who had completed the CELC course at the selected four centers of FLTC. According to the findings obtained by these two authors it can be concluded that the FLTC project is doing a creditable task by offering quality English language teaching employing Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) facilities to the learners of Bangladesh. This study also manifests some weaknesses of the program delivery, teaching approaches and learning support. Some of these problems are not surprising because the program was still evolving and experiencing the changing practices during the study. These led to some of the instructors’ difficulty in getting themselves at ease with the computer based materials and technological instruments quickly (ibid).

Park and Son (2009) investigated factors influencing EFL teachers’ employment of computers in their classrooms in order to find out EFL teachers’ attitudes toward CALL and ways to improve CALL practice in schools. The results of their study indicated teachers' positive and favorable attitudes toward the employment of the computers. They regarded computer technology as a helpful teaching tool which can improve ways of teaching through providing students with different language inputs and increasing students’ learning experiences in real and authentic contexts. It was also reported that external factors including lack of time, insufficient computer facilities, rigid school curricula, textbooks and lack of administrative support put negative effects on the implementation of CALL in the classroom. Internal factors like teachers’ limited computer
skills, knowledge about computers, beliefs and perceptions of CALL also appear to significantly influence teachers’ decisions on the employment of CALL (ibid).

Barani (2011) investigated the relationship between CALL and listening skill of Iranian EFL learners. His results suggested that there was a statistically significant difference between CALL users and nonusers in favor of the experimental group (p<.05).

Ghalami and Ahangari (2012) explored the impact of CALL on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' task-based listening as a motivating device to improve formation of positive attitudes. Their findings indicated that there was a meaningful difference between the experimental and control groups; that is to say, the participants in experimental group performed better than those in control group and obtained a higher average. The motivation of the experimental group participants was also higher compare to those in control group.

Nachoua (2012) in a study entitled "Computer-Assisted Language Learning for Improving Students’ Listening Skill" found that CALL is a motivating method and computers are valuable instruments in second/foreign language classes to improve students’ listening skill. Also, participants in experimental group (CALL) outperformed those in control group. Students' performance was improved in grammar, vocabulary, writing and listening. Furthermore, many parameters indicated that significant progress was attained in the group receiving a CALL teaching.

Edalati Shams (2013) investigated the effects of hybrid learning on Iranian EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. Hybrid Learning (HL), according to Bärenfänger (2005, as cited in Edalati Shams, 2013), is a learning approach including traditional classroom learning, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and self-directed learning (SDL). According to Edalati Shams' findings a few of the learners manifested a considerable level of autonomy in learning from the outset. They were used to watching movies, reading books, listening to music, surfing the net, and gaming in English and outnumbered others in posts and comments they published on the weblog. The quantitative analysis proved that these already autonomous learners obtained the most significant gains throughout this HL course regarding both vocabulary knowledge and level of autonomy. Learners, mostly, had positive views on employing modern technology for the purpose of learning. The need for learner training and the significance of computer literacy were both expressed by the learners and witnessed by the researcher throughout the course. CALL and traditional classroom learning played complementary roles and each supplemented the disadvantages of another. Drawback to the use of weblogs observed in this course was regarding the a-sychronicity of communication in a weblog. Regarding the learners' responses to the autonomy questionnaire at the beginning and end of the course, a statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the two sets of scores the learners got at the questionnaire which means that there was an improvement in the learners' level of autonomy after participating in the HL course (ibid). To sum up, the results of Edalati Shams (2013) indicated that learners' autonomy level and vocabulary knowledge increased at the end of HL course.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The following research questions were posed by the researcher:
Q1: Does the employment of smart board have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening?
Q2: Does the employment of smart board have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' autonomy?

RESEARCH NULL-HYPOTHESES
The following research null-hypotheses were formulated by the researcher:
HO1: The employment of smart board does not have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening.
HO2: The employment of smart board does not have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' autonomy.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
A sample including 48 lower-intermediate EFL students learning English in Khorasan Institute Of Foreign Languages in Kashmar, Iran was selected. Their age ranged from 19 to 25. Only females took part in this study. None of these participants have traveled to an English speaking country. The participants' homogeneity was confirmed using Quick Placement Test.

Instrumentations
Quick Placement Test (QPT)
To make sure that the participants were at the same level of language proficiency this kind of test developed by Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (60 multiple-choice items; grammar, vocabulary, cloze test) was administered to a population consisting of 94 EFL learners. Those students who scored 24 to 30 out of 40 were selected as the subjects of the present study (lower-intermediate).

Listening Speaking test battery
Participants' speaking ability was assessed via an interview between the researcher and the respondents. Also, an audio-CD was employed to assess the participants' listening comprehension. These assessments were done at the start and at the end of the study, but the materials employed as the assessment instruments were different. The test battery was adopted from Top Notch Fundamental A and B (Saslow & Asher, 2013). These two books are taught at some Iranian language institutes.

Learner autonomy questionnaire
In order to assess EFL students' autonomy in learning a Learner Autonomy Questionnaire developed by Zhang and Li (2004) was administered to see how autonomous the participants were in learning English as a foreign language. The content validity and reliability of the questionnaire have been already confirmed. The questionnaire has two parts: Part 1 includes 11 multiple-choice items on a 5- point Likert scale. The choices range from 1 (never) to 5 (always).
Part 2 includes 10 multiple-choice self-reporting items and students had to choose one option from the five alternatives.

Procedure
Forty-eight lower-intermediate EFL learners selected as the participants of the study, based on QPT, were randomly assigned to control (N=24) and experimental (N=24) groups. Listening-speaking materials adopted from interchange were taught to both groups by the same teacher. Smart board was employed in experimental class. Smart board works with a computer, projector, digital pens, and software called Notebook. The computer screen is projected to the smart board. Also using digital pen the teacher and the student alike can annotate. The quality of displaying materials on the screen was very high allowing the students to watch and hear effectively. On the contrary, participants in control group were not provided with a smart board and traditional white board was employed in order to teach new materials. Finally students in both groups sat for the posttest. Also participants in the experimental group were asked to complete the learner autonomy questionnaire before and after the treatment so that the effects of using smart boards on enhancement of EFL learners' autonomy were explored.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This section summarizes the data obtained from the instruments given to the participants; also the null-hypotheses already proposed are tested.

Results of the pretest
Table 1 shows data related to the participants' performance in the pretest (listening and speaking).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.96</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16.75</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 shows there is no statistically meaningful difference between mean of control group (M=14.96; SD=4.58) and that of experimental group (M=16.75; SD=4.51) because p-value is greater than .05 (sig=.17; t=1.36). Therefore, the homogeneity of the participants was confirmed at the beginning of the course.

Results of the posttest
Data in Table 2 show the results obtained from the participants' performance in the posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.21</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data in Table 2 show the effects of the treatment (employment of smart board) on EFL learners' speaking and listening. Based on these data, participants in experimental group (M=20.21;
Results of learner autonomy

To explore the effect of employing smart board on EFL learner's autonomy paired-samples t-test was employed since the questionnaire was given to the participants in experimental group as pre and posttest (Table 3).

Table 3: Results of learner autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64.67</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12.10</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70.42</td>
<td>15.54</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the mean of experimental group in the pretest is 64.67 and its mean in the posttest is 70.42. Since p-value (.000) is less than .05 it can be concluded that using smart board in EFL speaking and listening classrooms can improve learners' autonomy. The present study aimed at exploring the effects of smart board on enhancing lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening skills and their autonomy. Findings confirmed the significant effects of employing smart board as an effective learning tool in order to enhance EFL learners' speaking and listening skills. This finding was in agreement with Ghalami and Ahangari's (2012) who explored the impact of CALL on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' task-based listening. Also these findings supported the effectiveness of smart board in improving EFL learners' autonomy.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to explore the effects of CALL on Iranian lower-intermediate EFL students' speaking and listening as well as their autonomy. Having employed SPSS, the researchers tested the two research null-hypotheses formulated for the study. Results of t-test indicated positive effects of utilizing smart-boards in EFL speaking and listening classrooms, apparently due to the experimental participants' increased engagement in class activities and tasks. Also, the students' enhancement may be as a result of an increased level of motivation to learn. The findings offer pedagogical implications for utilizing smart-board and other technological tools in EFL contexts which need to be motivating and enjoyable.

Limitations of the study

The limitations of the present study were as following:
The present study explored the effect of CALL on listening and speaking. Other skills such as writing and reading were not taken into consideration.

Among psychological traits, only autonomy was examined and other traits such as confidence, motivation, self-regulation, etc. were excluded.

Concerning technological tools, only smart board was implemented and other devices were not employed in the treatment group.

Only lower-intermediate EFL students participated in this study and other EFL populations did not take part in the present study. Also, all of them were female.

REFERENCES


THE IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED EFFECT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ WRITING PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT
Dynamic assessment has opened new horizons for teaching and assessment of writing performance. The present study was undertaken to explore the impact of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on improving writing performance of Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) students, and also to explore whether dynamic assessment has any immediate and delayed effects on writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL students. The design of this study was quasi-experimental. Fifty Iranian students out of 120 were non randomly selected as participants of this study based on their scores on pet test. To determine the prior writing skill, a pre-test including two writing topics were administered to the participants in both experimental and control group. Then, the teacher worked on writing skill of experimental group with dynamic assessment technique, whereas she worked on control groups' writing through traditional method. At the end of the experiment, to check whether participants’ writing performance had been improved through dynamic assessment, a post-test was administered to the participants of both groups. The result of this post-test was also the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. Thus, it can be concluded that dynamic assessment is an effective teaching tool for improving writing performance of students, and it has immediate effects. To explore the delayed effect of dynamic assessment, five weeks after the first post-test, the participants were called for the second post-test. Thus, the results showed that experimental group performed better than control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that, dynamic assessment has also delayed impact on writing skill of EFL Iranian students.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic assessment, Non-dynamic assessment, Immediate effect, Delayed effect, Writing performance

INTRODUCTION
Dynamic assessment (DA) in language learning, which derives from Vygotsky’s (1978) idea on how child’s cognition develops and applies Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory into assessment, can offer new insights into assessment in the language classroom by revealing invaluable secrets about the ability of individual students and their abilities while answering each test item. The
reason can be the process-oriented nature of dynamic assessment. While the results of traditional Non-Dynamic assessment (NDA) can only show the already existent abilities of the student, the analysis of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) makes it possible to evaluate the ability of the student to learn from the interaction with a teacher or a more competent peer and predict their possible future development. Because Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development suggests that different people can have the same baseline score on a static test but may differ in the extent to which they can profit from instruction. Unaided performance on static measures tells us what has already been learned or accomplished, whereas the breadth of the zone of proximal development is thought to provide prospective indications of what can be learned (Ajideh & Nourdad, 2012).

Nowadays, in most of the countries, especially in Iran, product oriented testing and teaching are the most widely used testing methods in today’s educational environments, including the field of second and foreign language learning. Many language teachers around the world including Iranian teachers, use final assessment tests in their curricula to see how much the students have progressed on the subject they are being taught. On the other hand, it is not a rare case to hear a teacher saying that s/he does not understand why some students perform very well in the class but cannot get high grades from the tests. At this point, dynamic assessment in language learning, which applies Vygotisky’s sociocultural theory into assessment, might offer new insights to assessment in the language classroom. Vygotsky’s theory basically suggests that if we want to understand learning and development, we have to focus on process instead of product. Lantolf and Thorne (2006), Vygotsky argued that “the only appropriate way of understanding and explaining forms of human mental functioning is by studying the process, and not the outcome of development”(p.28). This is the critical point which distinguishes dynamic assessment from other forms of assessment. In this approach, development process is seen as a predictor of the individual’s or group’s future performance.

Dynamic assessment according to Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory suggests that instruction and assessment should be inseparable from one another. In other words, if teachers want to see how their students really progress in their classes, their assessment should not focus on testing the students’ performance with a final achievement test per se. The real focus should be on what students can achieve with the help of the teacher or peers during the class activities because what is achieved with the help of others shows the potential progress for achievement without any help. That is, if students are able to achieve a task with others today, this shows that they will be able to achieve it by themselves in near future because being able to achieve it with others proves that the internalization process has already begun. On the other hand, what teachers generally do in language courses is to assess students’ actual development after some time of instruction, and to decide on the potential development by looking at the results. However, Lantolf & Thorne (2006) Vygotisky, this process should be the other way around because “the potential development varies independently of actual development, meaning that the latter, in and of itself, cannot be used to predict the former” (p.328).

On the other hand, dynamic assessment is a procedure which takes the results of an intervention into consideration. Dynamic assessment is basically grounded in Vygotsky’s innovative insight
that in the zone of proximal development instruction leads development. Vygotsky (1978) argued that a person’s potential developmental level is as important as the actual developmental level and responsiveness to assistance is an indispensable feature for understanding cognitive ability because it provides an insight into the person’s future (potential) development.

Dynamic assessment is known as an effective teaching tool in EFL learning. In fact, dynamic assessment in language learning can offer new insights into assessment in the language classroom by revealing invaluable secrets about the ability of individual students and their abilities while answering each test item. The reason can be the process-oriented nature of dynamic assessment. While the results of traditional non-dynamic assessment can only show the already existent abilities of the student, dynamic assessment adjusted to the needs of particular learners makes it possible to evaluate the ability of the student to learn from the interaction with a teacher or a more competent peer and predict their possible future development. Regarding the advantages and effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and developing a foreign language, little attention has been paid to its place in the academic curriculums of many countries especially, Iran. Likewise, little research have been conducted on this issue.

As discussed above, unfortunately, in Iran, little attention has been paid to the effectiveness of dynamic assessment and therefore, this study investigated the effect of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. The central purpose of this research is determining the existence of any relationship between dynamic assessment and the writing performance of language students. In this study we investigated the scores of students in writing performance test to determine whether or not it is influenced by the intervention they received. In other words, the present research attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic assessment on the writing performance of students. Also, this study attempted to examine the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on intermediate Iranian EFL students. There is no similar example of an experimental study in writing which examines the dynamic assessment and its immediate and delayed impact on the writing performance.

Furthermore review of literature on the use of dynamic assessment in EFL classrooms reveals that despite the rich and strong background of dynamic assessment, a few research has been conducted on the effectiveness and practicability of dynamic assessment in different learning environments in Iran, therefore, the present study attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic assessment on improving writing performance of intermediate Iranian EFL students.

LITREATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Research on Dynamic Assessment

Although theoretical framework of dynamic assessment was proposed by Vygotsky, he did not present any methodological guidelines for its application in real educational settings. There is a robust research literature on dynamic assessment in general education and psychology, however, the approach is relatively unknown or at least new in second/foreign language studies. In fact dynamic assessment has generated an impressive body of research in the study of general intelligence and of basic learning abilities among individuals with special needs (Tzuriel, 2000;
Lidz, 2002; Baek & Kim, 2003; Hasson & Joffe, 2007; Wang, 2010;), but studies of dynamic assessment’s implications for problems particular to the development of L2 abilities are only beginning by a limited number of scholars in this field. Most of these discussions have been made at the theoretical level of dynamic assessment in language education and the number of studies focusing on practical and empirical dimensions to provide guidelines of methodological applications is very limited. For example Yildirim (2008) takes an in depth look at the issue of dynamic assessment from the standpoint of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory. He draws the theoretical framework and also discusses the methodological applications of the theory but his study doesn’t include practical and empirical dimension in detail.

In fact, the literature on the use of dynamic assessment in the classroom whether as a teaching or assessment tool is controversial. Although most of the researchers advocate the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and teaching and believe that dynamic assessment is an effective and useful teaching and assessment tool (e.g., Anton, 2003; Poehner 2008; Ajideh & Nourdad, 2012), some others criticize the reliability of dynamic assessment and see it as an inappropriate teaching and testing tool in classroom (e.g. Frisby & Braden, 1992).

And although most of the researchers advocate the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and teaching, they assert also that some degree of subjectivity is an essential feature of dynamic assessment (Tzuriel, 2000). Aastrup (2010) thinks that the theoretical basis for dynamic assessment is well known but not always practiced in assessments or teaching. So far experience indicates that dynamic assessment is a good tool to investigate a pupil’s mathematical thinking in order to plan and carry out adapted teaching. However, using the dynamic assessment material does not guarantee that the assessment will be carried out dynamically. It is only meant to be a good tool in order to practice the dialogue in an appropriate way, discovering how to help the pupil reach a new functional level. Therefore, applying the philosophy of socio-cultural learning theory and training in order to establish good dialogues is important for the assessment leader. Many pupils who find the assessment situation positive, their knowledge is more appreciated than they are used to, and they experience successes and a good atmosphere.

The dynamic way of meeting a pupil also influences the techniques teachers use in the classroom. Teachers seem to be more open to alternative ways of solving problems. In many cases the focus of the lessons moves from product to process, inspiring pupils to talk about their own strategies and jointly reflect on different strategies.

Considering this ambiguity on the effectiveness and practicability of dynamic assessment, the present study attempted to explore its effect on writing performance of EFL Iranian students.

**Empirical Studies on Dynamic Assessment**

In a recent study Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011) assessed the viability of dynamic assessment used as an instructional adjunct in the development of Iranian EFL learners’ grammar. The study was conducted on 60 intermediate EFL learners and each session during the treatment of the two groups of experimental and control took a grammar test in which the experimental group received...
mediation on test items. The results of their study proved that dynamic assessment oriented instruction significantly improved the learning of L2 grammar.

In another study, Pishghadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) applied a computerized dynamic assessment on 104 university students with moderate proficiency level. The software could calculate the non-dynamic assessment score of the participants, that is their score before any intervention of each item, as well as a dynamic assessment score, which is the score after providing mediation for unsuccessful answers. Using a t-test the researchers compared the dynamic and non-dynamic score of the participants and found a significant difference implying the usefulness of dynamic assessment in increasing the reading comprehension score of the participants.

**Immediate and Delayed Effect of Dynamic Assessment**

According to Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) measuring student's ability in transferring the developed abilities into new items after some time is delayed effect. It refers to the degree of maintenance of the positive or negative effects of treatment on the writing performance students in a longer period of time. That is, delayed effect refers to the effects of a treatment that remain until some other time. In the present research, we use this sense of delayed effect.

According to the web definition immediate effect refers to the degree of the positive or negative effects of treatment soon after the treatment is over. Immediate effects are those that occur within minutes of the exposure. In the present research, also, immediate effect refers to the effects of a treatment on writing performance of Iranian EFL students right after the treatment, i.e., teaching through dynamic assessment is over.

According to Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) there is great difference between assessing reading comprehension ability of EFL learners dynamically and non-dynamically, and that dynamic assessment leads in increased reading comprehension ability and this improvement is not short-term and can remain after some time interval because learners take advantage of the mediation on their ZPDs.

**Empirical Studies on Immediate and Delayed Effect of Dynamic Assessment**

In a study Ajideh and Nourdad (2012), investigating the difference between applying dynamic assessment and non-dynamic assessment for reading comprehension ability of EFL learners and also the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment. The results of the study revealed a significant difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment with a statistically significant increase in the reading comprehension scores of the group being assessed dynamically. The findings of the study also presented the existence of not only immediate but also delayed effect of dynamic assessment on reading ability of the participants.

In another study Ajideh and Nourdad (2012), aimed at investigating the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment on reading comprehension ability of EFL learners at three proficiency levels. The results of the study revealed that while applying dynamic assessment had both immediate and delayed effect on improving the reading comprehension of the EFL learners,
no significant difference was observed among different proficiency levels. In other words there is no significant difference in the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment of EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability in low-, mid-, and high-proficiency levels. That is to say dynamic assessment can be beneficial for EFL readers and its effect remains overtime. And learners of low-, mid-, and high-proficiency levels improve their reading comprehension ability almost equally and the proficiency level doesn’t affect the amount of taking the advantage of dynamic assessment.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Q1: Is there any difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance?
Q2: What is the immediate effect of applying dynamic assessment on EFL writing performance?
Q3: What is the delayed effect of applying dynamic assessment on writing performance?

H1: There is a difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance.
H2: Applying dynamic assessment has immediate effect on EFL writing performance.
H3: Applying dynamic assessment has no delayed effect on EFL writing performance.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 50 female intermediate Iranian EFL language learners. After assuring the homogeneity of all of the students, one of the intact classes were randomly considered as experimental group and another one as control group. Because of the limitations
Instrumentation

The following instruments were utilized in the present study. A proficiency test (PET) was administered to the participants in order to homogenize participants in terms of language proficiency. PET stands for Preliminary English Test which is suitable for testing language proficiency of intermediate students. It included four sections of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and there were 8 questions and topics at writing section. The estimated time for the test was two hours.

Then, a pre-test was administered to both experimental group and control to determine the participants' writing performance abilities before the experiment. The pre-test included two writing topics. The pre-test conducted in a non-dynamic way, i.e. in the traditional or usual way, with which all of the participants were familiar.

After the pre-test, the treatment began and last for five sessions. In each session, the researcher as a teacher introduced a topic for writing and received feedback. After 5 sessions of treatment, the teacher administered a post-test to the participants. Like the pre-test, the post-test included two writing topics, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. After five weeks, another post-test was administered to the participants of both groups to determine the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

Research Procedures

To conduct the present research, the researcher considered two classes of a language center which totally included 50 female students—25 in one class and 25 in another class. To assure the homogeneity of the two classes in terms of language proficiency, the researcher administered a Preliminary English test (PET) to the students. After determining the homogeneity of the students, the researcher considered one of the intact classes as experimental group and the other class as control group. Then, the researcher administered a pre-test to the participants to determine their writing skill before the treatment. The pre-test included two writing topics chosen from "Interchange series, volume 2, third edition", and its reliability and validity was determined beforehand. The pre-test included two writing topics. The pre-test conducted in a non-dynamic way, i.e. in the traditional or usual way, with which all of the participants were familiar.

In order to have a normal test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was administered to tests. After the pre-test on writing performance, the treatment began and last for five sessions. In each session, the teacher introduced a topic for writing and received learners' feedback. The teacher worked on the writing skill of experimental group in a dynamic assessment way. In other words, the teacher first gave a general topic, and then tried to narrow down it, and simplify the topic through word mapping and clustering, and question-and-answer techniques, which are three common techniques for narrowing down a topic in a dynamic way. The teacher was also supporting learner development actively by understanding learner abilities. While, the teacher worked on writing skill of the control group through traditional or usual way, i.e., through non-dynamic
assessment way. It is worth saying that due to quantitative research it was not possible to apply the interactionist model of dynamic assessment. The selected model was, therefore, interventionist approach.

At the end of the treatment, the researcher administered the first post-test to determine whether learners' writing performance had been improved through employing dynamic assessment technique. Like the pre-test, the post-test included two writing topics, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. To observe the effect of dynamic assessment and to make the scores as reliable as possible the researcher avoided any help in that test session and the test takers of experimental group had to resort to their previous experience of taking dynamic test and get help of the key points of those sessions and show how much they had learned from those dynamic sessions. Students in control group took the test as usual because they were already familiar with and used to non dynamic tests. The comparison of the pre-test and post-test's mean scores used to answer to the first research question. The mean score of this post-test was also taken as immediate effect of dynamic assessment on writing of EFL students.

But the study was not limited to this point, and another new step was taken. For finding out about the delayed effect of dynamic tests, test takers were called for the second post-test after 5 weeks to conduct second post test, and the same testing procedure and statistical analyses were repeated with different writing tests and comparisons were made between control and experimental groups to realize any probable delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study was conducted through pretest-posttest non-randomized quasi-experimental design to compare the writing performance of students in control groups with the writing performance of students in experimental groups.

**Statistical Analysis for Hypotheses**

*Hypothesis 1:* There is a difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance.

In order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, first of all, the researcher determined the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their language proficiency through the Preliminary English Test (PET), and then in order to answer the first research question, the researcher administered a pre-test and a post-test. Accordingly, two Independent Sample t-tests were conducted-- before and after the treatment-- to compute and compare the mean scores and to check the participants’ writing performance after the treatment. In order to answer to the second research question, five weeks after the first post-test, another post-test was administered to the participants of both groups to determine the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

Table 1 below shows the descriptive data for proficiency scores of the participants, and Table 2 shows the Independent Samples T-test results for the proficiency scores.
It shows that there was no significant difference between the two groups considering their language proficiency (t (38) = 0.565, p=0.654). Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group and control group are homogeneous.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for pre-test two Groups
One of the requirements of this test is the normality of the score distribution. Thus, it was necessary to conduct a One-Sample Kolmogorov- Smirnov test.

Table 3: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnova</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest experimental</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the pre-test of control and experimental groups is \( p > .05 \), so the distribution of data is normal and the normal distribution assumption seems to hold.

**A Pre-test on Writing Performance**

After administering the proficiency test (PET) and assuring the homogeneity of the participants in experimental and control groups, the researcher administered a pre-test to both groups to determine the participants' writing performance abilities before the experiment. Students’ pre-test compositions were evaluated by two experienced teachers. Students in control group were required to write about a topic without the mediation of the teacher, because they were taught through traditional method, while the experimental group were asked to write about the same topic but with mediation of the teacher, because they were taught through dynamic assessment. As it will be explained in the following section, post testing procedures were exactly the same as pretesting. Students writing were scored analytically. In this scale for measuring written proficiency, different parts of writing (grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and organization/form) are scored from 1 to 6. Furthermore, they must be added up to gain the score of written performance. Thus, a perfect writing scored 30 in this kind of scoring.

In order to calculate and compare the mean scores of the participants on pre-test, the researcher conducted another t-test. Table 4 and Table 5 below present the descriptive data of the means of the pre-test and the results of the t-test.

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the Means of the pre-test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCORE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17.6534</td>
<td>3.67465</td>
<td>.69543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.0234</td>
<td>2.97343</td>
<td>.612345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Result of the T-test for Pre-test Scores

<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></td>
<td>95% Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e Interval of the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td>-.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>.570</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>-.652</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-.54000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>.86641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference</td>
<td>-.54000</td>
<td>-1.19534E0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error Difference</td>
<td>.86641</td>
<td>2.20734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>-1.19534E0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>2.20734</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it obvious, Table 5 shows that there is no significant difference between control group (M= 18.02, SD=2.973) and experimental group (M= 17.65. SD=3.67). Moreover, as it can be observed in Table 4.4., the magnitude of the differences in the means of the two groups (mean difference = .54) is very small, and the p-value is bigger than 0.05 (t (38) = 0. 652, p= .516). Therefore, it can be concluded that the participants are homogeneous considering their prior performance on writing skill.

**Hypothesis 2**: Applying dynamic assessment has immediate effect on EFL writing performance.

In order to test this hypothesis, it was necessary to compare the mean scores of the pre-test and the first post-test.

**The First post-test for immediate effect**

After the pre-test and determining the participants' proficiency on writing skill, the research treatment began and last for 5 sessions because of time schedule of the institute. After 5 sessions of treatment, a post-test was administered to the participants. Like the pre-test, the post-test included a writing topic which was taken from Interchange 2, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. The estimated time for writing was 30 minutes, and all these tests—the pre-test and post-tests-- were conducted in non-dynamic way as Iranian students were familiar with. The purpose of the first post-test is to illustrate the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. 5 weeks after the first post-test, students invited to sit for the second post-test.
As it is shown in Table 6, the mean score of experimental group (M= 22.97) is higher than the mean score of the control group (18.97). Therefore, we can assume that the experimental group performs better than the control group. However, to see whether the mean differences are statistically significant, the results obtained from the Independent Samples T-test need to be analyzed.

Moreover, as it is displayed in the Table 7, the p-value is less than 0.05 (t(38)= 4.679, P= .000). Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group. This is the answer to the first question of this research. That is, dynamic assessment had an immediate impact on improving writing performance of EFL students, thus the first and second hypotheses are proved.

**Hypothesis3**: Applying dynamic assessment has no delayed effect on EFL writing performance. As it was mentioned before, 5 weeks after the first post-test, students were invited to sit for the second post-test to check the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on EFL writing performance.

**The Second Post-test for Exploring Delayed effect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCORE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.97434</td>
<td>3.65340</td>
<td>.45423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.9724</td>
<td>2.02532</td>
<td>.36979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equal variances assumed</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.821</td>
<td>-4.679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-4.679</td>
<td>37.7 64</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The purpose of the first post-test was to illustrate the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. 5 weeks after the first post-test, students invited to sit for the second post-test.

For finding out about the delayed effect of dynamic tests, participants were called for the second post-test five weeks after the first post-test, to measure their ability in transferring the developed abilities into new items after some time, and the same testing procedure and statistical analyses were repeated with different writing tests and comparisons were made between control and experimental groups to realize any probable delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

T-Test

Table 8: Descriptive statistics of the second Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCORE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.01</td>
<td>2.4527</td>
<td>.46412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17.9724</td>
<td>2.5353</td>
<td>.36549</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Results of the T-test for the second Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Samples Test</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-4.861</td>
<td>37.623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is displayed in Table 8 the mean score of experimental group (M= 22.01) is bigger than the mean score of the control group (17.97). Thus, it can be assumed that the experimental group, again, outperformed the control group.

Furthermore, as it is displayed in the Table 9, the p-value is less than 0.05 (t(38)= 4.861, P= .000).
Discussion

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of dynamic assessment on EFL learners’ writing performance in intermediate level, and also attempted to explore its immediate and delayed effect. In other words, the present study aimed at investigating the difference between applying dynamic assessment and non-dynamic assessment for writing performance of intermediate EFL learners and also the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

The results of the research revealed a significant difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment with a statistically significant increase in the writing scores of the group being assessed dynamically. That is, the findings of the present study showed that EFL learners could gain that kind of development in writing ability because after going through dynamic assessment session and being given the appropriate mediation they were able to take the advantage of the mediations in their later independent performance in immediate post-test.

The findings were in line with the findings of some similar previous studies such as Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011). All these studies, like the results of the present study, revealed that dynamic assessment improved participants' writing skill or other skills. The findings of the present study also revealed the existence of not only immediate but also delayed effect of dynamic assessment on participant's writing ability.

The findings of this study support Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011)'s idea that dynamic assessment can improve learners' foreign language skills, they assessed the viability of dynamic assessment used as an instructional adjunct in the development of Iranian EFL learners’ grammar. The results of their study proved that dynamic assessment oriented instruction significantly improved the learning of L2 grammar.

The results of the present study also support Pishghadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) research. They applied a computerized dynamic assessment on 104 university students with moderate proficiency level. The software could calculate the non-dynamic assessment score of the participants, that is their score before any intervention of each item, as well as a dynamic assessment score, which is the score after providing mediation for unsuccessful answers. Using a t-test the researchers compared the dynamic and non-dynamic score of the participants and found a significant difference implying the usefulness of dynamic assessment in increasing the reading comprehension score of the participants.

However, the findings of this study rejects Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) idea that dynamic assessment has no delayed effect. He investigated the impact of dynamic assessment on improving reading ability of EFL Iranian learners and found that dynamic assessment improved learners' reading ability which although this idea is consistent with the findings of the present study, he also found that dynamic assessment has no delayed effect which this idea is inconsistent with our findings.

The outcomes of this study also reject the study conducted by Frisby and Braden (1992). They studied the reliability of dynamic assessment used in the classroom, and found that dynamic
assessments reliability is questionable and it is not an appropriate testing tool. As it is clear, this idea rejects the findings of the present research.

CONCLUSION
Dynamic assessment integrates assessment and instruction into a seamless, unified activity aimed at promoting learner development through appropriate forms of mediation that are sensitive to the individual’s (or in some cases a group’s) current abilities. In essence, dynamic assessment is a procedure for simultaneously assessing and promoting development that takes account of the individual’s or group’s (ZPD). Dynamic assessment focuses on modifiability and on producing suggestions for interventions that appear successful in facilitating improved learner performance (Lidz, 1991)

Considering the dynamic assessment as an effective teaching technique in the classroom, this study mainly attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. In other words, the central purpose of this research is determining the existence of any relationship between dynamic assessment and the writing performance of language students. This research also investigated the impact of immediate and delayed effects of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

To determine the prior writing skill, a pre-test including two writing topics were administered to the participants in both experimental and control group, and the mean score was calculated. Then, the teacher worked on writing skill of experimental group with dynamic assessment technique, whereas she worked on control groups’ writing through traditional method. At the end of the experiment, to check whether participants’ writing performance had been improved through dynamic assessment, a post-test was administered to the participants of both groups. Comparison of the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test revealed that experimental group outperformed the control group. The result of this post-test was also the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. Thus, it can be concluded that dynamic assessment is an effective teaching tool for improving writing performance of intermediate students, and it has immediate effects. To explore the delayed effect of dynamic assessment, five weeks after the first post-test, the participants were called for the second post-test. The second post-test, like the previous test, was two writing topics. Thus, the results showed that experimental group performed better than control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that, dynamic assessment has also delayed impact on writing skill of EFL Iranian students. The results of this study can be useful and informative for both teachers and learners in providing them with new horizons of instructing students through a step by step procedure.

Pedagogical implication
The findings of this study can have several pedagogical implications for language teachers, language learners, and curriculum designers. First, considering the positive impact of teacher mediation during teaching, language teachers can easily use dynamic assessment as a new effective technique in the classroom for teaching different aspects of English language. Second, applying dynamic assessment, language teachers can develop a learning environment which is
stress-free, and hence leads into positive washback effect during exams because dynamic assessment provides a learning environment in which testing and teaching aims and procedures are in line with each other and interwoven. Third, through mediations, teachers can develop learners' autonomy in the classroom and also make them autonomous in doing similar tasks later on.

Dynamic assessment helps students to take the advantage of mediation provided by the assessor and become autonomous in the classroom and in doing similar tasks later on. Likewise, applying dynamic assessment provides learners with mediation which results in reduced stress. In other words, dynamic assessment provides a stress-free learning environment for learners, and because of this, it presents a true picture of learners' abilities and learning potential (i.e. their current status and hidden potential in the zone of proximal development), which is the first and most important purpose of assessment. Accordingly, learners can be aware of their potential abilities.

Finally, based on the finding of this study which shows that dynamic assessment is helpful in improving writing performance, language learners can benefit from syllabuses which use dynamic assessment technique. Curriculum designers can develop syllabuses which employ dynamic assessment as a teaching technique, because exploiting dynamic assessment results in better learning outcomes and also, as mentioned above, results in learners autonomy and positive washback. Currently, both of the issues of learner autonomy and washback effect are of great importance and under investigation in EFL. Likewise, because dynamic assessment provides a stress-free learning environment for learners, it presents a true picture of learners' abilities and learning potential (i.e. their current status and hidden potential in the zone of proximal development), which is the first and most important purpose of assessment.

Suggestions for further research
This study is an effort to empirically examine the impact of dynamic assessment on improving EFL learners' writing skill and also explore its immediate and delayed effect on improving their writing performance. Further research is needed in these areas to have a thorough understanding of these issues. The following recommendations are stated as suggestions for further research:

It is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger number of participants with the same background. It would also be interesting to conduct the same research across levels of proficiency i.e., for learners with different levels of language proficiency. Moreover, the research may include both male and female learners. In the present research all of the participants were female college-level (intermediate) university students.

Another research can be designed to investigate the impact of dynamic assessment on another aspect of language learning like vocabulary learning or improving another skill, such as speaking, reading, listening. It is hoped that the outcome of this study will be of some use to future research studies. The present research used interventionist approach of dynamic assessment to examine its impact on writing skill of intermediate students, therefore, another research can be designed to investigate the impact of dynamic assessment through interactionist approach.
REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF TEACHER TALK ON EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE LEARNING PERFORMANCE, AND LEARNING STRATEGY USE

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ABSTRACT
Teacher talk which constitutes a preliminary attribute of much education, plays a significant role in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts marked by the restriction of L2 exposure to the language classroom. The present study explores the effect of appropriate teacher talk in terms of the provision of opportunities for learner interaction, language achievement and the fostering of positive attitudes. To this end, 50 learners and 2 experienced language institute teachers took part in the study. One class received appropriate teachers talk with the encouragement of language interaction while the other class did not present learners with opportunities for self-expression. Data were collected through questionnaire, test and observation. Results clearly showed the positive effect of appropriate teacher talk on learners’ engagement and attitudes. Findings highlighted how the pedagogical discourse and language learning is mutually shaped by teachers and learners in their language learning practices. The study yields crucial implications which can be directly applied by teachers and teacher educators to the actual classroom practice.

KEYWORDS: teacher talk, interaction, language performance, attitude, education programs

INTRODUCTION
In recent years, scholars have argued that the classroom should be considered as a context in its own right or as interdependent contexts that is jointly shaped and defined by the participants: the teachers and learners (Johnson, 1995; Seedhouse, 1996; van Lier, 1988). According to this perspective, the analysis of teacher and learner interaction needs to begin with the belief that verbal behavior is goal-oriented and dominated by specific rules which is also true for participants in interactions of other contexts such as a restaurant (Walsh, 2002). Therefore, similar to other discourse contexts, interactants in the language classroom are kept within bounds
of the prevailing features of the context. Some of these features are outlined by Walsh (2002, p. 4):

1. Teachers largely control the topic of discussion;
2. Teachers often control both content and procedure;
3. Teachers usually control who may participate and when;
4. Students take their cues from teachers;
5. Role relationships between teachers and learners are unequal;
6. Teachers are responsible for managing the interaction which occurs;
7. Teachers talk most of the time;
8. Teachers modify their talk to learners;
9. Learners rarely modify their talk to teachers;
10. Teachers ask questions (to which they know the answers) most of the time.

If the social nature of the EFL classroom in its own right is recognized which has the value of research by itself without any comparison to other contexts, then the focus on the comprehension of classroom discourse should attend to teacher quality instead of quantity. This goal is attained by considering the essential relationship between language use and instructional purpose.

A considerable body of research exists on the interrelation of interaction, input, output and the importance of the negotiation of meaning (e.g., Long, 1983, 1996; Swain, 1985, 1995; Pica, 1994; Foster, 1998). Although the current perspectives on the nature of the relation between negotiation of meaning and language learning is still dismal, its very identification is certainly a strong benchmark of the necessity of giving more attention to the connection of teacher talk and learners’ language learning.

**Research on teacher talk**

In the past few decades, there has been an increasing interest in teacher’s linguistic input during instruction (Cazden, 2001) and during classroom routines (Dickerson, 2005; Glazer & Burke, 1994; Maloney & Larrivee, 2002; Moguel, 2004; Short, Kaufman, Kaser, Kahn, & Crawford, 1999; Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin, & Midgley, 2001; Steele, 1998). In the other word, studies of teacher talk are related to two language types. One is the investigation of language that teachers use in their language classrooms, and the other is the investigation of language that they use in subject matter lessons. In recent years there has been several studies reporting on the specificities of teacher talk and the role of it regarding EFL learners’ language acquisition (Incecay, 2010). Kim and Suh (2004), for example, studied teacher talk in Korean English classroom. They analyzed recorded data from six middle school teachers in Busan. The results showed that teachers’ talk accounted for about 60% of classroom discourse and teachers talked about 17 times a minute, which is 4.5 times more than the students’ talk. The findings also indicated that teacher talk in the teacher-fronted class was more than that in the student-centered classes.

In another similar research, Lin (2005) investigated whether there were differences between the teachers' talk in monolingual and bilingual classrooms. The results of the study showed that there were significant differences between teachers' talk in both classes, such that teacher talk in
monolingual class was more focused on content-area vocabulary and its function. The teacher also used all the participant organization types including teacher to student, teacher to class, choral repetition and self-repetition strategies. In addition, the teacher used limited and broad references in the class time. On the other hand, in the bilingual class, the teacher talk focused more on form rather than content and teacher talk contained more phonological cues for teaching vocabulary items. The teacher used more visual support and repetition and the range of reference was narrow and focused on routine exchanges. Moreover, the teacher used more instruction and procedural directives in the classroom.

Xiao-Yan (2006) examined the amount of teacher talk in total class time and investigated its impact on foreign language learning of 80 Chinese students. The results of the study revealed that most of the class time was allocated to teacher talk- 76% of the total class time. According to the learners of this study, this amount of teacher talk could change the atmosphere of the class because "most of the students like to listen to teachers’ instruction and view it as a good learning strategy. But they do not like teachers to explain everything to them" (p. 36). Nevertheless, most of the learners believed that teacher talk is the most useful source of learning inside the classroom and it has direct and positive effect on their learning.

In another research, Rezaee and Farahian (2012) asked 12 intermediate learners to participate in their study to examine the amount of teacher talk in the classroom and investigated the role of teachers’ questions on students' learning. The results of the study showed that in each class session, 62% to 73% of the class time was devoted to teacher talk and almost 20% to 25% was allocated to student talk with the rest of the class time devoted to other tasks such as the groups works to related questions or issues raised by the teacher to the whole class.

Incecay (2010) investigated the role of teacher talk in young learners' language learning. The results of the study revealed that some of the features of teacher talk could facilitate learners' language process while other features restricted the learning process. More specifically, ‘direct error correction’, ‘prompting’, ‘extended wait time’ and ‘repairing’ facilitated students' learning process and ‘turn competition’, ‘teacher echo’ and ‘extended use of turn taking’ obstructed learners’ acquisition.

The effect of teachers’ talk on incidental vocabulary learning of 20 high-intermediate and advanced ESL students in an institute in Montreal was explored by Horst, Collins, White, and Cardoso (2010). The results of the study showed that teachers rarely used new vocabulary items in the class time and their talks were short and limited. Moreover, the results of the study revealed that although the teachers' discourse exchanges were short, they were comprehensive and complete. The findings of this study support the idea that teacher talk improves incidental vocabulary learning of the students.

Slavit and Mason (2011) examined the oral academic language used by teachers during content area instruction. The results of the study revealed that students did not have much opportunity to hear the specialized language of the content areas from their teachers because teachers used more than 88% of non-academic language during content area instruction. These opaque terms or non-
academic language included homophones, idiomatic expressions, heteronyms, deictic pronouns and demonstratives which caused some problems for the students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
With respect to the socially-constructed nature of the language use in EFL classrooms which is comparable to the language in naturally occurring contexts, the present study intended to focus on the teacher’ speech which constitutes a large amount of classroom discourse. This research aims at answering the following questions:
1. Does positive teacher talk have effect on student’s language learning?
2. Does positive teacher talk increase student’s interaction during the classes?
3. Does positive teacher talk promote students’ attitudes towards the teacher?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
Learners
50 female language learners in a language institute in Hamedan, Iran were selected as the participants of this study. Their age ranged from 12 to 19 years and had the same language and educational background. Their level of proficiency was lower-intermediate which was determined according to Oxford placement test administered at the beginning of the study. As a result of the proficiency test, 25 learners were randomly assigned to a class where positive teacher talk was practiced and the other 25 learners were assigned to a class without positive talk.

Teachers
Two experienced teachers of EFL (five or more years of teaching experience) were invited to participate in this research. Both teachers had post-graduate degrees.

Instruments
The instruments of this study were questionnaire, tests and observation. Following is the description of each.

Questionnaire: in order to get better insights about the learners’ attitudes towards their teacher’s language use and interaction in the classroom, the Learner Perception of a Good Teacher questionnaire (2005) which was developed by the Character Education Partnership was adopted (see appendix). This questionnaire was used to collect information on language learners’ evaluation of their English classes and their teachers’ speech on the basis of their usually and normally practiced classroom activities. This questionnaire is divided into two parts and is composed of 36 items. The questionnaire is a 5-point Likert type scale with the items ranging from ‘1 = rarely’, ‘2 = once in a while’, ‘3 = sometimes’, ‘4 = most of the time’, and ‘5 = almost always’. The participants were asked to read each statement and indicate their reaction by choosing a number in the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was computed using the Cronbach Alpha method. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient value for the reliability analysis of the questionnaire was found as .85.
Preliminary English Test (PET): PET was used as the post-test to determine control and experimental participants’ overall language performance after the treatment. PET includes 35 reading questions, 7 writing questions, 25 listening questions and 4 parts of speaking skill. The overall score obtained from the test was considered as the criterion for the comparison of the control and experimental groups.

Observation: Classroom observation was also carried out for the reason that the observation focuses on naturally occurring data and includes a fine-grained analyses. Thus, this approach is highly empirical, highlighting naturally occurring data without any effort to match the data to pre-conceived categories. The proof that such categories are employed by the participants was shown by reference to and instances from the data. In sum, observation leads the researcher to attend solely to the interactional patterns appearing from the data, rather than focusing entirely on any pre-identified ideas which language teachers might try to implement to the data.

Procedure
After assuring the learners’ language homogeneity, they were assigned two different classrooms and received different treatments for equal time of seven weeks. In class one, the participants received positive teacher talk treatment which included ‘teacher questions’, ‘feedback’, ‘wait time’, ‘pausing’, ‘paraphrasing’, ‘probing for specificity’, ‘putting ideas on the table’, ‘paying attention to self and other’, ‘presuming positive intentions’ and ‘balancing advocacy and inquiry’. The teacher attempted to provide adequate input to the learners in teacher-fronted activities by encouraging learners in the classroom interaction, encouraging conversational adjustments between teacher and learners, advocating opportunities for self-expression, facilitating and motivating clarification by learners, repeating and rephrasing utterances, and scheduling several activities during the class time. Quite the reverse, teacher talk in the control class included exchanges through display questions, speech modification in response to non-understanding, students’ rare modification of their speech, teachers’ rare request for learners’ speech modification, control of the topic of conversation, and rare asking of questions for which they did not have answers.

After the completion of classes, the PET test and the questionnaire were administered to the learners. In addition, the results of observation were analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In order to analyze the data to test the research questions, the statistical procedures have been carried out using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 21 (2012). First, the scores of dependent variable were analyzed to ensure the assumptions of normality. The results of the histograms, Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, and the box plots are presented below.
Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Null hypothesis</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of performance is normal with mean 87.68 and standard deviation 11.60.</td>
<td>One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov Test</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Retain the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of interaction is normal with mean 10.94 and standard deviation 4.6</td>
<td>One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov Test</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>Retain the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of attitude is normal with mean 25.38 and standard deviation 2.66.</td>
<td>One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov Test</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>Retain the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show that the scores of all dependent variables are normally distributed (p > 0.05).

Figure 1: Box plot results for attitude

Figure 2: Box plot results for performance

Figure 3: Box plot results interaction
Having ascertained the assumptions of independent samples $t$-test as a parametric test (i.e., the normality of data), the next step was to conduct the $t$-tests.

In order to investigate the first research null hypothesis on the role of teacher talk on learners’ language performance, an independent samples $t$-test was carried out. First, the results of descriptive statistics are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher talk</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>94.52</td>
<td>5.99389</td>
<td>1.19878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80.84</td>
<td>11.90476</td>
<td>2.38095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the mean and standard deviation scores in table 4.2 show, there are differences between the experimental ($M = 94.25, SD = 5.99$) and control ($M = 80.84, SD = 11.90$) group learners’ performance in the test. However, in order to get more accurate and reliable results, an independent samples $t$-test was run, the results of which are displayed in table 4.3.

**Table 3: $t$-test Results of Group Differences in Language Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>13.68</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.001$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are not same. The results of independent samples $t$-test show statistically significant difference ($t (35.43) = 5.13, p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control groups in the performance test. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that learners in the experimental group ($M = 94.25, SD = 5.99$) who were exposed to positive teacher talk outperformed those in the control group ($M = 80.84, SD = 11.90$). Therefore, the first null hypothesis of the present study is rejected.

In order to examine the second research hypothesis which is concerned with the role of teacher talk on learners’ language interaction, an independent samples $t$-test was run. First, the results of descriptive statistics are shown.
As table 4.4 shows, there are significant mean differences between the experimental (M = 14.52, SD = 3.24) and control (M = 7.36, SD = 2.69) participants’ interaction scores. The results of \( t \)-test are indicated in table 5.

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is \( p = 0.48 \), which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are the same. The results of independent samples \( t \)-test show statistically significant difference (\( t (48) = 8.49, p < 0.05 \)) between the experimental and control group learners in the interaction scores. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that the experimental (M = 14.52, SD = 3.24) learners who received positive teacher talk gained higher scores in terms of language interaction compared to control group peers (M = 7.36, SD = 2.69). Thus, the second null hypothesis of the present study is rejected.

As table 6 shows, there are significant mean differences between the experimental (M = 26.48, SD = 1.91) and control (M = 24.28, SD = 2.87) participants’ attitude scores. The results of \( t \)-test are indicated in table 7.
The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.78$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are the same. The results of independent samples $t$-test show statistically significant difference ($t (48) = 3.17, p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control group learners in the attitude scores. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that the experimental ($M = 26.48, SD = 1.91$) learners who received positive teacher talk held a more satisfying attitude towards the classroom compared to control group peers ($M = 24.28, SD = 2.87$). Thus, the third null hypothesis of the present study is rejected.

The findings of the present study clearly shed light on the significance of teachers’ speech in EFL classroom. The results of statistical analyses showed that experimental learners’ attitudes, language performance, and interaction were enhanced at the end of the treatment period compared to their control peers. The results of the study are therefore in line with those of previous studies (e.g., Love, 1991; Musumeci, 1996; Pica, 1994; Walsh, 2002). The results of these studies, too, pinpoint the advantages of teacher talk in creating opportunities for learner involvement due to the fact that the teachers’ use of language and pedagogic aim are at one. In other words, the teacher facilitates high learner involvement by developing a context in which learners are actively involved. Walsh (2002) argues that “the teacher, by controlled use of language and by matching pedagogic and linguistic goals, facilitates and promotes reformulation and clarification, leading to greater involvement and precision of language on the part of the learners” (p. 9).

**CONCLUSION**

There is in fact a vicious circle in the language use of teachers and the students’ achievement. As the teachers use language which is appropriately tailored to the students’ comprehension, goals, level, needs and wants, students’ perceptions of success develops and extends which itself strengthens the self-efficacy of teachers in language use. Learners’ success affects teachers’ instruction type, choice of tasks, perseverance in achieving goals, and persistent effort. This behavior on the part of teachers can lead to the learners’ development of long term goals about English learning who can form positive and constructive orientations toward English. Therefore, positive attitudes can help them set longer term goals and expectations of success, leading in turn
to higher self-efficacy beliefs. And, learners’ level of achievement or language performance could lead to lower or higher self-efficiency beliefs in teachers’ interactional discourse.

The findings of this study, therefore, have significant implications for teacher education and research. Teachers should be conscious of the significance of effective language use in the EFL classroom. By recognizing the connection between instructional purpose and language use, teachers can be more conscious of the essence of appropriate language use according to the teaching goal. Teachers also need to quit the idea of filling in the gaps in the language of the EFL learners. By using these strategies, teachers diminish the chance for conversational adjustments and learning opportunities.

Teachers should pay attention to the fact that students, especially those at the beginning stages cannot easily understand them; thus, they should teach at a slow to normal pace. This argument is in line with Krashen’s i+1 (as cited in McLaughlin, 1987) and Pienmann’s Teachability hypothesis (as cited in R. Ellis, 2008). Both of these lines of argument advocate the level of instruction that is slightly above the learners’ current level of development. They can break thoughts into manageable phrases, but not into individual words, as this will interrupt the rhythm of speech. As with importance of holistic learning, teachers can use visual clues so learners can associate words with objects. It is helpful to label as many items in the classroom as possible.

As one of the data collection tools in the present study was classroom observation, teachers can be more aware about their language use in the classroom by recording their classes. By so doing, they can get better insight about their verbal behavior in the class. Listening to the audio or video records and also analyzing the transcripts can increase teachers’ awareness about efficient and useful language use.

With regard to the educational programs, it should be noted that they can spend more time and attention to the appropriate teacher talk in the classroom. This point is significantly important since the current pre- and in-service education programs do not pay due attention to the importance of useful communication and the significance of measuring the use of language in teaching. Current models of teacher education are commonly focused on two issues: the methodology issue and the language awareness issue. It is suggested that the third issue of teacher talk, interaction and learning be also included in education programs.

There should also be a more comprehensive understanding of the quality language use in the classroom in order to reach a series of guidelines which bring about effective teaching in the classroom. With adequate attention given to the teachers’ differences in terms of their teaching style and with the avoidance of being too much prescriptive about pedagogical practices, much can be done to boost teachers’ comprehension of the relation between teachers talk, interaction and language acquisition. This can lead to a more thoughtful and controlled use of language in the classroom.

The study has some limitations that should be taken into consideration. First, the cross-sectional nature of the study in which the variables have been tested at once, exerts restrictions on the
generalizability of results which can be neutralized by the conduction of longitudinal research. Second, questionnaires can be subject to responses silhouetted with social desirability. Results of the study, therefore, need to be interpreted with due consideration.

REFERENCES
Kim, Mi-Rae., & Suh Chun-Soo. (2004). Teacher talk in English classroom. English Language Teaching, 16(4), 181-204.


Appendix
*(Learner Perception of a Good Teacher)*

Name of Institute: 
Name of student: ........................................... Gender : Male Female 
Age : ............................................ Date: ............................................

Direction: this questionnaire is just a part of my research about ( Teacher talk) -how you can learn beast in English classroom- please answer carefully and objectively .your responses to this questionnaire will help instructors confirm quality teaching and improve teaching skills and methods. Helps from you will be highly appreciated. Thank you very much.

PART 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Extremely Unimportant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The teacher explains important concepts/ideas in ways that I can understand</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The teacher stimulates my interest in the subject</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The teacher demonstrates enthusiasm in teaching the unit</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Appropriate teaching techniques are used by the teacher to enhance my learning</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teacher is helpful if I encounter difficulties with the lecture/unit.

The teacher is available for consultation (e.g., email, online, face-to-face or telephone).

I receive feedback in time to help me improve.

PART 2: The number rating stands for the following:
1 = rarely 2 = once in a while 3 = sometimes 4 = most of the time 5 = almost always
Circle the answer that fits with your experience of this teacher for each item.

**EXPLICIT CURRICULUM:**
How well does the teacher teach the core subject?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teacher is prepared for class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teacher knows his/her subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teacher is organized and neat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Teacher plans class time and assignments that help students to problem solve and think critically. Teacher provides activities that make subject matter meaningful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Teacher is flexible in accommodating for individual student needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Teacher is clear in giving directions and on explaining what is expected on assignments and tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Teacher allows you to be active in the classroom learning environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Teacher manages the time well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Teacher returns homework in a timely manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teacher has clear classroom procedures so students don't waste time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teacher grades fairly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I have learned a lot from this teacher about this subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Teacher gives me good feedback on homework and projects so that I can improve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Teacher is creative in developing activities and lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teacher encourages students to speak up and be active in the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

191
IMPLICIT CURRICULUM:
How well does the teacher model the core values through how he/she behaves with students and with other staff persons?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Teacher follows through on what he/she says.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can count on the teacher’s word.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Teacher listens and understands students’ point of view; he/she</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>may not agree, but students feel understood.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Teacher respects the opinions and decisions of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Teacher is willing to accept responsibility for his/her own mistakes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Teacher is willing to learn from students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Teacher is sensitive to the needs of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Teacher’s words and actions match.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Teacher is fun to be with.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Teacher likes and respects students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Teacher helps you when you ask for help.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Teacher is consistent and fair in discipline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I trust this teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Teacher tries to model what teacher expects of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Teacher is fair and firm in discipline without being too strict.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any other comments or suggestions:

Thank you for taking the time to think through the items carefully and thank you for completing this questionnaire honestly.
THE EFFECTS OF AWARENESS-RAISING OF SPOKEN TEXT CHARACTERISTICS ON EFL LEARNERS’ ORAL PERFORMANCE ACROSS GENDER

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ABSTRACT
Over the past decade or so, an effort has been made to draw learners’ attention on various linguistic features through different language activities. Among these, raising learners’ awareness on the linguistic aspects is considered to play an effective role on their improved performance. Hence, the present study sought to examine the effects of awareness – raising of spoken text characteristics (i.e., time-creating, facilitation, and compensation devices) on Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ oral production in a speaking task across gender. A total of 28 upper-intermediate students from Voice of Tabriz institute, Iran, participated in the study. The participants were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction on the spoken features; however, the control group underwent the same course of instruction in a traditional method without any treatment. Following an administration of a posttest, it was found that the experimental group outperformed the control group with respect to the spoken features. However, the statistical analyses did not reveal any significant differences across the gender role, with male and female participants performing relatively identical degree of oral performance. The findings lend support to the idea that the students’ awareness should be raised with respect to the features of speaking skills during the class activities. The findings suggest implications for educators, materials developers, and EFL learners in particular.

KEYWORDS: Awareness-raising, Time-creating devices, Facilitation devices, Compensation devices, Gender, Spoken text features, Oral performance,

INTRODUCTION
Following language awareness movement in 1980s, the role of consciousness in second language acquisition (SLA) received considerable attention by theoreticians, researchers, and practitioners in the field. It is argued that the key role of consciousness should be specifically regarded if we are to make progress in understanding how language acquisition occurs (e.g., Leow, 2000). By understanding the functions and effects of the concept of consciousness in SLA, students will be able to use language consciously and appropriately. Evidence from research findings and their relevance to the issues of consciousness lend support to the fact that conscious learning can contribute to successful second language (L2) acquisition (Robinson, 2003).
Conscious awareness of the target language system, as Schmidt (1990, 1995) contends, is vital if learners are to create more correct forms and utilize them less erroneously. Schmidt (2001) has also argued that SLA is driven by what learners pay consciously attention to and notice in the target language input and what they understand the significance of the noticed input to be. Four concepts of consciousness are currently discussed in the literature: attention, awareness, intentionality, and control. Since the focal point in this study is on awareness-raising, the concept of awareness is explicated for a better understanding below.

**Awareness**

Awareness is an individual's subjective experience of a stimulus or cognitive content. Ellis (1993a), in his discussion of implicit and explicit knowledge, stated that explicit knowledge is a conscious representation which is not the same as articulated knowledge. The significant issue, then, is whether awareness is stimulated by oral or written language, by reference or not, by timing, by different social arrangements, by formal or functional activities involving a focus on L2 input or reflection on input (Long, 1991). In line with Ellis (1993a), three conditions, according to Allport (1988), are conceived as essential for a person to be aware of a given experience. First, the person must indicate a behavioral or cognitive change as a result of experience. Second, the person must show that he / she was aware of the experience at the time it happened. Finally, the person must be capable of describing the experience.

A point of distinction between two types of knowledge seems essential to better understand the role of awareness in learning. Paradis (1994) makes a distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge where the former is acquired without awareness, unavailable to conscious memory even after competence and put to use spontaneously without conscious control. The latter, however, is knowledge that the learner is aware of and can access on demand. Schmidt (1990) argues that learners have to pay some kind of attention to language forms in order for the acquisition of accuracy.

It is, hence, safe to argue that teachers should make learners aware of the processes involved in language learning and to help them find environments that suit their needs best. Kohonen (1991) argues that raising the awareness of one’s own learning and gaining an understanding of the processes involved is a core factor for the development of autonomous learning. Therefore a balance must be found between providing opportunities for the learners to take control over their learning while at the same time supporting those learners who are not ready or who feel unprepared to take on this responsibility for themselves.

**Speaking Proficiency and awareness**

The concept of consciousness-raising, particularly awareness-raising activities, are hotly debated in the field to come up with more practical employment devices of those activities with respect to various areas of L2 acquisition. One such area has been the command of speaking skills in English which is a priority for many L2 or foreign-language learners (Richards, 2008). Learners often evaluate their success in language learning and the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. They only feel satisfied of their development when they realize they can speak and utter English words
Characteristics of spoken texts
Many learners of English encounter more difficulties in listening and speaking than in reading and writing. One of the contributing factors is that much emphasis is laid on the written text in the teaching syllabus. The effect is that young learners start learning the written form of the language with little regard to its aural-oral aspect. When listening to natural, unscripted speech, students are exposed to loose, flowing texts. On the other hand, when reading, they are exposed to dense, structured texts. Many teachers fail to highlight this difference to the students and subsequently the teaching and learning of listening and speaking skills can only achieve minimal results.

Foreign language teachers, thus, are strongly suggested to equip the learners with ways to alert learners to these characteristics in order that they can cope with real-world listening input and real-life communication more effectively. Classroom listening, however, is not real-life listening. So it is very important to provide students with training in listening comprehension that will prepare them for effective functioning outside the classroom. Activities should give learners practice in coping with at least some of the features of real-life-situations. They will be more motivating and interesting to do than contrived textbook comprehension exercises. EFL learners should take the following factors into account if they want to make communication easy and deal with its issues in a better way (Lam, 2002):

Utilization of time-creating devices
The speaker uses the time creating devices to simplify the speech production as well as to generate time to produce what to tell next in unplanned speech. One example is the utilization of pause feature even if pause filler doesn’t have any lexical or syntactic function such as "um", "urh", "eh" that is invented to offer great help for speaker to gain enough time to communicate his words.

Utilization of facilitation devices
Bygate (1987) argues that speakers employ facilitation devices when they are under time pressure in real-life communication to make their speech production less demanding. If learners are not equipped for these devices in listening and fail to recover the full meaning of these constructions, they will experience difficulties in real-life communication. Utilization of fixed and conventional phrases, speech formulas, and Stock phrases such as “I see what you mean,” “I’m sure you’re right but...” “You know,” “I mean,” “kind of,” are some of the devices to facilitate speech production. (Lam, 2002). The use of these ready-made phrases reduces the burden of speaker’s task, thereby increasing speed and fluency. As effective listeners, students need to be instructed about them understand their function.
Utilization of compensation devices

Since listening data are processed very swiftly, the rate of natural speech is highly difficult so that spoken discourse cannot be retrieved during normal interaction. Redundancy in natural speech, however, provides the speakers with some processing time to overcome the deficiency. The three common ways of repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing can be employed to create redundancy and relieve memory load. Speakers always find themselves correcting or improving what they have already said. They may repeat part of speech at the request of listener or express their ideas in different ways. According to Lam (1997), repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing are used by speaker to build redundancy and effective listeners need to be familiar with these elements of redundancy to be able to guess meanings from the help of compensation devices.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recent years have witnessed a bulk of research considering the role of awareness-raising activities on learners’ ultimate comprehension and production elements of language enterprise. Quite a number of studies (e.g., Elbro & Petersen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005; Saito, 2007; Shu-Chin, 2012; Svalberg, 2007), have acknowledged a general positive impact of awareness giving on learners’ subsequent performances. Altman (1997), from her personal language learning case study, found that, “a key to the success of the language learner seems to be the extensive employment of awareness—the focusing of attention on all aspects of the language to be learned” (p. 93).

Nakatani (2005) explored the influence of awareness giving on young Japanese adults’ use of oral communication strategies such as maintenance of fluency and negotiation of meaning. The findings revealed that the learners in the experimental group who received awareness produced longer sentences and used more achievement strategies, and did not leave the message as often as the learners in the comparison group.

Following this line of enquiry, Shu-Chin (2012) found positive effect of the use of rhetorical consciousness-raising instructional materials in writing research papers. In line with the results found by Nakatani (2005), Jones (2001) found positive impact of explicit training in conversational story telling. Similarly, Elbro and Petersen (2004) came to this conclusion that phonological awareness-raising of kindergarten children of dyslexic parents was influential. The children received awareness-raising for 17 weeks and it was revealed that the awareness training had long-term effects as late as grade 7.

Sze (2008) researched the effect of awareness-raising in teaching of phonetics. He addressed the question of how teachers should approach phonics teaching in L2 contexts. His main purpose in his paper was to argue for an awareness raising approach to teaching phonics to school children who learn English as a second language. He then explains and concludes that the approach of awareness-raising is more advantageous and it applying it to the classroom and the process of teaching leads to a more successful teaching outcome in phonetics.
It has been claimed that explicit learning within language awareness framework is facilitative in a variety of linguistic fields (Svalberg, 2007). Despite the core role of awareness raising in the process of L2 acquisition and learning of different skills (e.g., Ghorbani, 2011; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1994, 2001), there are some arguments against the significance of language awareness. For example, Alderson, Clapham, and Steel (1997) in their study conclude that whilst knowledge about language may be worthwhile in its own right, there is no evidence to justify the teaching of metalinguistic knowledge as a means of improving students’ linguistic proficiency. Al-Hejin (2004) also takes a more cautious stance, but concludes that both attention and awareness facilitate learning. The debate includes Norris and Ortega’s (2000) synthesis and analysis of 49 published studies, which concluded that on the available evidence explicit instruction, is more effective than implicit instruction.

Speaking skill is a very important and crucial part of learning any language. Its importance and specific characteristics have been pointed out constantly by experts involved in the field. It has also been emphasized that teachers must be aware of such characteristics in order to better instruct their pupils. Unlike the sole focus on the mere skill and teachers familiarity with it, the matter that whether learners’ awareness of the existence of such factors has any effect on their acquisition, have not been taken under close scrutiny to see whether knowing these characteristics prior the material learning can guide language learners through a better learning path or not. Also the fact that whether this knowledge is gender relevant has not been considered much in the studies. This study tackles the issue that whether familiarizing the learners with characteristics of spoken text and raising their awareness of such characteristics increases their language intake and also the issue that whether learners’ gender plays a role in this process. The aforementioned studies imply that awareness-raising is not just limited to the forms of language but it can be expanded to different skills of language. Although so many studies have been done in this field, but few researches have reported the effect of awareness-raising features on speaking skill. As it has been stated before, this study is an endeavour on the base of Lam’s theory the effect of awareness-raising about features on spoken text in order to improve EFL learners’ speaking skill.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study will be an attempt to find scientific answers for the following research questions:
1. What is the effect of raising awareness about characteristics of spoken text on the upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners’ speaking skill?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners’ use of speaking features?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES
In order to fulfil the objective of the study, the following null hypotheses have been proposed:
Ho. (1): Awareness-raising of the characteristics of spoken text has no effect on the speaking proficiency of the upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners.
Ho. (2): There is no significant difference between male and female upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners’ use of speaking features.

METHODOLOGY

Participants
A total of 28 students participated in this study. An equal number of 14 students, namely, 7 male and 7 female, took part in the experimental and control groups. The study participants attended in English conversation courses at Voice of Tabriz institute (Foreign Languages Center). The English conversation course lasted for 2 months and was held twice a week for 105 minutes per session in the evening (Holidays were excluded). For the homogeneity of the subjects, prior to research, the proficiency test PET (Cambridge Preliminary English Test, 2004) was administered to 56 students. From this pool 28 students participated in the study and were assigned randomly into the experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation and materials
This study was conducted with 28 EFL students chosen from among 56 students based on their proficiency scores. The proficiency test PET (Cambridge Preliminary English Test) was administered to make sure as to the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of their level of proficiency. The test included two parts, namely, a reading-writing part and a listening part.

In addition to the proficiency test, a pretest was administered to measure as well as to homogenize the participants’ speaking skill in both groups of the study. The pretest included an argumentative topic selected from Top Notch series. The test required the participants to express their opinion on a predetermined topic which was not already discussed in the course. Their oral performance was recorded by the tape recorder and later was rated via three different raters.

Following this, the study included treatment sessions twice a week for two months in which a 6-minute English B.B.C podcast was used. The program involved different real-situation conversations in dialogue and monologue forms of authentic speech. The experimental group received discussion activities after each listening activity; however, the participants of the control group did not receive any discussions.

In order to measure and compare the participants' oral performance in both groups and the effects of awareness-raising on students' speaking performance in the experimental group, a similar posttest was administered to the groups. The scoring criteria for the conducted tests will be discussed later in this chapter.

Procedure
The study was conducted through the following stages: First, Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to homogenize the participants in terms of their English language proficiency. From among 56 participants who took this test, 28 students whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the experiment. Second, the participants were randomly assigned into two groups: an experimental and a control
group, each including 14 participants. Next, a speaking assessment pretest was administered. For this purpose, we asked the very same topic with allotted 2 minutes to each and every individual of participants and the results were evaluated by three. The raters were already instructed about the rating criteria and necessary guidelines were offered in a one-hour session.

The next step of the experiment was the treatment stage that lasted for 9 weeks (2 months). In each session, the participants in the experimental group were exposed to authentic listening tasks to get familiar with the real-life speaking features and become aware of the communication devices employed by native speakers. After highlighting the spoken features in listening task, a discussion over these features was formed. More than 20 minutes was allotted to this activity in each session.

The participants in the control group were exposed to the same listening tasks in each session. They didn’t receive any treatment of discussion, or awareness - raising activities about the features of spoken language which were the use of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices before, during, and after listening to the materials. But the difficult vocabulary or ideas were presented to them as a pre-listening activity. On the other hand, the experimental group received discussion, or awareness - raising about the features of spoken language in terms of the use of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices before, during, and after listening to the materials. Every session, the researcher at the beginning of the class talked about the different kinds of real conversation features and during the listening task he explained those features. At the end of the class, he asked students to distinguish those features in the listening task and discuss about them.

Finally, a posttest was given to the participants of both groups at the end of the course of instruction to compare their oral performance and to see whether awareness-raising of features of real speech has any impact on their speaking performance. After collecting the data, the participants' oral performance was transcribed to measure their oral production.

**Measurement of Speaking Performance**

Following the collection of the audio-taped data, three criteria of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices were developed to evaluate the quality of the participants’ oral production. The three measurement criteria were intended to assess the fluency dimension of participants’ oral performances. That is, the aim was to better understand whether employing any of the devices explained below leads to more fluent speech in learners. Each rater was instructed about the related strategies and their scores were averaged for later data analysis and rating basis. The criteria were operationalized as follows:

1. **Time-creating devices:** application of pause feature even if pause filler doesn’t have any lexical or syntactic function such as "um", "urh", "eh" that is invented to offer great help for speaker to earn enough time to convey his words.
2. **Facilitation devices**: employment of ready-made phrases to simplify speaker’s task, thereby increasing speed and fluency. Such phrases as “you know,” “I mean,” and “well” may serve as pause fillers as well.

3. **Compensation devices**: The three common ways are use of repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing strategies to create redundancy and relieve memory load. Speakers always find themselves correcting or improving what they have already said.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After collecting the data, the experimental and control groups' oral performance was transcribed. Their oral production was measured based on the established criteria with respect to speaking features. To answer the research questions, the data were then submitted to statistical analyses which included several Independent Samples t-tests and descriptive analyses. That is, four different Independent Samples t-tests were used in order to measure and compare the homogeneity and amount of progress in speaking features for both groups in pre-test and posttest. In all analysis the alpha was set at .05.

A statistical analysis was run to calculate the distribution of data in the pre-test and posttest. Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistics for data distribution for speaking variable in pretest and posttest. The mean score in pretest and posttest were 29.54 and 34.93 respectively and the minimum and maximum scores were 20 and 40 for the pre-test and for the posttest were 21 and 48 respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29.54</td>
<td>5.922</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>-.196</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34.93</td>
<td>7.195</td>
<td>.177</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to investigate the distribution normality of variables score, kolmogorov-samimov test was used. The $p$ value in pretest was **0.863** and in posttest was **0.985**. With regard to acquired significance level, it is concluded that speaking variable in both pretest and posttest has normal distribution. Table 2 shows the statistics for the normality distribution.
Table 2: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Pre/Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Pre-test</td>
<td>29.54</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.922</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking posttest</td>
<td>34.93</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7.195</td>
<td>.985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the homogeneity of the two groups of the study in pre-test. Table 3 indicates the results of independent samples t-test for pre-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Pre-test Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>29.86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.600</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>29.21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.423</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 indicates the mean score for speaking pretest in control group was 29.86 and in experimental group was 29.21 and the p level was 0.78. That is, the participants in two groups of the study performed rather equally with respect to the three features of spoken devices (time-creating, facilitation, and compensation devices). As a result, the control and experimental groups do not statistically differ with respect to speaking pretest. So the homogeneity of control and experimental group is verified.

In order to study the homogeneity of male and female, speaking pretest scores were compared in either group. Another independent samples t-test was used for this comparison.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Male and Female- Pre-test Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29.07</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.690</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.325</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 illustrates, the mean score of speaking pretest in male's group was 29.07 and in female's group was 30 and the significance level was 0.686. Table 4 shows the results of Independent Samples t-test for both male and female groups. Regarding the significance level (p=0.68) in t-test, the null hypothesis was not rejected. In terms of gender, no group outperformed another one with respect to the three dimensions of spoken features. As a result,
First hypothesis: Awareness-raising of spoken text characteristic has no effect on EFL learner speaking skill.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Posttest Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking Posttest</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>32.07</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.318</td>
<td>2.254</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>37.79</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.073</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An Independent Samples t-test was used to answer this hypothesis. As Table 5 indicates, the mean score of speaking posttest in control group was 32.07 and in experimental group 37.79. The latter group outperformed the former in speaking posttest. With regard to the significance level of t-test (p= 0.033), the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the experimental groups’ speaking fluency improved in terms of the three dimensions of features of spoken text in the posttest which means that the awareness-raising of spoken text characteristics tends to have a significant effect on EFL learners’ speaking skill.

Second hypothesis: There is no significant difference between male and female in applying the speech techniques.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Male and Female- Posttest Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking Pre-test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>34.79</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.628</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, another Independent Samples t-test was used to answer the second hypothesis. As Table 6 indicates the mean score of speaking posttest in male's group is 34.79 and in female's group is 35.07. The female group outperformed the male one in the posttest. With regard to p value (p=0.919), the null hypothesis is not rejected. As a result, there is no statistically significant difference between the female and male groups in speaking posttest. So there is no significant difference between male and female in applying the spoken features in terms of time-creation, facilitation, and compensation devices which lead to ultimate fluency.
Discussion

The present study was designed to shed light on our understanding of spoken text features when the awareness-raising is employed in language activities. The rational underlying this study is that when learners are aware of the kinds of characteristics used in the spoken texts and they receive instruction on these features, their oral performance, and hence, their oral production is improved. Since learners often judge their success in language learning and the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency, instructing them about the spoken text features and consequently raising their awareness on these characteristics will equip them with necessary skills and strategies to succeed in their final oral productions. Compared to other studies, it has taken the view that learners’ oral performance in EFL contexts extremely suffers due to the scarcity of exposure to the target language and the ignorance of focusing attention (the absence of learners' awareness) on different spoken text features which are embedded in language activities. Therefore, the present study has focused on the awareness-raising of spoken text characteristics and then on the influence of this awareness EFL learners speaking skill and their subsequent oral production.

Using a range of measures, the participants’ oral performances in both groups of the study were measured and compared. First, the speaking variable in both pretest and posttest had normal distribution. Second, the researchers found some evidence that raising learners’ awareness of characteristics of spoken language resulted in improvements in their oral performance. This finding is supported by the idea that adding specific texts or instructions regarding speaking skill’s characteristics to the English learning materials appear to be a necessity. If EFL learners recognize the features of spoken language, their future difficulties will be removed in the final stage of language production.

The findings of the study are also supported by Allison and Martyn’s belief (1993) that materials developers have to be required to develop and incorporate some parts in the course books to introduce the unique characteristics of spoken language.

The results of the study are also in line with the suggestions made by Lam (1997) and Wu (1993) who stated that students need to recognize the features of spoken language and be aware of such techniques as the use of time-creating, facilitation and compensations devices in order that they can handle real-life listening input and real-world communication. Wu (1993) further pointed out that in order to formulate and create what to say and facilitate his/her speech production; a speaker is suggested to use time-creating devices to gain the necessary time in final stage of oral production. Consequently, Bygate (1987) suggests that time pressure in real-world communication makes it necessary for the speaker to apply facilitation devices to facilitate the production of speech. Again, the finding of the present study is in line with the idea proposed by Bygate (1987).

However, with respect to gender and its impact on the learners' application of speaking techniques, no positive effect was found in this study. The results of the study did not indicate any statistically significant differences in terms of gender and its role in speaking activities.
between the two genders of the study. The reason for the absence of significance between the two genders leaves another question for further investigation in later attempts.

The first research question addressed the effects of raising awareness about the characteristics of spoken text. The results of the study indicate that EFL learners’ awareness is significantly raised by instructing them about the features of spoken texts and equipping them with such techniques as the time-creating, facilitation and compensations devices, which gives more support to the insights and theories of Allison and Martyn (1993), Lam (1997), Wu (1993), and Bygate (1987).

Therefore, it is safe to argue that raising learners' awareness about the characteristics of spoken text and providing them with the necessary speaking devices give them the opportunity to recognize the skills and strategies that should be included in the completion of an oral production activity. In doing so, learners' oral performance quality is likely to improve to a great extent. Therefore, the findings of the study are in line with the previous studies regarding raising learners' awareness.

The second research question addressed the effects of gender on EFL learners’ use of speaking features. The findings in this study did not indicate a statistically significant effect on L2 production as a result of gender differences between male and female learners. Although the participants' awareness was raised with respect to the speaking features and was instructed equally on the communication techniques, when they came to produce L2 under the real time communication, gender differences were not capable of improving learners' oral performance. Therefore, the results revealed that no gender outperformed the other in terms of the quality of their oral production.

CONCLUSION
This study made an attempt to investigate the effects of awareness – raising of spoken text characteristics on Iranian learners’ oral production in a speaking task. The research was conducted with 28 students taking an English conversation course at Voice of Tabriz institute at upper-intermediate level. Doing the same speaking task, the participants’ oral performance in both experimental and control groups was recorded and measured based on the established criteria. The effect of awareness-raising on the established aspects of language production was determined by comparing the participants’ performance among participants with and without exposure and instruction to/about communication strategies.

Previous research findings (e.g. Ghorbani, 2011; Jones, 2001; Nakatani, 2005; Shu-Chin, 2012, and Sze, 2008) provide evidence supporting the effectiveness of awareness - raising in enhancing and improving EFL learners’ oral performance. The findings of the present study provided support for the close link between awareness-raising as a metacognitive strategy and high quality of oral performance.
The findings of this research supported claim which proposed that the communicational skills can be learnt consciously and that the communicational skills are important to enable learners to have a conversation and it is a great part of their language development.

In brief, it can be concluded that in EFL contexts teaching features of spoken texts by raising learners’ consciousness about different communication devices and techniques is an effective way to improve their oral performances. Accordingly, it can be an effective replacement for the traditional way of practicing and testing speaking skill in EFL classes.

**Pedagogical implications of the study**

The present study supports the findings of previous research regarding awareness - raising. The most important contribution of this study is that it provides L2 and L2 educators with a clear explanation of how awareness - raising affected the L2 learners’ (a) cognitive strategic processes, (b) their application of social strategies, and (c) the affective aspect of their speech. The present study has implications for pedagogy. In terms of pedagogical practice, the findings of this study suggest that awareness-raising can promote an optimal balance between conscious attention/awareness and characteristics of spoken texts. In addition, the findings suggest that learners' awareness of those features can balance the learners’ quality of speech.

Lastly, there are certain implications taken from this study for language teachers and material development experts. Teachers can include consciousness-raising activities in their daily teaching programs to enable learners to improve their quality of speech. In teacher education courses, the findings can be beneficial for training language teachers who are to teach English as a foreign language in EFL contexts.

**Suggestions for further research**

First, the present study did not take into account different levels of proficiency. Only upper-intermediate learners participated in the study. To examine the effects of raising awareness on the learners’ oral performance, different levels of proficiency should be included in the study. Second, from the different types of language learning skills and sub skills, only speaking skill was used to be performed and measured after doing consciousness raising task in the classroom setting. Different results might be observed with different levels of proficiency and various skills and sub skills of English language in an EFL setting. Third, the number of students participating in the study was limited to 14 in each group. A larger sample of participants should be selected and examined to ensure the effectiveness of awareness-raising on the learners’ oral performance. It seems that a large sample might produce more reliable and different results.

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THE ROLE OF TEACHING GRAMMATICAL LINKERS IN COMPREHENDING WRITTEN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE AMONG IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of teaching grammatical linkers (GLs) on Iranian pre-intermediate L2 learners who read to comprehend the written academic discourse. Reading comprehension of written academic discourse may be enhanced if university students are familiar with GLs as cohesive devices (e.g., however, and, so, etc.). In doing this study, 80 university students took part in the investigation. Through the administration of a homogeneity test, 52 pre-intermediate students who enrolled in the second year of English translation at Abadan Azad University were chosen. Then they were randomly divided into two groups of control (n=26) and experimental (n=26). They took a reading comprehension pre-test to assess their knowledge of GLs at the beginning of the research. To evaluate the frequency of GLs used by participants, they also took a pre-test of writing one-paragraph essays. During eight sessions, both groups worked on reading passages. The experimental group received explicit instruction including explanation on the form and function of GLs, while the control group received conventional instruction including examples in an implicit method. At the end of the treatment, a post-test on reading comprehension were administered to evaluate the effect of GLs instructions and a one-paragraph essays to assess the participants’ uses of GLs. The results obtained from the Independent and Paired Samples t-tests revealed that there was a significant difference between the performances of two groups. In the post-test, the experimental group outperformed the control group in comprehending written academic discourse. The results of analyzing GLs frequency showed a significant difference between the pre and post-tests. This study suggests that teaching cohesive devices such as GLs may help teachers to teach reading comprehension effectively.

KEYWORDS: Grammatical linkers (GLs), Reading comprehension, Written academic discourse

INTRODUCTION

Discourse is described as a piece of writing or speech that is longer than a sentence or an utterance. In academic writing, it is indispensable for the writers to guide the readers through the discourse signaling what is important and how each sentence links to others (Schiffrin, 1987). Accordingly, grammatical linkers (i.e., addition, contrast and comparison, conclusion, etc.) are the discourse signaling cues and use between sentences and between paragraphs. They connect
the related ideas, so they help readers to see connections that they might miss or misunderstand (Risselada & Spooren, 1998).

Grammatical linkers (GLs) are the main elements of linguistic production and the crucial factors in successful language learning. These linkers (e.g., but, however, and, or, etc.) are partly familiar to the authors and readers who often participate in academic discourse. The loss of such words and phrases might show the lack of cohesion in a particular discourse. There is no doubt that as writers mature; they rely increasingly on GLs as cohesive devises and that the lesser use of them is considered as a characteristic of the novice writers (Fraser, 1999). Students of English as a foreign language (EFL) may be unfamiliar with GLs as well as their functions in written academic discourse, and therefore may have the problems in comprehending these kinds of texts. In addition, as Fung (2011) states, nowadays a few teachers are prepared to teach students how to make use of grammatical linkers to build comprehension, though it is a widely accepted fact that knowledge of GLs is important for reading.

Students can benefit from explicit instruction that focuses on the identification of these linkers and their functions. Furthermore, they can get cues for signaling information and discourse organization, which are used to control the amount of information presented in the text as well as the ways in which the new information is introduced, and which in turn help reading comprehension, especially with more difficult texts (Hyland, 2005). There are many different GLs and, perhaps even more importantly, some of them are used more in speech than in writing, or vice versa or some of them are more informally used than formally and so on. Some researchers (e.g., Halliday & Hasan, 1976) have provided the lists of GLs, classified them, assigned different names to each category and defined special features for each of them.

According to Parker (1982), GLs include Addition, Comparison, Contrast, Emphasis, Example, Exception, Place, Proof, Purpose, Result, Sequence, Summary, Time (Appendix E). Among these categories, just four groups have been selected and taught in this study. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: GLs’ Classification (extracted from Parker, 1982)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contrast</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GLs rank among the key cohesive devices in formal written discourses. What is more, the knowledge of these linkers helps to understand and create text with greater ease. Many Iranian pre-intermediate L2 learners have problems in comprehending written academic discourse and their teachers often complain from the weaknesses of the students and the low level of EFL classes. It seems the training that these students receive does not enable them to attain full
competence in comprehending written academic discourse (Parvaresh & Nemati, 2008). These learners may be unfamiliar with GLs and their functions in the written texts. The present study intends to investigate teaching these linkers into pre-intermediate L2 learners who have many problems in comprehending written academic discourse.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

GLs are words and expressions taken into consideration within the text in order to join one sentence to another sentence or one paragraph to another paragraph. A writer utilizes these linkers between sentences to show relationships between ideas in adjoining major sections of academic discourses. S/he presents an idea and then other ideas to deepen the first idea by adding for example: and, besides, further. Here, it should be clarified what is meant by the term ‘GLs’ in this study.

One of the ways that writers help readers through discourse is by “marking” how the coming sentence or clause relates back to previous discourse. Thus if the author wants to show a continuation of a previous line of thought, s/he will begin the coming sentence with a linker such as in addition or moreover. This automatically helps the reader to approach the coming sentence with the knowledge of how it relates to the theme the author is constructing. If, on the other hand, the author wants to signal a change in direction of the discourse, s/he will utilize a linker such as on the other hand or conversely. Groups of researchers have worked on GLs.

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), there are many ways of relating one clause to another besides the use of a connective adjunct. Coordinators are one such device; syntactically, these have distinctive properties that lead us to analyze them differently from connective adjuncts. Nevertheless, the division between coordinators and connective adjuncts is not entirely clear-cut, and items such as yet and so have some uses where they are clearly connective adjuncts, others where they are very similar to coordinators. According to Hyland (2005), GLs are conjunctions and adverbial phrases that help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument by making comparison, contrast, and consequence in the discourse. In comparison, writers show the way two or more ideas are the same (e.g., similarity, likeness, equally). In contrast, writers show the way two or more ideas are different (e.g., in contrast, however, but). Consequences relations tell readers that either a conclusion is being drawn or justified (e.g., therefore, consequently) or an argument is being counted (e.g., nevertheless, anyway).

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) introduced conjunctions in this way: "Coordinating conjunctions (a) conjoin syntactically equivalent constituents and (b) lead the listener/ reader to certain interpretations of the way that clauses relate to each other meaningfully. Adverbial subordinators and conjunctive adverbials are often called logical connectors. Like some coordinating conjunctions, logical connectors are typically said to be types of cohesive devices, lexical expressions that may add little or no prepositional content by themselves but that serve to specify the relationships among sentences in oral or written discourse, thereby leading the listener/reader to the feeling that the sentences “hang together” or make sense" (p. 519).
According to Parrot (2002), conjunctions are divided into three categories: coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and discourse markers. "Coordinating conjunctions include only three words: and, but, and or. They can serve to (a) link together parts of constituents and are therefore contained within the constituent and (b) to form a link between clauses" (p. 262). "Subordinating conjunctions serve to link two clauses of unequal importance. They consist of (a) one word, such as after, although and if, (b) two or more words: as if, as soon as and as long as if, (b) two or more words: as if, as soon as and as long as" (p. 335). And, those connective elements between sentences indicating logical relationships and sequence are called DMs.

Discourse analysis forms the discipline that studies and analyses the actual language in use. It involves both language form and language function. Moreover, it includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. A discourse analysis of written texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences. Cohesion and coherence are two main aspects of discourse. When a writer is planning to write a well-organized text, cohesion and coherence are important considerations. Here, these two aspects will be explained. Cohesion is a particular feature of the spoken and written human speech. In general, cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which connect different parts of a text. These relations organize and create a text by needing the reader to interpret words and expressions with reference to other words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs and hence, according to Halliday and Hassan (1976), make the text 'cohere' (Carrell, 1982).

Coherence is another feature that comes usually to be related to the feature of cohesion. Some researchers apply the term cohesion to the surface structure of the text and the term coherence to the concepts and relations underlying its meaning (Jin, 1998). Cohesion has sometimes been applied to smaller units of language in the text, and coherence, to some general overall interrelatedness in the text. Other researchers have defined cohesion as "continuity in word and sentence structure", and coherence as "continuity in meaning and context" (Louwerse & Graesser, 2005). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are two kinds of cohesion that help the coherence, one being lexical cohesion and the other being grammatical cohesion.

Written Academic Discourse

Discourse is a term becoming more and more usual in a wide range of academic and non-academic contexts, in written and spoken form. Some linguists use it in reference to texts, while others claim it means speech. One definition of discourse is that "discourse is a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke, or narrative" (Crystal, 1992, p. 25). Somewhere else, the terms 'text' and 'discourse' are nearly utilized interchangeably implying that the first term refers to the linguistic product, whereas the second one denotes the entire dynamics of the processes.

The term ‘discourse’ has been also defined in a various ways: for example, as language use above the level of the sentence, as language use in context, and as real language use. The tasks and preoccupations of discourse analysts may change while studying spoken or written language. Whereas "conversational analysis" is a term used for analysis of spoken discourse, some linguists
for the study of written discourse use the term “text linguistics”. Written academic discourse is different from other discourses in any aspect of linguistic behavior, in the study of particular patterns of pronunciation, in the word choice, sentence structure, semantic representation, and the pragmatic analysis. The crucial function of the written academic discourse is referential, which involves the following aspects: it conveys information, presents arguments and explains facts and the different relations between them. To fulfill this function successfully, the written academic discourse needs a high level of explicitness, clear logical organization and an avoidance of ambiguity. In order to achieve all these criteria, this kind of discourse uses the appropriate terminology, formal language, complete sentences, relative clauses, and other devices among which GLs are certainly worth emphasizing.

**Why Teaching GLs?**

In contrast to the early years of the communicative approach that was felt the knowledge of grammar may not be necessary for one to communicate in a language, in recent years there has been a re-thinking about grammar teaching. In these days, it is being more accepted that language learning is essentially learning how grammar functions in the achievement of meaning (Widdowson, 1983). Nowadays, learners are first exposed to a new language in a comprehensible context, so that they are able to understand its function and meaning. Only then is their attention turned to examining the grammatical forms that have been used to convey that meaning. Organization of discourse is often indicated by GLs. They are viewed as effective means of cohesion in English, no matter whether it is written or spoken, formal or informal.

Over the past 20 years or so, the description of linguistic items related to GLs has been a research focus in many studies related to language learning and teaching. Schiffrin (1987) began writing about the significance of GLs in the 80s. Research studies on GLs can be generally divided into two categories. The first category describes research on GLs through the descriptive analysis of them in a particular language as spoken by native speakers (NS) of the language. The second category describes research on GLs which relate and examine the acquisition of GLs of the target language by non-native speakers (NNS), mostly that of teachers and language learners. Fung and Carter (2007) state that the second category of research on GLs has been studied much less. Yunus and Haris (2014) believe that GLs are not only important in joining words, sentences or paragraphs, but also indispensable for the coherent of the whole essay. These researchers studied the use of GLs in ESL students’ essay writing. When they analyzed the secondary school students’ essays, they identified something about the use of GLs such as the misused, the overused and the advanced used of them. These researchers also interviewed the teachers to get extra information about their opinion regarding GLs based on their teaching experience. When the researchers analyzed the answers, most of the interviewees seemed clueless and had no idea what GLs are all about. In this way, there was not enough exposure to GLs to make the students had a better understanding on how to incorporate the use of them in their essay.

In a study, Kalajahi and Abdullah (2012) attempted to examine Iranian English language teachers’ perception towards the use of GLs in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. This research extended on Fung’s (2011) study and further included the listening and speaking skills together with the role of GLs in teaching the reading and writing skills. Three
research questions were posed in this study. They were: (1) What is the perception of Iranian English teachers toward the use of GLs?; (2) How do Iranian English teachers perceive GLs?; and (3) Do Iranian English teachers exhibit high, moderate, or low attitudes toward the use of grammatical linkers? The descriptive method to the data analysis in this study provided better understanding of teacher’s perception towards the use of GLs. Forty five Iranian English teachers participated in the study via a questionnaire survey. Results from the analysis of data showed that Iranian English teachers seem to have a moderate attitude toward GLs. Findings also suggested that teachers tend to believe in the pragmatic and practical value of GLs.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION
The current study aims to answer the following question:
Does teaching GLs have any effect on EFL learners’ comprehension of written academic discourse?

METHODOLOGY

Participants
This study was conducted with the help of 80 male and female participants majoring in English Translation. These students were studying in the third and fourth semesters at Abadan Azad University, Iran. These students’ age were ranging from 20 to 35 years old. To achieve the objectives of the present study and to evaluate the homogeneity level of the participants, all of them were given a homogeneity test (Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy & Zukowski, 2008). Upon the administration of this test, 52 participants whose test scores were one standard deviation below or above the mean score were assigned to the group of study. Then they were randomly divided into two groups of control (n=26) and experimental (n=26). The control group received implicit instruction on GLs and the experimental group received explicit instruction on contextual learning of GLs.

Instrumentation
To run this study, several instruments were utilized. At first, 80 EFL learners took a homogeneity test based on “Interchange passages placement and evaluation package” (Richards et al., 2008). This test was consisted of 50 items on grammar and structure in multiple-choice format performed for making the participants homogeneous at the pre-intermediate level. The total score of this test was 50 and its reliability was computed through KR-21 formula as (r=.751). The second instrument was composed of two separate pre-tests. One of the pre-tests was on reading comprehension (Appendix B) included two parts and 40 items. Each part was consisted of 20 items in the multiple-choice format. The items of the first part were based on "Top Notch, level 1 A & B" (Saslow & Ascher, 2007), and the items of the second part were based on the students’ textbook;"Expanding Reading Skills" (Markstein & Hirasawa, 2005). Both parts aimed to determine the learners’ knowledge on GLs before the treatment. The pre-test was piloted on the learners with the same proficiency level to arrive at the reliability of the pre-test. The total score of this test was 40 and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach Alpha formula as (α=.801). The pre-test on GLs frequency was also assessed through writing one-paragraph essays on
a topic selected by the learners among three topics. The frequency of GLs was numbered by two raters. The inter-rater reliability of the test was calculated through Pearson Correlation Coefficient as (r=.811). The last instrument was two separate post-tests. The first post-test was modified based on the pre-test to determine the effect of teaching GLs on further comprehension of written academic discourse after the treatment. The reliability of this test was also calculated through Cronbach Alpha formula as (α=.761) and another post-test on writing one-paragraph essays was administered to evaluate the frequency of GLs used by two groups after the instruction. The inter-rater reliability of the essay post-test was estimated through Pearson Correlation Coefficient as (r=.793).

**Materials**

In this study, the materials prepared for two groups were consisted of "Expanding Reading Skills" extracted from Markstein and Hirasawa (2005) and Top Notch, level 1 A & B extracted from Saslow and Ascher (2007). The first book included 12 reading passages. Among these passages, just eight of them were taught during the course. In order to check learners’ understanding on each passage, each one had some reading comprehension exercises. These exercises were directed to three areas of reading skills development: (1) vocabulary development; (2) structural analysis; (3) relational and inferential analysis. The second book was introduced to both groups for extensive reading activities.

**Procedure**

At first the researcher asked the students of third and fourth semesters who were studying at Abadan Azad University to take part in a study. They were 80 students, both male and female, majoring in English translation. In order to determine the homogeneity of these subjects at the pre-intermediate level, a homogeneity test based on the Interchange passages placement and evaluation package extracted from (Richards et al, 2008) was administered. Next, among them 52 students whose scores were one standard deviation above or below the mean score were selected and randomly divided into two groups: control (n=26) and experimental (n=26). Both groups were under the instruction in 10 sessions, during five weeks, twice a week and 30 minutes per day.

In order to examine the effect of teaching GLs on improvement of written academic discourse comprehension, in the first session of the course a pre-test on reading comprehension was administered and both groups answered some multiple-choice questions in terms of their knowledge on GLs. This test lasted for 45 minutes. Then both groups were involved in the learning activities and their progress was carefully controlled during the eight sessions. In this course, teaching some reading passages was the main work of the instructor. The focus of each passage was on GLs to enhance students’ reading comprehension. These passages were chosen from students’ textbook, "Expanding Reading Skills" (Markstein & Hirasawa, 2005). In each session, one reading passage and one category of GLs were taught to both groups. Since among different categories of GLs, the focus of this study was on four clusters (contrast, addition, time, and summary), only these four groups were taught throughout the course. During these eight sessions, experimental group received explicit instruction on the form and function of GLs. Through explicit instruction, all the information about GLs’ structures was expressed precisely
and clearly. These students underlined GLs in their reading passages and received full explanation on the usage of the members of each category. In contrast to this group, the control group received implicit instruction on the form and function of GLs. Through implicit instruction, information regarding GLs’ structures was implied but indirectly expressed. Instead of underlining GLs, control group worked on the usual format of the reading texts. The instructor prepared for this group of participants separate examples on the usage of each category. Control group dealt with these examples without getting any explanation from the instructor. They unconsciously learnt the structures of GLs. At the end of each session, both groups answered some reading comprehension exercises. Besides working on these reading passages, reading strategies such as scanning and skimming as well as intensive reading were emphasized in both groups. Both of them also practiced finding lexical relations such as synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms as well as the structures of standard written English. In the tenth session and at the end of the treatment, a posttest on reading comprehension that was a modified form of the pre-test was administered to show the students’ comprehension of written academic discourse in terms of their knowledge of GLs. This test also lasted for 45 minutes. To calculate the effectiveness of treatment on the experimental group comparing with the control group, Independent and Paired Samples t-tests as well as chi-square will be used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the goal of this study which was the investigation of teaching GLs into pre-intermediate EFL learners for further comprehension of written academic discourse, the participants of this study passed a pre-test as well as a post-test on reading comprehension. After the analysis of these tests, the following results obtained:

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23.5909</td>
<td>5.34219</td>
<td>1.13896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20.0000</td>
<td>8.71780</td>
<td>1.59164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance on reading comprehension in the pre-test. The mean score of the experimental group is 23.59 and the mean score of the control group is 20.00. In order to see if there is any significant difference between two groups in the pre-test and they have been homogeneous before the treatment or not, an Independent Samples t-test was administered. Table 3 shows the results.
Table 3: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test)

<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>7.233</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>1.835</td>
<td>48.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the observed t (1.709) is less than the critical t (2.000). This means that the difference between two groups is not significant. Thus, the two groups have been homogeneous.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28.13</td>
<td>8.51</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.33</td>
<td>11.23</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 indicates the descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance on reading comprehension in the post-test. The mean score of the experimental group is 28.13 and the mean score of the control group is 21.33. To find out if there is any significant difference between the two groups in the post-test, an Independent Samples t-test was administered. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test)

<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>2.001</td>
<td>.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.483</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows the observed t (2.380) is greater than the critical t (2.000). It means that the difference between two groups is significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Experimental</td>
<td>23.59</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>1.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test Experimental</td>
<td>28.13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.51</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Control</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test Control</td>
<td>21.33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.23</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics of pre and post-tests on reading comprehension for each group. According to this table, the mean score of the experimental group in the post-test is 28.13 while this amount for the pre-test of the same group is 23.59. This table also shows that the mean score of the control group in the post-test is 21.33 whereas this amount for the pre-test of the same group is 20.00. In order to discover if there is any significant difference between the pre and post-tests of each group, a Paired Samples t-test was administered. Table 7 indicates the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-and post-test Experimental</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>7.80 - 1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-and post-test Control</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>15.18</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>7.00 - 4.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table indicates that the observed t (2.902) of the pair 1 (Experimental group) is greater than the critical t (2.080). So the difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group is significant. In contrast, observed t (.481) of the pair 2 (Control group) is less than the critical t (2.045). Therefore, the difference between the pre-test and post-test of the control group is not significant.

**Discussion**

In order to answer the first research question, the researcher compared the two groups of participants in the pre and post-tests. The pre-test was compared to the post-test to show any difference between the participants’ performance on developing reading comprehension concerned with using GLs. After analyzing data through the software "SPSS", version 17, the results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the pre-test showed an increase in the mean score of the experimental group in the pre-test. Then based on the administration of an Independent Samples t-test, it was revealed that the observed t was less than the critical t, so it was clear that there was not any significance difference between two groups in the pre-test. As a result, the two groups were homogeneous.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the post-test also indicated an increase in the mean score of the experimental group in contrast to the mean score of the control group in the
post-test. Through the administration of another Independent Samples t-test, it was revealed that the observed t was greater than the critical t. It means that there was a significant difference between two groups of the participants in the post-test and consequently, experimental group had a better performance.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the pre and post-tests showed another increase in the mean scores of both groups in the post-test in contrast to their pre-test. This time, through the administration of the Paired Samples t-test and the comparison between the observed t and critical t of each group revealed that the observed t of the experimental group was greater than its critical t. This means that there was a significant difference between the performances of the experimental group in the pre and post-tests in contrast to the control group. Since through the data analysis had been proved both groups were homogeneous before the treatment, the recent results showed that the experimental group performed more successfully than the other group after the treatment.

The reason of this progress can be interpreted in terms of the explanation the experimental group received on the forms and functions of GLs in analyzing the reading texts during the course. However, in this regard the control group received implicit instruction, mainly examples. By explicit instructions, the instructor clearly outlines what the learning goals are for the students, and offers unambiguous explanations of the skills and information structures the learners need. By implicit instruction, we refer to teaching where the instructor just gives examples and may explain the subject orally as what is currently used in conventional classrooms. The teachers teach the subject to the students and allow them to make their own conclusions and create their own conceptual structures and assimilate the information in the way that makes the most sense to them (Ellis, 1994).

If learners become familiar with the writing structures, they can comprehend the reading passages more easily. GLs are one of these structures which control group could not master it through implicit instruction and cognitive learning; hence, they showed a low performance after the treatment. On the contrary, the experimental group received a kind of instruction on GLs during the course that was compatible with their level of learning.

CONCLUSION
This study was conducted with the assumption that the teaching of the various GLs might cause a relative improvement to EFL learners' comprehension of written academic discourse. As very little was done and known in this context, this study was based on empirical research on teaching GLs and a series of activities and exercises and home works done in class or at home to consolidate the teaching sessions. The field work brought a number of results in that the experimental group showed a higher mean of comprehension whereas the control group got a much lower one. The direct explanation to these results is that after 10 sessions of instruction, the experimental group not only answered almost all the items of the pos-test and obtained higher scores than the control group, but also got high scores in the most difficult part of this test (long reading text). On the contrary, the control group failed in solving a good number of items, even
the easiest ones (mini-texts). Besides, in the essay writing the experimental group also appeared more successful than the other group in the proper use of wide range of GLs. The explanation to this fact is due to the implicit instruction that control group got on GLs during these sessions.

Through implicit instruction, control group did not become aware of this fact that based on meaningful connection some linkers are used at the beginning of the sentences, some of them in the middle and some in other places. They also were not aware of this fact that GLs receive different punctuations in different positions. For example, in the sentence "Mary had a bad headache; however, she went to work", they did not know that based on the presence of semicolon and comma, among several contrastive linkers, just the linker "however" is used. Moreover, control group did not get enough knowledge of this fact that some linkers are used in combination with particular prepositions.

This study evaluated the effect of GLs on reading comprehension and its data was collected through the tests. Further studies could evaluate the effect of these linkers on other language skills such as listening or speaking and collect data through other ways such as the interview, voice recording or classroom observation. Because of low number of English major students at Abadan Azad University, this study was done on a small sample population. Any replication should attempt to use a larger sample population, which may have affected the reliability of the results. This study was conducted on Iranian learners that English is their foreign language (EFL); it is possible to do it on the learners of other countries that English is their second language (ESL). This study was done on language learners at pre-intermediate level. Interested researchers can study the relation between recognition of GLs and reading comprehension on other levels of language ability such as intermediate or advanced. Considering the fact that this study was conducted on both male and female learners, it is suggested that similar studies could be done with the participants including only male or female ones. This study was done on students that English was their major. Other investigations could be conducted on the students of other majors.

Like all studies, this study had limitations and could not include all the issues related to the topic. Since the subject of GLs was wide, this study was only limited to this aspect of cohesive devices. It is clear that there exists another important category of cohesive devices that is the lexical one, within the same context of cohesion. This study would gain much objectivity if this aspect had been dealt with, too. In this study, adaptation of the reading texts to the students' level of proficiency which respond to all requirements of the study was another constraint; as the researcher could not find a reading text including different GLs from different categories.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF LISTENING MICRO SKILLS' AWARENESS-RAISING ON BILINGUAL LISTENING SKILL

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of the present study was to investigate the most effective and frequently used listening micro-skills in English as foreign language (EFL) classes in bilingual context at lower levels. Moreover, this study was also to probe empirically the effect of awareness-raising about these micro-skills and the most effective cognitive strategies on developing EFL listening comprehension skills. For studying the effect of awareness-raising, first 30 teachers and M.A students took part in identifying the most frequently used micro-skills in Khuzestan Province as a bilingual context. After gathering data, 7 listening micro-skills were identified as being the most frequently used skills for performing tasks in EFL classes. 40 bilingual learners took the Nelson proficiency test and they were divided into two groups, one experimental and one control group. The experimental group underwent awareness-raising activities on micro-skills in listening comprehension as well as elaboration and prediction strategies based on Chamot and O'Malley (1994) model. The control group did not receive any strategy-based treatment and was taught listening activities through a conventional method. Finally, a post-test from "Tactics for Listening" (Richards, 2011), was given to both groups after nine weeks instruction. Using the Independent Samples t-test, the findings revealed that (a) micro skill and strategy awareness-raising had positive effect on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners in a bilingual context and (b) instruction of micro skill and strategy had no differential effect on listening comprehension of female and male learners. Implications of the present study contribute to the teachers who teach listening comprehension and help them to raise learners’ awareness in learning listening tasks effectively.

KEYWORDS: Listening micro-skills, bilingual context, lower level students

INTRODUCTION
With the growing tendency toward developing communicative competence, speaking and listening have gained lots of attention from both teachers' and learners' side. According to Rivers (1984), "adults spend 40-50% of communication time listening, 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading, and about 9% writing" (p. 331). Therefore, composing large part of communication, it is necessary to investigate the different aspects of speaking and listening. Communicative competence framework, the abilities underlying language proficiency, according to Canal and Swain (1980) are: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence
and strategic competence. Regarding these, speaking and listening skills can be assumed as multidimensional constructs, succeeding at which requires exploring their effective components and improving those parts. Listening is a critical skill that underlies all verbal communication inside and outside a classroom. Individuals use listening all the time, in and out, at home, at work, for social, entertainment or for academic settings. In everyday life, listening is used more than any other language skill.

Some researchers (e.g., Krashen & Terrell, 1983) have stressed the key role that listening as comprehensible input plays in acquiring the target language. Listening is a fundamental skill in first language acquisition and is important in English as Foreign Language learning (Bozorgian & Pillay, 2013). Peterson (2001) stated "it is the primary channel for language input and acquisition" (p. 87).

Despite the importance of listening and the rewards listening can bring to the second or foreign language learning process, it has, instructionally, been neglected or overlooked until the last few decades. Compared with other skills in TEFL/TESL, listening has neglected in many language learning situations (Buck, 2001). It was assumed that listening comprehension is naturally acquired and improved by students as they are listening to the teacher all day. Wolvin and Coakley (1996) noted that "how utterly amazing is the general assumption that the ability to listen well is a natural gift for which no training is required" (p. 26). Listening has recently started to receive attention and to be recognized as a skill that needs to be developed just like any other language skill (Brown, 1990). Perhaps the most important reason for such recognition stems from the great problems listening cause for large numbers of English language students.

Listening comprehension is a complex process and a number of theorists have tried to describe it in terms of taxonomies of micro-skills. One of the first taxonomies is the division of listening into a two-stage process: the first step is the extraction of the basic linguistic information and the second step is the utilization of that information for the communicative purpose. Other attempts were aimed at describing listening skills in communicative terms. These taxonomies go beyond linguistic processing and consider a wide variety of skills necessary for relating the basic linguistic processing to the wider communicative situation. Weir’s (1993) taxonomy is one of communicative taxonomies. The most detailed communicative taxonomies were built and suggested that different lists of ‘micro-skills’ are required for various listening purposes (Richards, 1983). Besides the assumption that there are identifiable listening skills, there seems to be agreement in the language testing literature that these skills can be arranged in a hierarchy from lower order (e.g. understanding utterances at the literal level) to higher order (e.g. making inference and critical evaluation) (Weir, 1993). This skills-approach and the existence of such skills treated with caution. Buck (2001) declares that although there is no evidence that these lists of micro skills constitute a complete unified description of the listening process, there is no doubt that many of the components are of crucial importance in listening.

A more fruitful way of approaching listening difficulties reflects current practice in the teaching of reading which regards efficient reading as dependent on a set of micro skills (Grellet, 1981). Field (1998) pointed out breaking listening into micro skills offers two possibilities. "It can
support the kind of diagnostic approach already outlined, providing a checklist against which many breakdowns of understanding can be matched: is the breakdown due, for example, to failure to identify unstressed words, to failure to select the most important points of information, or to problems caused by assimilation?" (pp. 111-112). Some researchers stress the necessities of explicit teaching of listening strategies (Mendelsohn, 1994). Field (2001) emphasizes that listening should be broken into separate micro skills and strategies should be modeled in relation to a task rather than taught separately. This is in line with an interest which has offered thought-provoking ideas about what good language learners do to succeed. Applied research on language learning investigates the feasibility of helping students become more effective language learners by teaching them some of characteristics of the “good language learner” (Rubin, 1975).

Unfortunately, teachers, especially in EFL contexts, often are not aware about the process of listening; as a result, the common practice in the class is that teachers and educators focus on the outcome of the listening rather than listening itself (i.e. the process of listening). Field (1998) believes that most published courses continue to practice listening rather than teach the skill, raising the concern that the material tests not teaches.

Students are the heart of the learning process that can actually do the learning. In a community where English is learned as a foreign language, learners are less exposed to listening input. Consequently, most of the EFL learners at low levels have problems in listening comprehension and listening seems the most demanding skill. In this context most educators test listening not teach it and consider it as a product without regarding the processes and skills through which listening takes place (Sheerin, 1987). As a result, there is a need to do more research on listening in such contexts and present appropriate methodology, skills and tactics to make up for the gap. One possible way to teach the process of listening is to give learners awareness about listening micro-skills and strategies.

Learner-centered approaches require the teachers to assess their students’ differences and strategies and micro skills they utilize in process of learning a foreign language in different context. Furthermore, research results in the field of language learning have indicated that learners’ cultural backgrounds and gender do affect their learning process. Learners from two different sex and linguistic and cultural backgrounds may employ different listening micro skills and strategies when approaching a new language. Limitations in raising the existing literature highlight the need for the study of this topic in lower intermediate level EFL contexts in Iran.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Listening is a process that enables the brain to construct meaning from the sounds heard. It is, however, known that listening is an internal process, which cannot be observed directly. This means, "It is difficult to assess whether the listener has effectively used the skills at a particular occasion, what listening strategies are employed, which source of information is dominantly used, and what problems the listener experiences" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). This feature of listening might lead to the view that listening is a passive skill in which the listener simply receives a spoken message. Thus, listening remains the least understood and studied in the
language teaching/learning area (Rost, 1990). Although it has been difficult to define listening, a sort of agreement seems to have recently been reached on what listening comprehension entails.

Listening, nowadays, is perceived as an active process that involves four interrelated processes: receiving, attending to, assigning meaning and responding to an aural stimulus based on on-going complex and multidimensional cognitive processes (Buck, 2001). Based on the above mentioned statements, listening comprehension is a cognitive skill. It may develop through acquisition of learning skills and strategies. Explicit instruction of listening skills and strategies is necessary and useful for EFL learners.

A number of researchers have attempted to investigate the effect of some aspects of listening ability instruction on listeners' comprehension performances. Their aim is to identify the effect of different contexts and variables on skill and strategy instruction. Bacon (1992) investigated the learning strategies used by 50 learners of Spanish at an American university when listening to and comprehending authentic text. The study revealed that females and males reported using different strategies to deal with passage difficulty. Females reported using a significantly higher proportion of metacognitive strategies than did males. Males appeared to use cognitive strategies more than females. Paulauskas (1994) in an attempt to assess the effect of strategy training on the listening achievement of high beginning and low intermediate adult learners examined the reciprocal strategy methodology and direct methodology. The two strategy groups received training in four comprehension-fostering strategies: predicting text content, summarizing main information, questioning for comprehension of main ideas and clarifying comprehension difficulties. As predicted in the first hypothesis of this study, it was found that the two strategy groups performed significantly better than the control group on the two listening test measures. No significant differences were found between the two strategy groups. Nakatani (2005) studied the influence of awareness giving on young Japanese adults’ use of oral communication strategies such as maintenance of fluency and negotiation of meaning. The researcher found that the learners in the experimental group who received awareness produced longer sentences and used more achievement strategies, and did not leave the message as often as the learners in the comparison group. Recently, Bozorgian and Pillay (2013) investigate the effect of training five listening strategies delivered in L1 (guessing, making inferences, identifying topics, repetition, and note-taking) on listening comprehension and the results indicated that listening strategies delivered in L1 led to a statistically significant improvement in their discrete listening scores compared with the control group.

Having reviewed the related research literature, it appears that further study of listening proficiency improvement through explicit listening micro skill and strategy instruction may be useful. Hence, this current study seeks to document the impact of using listening micro skills awareness on the development of L2 listening proficiency.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
1. What are the most effective listening micro-skills used in the performing listening comprehension among bilingual learners in Iranian context?
2. Do awareness-raising activities about listening micro skills have any effect on the listening comprehension among the bilingual learners?
3. Does listening micro skills awareness have any differential effect on listening comprehension of Iranian female and male learners?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**
The population among which participants of the present study were selected included 74 pre-intermediate bilingual Iranian EFL learners studying English at Safereh Andisheh Institute, Shoush, Iran. To select and ensure the homogeneity of the participants included in the final stage of the study, the Nelson Homogeneity Test was administrated to the whole population. The students who scored one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the most homogenous students. Among them, 40 learners 20 male and 20 female were randomly selected and assigned in two groups one was experimental group with 10 male and 10 female and the other was control group with 10 male and 10 female to participate in the study.

**Instrumentation**
The instruments used for data collection in this study included:

- A Questionnaire was developed based on Weir’s (1993) taxonomy of micro-skills and Nunan (2001) taxonomy of Most Effective Listening Micro Skills. It was developed in an attempt to determine the effective micro skills used in the bilingual context.
- Nelson Homogeneity Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976). The reliability of the test was estimated \( r=.78 \) through a pilot test based on KR-21 method.
- c) A pre-test contained the actual test items, in order to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment. Its reliability which was estimated \( .71 \) based on KR-21 method.
- d) The tasks used in the classroom extracted from American New Interchange (Richards, 2005) and Tactics for Listening (Richards, 2011). The rationale for this selection is that this writer’s books are the most popular in the field of listening and speaking. These are the books most commonly used in Iran for listening classes for lower intermediate learners and the listening tasks used are authentic and compatible with EFL contexts.
- e) A post-test used to reveal the effect of the treatment of the effective listening micro skills and on listening comprehension. Its reliability which was estimated \( .88 \) based on KR-21 method.

**Research Procedure**
Since it was not possible to raise awareness about all the listening micro-skills in the current study, an attempt was made to determine the most effective and frequently used listening micro-skills which are used in the bilingual EFL context as a base line study. For this purpose and in order to select the effective and most frequently used skills for the study, 30 bilingual EFL teachers and MA bilingual students were asked to response each skill. In effect, they were provided with the list of different skills and were asked to response to each micro skill ranging from 1 least useful to 5 most useful in bilingual EFL classes.
For selecting homogenous subjects, first Nelson Homogeneity Test was administered to a group of EFL learners who were learning English in the institute. The subjects were 74 pre-intermediate bilingual Iranian EFL learners. In order to select homogenous subjects, those who scored one standard division above and one standard division below the mean were selected as the most homogenous learners. After selecting the homogenous subjects, 40 participants included 20 male and 20 female who were assigned to the control and experimental groups randomly so that every male or female participant had the equal chance of being in the control or experimental group. For the purpose of randomization, every participant was assigned a number and then the odd numbers were selected as the control group and the even numbers were selected as the experimental group. Thus, there were 20 learners 10 male and 10 female in the experimental group and 20 learners 10 male and 10 female in the control group. Before any instruction, pre-test was given to both experimental and control groups to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment.

The experimental and comparison groups went through different procedures during the study. While the comparison group did not receive any treatment, the experimental group received the treatment. They were given awareness about the most useful listening micro-skills involved in the listening process in bilingual EFL context. All the classes meet twice a week at different times of the day, covering the same content and material for all the groups and in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the study, the same material was used by the same teacher. The course of treatment lasted seven weeks in which students became trained in and practicing one micro skill or in every two sessions. The control group received the traditional and common practice in English classes that is the teacher plays the listening text in the class two or three times and after that focuses on the incoming listening comprehension questions. They are given handouts containing comprehension questions on each listening segment. Following the Instructions they just answer the same tasks done by the pure exposure group and hand them to the teacher to be marked. No group discussion was done by control group students. This typical method goes on in listening classes without teaching listening skills, while students in the experimental group were taught different listening skills. These training sessions heavily relied on the instructions and suggestions given by O’Malley and Chamot (1990) emphasize explicit teaching of the different learning strategies. The instruction model is the following the preparation, presentation, modeling, practice, evaluating phases.

When the training sessions and exercise giving sessions were over for the experimental and control groups respectively, another version of listening comprehension test for post-test was administered to both groups to test their listening comprehension enhancement. The scores in both experimental and control groups were calculated and separated for the data analysis using independent samples t-test test with SPSS package, version 17.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
As mentioned before, this study attempted to investigate the effect of the most effective micro skills awareness giving on listening comprehension skills in bilingual context. So the first research question is:
An answer to the first research question is used as the baseline for the main study. The data obtained from the questionnaire and the mean scores of its items provided us with the most effective and less effective micro skills used by all the subjects. The findings reported by subjects in the questionnaire are as follows:

Table 1: Questionnaire Analysis of Listening Micro skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening sub skill</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening for the gist of oral material</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for the main ideas; and distinguishing that from supporting details and examples</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for specific information, including recall of the important details</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for determining the speaker's attitude</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making inferences, deductions and understanding of the speaker’s purpose</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating utterances to speakers' social and situational context</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing the communicative function of utterances</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to guess the meanings of unfamiliar lexical items in the context</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand reduced forms of words in spoken language</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding grammatical notions such as comparison, cause and effect, result, etc</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding discourse markers</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the main syntactic structure of clauses, phrases and sentences</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding cohesive devises especially reference</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding lexical bundles and collocations</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding lexis of the oral materials</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to extract the salient points to summarize oral material</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to select relevant key words</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for phonemic distinctions</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for stress recognition</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening for tone/pitch to identify speaker's attitude in speech</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total mean</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 presents the mean of responses for each item in questionnaire. The average of individual micro skill items ranged from a low of 2.4 (item 18) to a high of 4.5 (item 8), while the overall mean of this sample was 3.224, indicating that these micro skills had medium of effectiveness in EFL (English as a foreign language) bilingual context. [In examining micro skills use on the five-point scale, three types of usage were identified as suggested by Oxford (1990): high (mean>3.5), medium (2.5<mean<3.5), and low (mean<2.5)].

A close examination of the individual micro skills suggests that the most effective micro skill is ability to guess the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context [M=4.5] and less effective one is listening for phonemic distinctions. The results of questionnaire revealed that seven of micro skills identified as the most effective micro skills divided into groups in an inventory of effective listening micro skills.

First to ensure that the experimental and the control group have the same level of language proficiency and that the any difference of the groups after the treatment was not due to different language backgrounds, an analysis of the experimental and the control group's pre-tests was made. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' listening pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), means, standard deviations (SD), and (SEM) standard errors of mean.
The above table indicates the mean score of the experimental group was 42.75 with standard deviation of 2.6729 and the mean score for the control group was 43.75 with SD=2.7314. However, to see whether this difference between the experimental group and the control group was statistically significant or not, a $t$-test was used the results presented in Table 3.

The results of the independent samples $t$-test for the experimental and control groups pre-test revealed that there is no significant difference between mean scores of experimental (M=43.75) and control (M=42.75) groups in pretest exam. The critical $t$ is greater than $t$ observed in the pre-test and $P$ value equals 0.249 by degree of freedom 38 is greater than critical $P$ value ($p>0.05$) which means there is no statistically significant difference between the performances of experimental groups comparing it to the control group.

To test this question and in order to investigate the difference between control and experimental groups after the treatment, the gathered listening comprehension scores obtained in listening post test by both groups subjected to statistical analysis of independent samples $t$-test to verify whether the performances of both groups were the same or different. The data for question two is presented in Table 4 below.
Although the above table shows that the mean score of the experimental group (69.8) with standard deviation of 5.5212 was greater than the mean score for the control group (52.80) with standard deviation of 2.3530, an Independent Samples t-test was applied in order to ensure that this large difference was statistically significant. Table 5 shows this clearly.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-Test (Experimental vs. Control groups, Post-test)

<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>16.769</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows, the observed-value in the above table reached 12.667 by degree of freedom 38 and significant level of (sig = 0.000). Since it is greater than the critical t-value and p value is less than critical p-value, it can be concluded that the t-test value was significant at the level of 0.05 (p<.05). The result was in favor of the experimental group. This is proof that the experimental group outdid the control group with a statistically significant difference. Hence, it can be said that the skill and strategy approach had a strong positive effect on the students' listening skills. Thus, the null hypothesis, which stated that:

Listening micro skills awareness-raising do not affect bilinguals' listening comprehension skills" was not supported because results showed a significant difference between the experimental group and the control one. Finally, to answer the third research question and to investigate the effect of treatment on gender an analysis of male and female experimental group's pre-tests and post-test was conducted to ensure that the male and the female in experimental group have the same level of language proficiency before the treatment and to examine the difference after the treatment. The results are presented in Table 8.
Table 8: Descriptive Statistics (Experimental Groups, Pre-test vs. Post-test)

<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>Male (Pre-test)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42.4000</td>
<td>2.83627</td>
<td>.89691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (Pre-test)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.1000</td>
<td>2.60128</td>
<td>.82260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (Post-test)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.2000</td>
<td>6.21468</td>
<td>1.96525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (Post-test)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>68.4000</td>
<td>4.62361</td>
<td>1.46211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 indicates that the mean score of male in experimental group' pre-test (M=42.4, SD=2.8362) and the mean score of female in experimental group' pre-test (M=43.1, SD=2.6012) and the mean score of male in experimental group' post-test (71.2, SD=6.2146) and the mean score of female in experimental group' post-test (M=68.4, SD=4.6236). To determine whether there is significant difference between male and female performance in experimental group' pretest and posttest, an independent samples t-test was applied. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Independent Samples t-Test (Experimental Groups, Pre-test vs. Post-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>Pre-test (Male vs. Female)</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test (Male vs. Female)</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>.154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows the homogeneity of male and female in experimental group before the treatment. The observed p-value (Sig. = .572) is more than the level of significance (.05). Therefore, there is no difference on listening comprehension performances of female and male learners of experimental group in pre-test. The results of this table also show that there is no significant difference between females and males in the listening comprehension post-test.

**Discussion**

English teachers and M.A students responded to items of researcher-made questionnaire which provided them with answering to the Likert scale. The results indicated that among 20 items
(micro skill), the subjects reported 7 as the most effective and frequently used in bilingual context. The means of this 7 micro skills range from 3.7 to 4.5 that indicate high use or effectiveness of them in listening comprehension. They are as follow: 1. listening for gist of the oral passage, 2. listening for main ideas or important information; and distinguishing that from supporting details, examples, 3. listening for specific information, including recall of important details, 4. making inferences and deductions and understanding the speaker’s purpose, 5. ability to guess the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context, 6. understanding cohesive devices especially reference, 7. ability to understand reduced forms of words in spoken language.

The high level of effectiveness of these micro skills used among Iranian bilingual may be attributed to several factors. One of the most important of them is the fact that Iran is a context in which English is considered to be a foreign language. Since learners find little opportunity to use English outside the formal setting of the classroom, they learn and practice English in the classroom with listening materials and comprehension questions clearly train and test these micro skills more than others. The second factor which seems to be influential in the high use of this is due to the easiness of systematic training of these listening micro skills. They are also easy to teach and learners learn and employ them easily. They usually try to make gist or elicit specific information to help them reach to answers for items when they feel that a linguistic item or structure is beyond their heads. Also, if they encounter a difficult word they may guess the meaning of unfamiliar word from context. In fact they routinely do these in their educational career.

The results of the study and the data analysis also revealed that bilingual learners use a wide range of cognitive micro skills. They used seven as high level and 12 as medium level of effectiveness among 20 cognitive micro skills. This may be due to the assumption that bilinguals possess the two competences which elevate their cognitive skills since they have a previous language learning experience. Nation and McLaughlins' (1986) statement support the results of this study that bilinguals are superior to monolinguals when it comes to cognitive skills. This also is consistent with Sanborn's (2005) research findings that bilingual learners have advantages of meta-linguistic awareness, cognitive flexibility, creativity and divergent thinking, elasticity in thinking and slightly speedier cognitive development.

The selection of distinguishing phonemic distinctions as low level of effectiveness in learning listening can be explained due to uselessness of this skill in information process and that bilingual learners do not care this skill when they are exposed to listening materials. The second reason is that the bilingual learners approach learning listening skill in the top-down process more than the bottom-up process. This is consistent with Jiménez, Garcia, and Pearson (1996) research findings that successful bilingual learners used more top-down approaches than did the monolingual groups.

The main findings of the analysis indicated a positive answer to the second research question of the study. It was found that the raising awareness about effective listening micro skills had a positive effect on the students’ listening skills. This was proved through the higher mean score (69.8) that the experimental group obtained in the post-test in comparison to mean score (52.8) of
control group. Specifically, the experimental group's performance was more differentiated than that of the control group in the post-test. Furthermore, the pre-test results for both groups did not reveal any statistically significant difference between the two groups. This means that before the application of the experiment they both had nearly similar listening levels. That is to say, they had the same language background.

The big difference between the experimental group and the control group could be attributed to many reasons. Firstly, the effective listening micro skills that were taught in the experimental group are the foremost reason for the improvement of this group listening comprehension. During the seven weeks of the experiment, the experimental group used to be aware and practice important micro skills and such listening training can be said to have enhanced the experimental group's listening abilities in an effective way. On the other hand, the control group did not have that opportunity to deal with listening micro skills. They just listen to same materials and answer comprehension questions without any training in listening process. In fact their listening is just tested. The second reason for the outperformance of the experimental group is that the students who are trained strategically as well as they practice the more effective mental activities for comprehending the listening are likely to gain the metacognitive knowledge about listening tasks. This knowledge is perhaps the most important factor in effective listening strategy training. This goes in line with Chamot and O'Malley (1994) who believe that "explicit metacognitive knowledge about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution is a major determiner of language learning effectiveness" (p. 372). The second reason is that the learners in experimental group start to feel self-confidence and remove anxiety because they equipped with the appropriate knowledge (metacognitive knowledge) and tools (micro skills). This confidence further enhanced student strategies to deal with listening tasks (cognitive strategies) and regulate their listening (metacognitive strategies) as well as assist learners to overcome the difficulties they confronted with. This seems to be corresponding with Nyikos (1996) who states that "strategy instruction helps students overcome fear or anxiety" (p. 112). This also leads them feel independent as they had cope with and overcome their difficulties.

In sum, the interaction between all the factors discussed above was the interpretation for the positive results obtained for second research question. These factors result in reducing learners' anxiety, as well as increasing their confidence that in turn lead to a better listening performance. The results are also regarded as confirmation of numerous previous studies suggested that skills and strategies can be taught and that such teaching increase performance in the second and foreign language process.

Research has shown evidence of gender differences in the use of language learning strategies, with the majority of studies reporting higher use of strategies by females than males (Bacon, 1992). Despite the assumption that females outperform males in learning and using language learning skills and strategies, the findings of this study indicated that gender did not have any significant effect on the learning listening micro skills. Furthermore, considering the mean differences between pre and post-test scores it can be found that male improved more than female in learning listening micro skills.
The main reason that can encounter for these findings is that the males have more tendency to achieve survival learning where males would be more motivated than females for survival needs (e.g., supporting their family). The second reason may be due to cultural context of study that is traditional male-oriented culture. The males are more motivated for getting proficiency in English because this may help them to get a better job. Other reason for this contradictory evidence of gender differences is the mental acts which are not the same among male and female bilinguals. As Wharton (2000) suggested that socialization and life experience as a result of previous language learning experience may be more effective than gender on types of learning strategy use.

CONCLUSION

This study is primarily beneficial to EFL learners who intend to make improvements in their listening skill. As this study indicated the skill and strategy approach is absolutely conducive by providing learners with activities that can help learners overcome or cope with listening difficulties so that they can have better control over their listening comprehension. This is an important tenet of skill and strategy instruction that students are more active when they are in charge of their own learning. Learners trained in micro skills and strategies can manage, monitor, and evaluate their learning process and check their progress in language learning frequently and this does not only improve listening performance but also leads to a degree of autonomy. Most importantly skill and strategy instruction leads learners to revise and modify their beliefs that they are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning and sharing the burden with their teachers and look at learning differently and to be in the belief that what causes success is not luck or mere innate ability but rather having and using appropriate strategies and the ability to take risks.

The findings of this research have important implications for task designers. According to the findings, it is suggested that listening tasks should be designed in accord with listening micro skills and strategies. Task designers are well counseled to design their listening comprehension activities in such a way that necessitates the employment of listening micro skills and strategies. Also, they must bear in mind that micro skills and strategies should be presented in a right time and at suitable levels that conforms to the listeners' actual potential in cognition, in order for them to comprehend the listening passages better. In the sense that before designing tasks for the EFL listening courses, task designers should consider the most frequently used listening micro-skills and strategies that learners use in performing the listening tasks. Most of the books available are not based on the different listening micro-skills and strategies; therefore, it is recommended for the material and task designer to design materials and tasks based on the listening micro-skills and strategies that are used more frequently in the EFL context. This needs teachers and task designers enhance their own awareness of these skills and strategies which aid them modify the materials and tasks in accord with these micro-skills and strategies.

The present research faced some limitations including the small size of the research sample since they are available at that time. The main limitation was to determine who is a pure bilingual and the criteria of bilingualism. In Khuzestan province, Iran, Arab communities use Arabic mostly for
conversation rather than writing and reading skills, they may not be pure bilinguals. However, they use Arabic in their family and social interactions and Farsi is just their official language. Therefore, we call them bilingual in that sense.

REFERENCES


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USING TRANSITION MARKERS IN ENGLISH SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES AMONG ENGLISH NATIVE AND IRANIAN NON-NATIVE RESEARCHERS: FOCUSING ON THEIR DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION SECTIONS

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ABSTRACT
This study compared and analyzed the use of transition markers (TMs) in research articles (RAs) on the three disciplines of physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics written in English. It aimed to find the possible similarities and differences in using TMs by native English writers of physics, computer and applied linguistics articles. It also compared the use of TMs in applied linguistics written by native English and non-native Iranian authors. To achieve this goal, 180 RAs from international and national journals were selected between 2005 and 2012. RAs included 25 on physics, 56 on computer engineering and 54 on applied linguistics written by English writers and 45 applied linguistic ones written by Iranian authors. A classification of transition markers was formulated by Halliday and Hassan (1976) to form the model for analyzing the data. After determining the frequency and percentage of each transition marker, Chi-square analysis was used to see if the differences between these disciplines were significant. Findings revealed that computer engineering writers used transition markers more than physics writers. The intra-discipline analysis showed that Persian writers of applied linguistics used less TMs than their English counterparts. The results of this study could be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran and all who are interested in learning more about English.

KEYWORDS: Metadiscourse markers, Transitions, Scientific writing, Articles

INTRODUCTION
Researchers should be objective and unbiased in reporting their findings in academic writing; this belief of academic writing has been criticized by several researchers (e.g., Hyland, 2001). Researchers (e.g., Hyland, 2005) claim that interaction in written text can be managed in the same way as the spoken text, though with different effects due to the different medium. Hyland (2004) describe academic writing as social engagement, comprising interaction between writers.
and readers. Hence, intellectual and proficient writers are not supposed to write texts to signify an external reality, rather to use language to express themselves and their work, and to acknowledge and negotiate social relations with readers.

Academic writing is created by different disciplines which includes features represent a particular community. In order to represent these features of an underlying community in research articles, the writers should engage and influence the readers. One way to do this is through the use of metadiscourse markers. Metadiscourse refers to ‘the cover term for self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer(or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community’ (Hyland 2005). It is believed that metadiscourse is a central part in academic writing which makes a mutual understanding between writers and readers. It involves linguistic devices which writers use to shape their arguments to the needs and expectations of their target language.

One of the metadiscourse features through which the writer helps reader to understand the text is transition markers. On the other hand, transition markers make the written text easy to understand at first time. According to Hyland (2005), transition markers are mainly conjunctions and adverbial phrases which help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument by making additive, contrastive, and causative steps in the discourse. Addition adds elements to the argument (e.g., and, furthermore, moreover). Comparison marks arguments as either similar (e.g., similarity, likeness, equally) or different (e.g., in contrast, however, but). Consequences relations tell readers that either a conclusion is being drawn or justified (e.g., therefore, consequently) or an argument is being counted (e.g., nevertheless, anyway).

Despite the crucial role of transition markers in academic writing, not many studies have been conducted concerning the frequency and use of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of research articles. Therefore, this study aims to compare and contrast the frequency of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of English native and non-native research articles.

Metadiscourse is increasingly important to research in reading, writing and text structure. Despite their importance, studies of metadiscourse outside of European or U.S contexts have not received the attention they deserve (Crismore & Abdollahzade, 2010). In addition, the lack of comparative research on the use of transition markers has created some sort of unawareness as to which disciplines are more TMs compared with other discipline. There is no perfect answer to questions like these due to the small number of researches carried out in this regard.

Although some researchers (Vassileva, 2001) compared TMs in research articles in English and Persian research articles, analysis of discussion and conclusion sections of research articles in terms of the type and frequency of TMs has received little attention. Thus, comparative studies on frequency and type of the use of TMs have been rare and this requires more studies to be conducted comparing native and non-native researchers in the use of TMs.
Thus, this study focuses on the type and frequency of transition markers in the discussion and conclusion sections of research articles in hard science and soft science written by English writers and Iranian writers of English. The research articles under the present study were selected from three disciplines including applied linguistics from soft applied science as well as computer engineering from hard applied and physics from hard pure science.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the occurrence of TMs in the articles written by Iranian writers as non-native writers and English writers as native writers in computer engineering, physics and applied linguistics fields of study. It is hoped that the results of this study will shed some light on academic writing problems for Iranian researchers and may provide English practitioners with better idea on writing scientific papers through using TMs appropriately and adequately. It is also hoped that the results of the present research will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Metadiscourse markers

For first time, the term metadiscourse was defined by Harris in 1959. Later, a number of researchers such as William (1981) elaborated it more. Harris (1959) defined metadiscourse as “non topical linguistics material”(p. 464).“Metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or communicating”(Hyland, 2005, p. 3). Metadiscourse is discourse about discourse, intended to direct rather than inform readers (William, 1981). Metadiscourse is "discourse about discourse" and refers to the authors or speakers linguistic manifestation in his text to interact with his receivers. Metadiscourse includes linguistic elements which do not refer to aspects of external reality (as propositional or referential elements do). But to the organization of the discourse itself and to aspects of the relationship that develops between the author and the reader (Crismore, 1989).

Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen (1993), define metadiscourse as:"linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given”(p.40). Similarly Hyland (1999) stresses non-propositionality of metadiscourse as follows: One important means by which texts depict the characteristics of an underlying community is through the writer's use of metadiscourse. All academic disciplines have conventions of rhetorical personality which influence the way writers intrude into their texts to organize their arguments and represent themselves, their readers, their attitudes. This is largely accomplished through non propositional material or metadiscourse.

Arguing the importance of metadiscourse devices, Camiciottoli (2003) states that metadiscourse markers produce a desire effect, depending on writer’s underlying purposes and perceptions of the reader’s expectations. They help writers to presents information in a clear, convincing and interesting to promote acceptance and understanding, as well as reader- writer solidarity. They act
as persuasive devices to affect and influence the reader’s reactions to texts according to the values and established rules and conventions of a discourse community.

Hyland (1999) states that “metadiscourse marker relates to the level of personality or the tenor of the discourse and influence such matters as author’s intimacy and remoteness expression of attitude, commitment to proposition and the degree of the reader’s involvement” (p. 8). Focusing on the importance of context in interpreting metadiscourse, Hyland (1999) further adds that:

To study metadiscourse without appeal to its associated rhetorical environment is to ignore the content which conditions its use and gives it meaning. Focusing only on the surface realizations give the impression that metadiscourse is purely writer-centered phenomenon and either neglect its relationship to a particular audience or unconsciously calls up contexts in an unsystematic way. In other words, the meaning metadiscourse only becomes operative within the particular context, both invoking and reinforcing that context with regard to audience, purpose and situation. Its use, therefore, reflects differences in the various forms of organized cultural communication reorganized and employed by distinct academic discipline for particular purposes (p. 6).

Adel (2006) believes that "metadiscourse is a functional category that can be realized in a great variety of ways" (p.22). She believes that an item which is metadiscursive in some point due to its relation with its co-text may not be met as a discursive feature in another. Vande Kopple (1985) introduced the first model of metadiscourse, divides into two category of textual and interpersonal. In this model, textual metadiscourse includes text connectives, code glasses and narrators markers, and interpersonal metadiscourse consists of validity markers, attitude markers and commentaries. Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen (1993) presented the revised model. In addition, they introduced textual and interpersonal as two main categories of metadiscours, but they classified textual metadiscourse into two types, textual and interpretive. Textual markers include features which can help the discourse to be organized, and interpretive markers facilitate readers’ interpretation and understanding of the writer’s intention and writing strategies (Crismore et al., 1993).

Dahl (2004) proposes a taxonomy consisting of two categories of metatextual elements. The first, called locational metatext, comprises linguistic elements which refer to the text itself or to parts of it. Dahl's (2004) second category has been termed rhetorical metatext. It includes meta elements which assist the reader in the processing of the text by making explicit the rhetorical acts performed by the writer in the argumentation process.

Hyland and Tse (2004, p. 169) propose a model of metadiscourse which distinguishes interactive and interaction dimensions. Interactive Resources are those devices which are used explicitly by writers in an argument. They are used to organize the discourse, help and guide the reader through the text. Readers can get the intended meaning and interpretations of all the text through explicit use of these devices which can be recovered from the text. Interactional resources engage
the readers in the discussion by alerting them to the writer's attitudes and propositional information and readers themselves.

Hyland (1999) studied the use of metadiscourse in texts books and research articles in three disciplines: Biology, Applied linguistics and Marketing. The result of this study showed that applied linguistics use more evidences and relational markers, the writers of biology prefer to use hedges and marketing text books use fewer evidences and endophorics. Hyland stated that the greatest diversity in most types of metadiscourse both across genres and disciplines is found in biology.

Camiciottoli (2003) investigated the effect of metadiscourse on reading comprehension of a group of Italian university of students. In this study, students were divided into two groups, and then they read selected texts from two versions of the same texts which differed in the quantity and type of the texts. Finally each group took a reading comprehension test and their mean scores were compared. The results showed that metadiscourse features have a positive effect on the students’ comprehension. She concluded that “the greater presence of some types of metadiscourse (e.g., frame markers, person markers, and hedges) could be linked to the better performance. In some of the comprehension questions (Camiciottoli, 2003).

Mauranen (1993) studied the relationship between metadiscourse and first language and culture written in English by Finnish and Anglo-American native and non-native students. The findings of this study revealed that Anglo-American students used more metadiscourse than Finnish students. In the other hand, Mauranen found that Finnish students tend to guide the readers thorough the text. She concluded that “Anglo-Americans tried to be as explicitness possible in their writing in order to give the reader the feelings of comfort and easiness, while in Finnish culture,” saying too obvious things is, as we know, patronizing” (Mauranen, 1993, p. 17).

Zarei and Mansoori (2007) looked at the metadiscursive pattern in research articles written in English and Persian in two fields: Computer engineering and applied linguistics. The findings revealed that both English and Persian texts emphasized text coherence but in Persian texts much of the meaning left to be uncovered by the reader.

Another study was conducted by Zarei and Mansoori (2011), focus on the use of metadiscourse in two disciplines: Applied linguistics versus computer engineering within two languages: Persian and English. The analysis of the data showed that the metadiscourse resources are different in two languages and Humanities focused on the textuality to the detriment of the reader involvement.

Shokohi and Talati Baghsiahi (2009) studied the functions of metadiscourse in sociology research articles in Persian and English. The results showed that there are a higher number of metadiscourse elements in the English texts. Also, It is found that textual metadiscourse is used more than the interpersonal metadiscourse in both languages. Finally, they conclude that the Persian writers are less interested in explicitly organizing the texts and engaging the readers.
METHODOLOGY

Data
The data used in the present study consist of 180 research articles from three English native disciplines including physics, computer engineering, applied linguistics and the non-native discipline of applied linguistics in English published internationally in prestigious journals. 135 research articles written by native researchers of English and 45 of them written by Iranian researchers as NNReS of English. There are some reasons for this selection. First of all, there is a standard typology for the classification of academic knowledge distinguishing between 'pure' or 'applied' and 'hard' or 'soft' disciplines (Becher & Trowler, 2001). According to this classification of academic discourse, the researcher decided to work on physics as a hard-pure, computer engineering as a hard-applied, and applied linguistics as a soft-applied academic discourse. The reason for which the researcher used applied linguistics is our familiarity with and good command of that.

Moreover, the researcher compiled a non-native data of applied linguistics in English which included RAs written by Iranian writers to see if there is any difference between native and non-native authors in the same discipline of applied linguistics with regard to the transition markers.

Procedure and Data Analysis
The first step involved the collection of 180 research articles across three native disciplines including computer engineering, physics and applied linguistics and a non-native discipline of applied linguistics in order to examine the occurrence of TMs in their discussion and conclusion sections and the difference between native and non-native researchers in the use of TMs in applied linguistics articles. In the next step, all research articles were saved on the computer to form data-based and the two sections of the research articles consisting of 253719 words were chosen for the analysis.

The taxonomy of Halliday and Hassan (1976) was extracted for the analysis of the selected sections of RAs regarding the use of TMs. In the next phase, the articles were examined to determine the frequency of TMs. According to Adel (2006), metadiscourse expressions can be multifunctional and context dependent, therefore, determining the frequency of TMs was conducted manually throughout each data. Moreover, this job was done twice for the purpose of accuracy. So, the researcher calculated the inter-rater reliability through the calculation of correlation between the raters based on Spearman formula to make sure whether the analysis was done in the right way.

After the data were obtained, they were summarized by the use of descriptive statistics and presented through frequency table. The frequency and percentage of each TM in each discipline were calculated separately and then computer engineering and physics articles were compared with each other and native applied linguistics with group non-native applied linguistics. Then, Chi-square was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the research articles in the use of TMs.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Analysis

A total of 1746 transition markers were identified in all research articles. In computer engineering RAs 517 TMs were used (76985 words), 161 were used in physics RAs (24794 words), 735 were identified in native applied linguistics RAs (97719 words), and 333 in non-native applied linguistics RAs (53821 words).

Frequency and percentage of TMs in RAs

The four groups of RAs investigated in this study were analyzed concerning the frequency of occurrence of transition markers in each of the 5 categories of the taxonomy used in this study. Table 1 shows the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the articles; rows numbered 1-5 represent the taxonomy applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all transition markers in each discipline under the present study are shown in columns under each discipline as well. Total number of TMs is also given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Computer engineering</th>
<th>Physics</th>
<th>Applied linguistics native</th>
<th>Applied linguistics non-native</th>
<th>Total TMs in all the discipline</th>
<th>Percentag e of the category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Frequency of occurrence of transition markers in RAs

In the following the five categories of the taxonomy of TMs presented are introduced:

1. Causal

The first category in the classification used here represented the causal connectors. Different causal connectors were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers. However, the least number of this category was found in physics articles. The sum of the occurrence of this category in the five groups equaled 347 cases (19.87% of all the TMs) among which causal connectors “thus” had the highest frequency while “hence” had the lowest.
2. Adversative
The frequent adversative connectors were found in applied linguistics articles written by native researchers. While the least number of this category was found in physics articles, this category had the frequency of 503 cases in all the five groups (28.80% of all the TMs) among which adversative connectors “however” had the highest frequency while “even so” had the least.

3. Sequential
This category occurred 210 times in the four groups (12.02% of all the TMs). The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least number of this category was found in physics articles among which the transition markers “finally” had the highest frequency while “at present” had the least. (For observing the details.

4. Conditional
This category was found to be repeated three times (0.17%) in applied linguistics by non-native writers while the least number of this category was found in computer engineering, physics and native applied linguistics.

5. Additional
The fifth category of transition markers in the classification of TMs in the present study deals with the additional connectors. The overall number occurrence of this category was 683 cases equal to 39.11% of the TMs highlighted in this study. The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles.

Cross-disciplinary variation of transition markers in RA,
The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between physics and computer engineering articles in terms of using TMs. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where $X^2$ stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of TMs</th>
<th>Causal</th>
<th>Adversative</th>
<th>Sequential</th>
<th>Conditional</th>
<th>Additional</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physics articles</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer engineering</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>211</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between physics and computer engineering articles was found to be significant at (p<0.05) since the Observed $X^2$ (12.8) is greater than the Critical $X^2$ (9.4) with df=4.

Inter-disciplinary variation of transition markers in RA,
The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers in terms of
using TMs. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where $X^2$ stands for the Chi-square and P shows the level of significance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TMs</th>
<th>Categories of Causal</th>
<th>Adversative</th>
<th>Sequential</th>
<th>Conditional</th>
<th>Additional</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disciplines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied native articles</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied non-native articles</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers was found to be significant at (p<0.05) since the Observed $X^2$ (16.7) is greater than the Critical $X^2$ (9.4) with df=4. Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of transition markers in computer engineering articles and physics articles showed significant differences in using TMs in the two groups. In other words, there were no significant differences in the types and frequencies between these two disciplines was rejected and so were articles written on applied linguistics by English and Iranian researchers.

**Discussion**

The results of this study showed that there are differences and similarities between computer engineering and physics. In both set of articles, the most frequent types of transition markers were additional connectors, and the least ones were conditional and sequential connectors. Such differences in various disciplines can be explained by regarding the nature of fields of knowledge. For example, the field of physics can be accounted as "hard" sciences in which methods, materials, and procedures can be measured precisely and experiment context is more controlled, whereas Economics as a "soft" science is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative essence. Similarly, Hyland (1998) argues that the control of variables in the soft-knowledge fields is looser and research findings are not streamlined. Thus, the soft disciplines more likely need more strategies and devices such as interactive metadiscourse elements to persuade audiences.

The possible reason for higher occurrence of TMs in computer engineering is that although computer engineering generally represents technological information, it gives information about some issues which are not absolutely technological. So it has some characteristics of "soft" science which is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative nature.

In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure; the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied. So physics and computer engineering can be considered as hard science; therefore, they are expected to have some common characteristics. This can justify similarity between these two disciplines in terms of using same categories of TMs in both disciplines adversative connectors were of the greatest frequency and also both disciplines used conditional connectors equally.
In the view of the second research question, the analysis of the data showed that there were disciplinary similarities and differences in the use of transition markers in applied linguistics RAs written by English and Iranian authors. In both set of articles, the most frequent were additional connectors. Adversative and causal connectors occur in the second and third position respectively. In applied linguistics articles written by native authors there were 735 TMs out of 97719 words whereas in the Iranian ones 333 TMs out of 53821 words. In other words, there was a significant difference between these two disciplines. The results of the study are also to some extent similar to the results of the study conducted by Farrokhi and Ashrafi (2009) which concluded that there is a significant difference in the distribution of textual metadiscourse markers between the writings of native English writers and non-native Persian writers of English. The results of this study confirm Dahl’s (2004) claim that language and national writing traditions seem to be the most influential factors in using interactive metadiscourse markers in linguistics texts.

One of the reasons in meaningful differences between the uses of TMs in articles written by native and Iranian non-native writers can be the lack of the non-native writers’ mastery of conventions and linguistic rules of academic writing genre. According to Hyland (2009), academic writing, much like any other kind of writing, is only effective when writers use conventions that other members of their community find recognizable and convincing. Moreover, not only the non-native writers needs to master in linguistics rules and conventions of academic texts, but also they require understand higher levels of discourse. Hyland (2004) mention that metadiscourse resources are of great value at higher levels of writing in an academic and at the same time meaningful and appropriate way to a particular disciplinary community.

The other reason can be the influence of linguistic background and culture traditions of non-native writers on the use of metadiscourse markers in the second language. According to Hyland (2004) the writers’ cultural and rhetorical preferences can affect the use of metadiscourse markers and the style of discourse organization. So, it can be said that non-native writers must be familiar with the cultural conventions of the use of metadiscourse markers in the target language in order to produce successful texts in a foreign language.

CONCLUSION
This study aimed to examine the use of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of published articles in the fields of physics, computer, and applied linguistics among English native and Iranian non-native researchers. The results of this study showed the writers of physics articles used more TMs than the writers of computer engineering articles which showed the different nature between these two disciplines. On the other hand, the nature of discipline can influence the frequency of transitional markers in the written text. Another result of this study revealed that Iranian researchers of linguistics slightly use less connector than English native researchers. This underuse problem may be related to the impact of first language and culture of non-native writers on the use of TMs in the second language. Also, these two groups of writers from these two disciplines showed that various preferences in employing TMs types based on their propositional content, argumentation and readers.
Finally, it can be said that even when the non-native writers have a good knowledge of TMs, they will be influenced by their first language and culture. Contrastive studies on the use of metadiscourse markers in different disciplines with different languages help the writers to familiar with the differences between their cultures and the culture of discourse to which they write the text. Also, it shows us that some languages and disciplines are specific and this awareness is important for the development of writers.

Difficulties for those non-native writers and students who want to be considered as member of the academic discourse may be because of the lack of familiarity with the conventions of disciplinary culture and these resources of academic discourse. According to Mauranen (1993), cultural differences in metadiscourse use may result in unintentionally inefficient writing on the part of L2 writers. Therefore, EFL writers need to increase understanding of these resources and rhetorical conventions of their disciplinary community in order to join that community.

The results of this study may be useful for the teachers of English for academic purposes and English for specific purposes in making their learners aware of the ways in which metadiscourse resources including TMs occur in the text in order to achieve the communicative purpose of specific genre. So, it is necessary to pay attention to these resources and teaching them to the foreign language learners of English in ESP, EAP course.

Also, these findings of this study can be used by teachers of EFL learners to aware them the differences which occur in the conventions of metadiscourse use between native and non-native writers.

This study has examined some important questions about the types and frequencies of TMs in English and Persian in the disciplines of applied linguistics, physics, and computer engineering. Further research may be carried onto comparatively studying TMs in other disciplines in English articles written by English and Iranian writers to find if these devices are used differently. It is possible to compare research articles written by authors with other language background; for example, between German writers and English writers. It is also possible to compare other metadiscourse markers such as frame markers in research articles. In this study, the checklist used was based on Halliday and Hassan (1976). In other studies other checklists or combination of different checklists can be used. The present study dealt with discussion and conclusion sections in RAs while other sections in RAs could be studied in terms of TMs and other metadiscourse markers.

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I
nternational Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)

Volume 8 (2), February 2015: 260-272

Bagheri, M., et al

EISSN: 2289-2737 & ISSN: 2289-3245

www.ijllalw.org


INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF INDIRECT FOCUS ON FORM THROUGH CORRECTIVE RECAST AND DIRECT FOCUS ON FORMS THROUGH METALINGUISTIC FEEDBACK ON IRANIAN PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ LINGUISTIC ACCURACY OF ORAL PRODUCTION

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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed to examine the effect of oral corrective feedback provided by the means of indirect focus on form through corrective recast in comparison with direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of pre-university students’ oral production was studying at Mehr School in Khoramshar, Iran. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 40 students were chosen through a Nelson Proficiency Test (series 300D) used to homogenize the participants regarding their language proficiency level. Based on the results of this test, two matched experimental groups, 20 participants as the Indirect Corrective Recast (ICR) and 20 participants as Direct Metalinguistic Feedback (DMF), were formed. After ten sessions of treatment, the two groups were post-tested through another structured interview. The analysis of the data was done through Paired and Independent Samples t-test. While both groups made statistically significant improvement in terms of the average accuracy gains, concerning the general effectiveness of the two feedback techniques to focus on form, the data analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups, though the ICR Group performed slightly better on the post-test than the DMF Group. In sum, this study confirmed that the planned focus on form can be an effective tool for the development of oral accuracy in the EFL situations. It can also be concluded that intensive recasts which are repeatedly focused on a particular structure are not different from direct types of feedback in teaching linguistic accuracy.

KEYWORDS: Corrective recast, Metalinguistic feedback, Accuracy, Oral Production

INTRODUCTION
As indicated by Corder (1967), errors play an essential role in the process of language learning because they show the extent to which the learners have learned the target language as well as the areas in which they still require help. This study aimed at examining the ways through which teachers orally correct learners’ errors and the impact of such corrections on learners’ English language production. As Shaffer (2008) stated, one of the questions confronting every EFL
Corrective feedback as one of the efficient techniques of focus on form and meaning has long been used in second language classrooms. Learning entails feedback. Otherwise, the students have no means of evaluating the extent and appropriateness of their learning. Within the field of second language research, a number of studies are centering on corrective feedback. Feedback is an essential part of language pedagogy because through teacher's feedback learners can be aware of how far they have progressed and how they are doing. All of these techniques are put into a direct-indirect continuum. Metalinguistic and recasts have been recognized as two useful feedback treatments that arise in the course of interaction to deal with communication problems.

While a great many studies have been done to investigate the efficacy of corrective feedback in EFL, there is still debate over what kinds of corrective feedback is more effective. The present study aimed at investigating whether there is any statistically significant difference between groups of Iranian pre-university students receiving indirect feedback on form through corrective recast in comparison with another group receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of oral production at the same level of language proficiency. Nassaji and Swain (2000) maintained the primary issue that exists in the area of corrective feedback is that most of second language teachers are not familiar with the impacts of different types of feedbacks, which feedback is more suitable for which level? They are not aware that whether corrective recasts or metalinguistic feedback has more beneficial effect on students’ accuracy.

The purpose of this study was to see whether pre-university school students in Iran benefit more from indirect focus on form through corrective recast or direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback. This study aimed to provide data for English teachers and researchers with better understanding of corrective feedback and which type can be more useful for students’ oral accuracy and retention. One of the concerns of teachers, particularly in communicative-focused classes, is that they wonder if students’ oral productions should be corrected in terms of indirect or direct corrective feedback. As teachers obtain a better perception of which kind of corrective feedback benefit students, students receive more quality instruction and receive feedback that best contributes to L2 acquisition.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Reactive and proactive focus on form has both advantages and disadvantages. An advantage of reactive focus on form is that the natural flow of communication is not interrupted as a teacher should only correct learners’ repetitive errors using more indirect techniques such as recast. In addition, “the teacher does not have to pre-select a target form before a class” (Doughty & William, 1998, p. 206). On the other hand, Doughty and Williams (1998) suggest that reactive
focus on form is not practical when the learners are of “different L1s, of different abilities, or of such high ability that errors go unnoticed by the teacher or other learners, since the message is successfully delivered” (p. 206).

Doughty and Williams (1998) respond to these conditions of reactive focus on form by asserting that teachers should “notice and be prepared to handle various learning difficulties as they arise” (p. 206). The proactive focus on form was introduced in order to overcome deficiencies of the reactive stance and can be successfully used to either a large class-size or learners at different levels of ability. In proactive focus on form, a teacher must choose a target structure before starting class and design a schedule on the basis of “considerations of individual learner differences, developmental language learning sequences, input quality, formal or functional complexity, and L1 influences on SLA process” (p. 198).

Loschky and Bley-Vromen (1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998) introduced concept of task essentialness regarding the difficulties in proactive focus on form. Thus, Swain (1998) proposed dictogloss which could fulfill the condition of task essentialness to a large extent. In dictogloss for focus on form purpose, the teacher read a text involving the targeted structure to students at normal speed, while the students need to take notes and then reconstruct the text together. Afterwards, at the time of reconstruction and reproduction, the teacher can focus on that specific form.

Direct feedback to focus on form includes explicitly attracting the focus of the learner to the error with or without rule explanation. The two kinds of direct corrective feedback that fall toward the more explicit end of the continuum are determined by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as: (a) ‘direct correction’ when it is overtly stated that an error has been made and the correct form is provided; and (b) ‘metalinguistic feedback’ when a metalinguistic explanation of the underlying grammatical rule is given. Therefore, if a language learner says, “He go to school every day,” the corrective feedback can be supplied directly, for example, “no, not go, you should say goes,” and may or may not contain metalinguistic information, for instance, “Don’t forget to make the verb agree with the subject” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, pp. 171-172). Metalinguistic feedback is divided into three subcategories: metalinguistic comments, metalinguistic information and metalinguistic questions (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Metalinguistic comments, the most minimally informative of the three, simply demonstrate the occurrence of an error. The second subcategory of metalinguistic feedback is metalinguistic information which goes beyond simply indicating the occurrence or location of the error and “generally supplies some metalanguage that refers to the nature of the error” (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47). The third subcategory of metalinguistic feedback is metalinguistic questions that refer to the nature of the error but try to extract the information from the student.

Richards, Platt and Platt (1992, p. 141) stated that fluency is mainly used in contrast with accuracy which is “the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently”. Harmer (2001) asserted that non-communicative activities are expected to improve the accuracy of learners. On the other hand, communicative activities are
to enhance the fluency of learners. The common idea is that during accuracy work, the teacher is supposed to point out and correct the errors made by learners. In addition, during communicative activities teachers should not interrupt the flow of the speech of learners to shed light on the grammatical, lexical, or pronunciation errors, for the reason that this act interrupts communication.

Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) in an experimental study investigated the effects of direct and indirect corrective feedback on the acquisition of past test -ed among low-intermediate learners. The indirect feedback in this study was recast and the direct feedback was metalinguistic feedback. The results of this study indicated that direct feedback containing metalinguistic information was more effective than indirect feedback containing recasts.

Nassaji (2009) investigated the impact of recasts with more direct types of corrective feedback which is called prompt on a series of linguistic features. Despite the fact that these target features were not new to learners in his study either, he came to a reassuring point that the degree of learners’ latent knowledge of the target forms may affect the efficacy of recasts and feedback which is called prompt on a series of linguistic features. Despite the fact that these target features were not new to learners in his study either, he came to a reassuring point that the degree of learners’ latent knowledge of the target forms may affect the efficacy of recasts and more heavily on learners’ latent knowledge of the target form than recasts. He further supposed that recasts could be “more beneficial for learning new forms” than prompts (2009, p.441).

Sheen (2007) investigated the impact of focused corrective feedback on the improvement of 91 adult ESL learners’ accuracy in the use of two kinds of articles (‘the’ and ‘a’). This study involved a direct only group (the researcher pointed to errors and provided correct forms), a direct-metalinguistic group (the researcher pointed to errors, provided correct forms, and supplied metalinguistic explanations), and a control group. The efficacy of the corrective feedback was measured on post-tests. Sheen found that both direct corrective feedback groups outperformed the control group. This study also revealed that direct corrective feedback helped upgrade ESL learners’ accuracy, particularly when metalinguistic feedback was supplied. She described this result by pointing out that the feedback supplied to the students with the correct form was limited to two linguistic forms (i.e., articles ‘the’ and ‘a’), which made the processing load manageable for them.

Saito and Lyster (2012) compared the impacts of instruction with and without recasts targeting pronunciation errors in the use of English /ɹ/ by Japanese students of English. All students participated in four hours of form-focused tasks designed to improve their argumentative skills in English while attracting their attention to the target forms through typographically enhanced input and providing opportunities for production practice. During these tasks, one group received recasts following their mispronunciation or unclear pronunciation of /ɹ/ while no corrective feedback was provided to the other. The students receiving recasts made considerably more improvement than those not receiving recasts, again revealing that practice in tandem with feedback supplies more support for the restructuring of interlanguage forms than practice alone.
Sometimes with previous studies regarding the effectiveness of indirect and direct feedback, little to no difference occurs between recasts and metalinguistic error correction. A research done by Kim and Mathes (2001) utilized a target structure of dative verbs with 20 Korean adult ESL learners. Their study examined two groups: Group A received metalinguistic feedback and Group B received recasts. Both were presented in two sessions one week apart from each other. Although learners told that they preferred direct feedback, the achievements between the two production tasks were not significant.

Another study done by Sanz (2003) examined 28 first-year university learners of Spanish studying pronouns between the object and verb and placed them into two groups. Group one received metalinguistic feedback and group two received implicit feedback. Sentence completion and written video retelling revealed that both groups significantly enhanced ability to provide the target structure with no difference between the groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The research questions formulated for the purpose of this study were as follows:
1. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test linguistic accuracy of participants’ oral production, receiving-indirect focus on form through corrective recast?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test linguistic accuracy of participants’ oral production, receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference between post-test linguistic accuracy of participants’ oral production, receiving-Indirect focus on form through corrective recast and those participants receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic Feedback?

METHODOLOGY
Design
This study was conducted based on pre-test and post-test design which composed of two independent variables (two techniques of focus on form, i.e., indirect focus on form through corrective recast, and direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback), and a dependent variable (linguistic accuracy). Drawing upon Mackey and Gass (2005), the present study had a between-groups design. More specifically, since the two groups of the study received different treatments, and there was no control group, the design took the form of comparison groups design, one of between-groups design types.

The design of the study included:
Language proficiency test: Nelson English Language Test (series 300D) developed by Fowler and Coe (1976) was used as a means to homogenize the experimental groups' participants.
Pre-test: It was done through a structured interview to measure the accuracy scores of participants on the basis of three mentioned grammatical structures before treatments.
Treatment 1: It was in the form of indirect focus on form through corrective recast.
Treatment 2: It was in the form of direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback.

Post-test: It was done through another structured interview to measure the accuracy scores of participants on the basis of three mentioned grammatical structures after treatments.

Participants
Participants of the study were selected through the random sampling among pre-university students studying at Mehr School in Khoramshar, Iran. Upon administering Nelson Proficiency Test, 40 students whose scores were within one standard deviation above or below the mean score of the whole sample were recognized as eligible participants and included in the study. They were selected out of 52 pre-university students who took this test (i.e. Nelson test). Subsequently, these participants were evenly assigned to one of two experimental groups, one as the Indirect Corrective Recast (ICR) group and the other as the Direct Metalinguistic Feedback (DMF) group, respectively. Each group included 20 participants. Regarding the participants’ demographic information, they were all male students and their age ranged between 17 and 19 years old.

Instrumentation
In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, the following instruments were employed: To run the study, first, a Nelson English Language Test was used as a means to homogenize the participants with regard to their language proficiency level. While the Nelson test is standardized and highly reliable, this test was also piloted with a similar group of eight students from the same population to verify its consistency with respect to the context of the present study. Hence, the general English proficiency test was found to be appropriate for the participants performing level. It is worth noting here that the reliability of general English proficiency test estimated by KR-21 method appeared to be (r=.76). This test consisted of four parts: cloze tests, structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. All parts were in the form of Multiple-Choice questions. There were, in all, 50 items and the time allotted was 60 minutes.

The second instruments used in this study were two structured interviews including three grammatical structures namely second-conditional sentences, should have + past participle, and the use of four types of conjunction including so, such, too and enough in adverbial clauses in order to elicit the required structure from the participants, in pre-test and post-test. It is important to note that since there was no valid and reliable ready-made test in the market fulfilling the purpose of this research, the pre-test was designed and developed by the researcher based on the grammatical exercises related to these three aimed structures which are commonly used in Pre-University Students’ English Workbooks. This test was in the form of structured interview included 20 items and before final administration it was piloted with a smaller group of pre-university students who were similar in English proficiency level to the main participants of the study. An item analysis was done to calculate the level of difficulty of all items. Then, based on the results of this analysis, some items were modified or replaced by some new ones. The reliability of this test which was calculated by KR-21 method and it came out to be satisfactory with an index of .77. Another similar test of 20 items like pre-test was used as the post-test to measure the effectiveness of the instructional approaches. The reliability index for this test was 0.78. It should be noted that in all the interviews, the interviewer read the situation to the
interviewee. Then the interviewee was supposed to start his answers orally with the provided incomplete sentences, with the required structure. Accuracy ratios were computed to score the interviews (by two raters) through dividing the correct uses by the sum of the total number of incorrect and zero uses (White, 1998).

For treatment, three passages for dictogloss purpose were developed for each structure, which were the same for both the ICR and the DMF Group. As noted in Chapter Two, dictogloss (Swain, 1998) was used to meet the condition of task essentialness, that is to say, to provide enough opportunities for the teacher to offer focus on the aimed form (Loschky & Bley-Vromen, 1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998). These passages for dictogloss were selected based on reading comprehension activities of their English Workbooks that students had worked on them during the class activities. Then the researcher included many instances of the specified structure for each passage to fulfill the objective of the study in order to attract the participants’ attention to focus on the aimed form.

**Procedure**

Based on the administration of Nelson Proficiency Test, 40 participants whose test scores were one standard deviation below or above the mean score were included as the eligible participants of the study. Based on the results of this test, two matched experimental groups, 20 participants as the ICR Group and 20 participants as the DMF Group were formed. Further, to make sure the participants, in the two groups, did not possess statistically significantly different abilities in terms of linguistic accuracy, a pre-test was given, requiring the participants in both groups to answer orally the questions of structured interview in order to obtain the accuracy rate of the participants before treatment. It should be noted that the questions of structured interview in pre-test were about three grammatical structures namely second-conditional sentences, should + past participle, and the use of four types of conjunction including so, such, too, and enough in adverbial clauses. It is worth mentioning that the participants in this study had a little familiarity with these three grammatical structures based on what they had studied in their English course books.

It should be noted that the ratings of the interviews in the pre-test and post-test were carried out by two raters. The inter-rater reliability was calculated through Person Correlation analysis for the pre-test of accuracy is \( r=.94 \) and for post-test of accuracy is \( r=.97 \) which shows that there is a high positive relationship between the scores rated by Rater 1 and Rater 2 in both pre-test and post-test for both experimental groups.

Regarding the treatment, this study required the teachers to provide the participants with a kind of task that pushed the participants to use the aimed structures in a way that the completion and fulfillment of the task was not possible without using them. This matter, called task essentialness (Loschky & Bley-Vromen, 1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998), was solved by using dictogloss (Swain, 1998). Three passages were developed for each structure to be presented to participants for dictogloss purpose, in ten sessions that each session lasted for about 45 minutes.
Furthermore, during the dictogloss, the participants took notes about the text which was read aloud by the teacher at normal speed, which also involved many instances of the aimed structures. Then, the participants were to reconstruct the text and supply an oral production of the summary of the text, once in pairs or small groups of three, and once more to the class.

In the ICR Group, the participants were provided with corrective recast, once during the pair or group work by their trained teacher by walking around the class and eavesdropping on them, and once more at the time of the oral production to the class. It should be pointed out that in order to attain the maximum benefit from recasts, the participants were made familiar with the nature of recasts; that is to say, the learners were instructed that the use of recasts by the teacher was not confirmations of meaning but rather reactions to erroneous forms (Nicholas, Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

For the post-test, which was about 30 days after the pre-test, the participants took the post-test through another structured interview, which was again double-rated. It should be pointed out that the scores used for data analysis were resulted from getting the average of two scores given by the two raters, if the scores were ever different at all.

**Data Analysis**

Taking account of the research questions and the null hypotheses and regarding the fact that all the assumptions for parametric tests were met, to determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the language proficiency levels of the two groups before the experiment began, an Independent-Samples t-test was run on the language proficiency level mean scores of the two groups. Moreover, another Independent-Samples t-test was used to examine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the pre-test before starting the treatment. Next, to investigate the first and second null hypotheses, two separate Paired-Samples t-tests were run, one determined the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the ICR Group and the other determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the DMF Group. Finally, to either confirm or reject the third null hypothesis, an Independent-Samples t-test was used to investigate the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In order to measure the accuracy scores of two groups on the basis of three aimed grammatical structures before the treatment, a pre-test was administered to the participants. The participants’ overall scores on the pre-test were collected through structured interview and are shown in Table 1.
Table 1: ICR and DMF Group’s Pre-test Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICR Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.66</td>
<td>18.66</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMF Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29.78</td>
<td>16.61</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean was 27.66 and the standard deviation was 18.66 for the ICR Group. In the case of the DMF Group, the mean and standard deviation were 29.78 and 16.61 respectively. As it is noticed, the means and standard deviations of the two groups were approximately similar on the pre-test. The data were put into Independent Samples t-test analysis to show any possible difference between the ICR and DMF Groups on the pre-test. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Independent Samples T-test on Pre-test Mean Scores

<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>Equal variances</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.471</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>37.49</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2 the two groups were not significantly different with respect to their variances. (F=.530, p=.471). The observed value, by degrees of freedom 38, was 0.37. As it can be seen the value of the Sig. (2-tailed) is .70 which was more than 0.05, hence; it can be inferred that both the ICR and the DMF Group performed significantly similar on the pre-test, that is, the participants’ oral accuracy concerning the knowledge of three aimed grammatical before treatment was considerably equal.

Further, to investigate the first and second hypotheses, two separate paired-samples t-tests were run, one determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the ICR Group, and the other determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the DMF Group. To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, nevertheless, a paired-samples t-test was utilized.
As Table 4 indicates the $T_{observed}$ absolute value, by degree of freedom of 19,-was 14.61. Since the Sig. (2-tailed) was less than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that the difference in mean scores of the pre-test and post-test was statistically significant. This finding was not in conformity with the claim of Null Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis was, consequently, statistically rejected. Therefore, the Paired Samples $t$-test analysis revealed that the participants in the ICR Group receiving corrective feedback improved significantly in their post-test for their performance on the accuracy of oral production ($p=.000 < 0.05$). The results proved the hypothesis that indirect error correction through corrective recast during oral activities by the means of dictogloss to focus on the aimed form seemed to have a significant overall effect on students' oral accuracy.

To determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the results of the DMF Group's pre-test and post-test, a similar approach was adopted. The relating descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5.

As it is evident in Table 5, the pre-test-mean score of the DMF Group was 29.78, while that of the post-test was 56.79. Although this difference between the two mean scores seemed to be less than the mean scores difference of the ICR Groups' pre-test and post-test, a paired-samples $t$-test was run to see if this difference in the DMF Group was statistically significant (Table 6).
Regarding the $T_{\text{observed}}$ absolute value, by degree of freedom of 19, which was computed to be 14.74, and taking the value of the Sig. (2-tailed) into account, 0.00, it was proved that the difference between the two mean scores was statistically significant. This meant that the participants in the DMF Group had performed significantly better on the post-test; hence, the Null Hypothesis 2 was rejected. On the whole, the paired-samples $t$-test analysis indicated that the learners in the DMF Group receiving metalinguistic feedback also made considerable progress for development of their oral accuracy. That is to say, both types of corrective feedback in this study were effective in facilitating participants' oral linguistic accuracy. An independent-samples $t$-test was used to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test.

With respect to the pre-test and post-test mean scores, whereas the ICR participants gained a pre-test mean score of 27.66, which was lower than the pre-test mean score of the DMF participants (29.78), they performed better on the post-test and obtained a mean score of 60.81, as compared to that of the DMF participants (56.79). In other words, the mean gain of the ICR Group was computed to be 33.15, while that of the DMF Group was calculated to be 27.01. In order to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test, an independent samples $t$-test was run.
Table 8: Independent Samples t-test on Post-test Mean Scores

<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>.087</td>
<td>.769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>37.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 8 indicates, the Sig. value of the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was more than 0.05, it was concluded that the variability in the two conditions was the same. The Tobeserved value was, therefore, 0.59, by degree of freedom of 38. Moreover, since the Sig. (2-tailed) was more than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that there was not a statistically significant difference between the oral production’s linguistic accuracy performance of the ICR and DMF Groups on the post-test based on the three aimed grammatical structures. The third Null Hypothesis was, therefore, verified.

**Discussion**

Results of paired-samples t-test analysis showed that, in spite of the low performance of the participants in the pre-test, there were significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post mean ranks of the ICR group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview, in favor of the post-test. Thus, the first null hypothesis stating that “There are not significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post-test mean ranks of the ICR group on the three aimed grammatical structures” was rejected. This improvement may be due to the fact that the recasts used in the present study were corrective in nature. This kind of recasts composed of two steps: 1) repetition (generally with rising intonation) to draw the participants' attention accompanied by 2) recasts to supply, contrastively, the necessary target exemplar. This made recasts more salient and easier to notice.

The third reasonable interpretation is that the participants of the ICR Group were already taught grammar explicitly in the context based on what they had studied in their English course book. This enabled them to respond to and benefit from recasts effectively. This supports the conclusions about the positive relationship between explicit knowledge and noticing. These conclusions revealed that learners who tended to respond to recasts had learned grammar rules explicitly. For example, Rhee (2012) concluded that contexts and explicit knowledge interdependently created the cognitive ability that increased the effectiveness of recasts on second/foreign language processing, which then arguably determined subsequent language development.
Results of another paired-samples t-test analysis showed that there were significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post mean ranks of the DMF Group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview, in favor of the post-test. This indicates that metalinguistic feedback like corrective recast led to significant improvement in the participants’ oral grammatical accuracy. It mainly provided the participants with negative evidence explicitly.

The findings of the present study indicated that in spite of the differences between the two experimental groups’ means during the ten sessions of oral production and treatment, the results of independent sample t-test showed that there were not statistically significant differences at 0.05 levels between the post-test mean ranks of the ICR Group and the DMF Group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview. Indeed, the two feedback types were equally effective in the development of the oral accuracy. Considering these findings, it can be suggested that the intensive recasts focused on a specific forms are not different from direct types of feedback. However, the findings of the current study revealed that recasts seemed to be an effective type of corrective feedback with low level language learners as they were short, one change and accompanied by clues and gestures which empowered the participants to pinpoint their errors and hence bridge the gap between their erroneous utterances and the target utterances (e.g., Sheen, 2004)

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to examine the potential impact of the two feedback techniques to focus on form through corrective recast and metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of Iranian pre-university students in the terms of three aimed grammatical structures. Both theory and research proposed that directing learners’ attention to linguistic forms during meaning focused activities can help learners to improve accuracy as well as fluency. This study found that focus on form instruction contributes to the learners’ accuracy gains. Results are encouraging as far as the two types of feedback in grammatical accuracy are concerned. They revealed that the two feedback techniques (corrective recasts and metalinguistic feedback) were effective in enhancing the participants' grammatical accuracy in oral production. The findings indicated that in spite of the difference between the two experimental groups’ means in the favors of the ICR Group, this means difference were not statistically significant on the post-test. In fact, the two types of feedback were almost equally effective in the development of the oral grammatical accuracy.

This study investigated the two techniques of focus on form, demonstrating higher gains after the application of indirect focus on form through corrective recast and direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of oral production of Iranian pre-university students based on three aimed grammatical structures. Since corrective recast led to higher score on post-test, albeit by a relatively small margin, in comparison with metalinguistic feedback, it may be beneficial for a teacher to use indirect error correction when possible. Moreover, this study indicates some support for the use of focus on form rather than the use of traditional focus on formS. Hence, teachers need to be familiarized with the techniques of focus on form,
especially the indirect ones which keep the communicative nature of the language classes. So, it would be logical to allot some time to the training of teachers in this respect.

Since this study was confined in terms of its participants, structures in focus, techniques of focus on form, etc., it appears to be necessary to point out some further research to be done in this regard. Considering the fact that this study was limited to only two techniques of focus on form, it is suggested that similar studies be conducted with other techniques of focus on form whether indirect ones or direct ones, such as clarification request, elicitation, etc. Moreover, more comprehensive studies could be done to investigate the effect of more than two techniques at a time on language acquisition. Since the present study focused on only three structures in English, similar studies could examine the accuracy gains in terms of other structures in English. Similar research could be done regarding written recognition and production of other English structures.

REFERENCES

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EVALUATION OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) FACILITIES IN DEVELOPING EFL AMONG UNIVERSITY MALE AND FEMALE ENGLISH TEACHERS: THE CASE OF COMPUTER LITERACY

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ABSTRACT
The present study attempted to investigate the male and female teachers’ attitudes towards computer assisted language learning (CALL) in developing English language teaching in Iranian context. This study was also to examine the MA and PhD teachers’ computer literacy and its effects on using CALL facilities in English classrooms. The participants of this study were 35 university teachers who were selected based on non-random convenient sampling method at the universities of Shahid Chamran and Islamic Azad Universities in Ahvaz, Iran. The research instrument was a three-section questionnaire extracted from Shin and Son (2007) which is in multiple-choice, Likert type and open ended items. The data were collected and analyzed through K-S test of normality and Independent Samples t-test. The results of the study showed that the facilities and equipments are poor and universities need to reassess CALL facilities, in the case of computer literacy and skills, teachers were enough competent and they used CALL facilities if they have access to such equipments. Findings showed that that there was lack of technological equipments for CALL implementations which may affect English as foreign language (EFL) teachers’ motivation in using CALL technology in their teaching career. The implications of study suggest that teachers should keep in mind that they need to be competent both in computer use and language teaching methodologies. Thus they may find new teaching CALL techniques in teaching EFL tasks in their classrooms.

KEYWORDS: Male, female, teachers’ attitudes, Computer assisted language learning (CALL)

INTRODUCTION
Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) provides an effective environment in which students can practice in an interactive manner using multi-media contents, either with the supervision of teachers or on their own pace in a self study mode. The advancement of speech and language technologies has opened new perspectives on CALL systems. The influence of these powerful technological tools has pervaded all aspects of the educational, business, and economic sectors of our world (Singhal, 2004). There is no doubt that the computer has established itself firmly in the world of business and communication technology; it has also successes in acquiring a fundamental role in the educational process (Albirini, 2006a,
This role is becoming more powerful as computers become cheaper, smaller in size, more adaptable and easier to handle. Computers are becoming more appealing to teachers because of their huge capabilities and extensive effectiveness (Dhaif, 2004).

Computer and new technologies help students to obtain individual instruction which are designed to meet their specific needs; therefore, teachers should catch up with the new technologies to enhance students’ learning. Teachers' tasks are different from the traditional teaching. Recently, teachers are not only instructors but also assistants to students' learning. Teachers should give the students chance of creative and critical thinking, the role of teachers in this modern environment of CALL has become active, creative, and innovative. Since students see a computer as a trendy and useful tool, which enables them to be close to the world, new technologies and web sites are very motivating, offering a wide range of authentic material and promoting development of new learning strategies. English as a foreign language (EFL) learners need to use CALL for sending e-mails, using chat rooms, article, class – conferencing, etc. inside and outside the classroom. All these allow the learner to participate in the target language culture. Besides these positive effects, negative ones such as technical and financial problems, lack of training, inappropriate material, and the huge quantity of information requiring skills and judgment on CALL should be also mentioned. The crucial problem is how teachers use these resources. According to Moras (2001), the use of computers does not constitute a method, but rather, it is a medium in which variety of methods, approaches and pedagogical philosophies may be implemented. Warschaur and Whittaker (1997), suggest that in order to make effective use of new technologies, teachers must take a step back and focus on some pedagogical requirements. Teachers should have self-defined goals in order to use it successfully in the classroom. Some of the reasons could also be that CALL creates perfect conditions for writing because it provides authentic materials, or raises students' motivation and can help to achieve computer literacy which is essential for future work and success.

This study was conducted based on the advantages of CALL which have mentioned in the literature of this research. The motivation behind this study was to uncover teachers’ attitudes using CALL in Khuzestan setting, teachers’ computer literacy in teaching English, and teachers’ knowledge of computer facilities of universities. The present study also intended to investigate and evaluate CALL facilities at Khuzestan universities and also investigated English teachers' CALL knowledge in these universities.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Computer–Assisted Language Learning means search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997). CALL means learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies. According to these definitions, computer and new technologies are considered as an essential medium for language teaching and learning. Television, mobiles, iphones, ipads and other technologies could be considered as very modern inventions and become ordinary and essential in daily life. Similarly, computers become ordinary in the life of millions of people around the world (Mahdi, 2013), because of advances in
computer technology teachers are motivated to reassess the computer and consider it a valuable part of daily foreign language learning. Software programs, compact disk technologies, and computer networks are providing teachers with new methods of incorporating culture, grammar, and real language use in the classroom while students gain access to audio, visual, and textual information about the language and the culture of its speakers.

CALL facilities can affect developing EFL in different aspects, they can create authentic learning environment for the learners and give learners constant access to plenty of materials such as newspapers and magazine articles, offer learners the opportunity to take part in activities in the target language, exchange messages with native speakers and interact with them, as part of cultural and social exchange and the outcome being improvement in different skills (Dina & Ciomnei, 2013).

With regard to CALL facilities, a few technical issues should be taken into account. It is obvious that availability of a computer room on a regular class is the first thing that teachers need for CALL to be successful. The experiences of many teachers (e.g. Hashemi & Aziznezhad, 2011) have revealed that three students per computer is the maximum for the teaching experience to be effective. Moreover, navigation on the web implies other specific requirements, such as, access to a reliable network environment, use of modern equipment and browser. This may need many newer sites which are designed through the latest Internet technology in order to anticipate potential problems.

According to Liao and Pope (2008), computer literacy is the knowledge and ability a person has to use computers and technology efficiently. Computer literacy can also refer to the comfort level someone has with using computer programs and other applications that are associated with computers. Another valuable component of computer literacy involves the knowledge of how computers work and operate.

Technological tools such as PCs, laptops, or mobiles are used very effectively and frequently in the classroom for instructional purposes. Drills, tutorials, and computer-based tasks are used in the classrooms in order to promote learning of English skills (Beatty & Nunan, 2004). According to Bangs and Cantos (2004), integrating computer technologies efficiently into language teaching require a combined knowledge of foreign language pedagogy, teaching experience and some computer literacy. Language technologies have been sorting through novel technologies evaluating various instructional potentials, researching current educational uses, and sharing findings with educators to help design instructional technology that enhances language learning. New technologies are interested for preparing teaching materials and activities to be used in teaching skills such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking, communication, reading, and writing (Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2011).

The computer as a tool is used in order to facilitate learning of language. It is powerless and has no inborn wisdom; no initiative and inherent ability to learn or to teach and it is totally the servant of the user, and it is dependent on the teacher in many cases. For example, it is impossible to create educational materials without the help of the teacher. All the teaching, linguistic materials and instructions must be specified by the teacher. It is the teacher decides
what degree of control the computer will have in his/her classes (Chapelle, 2005).

Being a relatively new and interdisciplinary field of study, CALL draws on quite an amount of diverse disciplines, theories and fields that can be grouped into five categories: psychology, artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, instructional technology and design, and human-computer interaction studies (Levy, 1997).

CALL instruction was a theory of instruction centered on the teaching process; however, with the noticeable shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, second language acquisition (SLA) was of paramount importance. Unfortunately, SLA’s reflections on CALL have been far from transparent as there is ‘no generally accepted theory of SLA to embrace with confidence’ (Fox, 1993, p. 101) and there are at least forty theories, models, perspectives, metaphors, hypotheses, and theoretical claims in the SLA literature (Beretta, 1991). The Internet has also given way to computer-mediated communication in language teaching and learning. According to the definition provided by Herring (1996), Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) is “communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers” (p.1). CMC may be categorized as either synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous CMC requires all participants to be online at the same time where an active exchange of information takes place as the participants read or listen to messages and respond immediately. Synchronous CMC includes, instant messaging and chatting through MSN or Skype programs, classroom discussions, and MOOs (Multi-user domain Object Oriented). In asynchronous CMC, participants can log onto the computer and respond to message whenever it is convenient for them. Asynchronous CMC includes mailing lists, bulletin boards, blogs, and e-mail.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study aimed to find out the answers to the following research questions:
RQ1. Do teachers’ educational levels affect the use of CALL in the teaching EFL processes?
RQ2. Do university colleges prepare adequate CALL facilities for EFL teachers?
RQ3. Do male and female teachers use CALL facilities similarly in their EFL classrooms?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
This study was conducted in both governmental and non-governmental universities of Khuzestan where English is taught by university teachers. The EFL university teachers who participated in filling in the questionnaires were selected based on non-random convenient sampling method from Shahid Chamran, Payam-e-noor, Jahad Daneshgahi as governmental universities in Ahvaz, Iran and Islamic Azad Universities of Ahvaz, Abadan, Masijd Suleiman, and Khuzestan Science and Research Branch in Khuzestan province in Iran as non-governmental universities. They taught EFL at the levels of BA, MA, and PhD courses. The numbers of the participants were 20 males and 15 females. Also 19 of the participants hold MA degree and 16 of them hold PhD degree. The age range of the participants was from 26 to 60 with a mean age of 35. The results are presented in Table 1.

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In this study a three-section questionnaire was extracted from Shin and Son (2007) and administrated in order to collect data among EFL university teachers. It was used to collect male and female teachers’ perceptions and perspectives on the use of CALL as a new tool for better implementation of EFL teaching. The questionnaire consisted of three sections; the first section includes personal and educational items aimed to collect the profile of the participants’ background such as their age, gender, degree, teaching experience, using CALL at home and classroom, and reasons for using it, and their level of familiarity with CALL.

The second section includes 15 items of four-point Likert scale including the choices of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4), intended to explore teachers’ perceptions and perspectives on the use of CALL, the first five items related to CALL and its characteristics in providing appropriate teaching and learning materials, the second five items relate to students and their attitudes toward CALL and motivation in learning English via CALL, and the third five items relate to the teachers attitude and ability in utilizing CALL as a teaching tool.

The third section of the questionnaire includes three open-ended questions the advantages, disadvantages of CALL, and teachers’ comments in using CALL for teaching purposes. These items investigated EFL university teachers’ general opinions and comments on the use of the CALL for teaching purposes in the classroom.

The questionnaire was used as an instrument to analyze the features and the numbers in a scale and to differentiate the levels of participants’ answers. The items are grouped according to the concepts of responses as a whole. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated through Pearson correlation analysis on the two occurrences of piloting the questionnaire among a group of 8 MA and PhD university teachers in two occasions of a two-week interval. The participants in the pilot test were supposed to have the same level of knowledge of the research sample. The questionnaire was revised and modified after the pilot test and its reliability coefficient was analyzed through Pearson Correlation analysis as (r=.762).

Procedure
The questionnaire was extracted from Shin and Son (2007) with some modifications. Their questionnaire was designed to assess the use of the Internet in the classrooms; however, we modified it to be adjusted in the research of the effect of CALL on teaching EFL. Then it was
distributed to EFL teachers of governmental and non-governmental universities in Khuzestan (where English is taught at BA and MA levels) in the first semester of 2013-2014 academic year and they returned it within two weeks.

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of 16 items of personal data and 15 items of four-point Likert rated from 1 to 4 and 3 open-ended questions about teachers’ attitudes toward the use of CALL in teaching EFL. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive studies aimed to describe and to interpret the mean, standard deviation (SD) and the variance of each group. Accordingly descriptive statistics was concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views or attitudes that were held; processes that were being felt; or trends that were developing. In sum descriptive statistics in the present research was concerned with how and what existed among the respondents.

The rationale behind the use of descriptive statistics in this study was to obtain complete and detailed perceptions of teachers in regard to computer-assisted language learning. In descriptive statistics, summary statistics are used to summarize a set of observations in order to communicate the largest amount as simply as possible.

In section one items 1 to 4 of the questionnaire asked the participants’ gender (i.e., male and female), education degree (i.e., MA and PhD), age (i.e., under 50 and above 50), teaching experiences (i.e., under 15 and above 15) and their access to CALL (Table 1). The items 5, 6, 10, 14, and 16 were yes/no questions on the use of CALL in the classroom. Items 8 and 9 asked the type of CALL and reasons of using it in teaching EFL. Items 7 and 11 asked the time allocating to use CALL for teaching and items 12, 13, and 15 asked the main reasons for searching webs. Items 11, 12, 13 and 15 were in multiple-choice formats.

The second section included 15 four-point Likert scale items. The main theme of the items was the role of CALL used for teaching EFL. The necessity of CALL was also mentioned in these items. The items were scored based on 1 to 4.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The collected data were analyzed through K-S test of normality and Independent Samples t-test analyses to find any different between MA and PhD teachers’ perspectives in general and male and female teachers, in particular. The effects of teachers’ experiences were also assessed to find any significant difference among the participants.
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Females’ Attitudes toward CALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>.77460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>1.9333</td>
<td>2.01660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>7.1333</td>
<td>1.59762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>5.6000</td>
<td>1.59463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows mean and Std. Deviations of each item in female’s group. The mean of each item showed that disagree had the least and agree had the most attention, therefore, the results of this part showed that female group had positive view toward the use of CALL but not same to the male group. Results are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Parameters</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.9333</td>
<td>7.1333</td>
<td>5.6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Extreme</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</td>
<td>.77460</td>
<td>2.01660</td>
<td>1.59762</td>
<td>1.59463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.398</td>
<td>-.169</td>
<td>-.200</td>
<td>-.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.073</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td>.680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.585</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test distribution is normal.

Table 3 is the K-S test of the female group which is used to determine that whether the test is normal and according to K-S test it was normal; therefore, Independent Samples t-test can be used to calculate the data. Results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers’ attitudes toward CALL (Males vs. Females)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61.9333</td>
<td>9.09840</td>
<td>2.34920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47.0667</td>
<td>3.86313</td>
<td>.99764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 compares two male and female groups and the result showed that mean of the male group is greater than the females. It means that male group had more positive view toward the use of CALL and since descriptive statistics cannot show the significant difference therefore, Independent Samples t-test is used to show the significant difference of the test. It is shown as the following. Results are shown in Table 5.
Table 5: Independent Samples t-test of Using CALL (Males vs. Females)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>14.86</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>20.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>18.88</td>
<td>000</td>
<td>14.86</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>20.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that the critical t=2.04 is less than the observed t=5.82, thus the difference between the groups is significant at (p<0.05). Males and females’ attitudes toward using CALL are analyzed through the Independent Samples t-test to calculate the difference between male and female teachers’ perceptions.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Participants’ Gender and Using CALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50.3500</td>
<td>8.05426</td>
<td>1.80099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.6000</td>
<td>13.31916</td>
<td>3.43899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 showed that the mean of the male group is higher than the females which means that males more positive view toward the use of CALL. Both groups had positive attitude towards computer integration and technology use but males due to some factors including more effects of computer in their daily routines, since they are using more computerized facilities and Internet cafés in the society.

Table 7: Independent Samples t-test of Participants’ Gender and Using CALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>16.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>21.53</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>16.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that the critical t=2.04 is less than the observed t=2.41, thus the difference between the groups is significant at (p<0.05).
Discussion

This section concerns with discussing the results of the study through referring the research questions were raised earlier. Results of the study showed that using technology is known as one of the recent techniques to enhance desirable learning and studies showed that both learners and teachers are interested in technology especially, new ones including CALL. In line with the progress of the society and technology teachers should start to adapt these new instructional tasks in order to motivate their learners for better learning. Since the young generation is so adapted to CALL technology and it is an inseparable part of their lives; therefore, teachers should start using this positive attitude of learners toward using CALL for language teaching. It may be stated that teachers who are interested in CALL agree on the effectiveness of CALL in teaching EFL. With regard to the first question, it should be stated that EFL teachers’ educational levels do not affect on the use of CALL in teaching EFL. Both male and female university EFL teachers tend to use CALL during their teaching processes. In other words, both MA and PhD teachers face the problems including lack of CALL equipments, financial problems, slow Internet, etc. This may affect their computer literacy in using appropriate programs in teaching EFL. Results also showed that CALL literacy is common among male teachers rather than female teachers. This may be due to the availability of such facilities in the society which are used by males rather than females. These facilities are internet cafes, game nets, computer games, etc.

According to the results of this study, CALL may improve language learning which may motivate teachers to teach EFL effectively. Computer and new technologies including CALL facilities which are common among young teachers since this new generation could be called digital natives. In most of the previous studies in CALL, several factors were mentioned as the barriers to the implementation of CALL (e.g. Park & Son, 2009) including external factors such as insufficient computer facilities, lack of administrative support, lack of time, etc. Therefore, it seems that these factors are common problems in most contexts like the setting of Iran. However, it is necessary to use CALL in higher educational settings for teaching EFL. Moreover, language learning centers need to be equipped with these facilities for teaching foreign languages. The participants of this study agreed that CALL facilities at their university are poor and they do not access to new technology in the classroom due to the factors which were mentioned in the previous section. It is also shown that one of the main reasons CALL manipulations is that these facilities are rare due to their expenses. Therefore, as it is agreed by the majority of teachers, these facilities are not used due to EFL classrooms which run in traditional methods such as using blackboards and pen and paper methods.

It is also clear that the teachers’ attitudes toward CALL are dramatically affecting learners’ judgment of using technology. The teachers need to be competent in using computers and enthusiastic about using them. They should have positive attitudes on using computerized equipment if they want their students to work with CALL (Hubbard, 2010). Teachers’ attitudes towards computers define their attitude towards CALL. The teachers who consider themselves to be proficient and integrated with computers have positive attitudes towards CALL. The study proved providing computer literacy classes for teachers who have problems with computer and new technologies. Computer literacy in classes may be highly beneficial. When the teachers are confident enough to work with computers, they have positive attitude towards using computers in
order to teach a foreign language and then their students are likely to have higher motivation and eventually higher achievement. CALL has much to offer when it is integrated into the curriculum with a well-organized fashion. Students have positive attitudes towards it. As Gardner (1985) suggests, when students have positive attitudes they will be more motivated and they more likely to perform better and achieve higher levels of acquisition.

Teachers should keep in mind that students in higher education would need to be proficient both in computers and language. They need to research, write reports, present them, and communicate in English via computers. Therefore, it is not only the question of technology for learning English, but also the urge to assist them in developing CALL.

CONCLUSION
The present study attempted to investigate the teachers’ attitudes toward using CALL in developing EFL among MA and PhD and also male and female teachers. The participants of this study were two male and female groups with respectively 20 and 15 EFL university teachers. A questionnaire on the use of CALL was given to the participants; the questionnaire consisted of three parts which asked the participants’ views toward using the CALL. The results of the study showed that the facilities and equipments at the universities are so poor and they need to reassess their CALL facilities(Zamani, 2010). In the case of computer literacy and skills, teachers were enough competent and they almost used computer and new technologies to search for teaching materials. Since one of the research questions was about the role of gender in CALL use, the findings of the study showed that male teachers were more interested in computer use than the females and younger teachers were more integrated in technology use than the traditional ones. Although the survey showed positive views on the use of CALL in teaching EFL, the integration of CALL into classroom was very limited and this problem was due to large numbers of students in the classrooms, limited time to finish the textbooks, lack of technical and pedagogical training of using CALL, lack of computer facilities, and slow Internet. According to Machtmes (2005), the use of CALL technology in the classroom needs substantial investments of time, financial support, equipment, personal commitment and courage in order to explore teaching innovation in the EFL classrooms.

There are some implications for language teachers, learners, and college administrators. It is highly recommended these implications as new ideas for further studies about CALL. The findings of the study showed that EFL teachers have positive view toward technology use and its effect on learners’ language proficiency and motivation in language learning (Cooper & Self, 1990). According to the participants’ view, using the CALL and technology help to access to the new and up to date materials which lead to better education.

The study also revealed those students’ language skills, especially listening, speaking, and writing will be improved through using technology. The students are also interested in using CALL when teachers can use these facilities in the classroom. Thus providing students with web sites or CALL approaches is believed to be highly constructive (Inan & Lowther, 2010). The results of this study implied that male teachers are more proficient in using CALL tasks.
Technology will not weaken the teachers’ role, since it is revealed that there will be necessary to offer technology and computer literacy courses to both teachers University colleges are advised to prepare and develop CALL facilities for better language learning and teaching. Most teachers in this study believed that CALL approaches can be an effective tool for teaching a foreign or second language because they can find authentic, up to date, and various materials, as students are motivated in learning with computers. However, there seems to be some obstacles in using CALL and technology in EFL classrooms including limited computer facilities, limited technical support, slow Internet, and even no access to Internet in classes, etc (Alkahtani, 2007). Therefore, universities need to pay more attention to this issue of language learning and teaching.

REFERENCES


SEMANTIC VERSUS THEMATIC LEXICAL TEACHING METHODS AND VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of three various types of clustering (i.e., semantic, thematic, and haphazard clustering) in the vocabulary acquisition and recall of English as a foreign language (EFL) students as well as the putative role of gender in this regard. To achieve these aims, 50 Iranian native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females, whose linguistic homogeneity had been confirmed through the Oxford Placement Test were selected as the participants of this study. To make sure that the participants had no prior knowledge of the targeted words, the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993) was also administrated. Three separate lists of vocabulary based on their clustering type were then prepared and employed each of which included eight new English words along with their Persian equivalents. These lists were given to the participants in three steps separately. In each step, the participants were required to read the new words along with their Persian equivalents for a specific amount of time and then be immediately tested on them. Each correctly guessed answer received one point. The obtained data were then subjected to an analysis of variance and an independent samples t-test to see if the observed differences were meaningful. A Post hoc Scheffe test was later run to shed more light on these differences. The results demonstrated a statistically significant difference in the immediate posttest in favor of thematic clustering over haphazard and semantic clustering. That is, the performance of participants (both males and females) was improved when vocabulary was presented in thematic cluster. The present study could have implications for language teachers, materials developers, and educators in general: thematic clustering of lexical items ought to be prioritized over semantic or haphazard clustering of the vocabulary items chosen to be taught to L2 learners.

KEYWORDS: Thematic clustering, Semantic clustering, Haphazard clustering, Vocabulary acquisition
INTRODUCTION
Learning vocabulary, as the most unmanageable component in the process of language learning and particularly in the process of second language learning, is really a demanding task which according to Montrul (2001) “involves much more than learning sound-meaning pairings; it also involves learning how lexical information is morphologically expressed and syntactically constrained” (p. 145). Therefore, language learners should experience various tasks such as extensive reading as well as explicit instruction (Schmitt, 2008) in order to enhance their vocabulary knowledge. Through explicit instruction, teachers provide students with lists of words or pictures that are most related to particular situations or topics. Introducing words in groups is among the strategies or techniques used by teachers for direct vocabulary instruction and it seems to enhance vocabulary learning. In this method, which is called clustering, words are grouped in various ways. Words within a cluster share a common super-ordinate concept and can be grouped or related to each other semantically or thematically.

Most English textbooks in use in the context of Iran introduce lexical items in semantic clusters and curriculum writers attempt to select, for each lesson, a set of semantically clustered words that fit specific situations and tasks or that express different notions. It seems that curriculum writers along with EFL program designers assume that this way of organizing and presenting new vocabulary items will benefit learners as it will help them to build semantic networks and relationships and consequently will facilitate and accelerate learning including both acquisition and recall. Whether words can be learned better, stored deeper, and remembered easier when presented semantically, thematically, or even unrelated is the concern of many researchers and remain still controversial.

The present study was an attempt to compare the effects of two different methods of teaching vocabulary items including semantically-related or thematically-related vocabulary presentation on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners to find out which one facilitates vocabulary learning more. Additionally, this study investigated to what extent short-term memory and long-term memory can reserve the words of different sets. Since gender appears to have an effect on the retention and recall of the learned words, the study also aimed to investigate its role in this regard, that is, to see whether these ways of presenting lexical items have a statistically significant relationship with gender’s retention of vocabulary items.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
Vocabulary learning has a key role in second language acquisition (SLA). It is quite necessary for second language (SL) learners to acquire at least hundreds of words in order to be able to communicate in the target language at the most basic level. Second language learners should be able to communicate more effectively and comprehend a broader range of input from the target language through learning a good range of new vocabulary. Bogaards (2001) reminds that for many learners, language learning is the same as knowing a large number of words by heart. So it should not be denied that words constitute a major part of a language. With this in mind, it is necessary to help learners to effectively store and retrieve words in the target language (Sokmen, 1997), and this compels the use of effective pedagogical methods in teaching vocabulary.
Semantic clustering as a vocabulary learning strategy

Semantic field theory is based on the assumption that vocabulary is cognitively organized by interrelationships and networks between words. In a sense that the mind classifies vocabulary by making connections in meaning; these connections in meaning are called semantic fields (Channell, 1981). He interprets this to mean that words that are close in meaning are literally located closer to each other in the mental lexicon. Based on this theory since vocabulary is organized in the mind into groups of words that are linked in meaning, it should be presented to students in groups of semantically related words to facilitate learning (Channell, 1981). Jullian’s (2000) article supports this notion as an effective method of classroom presentation for second learners. Semantic categories are linguistically based and thematic clusters are cognitively based. Although these two types of clusters will not be mutually exclusive, the slight difference between them is still apparent. Variable word class can be considered as one other defining characteristic of a thematic cluster.

Tinkham (1994) claims that authors and planners of ESL programs who are following a more learner-centered approach select vocabulary items based on the communicative needs of the learners, and then organize their programs into units to reflect situations in which students have to use English. In this approach, the vocabulary items needed to express notions, functions and to fit tasks tend to be presented as they are in the structure-centered approach that is they are grouped into semantic clusters.

Channell (1981) suggests using semantic field theory (Lehrer, 1974) and componential analysis (Nida, 1975) in order to facilitate vocabulary acquisition. Semantic field theory describes the vocabulary of language as existing in interrelating networks and relationships that is semantic fields as opposed to long lists of random words. She suggests that since the mind seems to categorize vocabulary based on semantic similarity, categorizing vocabulary into semantic fields will help the learner acquire it more easily. While semantic clusters fall into categories like nouns and verbs, thematic clusters contain a mixture of verbs, adjectives, adverbs and nouns.

Thematic clustering as a vocabulary learning strategy

Based on psychological union, thematic clustering is intended to make an association between a set of related words and a shared thematic concept. Both the interference theory and the distinctiveness hypothesis fail to predict the impact of thematic clustering. Despite the fact that researchers are interested in similar words in a number of studies in relation to interference, there are some conflicting issues. For example, a cluster of words like frog, green, swim, and slipper has not been their interest when they probe for evidence for interference. On the other hand, clusters of words like car, raceway, team, champion, and drive which are not similar have not attracted the researchers, favoring the distinctiveness hypothesis.

Al-Jabri (2005) expressed that "lexical semanticists, when investigating the way speakers organize words in their mental lexicons, propose that speakers subconsciously organize words in frames or schemas with reference to the speaker’s background knowledge rather than in semantic fields" (p.48). On the basis of associative strength, clustering of this kind are cognitively rather than linguistically derived, and therefore would seem fit most easily into learning centered
second language acquisition programs which are most interested in learning process than with linguistic analysis. Within frame semantics as labeled by Fillmore (1985), “speakers can be said to know the meaning of the word only by first understanding the background frames that motivate the concept that the word encodes. Within such an approach, words or word senses are not related to each other directly, word to word, but only by way of their links to common background frames and indications of the manner in which their meanings highlight particular elements of such frames” (cited in Fillmore & Atkins, 1992, p. 77).

According to Brewer and Nakamura (1984), schema theory explains how old information possessed by the learner influences the learning of new information. It aims to explain the way different types of knowledge are learned and people’s interpretation of the world from a psychological. This theory is among the most intellectually exciting areas in cognitive psychology. Brewer and Nakamura (1984) remark that the idea that schemas are unconscious was rejected by psychologists and philosophers who claim that psychology data are restricted only to conscious rather than unconscious phenomena. Behaviorists also rejected the same idea. They claim that the data of psychology are restricted to observations of overt behaviors. But after much discussion, the idea has now been universally accepted.

Generally speaking, schemas help us by organizing our knowledge, assisting with recall, and guiding our behavior. They help us make sense of current experiences and interpret situations. Much research has been done studying the schema theory to show that information which is schema-related is recalled better than schema-unrelated information.

Since there are still contradicting conclusions with regards to the best type of clustering, the current study was set up as an attempt to uncover the superiority of three different clustering techniques (i.e. semantic, thematic, and haphazard), and to examine the role of gender in this regard.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study, hence, was set up to answer the following research questions:

1. Does semantic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does thematic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
3. Is there any difference between semantic and thematic clustering of English vocabulary in their effectiveness on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
4. Is there any difference between males and females with respect to the type of vocabulary clustering?

**METHODOLOGY**

The present study was conducted as an experimental and quantitative hypothesis testing study to investigate the effectiveness of thematic versus semantic clustering of L2 vocabulary on lexical
acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners. Additionally, this study investigated to what extent males and females behaved differently regarding understanding and retrieving of semantically-oriented or thematically-oriented vocabulary items. That is, it compared the performance of male and female language learners in terms of these different ways of clustering of words.

**Participants**
The participants of this experiment were 50 native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females, aged 18 to 30. Based on the central limit theorem (CLT), contemplating this number of participants led into obtaining normal distribution; therefore, it was possible to conduct different types of parametric tests with 25 participants in each group. The participants were selected from among the students who were studying English as a foreign language at Jahad Daneshgahi English Language Center based on the results of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The OPT (2007) was employed as a homogenizing tool for the sake of the linguistic homogeneity of the participants.

**Materials and instrumentation**
Since the aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of three types of vocabulary clustering techniques in vocabulary acquisition and recall of EFL learners, three lists of words as the materials of the study were prepared each of which represented a particular clustering. The selected words for the first list were semantically related and included eight coordinate English words under the headword ‘occupations’ and shared a common semantic relationship. Given the nature of semantic classes, the words in the semantic set shared the same word class, with all eight terms being noun. They were also accompanied by the Persian equivalents.

The second list contained eight semantically unrelated words in English accompanied by the Persian equivalents. The word class of these words was not held constant. The third list was arranged based on eight English words related thematically and accompanied by their Persian equivalents. These words were categorized under the theme of marriage-related terms and included words of various syntactic classes.

The study also adopted three instruments for data collection. The first one was the Oxford Placement Test (2007) to check the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their language proficiency. The widely used placement test, the reliability of which has been reported in a colossal number of studies, contained 50 items in multiple choice formats assessing students’ knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. It also included an optimal writing task estimating students’ ability regarding productive skills. The whole test was designed to be administered in 65 minutes. The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) developed by Paribakht and Wesche (1993) as the second instrument in this study was administrated as the pretest to make sure that the participants had no prior knowledge of the targeted words. The internal consistency measure of the reliability of the test was calculated to be .84. Three short gap filling exercises as the last instrument were also taken from Intermediate Vocabulary by Thomas (1986) and employed as the posttest in this study.
Procedure
To achieve the aims of the study, some steps were taken. To have a homogeneous group, the OPT was firstly administered at Jahad Daneshgahi English Language Center and 50 native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females whose linguistic homogeneity was confirmed on the basis of the test result, were selected from among the intermediate students who were studying English as a foreign language there. Following the guidelines in the test booklet, those learners whose score was above 47 were confirmed as intermediate learners and were selected for the purpose of the study.

The second step was administering the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale Test (VKS) as a subsidiary assessment tool. This test, containing eighty vocabulary words, was employed as the pretest and presented to the participants to find out which vocabulary items the learners did not know. The scores obtained from this test were not included in the study since they did not affect its process. Each participant was then given six pages having the list of semantically-related, thematically-related, and haphazard English words accompanied by their Persian equivalents and the short gap filling exercises. This step was undertaken in two phases including studying phase and recall phase. In the first phase, the participants were required to study the first page consisting of the list of eight semantically-related English words accompanied by their Persian equivalents for a total of four minutes, that is, 30 seconds per item. They were advised to study carefully using every possible strategy to learn new lexical items in the list. The participants were also informed that they would be having an immediate recall test on the same vocabulary items. After four minutes, the students had to stop studying and then, the immediate recall phase began in which each participant was required to turn to the following page that included a short gap filling exercise.

In this stage, the participants were required to fill in the gaps of the short reading by applying the appropriate words from the previous page they had studied some minutes ago. In order to eliminate any chance of memorizing the list as a whole rather than learning them, the participants were informed that the required words in the short reading had been arranged in a different sequence. Exactly the same was done for thematic and haphazard English clusters. The researchers afterwards identified, scored, and calculated all the answers given by the students to the short gap filling exercises in a sense that each correct answer of a lexical item was considered as one point. Since there were eight lexical items in each type of clustering list, the total score in every list was 8 points. The data gathered through this procedure were later subjected to the statistical procedure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the first research question
The first addressed research question in this study was:

1. Does semantic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

To find an acceptable answer for this question, the researcher identified, calculated, and scored all the correct answers given by the students in the short gap filling exercises prepared for estimating the participants’ knowledge of semantically related words. These exercises were
selected from the Intermediate Vocabulary by Thomas (1986). Each given correct answer was considered as one point so the total score in each list was 8.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Semantically-Clustered Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Valid 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Mean</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in the above table, the mean of the scores for the short gap filling exercises on semantically clustered words was 3.10. That is, most of the participants provided just less than half of the required words. The participants guessed at maximum 5 words correctly and at minimum 2 words. This indicated that they were not able to work as successfully as expected in this part. The following table provides some extra information in this regard.

Table 2: Frequency Table: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Semantically-Clustered Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table, out of 50, 14 participants had two correct answers, 22 participants had three correct answers, nine participants had four correct answers, and five participants had five correct answers.

Results of the second research question

The second research question that was posed in the study was:

2. Does thematic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

To obtain an answer to this question, the frequency of correct answers in the short gap filling exercises was calculated for each student separately. For every correct answer that the students provided, one point was given to them. The points were then added and the final score was given. The average of all scores was thereafter determined. The required words were thematically oriented.
Based on the above table, the participants approximately provided 5 correct answers for the 8 existing blanks in the exercises organized thematically. To be specific, the mean of all provided correct answers was equal to 4.90 which was above the mean score obtained in the semantically related set of words. Here, the maximum and the minimum number of given correct answers were 8 and 3 respectively, that is, there were some exercises which were filled in by the students completely correct. It seems that the students acquired and recalled more words when the lexical items were presented to them in thematic cluster and therefore worked more successfully.

The next tables pertain to what the participants did in the haphazard list of words.
Regarding the unrelated set of lexical items, as shown above, the participants at most filled in four intended blanks and at least one blank correctly. The mean score was 3.12 which was slightly above that in the semantically related group and still below that in the thematically related group.

Table 6: Frequency Table: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Unrelated-Clustered Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the above table which has a detailed look on the distribution of unrelated words guesses by the participants correctly, one correct answer goes to two students and five correct answers go to five answers. The same number of students \( n = 11 \) recalled 2 and 4 answers respectively and the rest \( n = 21 \) remembered three correct answers.

Results of the third research question

The next research question that the researchers addressed in this study was:

3. Is there any difference between semantic and thematic clustering of English vocabulary in their effectiveness on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

For this question, the means of scores that were achieved by the participants in the three groups of semantic, thematic, and haphazard texts were compared to see if there was any statistically significant difference among them.
After comparing the means, it was found that the participants had different reactions towards the three types of clustering of vocabulary. According to the table, the largest deviation and mean refers to the time when the participants were examined on the thematically oriented words. That is, the participants had the best achievement and recalled more words when lexical items were thematically organized and presented. When examined semantically, the participants had the lowest recall and achievement. That is, the semantically related group seemed to be the least effective technique.

The variation was clear among the participants when they were tested on the effect of the three types of clustering and this could be assessed for more accurate results by another inferential test. That is, in order to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference among the three groups or to explore the impact of type of clustering on the vocabulary acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run based on which the existing differences among the three groups were revealed to be statistically significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></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>105.613</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.807</td>
<td>42.405</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>183.060</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>1.245</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>288.673</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be specific, there was a statistically main effect for the clustering types (semantic, thematic, or unrelated) that had been used for estimating the acquisition and recall of new lexical items. In other words, the observed differences were meaningful at 0.05 level of significance and one can be 95% sure that these differences were not obtained accidentally. In order to test which type of clustering had the most important effect on the acquisition and recall scores, post-hoc comparisons were employed to identify the detailed difference among the three types. The following table revealed the main location causing this effect.
The findings of the post-hoc test indicated, in multiple paired comparisons, that the differences were at the highest level when comparing the participants’ scores in the thematic and the semantic lists and in the thematic and the haphazard lists. In other words, there was a statistically significant difference between the gained scores in the thematic and the semantic lists as well as in the thematic and the haphazard lists. This led to the conclusion that the thematic clustering was the most effective strategy for vocabulary presentation to the EFL learners.

**Results of the fourth research question**

The last investigated research question in this study was:

4. Is there any difference between males and females with respect to the type of vocabulary clustering?

To detect the relationship between the gender and the type of vocabulary clustering, the performance of both males and females in the exercises examining the learners’ knowledge of words that had been presented to them in semantic, thematic, and haphazard clusters were separately considered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I groups</th>
<th>J groups</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey HSD</td>
<td>semantic</td>
<td>thematic</td>
<td>-1.800*</td>
<td>.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thematic</td>
<td>unrelated</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unrelated</td>
<td>semantic</td>
<td>1.800*</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unrelated</td>
<td>thematic</td>
<td>1.780*</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unrelated</td>
<td>semantic</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unrelated</td>
<td>thematic</td>
<td>-1.780*</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics: Female Performance on Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semantic</th>
<th>Thematic</th>
<th>Unrelated words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Mean</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>1.030</td>
<td>1.003</td>
<td>1.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>1.060</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>1.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\* Gender = female
As shown in the above table, the females ($n = 25$) acquired and recalled the most when words had been presented to them in thematic cluster. The score means of females in semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of lexical items were 3.32, 5.56, and 3.08 respectively. The most number of words were acquired and recalled when presented thematically, less when presented semantically, and the least when presented in a haphazard manner. The females at least remembered one word (in unrelated set of words) and at most 7 words (in thematic set of lexical items). None of them could fill in all the blanks correctly.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics: Male Performance on Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semantic</th>
<th>Thematic</th>
<th>Unrelated words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N, Valid</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Mean</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.254</td>
<td>.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td>1.268</td>
<td>.898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>.610</td>
<td>1.607</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a. Gender = male*

Considering males, they had the best performance in the exercises organized thematically and the worst in the exercises organized semantically. Both males and females worked successfully in the thematically-oriented set of lexical items. They at least guessed and remembered two correct answers and there was a case in which males even completed the text completely correctly. The score means obtained for the semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of words were 2.88, 4.24, and 3.16 respectively. The results revealed that males and females performed quite reverse in the exercises including the semantic and haphazard sets of lexical items. The females’ knowledge of the words organized semantically was more than the males’ and on the other hand, the males’ knowledge of the words organized haphazardly was more than the males’. After investigating the males’ and females’ performance separately, their score means from the three different groups of exercises needed to be compared to detect whether the males differ from the females in this regard and whether this difference (if any) was statistically significant.

Table 12: Group Statistics: Males’ and Females’ Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.030</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td>.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>1.003</td>
<td>.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.268</td>
<td>.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated words</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.115</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td>.180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Considering semantic clustering of vocabulary, the data included in the table indicated that the female participants acquired and recalled more words than the male participants and their mean scores therefore differed from each other. In terms of another type of vocabulary clustering, that is, thematic clustering, there was again difference in the performance of both genders. In this case, females worked more successfully and their final achieved points were therefore higher than those of males. The last group of clustering relates to the haphazard lexical items and the findings in this case were quite reverse and indicated that the achieved scores by the females were lower than the males. The mean scores of males and females were here 3.16 and 3.08 respectively. To see the meaningfulness of these differences, an independent t-test was conducted.

Table 13: Independent Sample Test: Males' and Females' Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.702</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>-.080 - .960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>4.083</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.320</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.670 - 1.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated</td>
<td>-.279</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td>-.080</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>-.656 - .496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table shows, although there was a difference between males and females in terms of their mean scores from both the exercises with required semantically-oriented words and unrelated words, this difference did not reach statistical significance. In other words, the females and males did approximately have the same memory of words thought to them beforehand. Considering thematically-oriented words, this difference did however reach statistical significance.

In the remaining part of the current section, the obtained results are discussed and compared with the results of previous studies. The results obtained for the first research question revealed that the means of the semantically related words was 3.10. To be specific most of the participants provided just less than half of the required words. Consequently, the first hypothesis which was semantic clustering of vocabulary items does not affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners was supported in this study.

Based on the result achieved for the second research question concerning with thematically related words, the mean was equal to 4.90, which was above the mean score obtained in the semantically related set of words. Besides, there were also some exercises which were filled in by the students completely correct. Therefore, the results showed thematic clustering of vocabulary items affected lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners. Considering the result achieved in the analysis of haphazard set of lexical items, the mean score was 3.12, which was slightly above that in the semantically related group and still blow that in the thematically related
group. To be more specific, the participants at most filled in four intended blanks and at least one blank correctly.

The results obtained from the third research question indicated that among the means of scores achieved by the participants in the three groups of semantic, thematic, and haphazard texts, the largest deviation and mean refer to the time when the participants were examined on the thematically oriented words, that is, the participants had the best achievement and recalled more words when lexical items were thematically organized and presented. When examined semantically, the participants had the lowest recall and achievement in a sense that the semantically related group seemed to be the least effective. Based on a one-way ANOVA, the observed differences among the three groups were meaningful at 0.05 level of significance and one can be 95% sure that these differences were not obtained accidentally. The results of this study generally proved that those exposed to thematically related sets of words outperformed those exposed to semantically related words which is in line with Tinkham’s (1993, 1997) point of view when he claimed that providing learners’ vocabulary with thematic clusters was a more effective method of instruction than semantically clustered sets. Learners can learn words that belong to the particular topic or theme better than those vocabularies that are semantically clustered.

The findings of this research determined that learning new words in semantic clusters required more time to be learned completely and it also needed more learning trials which is in total agreement with many researchers (Finkbeiner & Nicol, 2003; Higa, 1963; Laufer, 1989; Nation, 2000; Tinkham, 1993, 1997; Waring, 1997) who argue that learning similar words which share numerous common elements and a super-ordinate concept are difficult because these words will interfere with each other and have a negative impact on their retention.

There are different reasons why words presented in unrelated clusters were retained more efficiently than those presented in semantically related sets. According to Aitchison (1996), McCarthy (1990), and Meara (1983), although vocabulary items appear to be organized in the mental lexicon around semantic bonds, learning of new vocabulary items might pursue a different path of mental processing. McLaughlin (1990) also claims that semantic fields are the final outcomes of the learning process while they represent aspects and features of what is already known. Additionally, the findings of the study confirm the empirical studies by Iranian researchers such as Marashi and Azarmi (2012) who showed that presenting words in semantically unrelated clusters and in an intentional learning method were more effective for students’ vocabulary achievement compared to the other methods and Mirjalili et al. (2012) who indicated that the students generally recalled the highest number of words from the unrelated clusters.

Moreover, the results of the present study are in line with two psychological theories including theory of interference and the distinctive hypothesis discussed earlier (Finkbeiner & Nicol, 2003; Tinkham, 1993, 1997; Waring, 1997). It can be argued that presenting L2 learners with vocabulary items grouped in semantic clusters actually impedes vocabulary learning.
The most surprising result gained from the data in this study showed that gender can be considered as an effective variable in this respect as there was difference between two groups of males and females in the retention and recall of vocabulary items. The score means of females in semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of lexical items were 3.32, 5.56, and 3.08 and of males were 2.88, 4.24, and 3.16 respectively, that is, they both had the best performance on the thematically-clustered words tests.

Considering semantic and unrelated clustering of vocabulary, although there was a difference between males and females in terms of their score means, this difference did not reach statistical significance. In terms of thematic clustering of vocabulary, the results revealed that there was significant difference between the males’ and females’ scores. In the end, the researchers came to this conclusion that in the process of different types of vocabulary learning clustering, female students excelled male students and the last hypothesis which stated that there was a statistically significant relationship between gender and the type of vocabulary clustering was consequently supported in this study. In theory, this finding of present study is in line with that of Zhuanglin (1989) and of Larsen-Freeman (2000) and in practice, with conclusions by some researchers such as Wu Yi’an, Liu Runqing, (1996) who believed that female students obviously acted better than male students in terms of language learning.

CONCLUSION

Since any language emerges first as words, using various effectual strategies and techniques for better and more rapid acquisition and recall of new lexical items are then of crucial importance. Presenting vocabulary in groups and clusters has been proved to be among the factors or strategies that lead to better acquisition of words.

The results and the statistical analysis of the data in the immediate posttests of this study indicated that there were statistically significant differences among the three types of vocabulary clustering techniques and this led to the assumption that vocabulary clustering in presentation of new words had an effect on vocabulary acquisition and immediate recall of foreign language learners of English. To be specific, the findings revealed that all the three vocabulary instruction techniques which were used in this study were effective in the learners’ vocabulary acquisition and recall, but since thematic clustering for presenting new words to the learners of foreign/second language had the most positive effect compared to semantic clustering and haphazard grouping of the words, it can be concluded that it was the most effective method for Persian-speaking EFL learners’ (both males and females) vocabulary knowledge. Semantic clustering of the lexical items was shown to be on the other hand the least effective.

As the classroom has been the most important context, or sometimes the only one, for foreign language learners to acquire a new language where a large portion of input is expected to be available, providing enough comprehensible input providing learners with thematically clustered words can be of great importance. Reading and listening to appropriate texts can serve as the supportive techniques in this regard and can give great insight to the language learners.
What could perhaps impose limitations on the results obtained in this study include the limited number of words in each word list (i.e. eight words), the limited number of participants in each group, and the idiosyncratic learning styles of the learners which could not be under the control of the researchers. Yet, the results might be applied (though by caution) in many language learning settings in Iran.

REFERENCES


ABSTRACT
This research is intended to give the description about politeness in the text Jambinese Seloko custom in “Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin” in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume. The research method is qualitative which is written descriptively. The data in this research is consisted of primary and secondary data. Population and sample in this research are texts of Jambinese Seloko custom that is published by Traditional Institutions Jambi Province Indonesia. The technique of data analysis that is used is content analysis. From the result and discussion, it could be concluded that there are six uses of politeness maxims in Jambinese Seloko custom texts (wedding ceremony) especially back and forth handover the bride in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume; they are the use (1) tact maxim, (2) generosity maxim, (3) approbation maxim, (4) modesty maxim, (5) agreement maxim, and (6) sympathy maxim.

KEYWORDS: politeness, seloko custom, ulur antar serah terima pengantin, Jambinese
Jambi province as one of the provinces in Indonesia has many regional literature, one of them is seloko custom. Seloko custom, as other regional literature, contains positive values from the society as its proponent. It was said like that because seloko custom of Jambi is the outcome of the act of expressing the humanity essence of Malay society in Jambi. Because of that, the effort to reveal those values is required as a form of preservation of those noble values in the culture of Jambinese Malay society.

The opinion of Saphir (in Wahab, 1995) tells that there is some truth in the expression that says language determines behavior of human custom. People that use good choice of words, sentence structures, and idioms when speaking shows that the personality of that person is indeed good. On the contrary, if someone did not have good behavior, even though they have tried to communicate correctly and well-mannered in front of other people, there will come a time in which they are not able to cover their inherent bad behavior which then shows in their bad choice of words, sentence structures, idioms and impoliteness. Politeness is an aspect of language behavior that could increase the emotional intelligence of its speaker because in communication, speaker and hearer are required not only to deliver truth, but also to maintain commitment and harmony of the relation. The harmony of the relation between speaker and hearer would be maintained if both sides keep refrain on embarrassing each other.

Ethics in language behavior is what is called as politeness. If this is connected with seloko custom as a form literature which is delivered using language as its media, there must be a lot of politeness values contained in its every saying. Therefore, the study about how the realization of politeness behavior in Traditional Ceremony of Handover the Bride “Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin” which is contained in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume is necessary.

RESEARCH QUESTION
From the explanation that are mentioned before, this study is meant to answer how the form of tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim maxim in Jambinese Seloko wedding custom “Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin” in the Book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume.

METHODOLOGY
The method that is used in this research is qualitative. The data are taken from seloko custom of Jambinese Malay which has been documented by Traditional Institution Jambi Province Indonesia in Jambinese Custom History book year 2001. The technique of collecting data that is used in this research is library study.

JAMBINESE CULTURE
Language is a tool to transmit culture from a generation to the next one. Extinction, decline, and weakening of the function of one particular language implied the decline or extinction of one
cultural wealth. The everlasting of language, especially the regional language will strengthen the longevity of regional culture which contains oral literature and oral tradition. Using the potential of regional culture like oral literature and oral tradition as the source of character education is a revitalization of youth personality which is made by culture-based education.

One of the forms of the language own by Jambi province is a form of literature which is known as seloko culture of Jambi. Karim (2007:14) said that “Seloko in Indonesian language often called Seloka or proverb or with other words also often called as cultural advice”. Seloko word comes from Sanskrit word Seloka which means a form of classical Malay poem which contains idioms in which there are jokes, limericks, dreams, imaginations, teases, or insults. In Jambinese Malay language, seloko is a poem that consists of four lines which each line consisting of 8-11 words. The verse rhythm a-a-a-a, Karim (2007:14) gives an example of seloko as follows:

Ada seekor burung pelatuk
Cari makan di kayu buruk
Tuan umpama ayam pungguk
Ayam mencakar, rajin mematuk

In some areas in Indonesia, some seloko rules are unused. In Jambi region, the number of lines in seloko is inconsistent. The verses are also irregular, but the rhythm is easy-listened which contains rules or norms of customs that apply in Jambinese culture (Karim, 20017:15).

SELOKO AS A FORM OF TRADITIONAL POEM
Jambinese seloko custom is an idiom that contains messages or advices that have ethics and moral values, also used as a tool to enforce and supervise society norms to make sure it is always abided. The content of Jambinese seloko are the behavior rules in everyday life of the society and principles of law and norms which always be abided by the society because it has sanction. One of the examples of Jambinese seloko is about how decisions are made in a government, jambinese seloko said that “Berjenjang naik betanggo turun, turun dari takak nan di atas, naik dari takak nan di bawah”, which means that during decision making there are levels of decision making. The highest level of decision making is for example: the highest level decision making which is Alam Nan Barajo, up until the lowest level of decision making which is Anak nan Berbapak, Kemenakan nan Bermamak.

ULUR ANTAR PENGANTIN (HANDOVER OF THE BRIDE)
The ceremony of back and forth handover the bride is conducted after the groom has arrived in the yard of the home of the bride. Usually, the groom is accompanied by uncles and elders and also children escort to the house of the bride. The ceremony of back and forth handover the bride could only be completed and accepted by both party after the discussion is decided by the mediator. After that, the bride and groom are met and sat down on their place, and then chieftain gives them advices. This ceremony is called Labuh Lek ceremony. It could be said that this ceremony is obligatory that has to be conducted during wedding ceremony of Handover the Bride
SOCIOPRAGMATICS
Sociopragmatics is a study that highlights the use of language in a society culture within particular social situation like what Leech 1983 said sociopragmatics is one of two sides of pragmatics which the other part is pragmalinguistic. Sociopragmatic study involves two theory which are speech act theory and politeness theory. Austin (in Levinson,1985:236). Austin stated, “In uttering sentence, one is also doing something.” A speech act is created when a speaker or a writer makes an utterance to a hearer or a reader in a context. In other words, speech act is an action performed by the use of an utterance to communicate. Speech act theory is related to three acts in pragmatic which is locutionary act, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. While politeness in language behavior like what is said by Lakoff that there are three things that should be considered to maintain politeness as follows:

MAXIMS OF POLITENESS
According to Leech (1983), “the politeness principles are divided into six maxims”. Maxim is the principle of language in lingual interaction; principles that control the act, language use, and its interpretation to actions and utterances of the opposite. Besides that, maxim also called as a form of pragmatic based on mutual principle and politeness principle. The examples of politeness maxim can be seen as follows:

Tact Maxim
Leech (1983: 132) “Minimize the benefit to self” and “Maximize cost to self”. If every person conducts the core of generosity maxim in their everyday utterances and daily interactions, envy, jealousy and heartache between people would be avoided.

Generosity Maxim
Generosity maxim involves minimizing the benefit to self and maximizing the cost to self (Leech, 1983: 132). Within generosity maxim, it is explained that people would be considered as polite if they are always trying to give award to other people in their utterances. With this maxim, it is hoped that participants of utterances would not insult, scorn, or humiliate each other.

Approbation Maxim
This maxim involves minimizing dispraise and maximizing praise for others (Leech, 1983:132). In approbation maxim, the speaker and hearer are expected to act humble by reducing compliment to their ownself. People would be said as arrogant and haughty if they are always praise and give credit to their ownself during utterances. In Indonesian culture and language society, modesty and courtesy are often used as a parameter to determine the politeness of people.
Modesty Maxim

This maxim requires the speaker to minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. In this maxim, it is expected that the speaker shows modesty by minimizing praise upon own self.

Agreement Maxim

This maxim involves minimizing disagreement and maximizing agreement between self and other. There is a tendency to increase an agreement and to minimize a disagreement by declaring a regret or partial agreement when someone speaks with other.

Sympathy Maxim

This maxim is divided into two sub maxims they are “minimize antipathy between self and other” and “maximize sympathy between self and other” (Leech, 1983:132). In sympathy maxim, the speaker and hearer are expected to maximize sympathy between each other. Having no sympathy to one utterance participant would be considered as impolite. Indonesians hold sympathy to other people in daily communication in high-esteem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The use of Tact Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yang datang</td>
<td>People who come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Barangkali kami iko kok bejalan lai sampai ke batas, berlayar lai sampai polo ke pulau. Kalau bejalan lai sampai ke batas kok berlayar lai sampai polo ke pulau, ia boleh kami ko berkato agak sepatah berunding agak sebaris, sebab bak pantun nak mudo’ |“Maybe if we were walking we have arrived to the boarders of sailing, we have arrived to the island, if we were walking we have arrived to the boarders of sailing, we have arrived to the island. Let us speak a little discuss a few lines like a youth poem.

Yang menerima

| Ooo…….macam itu maksudnya, maeko datuk kato-kato petuah orang tuo-tuo kito, idak elok, becakap di tengah laman, ko berunding sepanjang jalan, apo buni petuah orang-orang tuo-tuo kito yang sebagaimano dalam pantun seloko. Batang belimbing di tengah laman Uratnyo menyuruk ke bawah rumah Idak elok kito berunding di tengah laman Eloko kito naik ke atas rumah Hendak duo pantun setring Batang cempedak di tengah laman Uratnyo susun betindih Idak elok kito tegak di tengah laman Eloko kito naik makan sirih Tanggolai kami tegakkan, kok lawang lai kami bukap Tikarlah kami bentangkan pulak, silohkan datuk-datuk segalonyo naik kerumah! |“Ooo………………. That is the intention, like what elders and our ancestors said, it’s not good, to speak in the middle of the yard to discuss along the road, like the advices given by our elders like what is mentioned in seloko poem. Star fruit tree in the middle of the yard The root hides under the house It’s not good to discuss in the middle of the yard It’s better to go up into the house It’s better for two poems to go along Jackfruit tree in the middle of the yard The roots are overlapping each other It’s not good to stand in the middle of the yard It’s better if we go up and eat betel leaf. We have put up ladders, we have opened the door, we have spread the mat, and we invite elders to get in to the house. |

Seloko examples above shows the use of tact maxim which are conducted by the host. The host clearly tries to act wise by asking the guests to immediately come into the house because it is not
good to be seen discussing in the house yard by other people. That seloko shows that the house asks the guests to come inside the house to discuss; this is the part that shows that there is a tact maxim in that part of seloko.

The Use of Modesty Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Yang dating  
Macam iko datuk, kami nan sebanyak iko takut kalu  
cepat kaki salah langkah, cepat tangan salah limbae,  
cepat mulut salah kato, elok juga kami betanyo, kalu  
nak kerumah datuk-datuk ado idak larang kedengan pantangyo. | People who come  
“It’s like this elders all of us are afraid if we walks too fast and missteps, hands too fast and took the wrong thing, speaks too fast and misspeak. It’s better for us to ask whether there are some taboos in walking into fellow elders’ house.” |

That seloko mentioned by the guests show the use of modesty maxim. That utterance displays the courtesy of the guests, before they are being allowed to come in, they asked humbly about things they need to do, whether there are some taboos they have to abide.

The Use of Generosity Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Yang menerima  
Baiklah kalau macam itu kato Datuak-datuk, sesat di  
ujung tali balik ke pangkal tali, sesat di ujung jalan balik ke pangkal jalan.  
Tidak keruh yang tidak jernih dan idak kasut yang tidak seselai, silang yang tidak patut.  
Jadi macam mano kito serahkan kepada Datuak-datuk penengah sajo, kok keruh mintak dijernihkan,  
silang mintak di patut. | People who accept  
All right then if that’s what fellow elders say, lost the tip of a rope get back to the beginning of the road, lost in the end of the road back to the beginning of the road. There is no cloudy that is not clear and there is no tangle that is not finished, crossed there are not appropriate. So what if we just give this to the mediator elders, if couded we asked to be cleared, if crossed we asked to be appropriated. |

The seloko above exhibits the use of generosity maxim that is said by the host in the utterance Datuak-datuk penengah sajo, kok keruh mintak dijernihkan, silang mintak di patut. In that utterance, they asked with their generosity that if there are some conflicts later, the conflicts are to be returned to the mediator elders.

The Use of Agreement Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Yang menerima  
Datuak-datuk nenek mamak yang kami muliokan. Sesuai  
dengan adat yang tereco tepakai, kok betanyo lepas  
litak kalu nak berunding tentu lepas makan, kareno  
kami iko tadi ado membawak sirih nan sekapur, rokok  
nan sebatang, elok juga kito makan sirih sekapur  
mengisap rokok nan sebatang bak pantun anak mudo. | People who accept  
“Venerable elders and uncles. In accordance to the customs that is good to use, if we were to ask it’s after stopped being hungry, if we were to discuss of course after we finished eating, because we did bring betel and lime, a cigarette, it is better for us to eat betel while puffing a cigarette, like a youth poem.” |

The seloko above contains agreement maxim, in the utterance Sesuai dengan adat yang tereco tepakai, kok betanyo lepas litak kalu nak berunding tentu lepas makan, kareno kami iko tadi ado membawak sirih nan sekapur, rokok nan sebatang, elok juga kito makan sirih sekapur mengisap rokok nan sebatang bak pantun anak mudo. That utterance shows that the host
clearly states the condition to begin the ceremony. Because the guest has brought betel and cigarettes, the host asks the guests to eat betel and smoke cigarettes before starting the ceremony, this would be an agreement from both sides.

The Use of Sympathy Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalau macam itu kato Datu-datuk, itu namonyo serah patah arang atau serah kumbang putus tali, kami bukan mengelak, segan keno ba-sengecek segan jatuh.</td>
<td>If that’s what elders said, it is called surrender broken charcoal, surrender broken shoot, or surrender broken thread beetle, we are not avoiding unwilling because afraid of falling when we are talking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sympathy maxim is showed by the words of the host that say that they support the intention of the guests because they don’t want any misunderstanding. It can be seen from Kalau macam itu kato Datu-datuk, itu namonyo serah patah arang. Therefore agreement is made for that.

The Use of Aprobation Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seloko</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yang dating</td>
<td>People who come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Datuk-datuk, Nenek-Mamak, Tuo-Tuo Tengganai Alim Ulama, Cerdik Pandai, yang gedang begelar, yang kecil benamo kok gedang idak diimbau gelarnyo, nan kecik idak polo disebut namonyo.</td>
<td>Elders and uncles, clergy and cunning ones, the great ones have titles the small ones have names, the great ones are not called by their titles, the small ones also called by their names. Women with jingling bracelets, with shining rings on their fingers, clothed with sarong, pandanus fold hair bun. We are nothing, we arrange our fingers which are ten, we bow our heads which is one. Asking for forgiveness from the elders, requesting apology from the many.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The utterance yang kecil benamo kok gedang idak diimbau gelarnyo, nan kecik idak polo disebut namonyo shows approbation maxim. That utterance displays appreciation that is given to everyone (with their age irrelevant) because everyone has the same position in the customs that apply.

CONCLUSION

This research investigates the indication of maxims proposed by Leech in Jambinese seloko wedding custom ulur antar serah terima pengantin in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume. Based on the result and discussion, it is found out that there are five types of maxims used in that book. They are tact maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, sympathy maxim, and approbation maxim. It is concluded that the types of maxim mostly used in Jambinese seloko wedding custom ulur antar serah terima pengantin in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume is tact maxim which is occurred for four times. Moreover, modesty maxim is used for two times while agreement maxim, sympathy maxim, and approbation maxim are only used for one time.
Limitations of the study
This research is limited to the use of Maxims which are proposed by Leech (1993). Those maxims are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. Furthermore, the aspects of politeness and context are needed in supporting data analysis.

REFERENCES
TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this qualitative study was to obtain qualitative results from a sample of 20 Iranian EFL teachers regarding their attitude towards the role of literature in EFL classes, and consequently follow up with some interviews to probe or explore how well they practically employ this issue in their classrooms. The participants were twenty male and female Iranian EFL teachers, teaching in different private language centers in Sanandaj, Iran. Generally, the participants were from two main categories; literature-graduated and TEFL-graduated teachers. The results of participants' interviews indicated that teachers should be encouraged to make adequate use of literature genres in classrooms, also, the participants considered short stories useful in language classes. Most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. For some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand some others said it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed that literature can go further and it can be connected to the learners' lives.

KEYWORDS: EFL teachers; Literature; Attitude, Literary genres

INTRODUCTION
Attitudes toward the role of English literature and its potential influence on the expanded area of teaching and methodology, which seek learning at the long turn, are extremely complex and vary from teacher to teacher. The past three decades have witnessed a national and still an international debate over this matter, particularly in developing countries such as Iran. "It has only been since the 1980s that this area has attracted more interest among EFL teachers" (Clanfield, 2011). The debate is still of great enthusiasm and a sea of differences is to be met and it is generally because of voices supporting and those criticizing literature along with teaching process. Literature-based instruction in EFL/ESL classes had been abandoned for justified and still questionable reasons in various methodologies.
However, with the presence of so many literary critics and controversies, literature could honorably climb the teaching pedestal in the recent years. One of the most common complaints is that teachers and curriculum supervisors find literary texts difficult, hard to understand and not relevant to the students' lives. Literature which once was the main teaching material in language teaching approaches became less popular when language teaching and learning started to put its pivotal emphasis on the functional use of language and its audio/oral role in teaching classes. However, the role of literature in the ELT classroom has been regained and nowadays many teachers view literature and literary materials as providing rich linguistic input, and a considerably affluent source of learner motivation. This change in approaches might be better referred to as what Marckwardt (1972) considered "changing winds and shifting sands" (as cited in Brown, 2002, p. 17) and the cyclical nature of teaching methodology patterns.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Literacy was and still is the ability to read and write one's own name and further for knowledge and interest, write coherently, and think critically about the written word. In the previous centuries and even ages before that such ability was found in the ability of literary texts comprehension and in its new term literature competence; thus literature was once a core unit of English language classrooms. When Grammar Translation Method was in its heydays during the previous century, using literary texts in the language classes was abundant due to the rudimentary definition of literacy. On those days literature was an end in itself.

**Role of Literature in Language Learning**
The teacher in classroom plays a significant role in making students understand the value of literature and literary texts. Empirical studies consider various reasons for the teachers to use literary texts in their classes. Keshavarzi (2012) suggests as English teachers, specifically, are always concerned with the various kind of material they are going to present to their students, literature can solve their problems. He believes as language learning requires acquiring the language four skills of reading comprehension, writing, listening and speaking. Literary sources provide materials that can meet some of these abilities thus literature has proved a good source that fulfills these four skills. He goes further than just the language skills fulfillment and claims as: "language learning deals with culture, and hence with social understanding. It is this feature of language that demands materials dealing with culture.

**Related Empirical Studies**
There is a plethora of research that has been carried out internationally to investigate learners' motivation and attitudes towards the English language. In Malaysia, for example, Vijchulata and Lee (1985) reported on a study that investigated the students' motivation for learning English in University Putra Malaysia (UPM). Based on Gardner and Lambert's research (1972), the researchers developed a questionnaire to elicit the data required. The questionnaire was administered on approximately a thousand students from all the different faculties in UPM. The findings revealed that UPM students are both integratively and instrumentally oriented towards learning the English language.
Another study by Sarjit (1993) attempted to explore the language needs of consultants at a company. The name of the organization was not mentioned as the consultants did not allow the researcher to expose their identities. Learners' motivation was of concern in the study. The research sample consisted of 26 consultants, 4 directors and one instructor. In her study, Sarjit (1993) employed different techniques to gather information, such as questionnaire, interviews and field observation. For the subjects' motivation, the study found that instrumental motivation was the main reason for learning the language followed by personal motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
In this study the researcher tries to find answers to following questions:
1. How do English language teachers perceive the effectiveness of English literature in their English classes?
2. What literary genre is assumed to be the most useful and practical one in language teaching classes based on teachers' perceptions?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of the study were English teachers who had teaching experience from one to ten years. This sample was composed of 20 English teachers, both males and females, who worked during summer 2013 semester in private language institutes in Sanandaj. Generally, the participants were from two main categories; literature-graduated and TEFL-graduated teachers. It was strictly desired that these participants would be among those teachers who were teaching English in different levels of English classrooms as a part of their regular daily schedule. A more insightful description of each participant is presented in table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant's number</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>major</th>
<th>Experience (years)</th>
<th>Levels taught</th>
<th>Willing to teach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Elementary Intermediate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Elementary Intermediate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Elementary Intermediate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Elementary Intermediate Upper-inter</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intermediate Upper-inter Advanced</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Intermediate Upper-inter Advanced Elementary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instrumentation

The instruments for data collection in this study were a form of demography and semi-structural interviews conducted by the researcher. The form and its content do not affect the results of the study. It is just used to collect information about the qualifications and background of the participants. The main instrument to collect data for the study was face-to-face interview. Each of these instruments is described below:

Demographic Forms

A demographic form was given to each participant to be filled in before the interview. This form gives participants information about the study and how it is conducted and asks for their names, major, years of experience in teaching and the level of teaching. It also asks them if they are willing to take part in the study. The information in this form is not analyzed to gain a result for the study. That is, the researcher does not differentiate and discern attitudes of participants based on the information provided in this form. It can just help us categorize the participants and make sure that all of them are graduated teachers with real identities to get more insights into the study.

Semi-structured Interviews

One of the most famous data gathering instruments in research methodology area is semi-structured interview (keats, 2001). According to Keats (2001) recording the interview helps improve the reliability. Such interviews have an exploratory nature since the interviewer provides orientation for interviewee. The interviews were conducted one by one in a relaxed atmosphere. Interviews used in this study consisted of eight questions and were constructed in order to gather information for this study. The interview questions were all developed by the researcher shared and edited by two judges to ensure their relevance, feasibility and validation. The judges were two experienced university professors holding Ph.D. degree in TEFL with five and six years of experience. Each interview lasted for about 15 minutes and was recorded and transcribed later for further analysis. Since the participants of the study are English teachers the interviews have been done in English.

Procedure

As mentioned earlier this research was conducted in a qualitative approach. According to Nunan (1997) qualitative information gained through interviews is crucial and of great importance since it can provide reliable outcomes. For this reason, qualitative data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were used to identify the participants' perceptions of literature role in English classes. Accomplishing a qualitative study necessitates a precise procedure fulfillment. So, a clear definition of these terms and the procedures helps us manage the study correctly.

Data Collection Procedure

A random list of 20 participants was gathered from teachers from different English language institutes, and with different trends in teaching and different university majors, literature and TEFL. This was done through cluster sampling by written confirmation and demographic forms which were given to participants before the interviews. Through these forms they were asked about their willingness to participate in the study. Then the interviews were held and questions
were directed to each participant in a face-to-face interview in a relaxed environment to collect information on their attitudes. They were asked to answer a set of eight free-response questions on the topic of literature inclusion.

**Data Analysis of Qualitative Approach**

Each learner was interviewed individually. They answered the questions about their knowledge and feeling about literature and their attitudes toward it. In an interview study the term reliability refers to the degree of consistency that the interview has for the respondents. The content analysis approach is based on Keats (2001). According to Keats (2001) recording the interview helps improve the reliability. Teachers' oral performances were recorded to measure the reliability of the measuring instruments.

The data was analyzed using a version of the grounded theory approach in which the researcher tried to look for multiple themes. In order to do the content analysis, the researcher decided to deal with sentence units of analysis in interviews. The participants' sentences were selected due to perceiving and finding a general and basic perspective regarding the implied ideas for the persecuted issue. The explicit sentences and explanations of participants to the questions were considered as the scale of judgment in our analysis.

As an example, the sentence "it's a little bit time-consuming to cover all the literary texts in the classes." simply declares its meaning and implication. So, there is no need to analyze and interpret its words and sub-sections.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The present study was interested in probing whether English teachers are aware of literature competence or not, besides; how the 20 participants, who were all English teachers, perceive literature role in their classroom methodologies for learning English in English private schools of Sanandaj in Iran. In this chapter qualitative data analysis is presented. The unit of analysis consists of participants' utterances which contain material related to the research questions.

The main research questions for this qualitative study were:

1. How do English teachers in Sanandaj define the effectiveness of English literature in their classes? And what are their views toward instructional value of English literature in EFL classes?
2. What literary genre is assumed to be the most useful and practical one in language teaching classes based on teachers' perceptions?

The analysis of the data was based on the grounded theory approach in which the researcher tried to look for multiple themes while scrutinizing each uttered sentence. The researcher highlighted three important patterns to be investigated during the analysis of interviews. A) The effectiveness and usage of literature; B) Importance of literature and C) The important literature genres.

Patterns A and B are included in answers to the first research question and are elicited from interview questions 3, 4, 5 and 6. Pattern C is dealt with while answering the second research
Qualitative Data Analysis for Question Number 1

(Q 1) How do English teachers in Sanandaj understand the effectiveness of English literature in their classes? And what are the most valuable literary sources according to teachers' views in English literature in EFL classes?

PATTERN A: Literature effectiveness and usage

Based on the conducted interviews the researcher searched for sentences in which she could possibly see a relationship with the justifications of literature effectiveness according to the teachers' ideas emerged in the interviews conducted by the researcher. Regarding the effectiveness of literature, the teachers presented the effectiveness of literature the same ideas. Most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. In order to see whether it was effective the participants were asked in third question of interview: Do you consider English literature as an important teaching resource? In other word, does literature foster learning a language? If your answer is possibly positive or even negative please elaborate. The teachers participated in this research claimed two views for application of literature usage in their classes. Firstly, for some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. Secondly, on the other hand some others said it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed literature can go more and it can be connected to the learners' lives. For instance participant number 10 said: "Ok for sure! Actually my answer to this question is yes! I do consider it as an important resource. Because, you know, English literature is an authentic source, and whatever you find in a literary text is something authentic. So I consider it for sure a positive resource".

Participant number 4 even went further and said: "Yes I consider it important and it has to be taught even here in the institutes in addition to universities. Because you know even if the teachers are really familiarized with teaching methods they have to be able to know about literature world and it is somehow possible. It is really essential to have literature and literary materials in classes".

This was while Participant number 4 said: "You know literature is the life itself and it is the mirror to life and I always tell my students about it. So it is really a complete source and it includes whatever you call it instructional materials because you can find different dimensions of life and the learners can have those experiences by reading literature. Then my students can have the same experience by presenting them some literary genres. They will learn indirectly how to live not only just learn the language. Participant number 6 said: "the most important one (usage) that I can say now, is changing perspectives and thoughts of humans towards life. It is very important that the students can chase the mind of characters and learn how other people think about different matters in life."

Furthermore, regarding the effectiveness of literature participant number 6 said:
"Definitely yes because my BA was in literature I pushed myself very interested in it. Although my MA was English teaching I am still interested in literature. When I want to teach, in most of my classes stories are one of the most important resources. I think that teaching through literature helps you have an open mind and think in new ways. So, I definitely use literature. It is important in my classes".

This was, however, neglected by some others like participant number 2 who said: "Ok, my role in the class is just facilitating communicative processes. Ok? My students just want to learn how to speak and how to understand English, so they don't need to learn something about English literature, so I think it is not something necessary. Yeah! So in my classes, only communication is so important for them not literature".

Additionally, participant number 3 said: "How and when you use literature depends on the situation and the classes. Sometimes we use but the most important point of this answer is to use literature indirectly, not directly in our teaching.

Participant number 5 claimed: "Since I am not an expert (in literature) I think it can only help improve vocabulary in a narrow view and for the broad view it can give the learners some philosophy of life. Normally we never teach literature and some literary material like poems in original forms. But as I said some teachers use story books but I never use them directly in my classes, students read them and they are supposed to understand the meanings or paraphrase the sentences and the structures or something like that. Since my learners are teenagers I think it is hard for them to understand some points of philosophy and social norms, in such cases it even causes paradoxical situations for them and it could be baffling for them".

**PATTERN B: Importance of literature**

The teachers were also asked to see if they personally thought it was important for the learners to get familiar with English literature or not. Again two different views were found. On the one side for some of the participants the learners had to be familiarized with the world of literatures and for some others only literature was considered as a tool for learning more and thus they would not have taught literature with a meticulous attention. Participant number 1 said: "Of course yes, they should be familiar (with literature) because literature contains culture and the learners must know something about the culture of the target language they are learning. They also should be exposed to authentic reading materials and sources. Of course I should say for us communication is important, and because of that they may never need pure literary texts".

Participant number 10 said: "........some of my learners knew nothing about literature, when they first came to my classes, they got familiar with what literature is. And somehow it was from my classes or from my colleagues’ classes that they learn more about it or they got a desire and are encouraged to continue their study in the field".
Participant number 3 suggested:

"It is based on our idea about literature that is, how we perceive the literature. For example as I said in my classes most of the students come to learn speaking, Listening and sometimes writing, but we do not pay attention to different literary materials in special in a broad sense, and so we may never need to tell them in details about the literature……..."

Participant number 2 said:

"I think it is not necessary to have literature in our syllabus! So yeah I think it is enjoyable for me but it is not necessary since our students do not need to learn so much about literature they come here to learn how to communicate in English. So they only come here for leaning some conversations to be helpful for them when they go abroad so that they are able to interact with foreigners. That is their main reason for joining my classes. But I don't mean it is not useful……... Only in some of my classes I teach short stories. I want them to memorize some idioms and vocabularies. By the stories they can learn lots of things".

Participant number 11 suggested

"……..as I said we use literature in our classes indirectly, for example we do not ask our students what literature is, because the aim of our classes is to teach them how to connect and how to communicate to the other students and other people in other countries. It is the first aim that we want to follow in our class".

Qualitative Data Analysis for Question Number 2

In another section of the interview session the participants were asked to state which kind of literary material was their favorite in order to use it in their classes. This was done through question number 8 of the interview. Unanimously all of the participants considered short stories useful in language classes, but not the full text ones. The samples are brought in what follows.

**PATTERN C: the best literary Materials**

In order to answer second question of the research, participants presented following responses:

Participant number 3 said:

"All genres are useful but they have to be presented in an abridged form. All of them are good. The novels are really suitable for classes but poems are a little difficult and boring".

Participant number 5, however, said:

"I believe the story books will be the best sources. Because they are rich in vocabulary and it is good for reading comprehension. That will result in fluency in reading and story books should be graded for them ……"

Participant number 11 suggested:

"Well I think for me the most important genre is story books not the poets or the plays".

Participant number 2 said "I think story is good. Using stories, learners can improve their grammar and vocabulary too".
Participant number 1 also said: "Well I think for me the most important genre is story books not the poets or the plays". Almost all of the participants believed in the story books as the best literary material among the existing genres.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study make us conclude that most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. For some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. And for others it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed literature can go more and it can be connected to the learners' lives. On the one side for some of the participants the learners had to be familiarized with the world of literatures and for some others only literature was considered as a tool for learning more and thus they would not have taught literature with a meticulous attention. Also, all of the participants considered short stories useful in language teaching.

As Obediat (1997) claims, literature helps students acquire a native-like competence in English, express their ideas in good English, learn how the English linguistic system is used for communication, see how idiomatic expressions are used, speak clearly, precisely, and concisely, and become more proficient in English, as well as become creative, critical, and analytical learners. The participants of this study generally agreed that literature can help learning English. They were aware about the merits of literary materials in English classes. In fact they believed that literature can be effective in different ways. Firstly, it can help learners to foster their vocabulary competence. This might be due to the fact that there are a plenty of vocabularies in literary texts. The text can give this chance to learners to be exposed to a large number of efficient words. Secondly, they said that grammar could be taught through the literature.

Apart from grammar and vocabulary improvement and according to the result of interviews another perception of the study was that literature could provide learners with a lot of experiences and world views all could be found in literary materials. Some teachers interpret literature as a mirror in which the learners could see many realities consistent with their lives. Furthermore, Custodial and Sutton (1998 p, 20) explain that literature can open horizons of possibility, allowing students to question, interpret, connect, and explore lives realities. Elliot (1990, p, 198) suggests when students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, then they can effectively internalize the language at a high level. Finally, participants considered literature as a tool which equips students with rich source of authentic material. Literature is the genuine representative of any language. It can be claimed that the literature is the language soul itself.

Limitations of the Study

Any study has some limitations that make generalization of its findings to other contexts a little difficult. The important limitation in this study was that the researcher only focused on Iranian teachers. So, the results may be different in any other context with teachers from socio-cultural backgrounds different from the one of participants in this study. Then, there are limitations of the
beliefs of different gender and age on the study. Taking the context and the participants of the study into consideration, any further generalization from this study should be done with caution. Furthermore, self-reported data collected through interviews has its limitations, since it presents the teachers' perception of the issue rather than the observable facts. Moreover, teachers' L1 background (Persian, Kurdish) are not considered as variables in this study.

Last, although this study had a qualitative design, the number of participants in this study was limited to 20 teachers. Thus, the findings of this study might be generalized to other societies with caution.

REFERENCES


BEYOND A “WHAT WORKS” TECHNIQUE: THE CASE OF SEMANTIC MAPPING

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ABSTRACT
The present study intended to assess the effect of semantic mapping on pre-university students’ reading comprehension. For this purpose, a pretest-posttest intact groups study was developed. Sixty Iranian high school girls took part in the study. At the outset of the study, a reading comprehension test, composed of six reading comprehension, was administered to the participants to make sure that the two groups were homogeneous. The students were recruited in two groups, namely, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning. Eight passages of the students’ textbook were used as the treatment material. The semantic group was taught how to make semantic maps for each text and the other group was taught how to make questions about the texts. After the treatment, a posttest was administered to both groups. The results, analyzed through an independent samples t-test revealed that the semantic group did better than the other group, t (58) = 2.54, p < .01, d = .10, 95% CI [.52,4.41]. The results from the present study can be used by teachers to improve the learners’ reading comprehension.

KEYWORDS: reading comprehension, semantic mapping, pre-reading questioning, schemata

INTRODUCTION
Reading is perhaps the major language skill that most EFL learners need. Reading is central to life. There are many reasons for this; such as reading for pleasure or reading textbooks, scientific books and articles. Reading skills become more important as students advance through the educational system. Teachers normally ask students to read different materials to locate information relevant to their course in schools.

Reading is believed to be a very complex activity. Too many processes are involved in reading for meaning. It involves the rapid coordination of visual, phonological, semantic, and linguistic processes (Plaut, 2005). Furthermore, it is necessary to remember and manipulate information, to know what individual words mean and to be motivated to work on the text to understand its content (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme & Snowling, 2014). Hence, readers may spend a lot of time to read and comprehend a text. However, good readers try to find ways that help them not only understand a text but also enjoy reading.
Understanding a text usually involves activating background knowledge or otherwise known as knowledge of the world. This knowledge is stored in the mind in the form of schemata. People associate an entity or concept with a set of interrelated features. These set of features are called schemata (Field, 2003). According to schema theory, in order to help readers comprehend a text at a normal speed, they should be guided to activate their prior knowledge before they start reading and therefore, one of the teachers’ responsibilities in reading classrooms is to design activities that help students activate their background knowledge.

Pre-reading strategies can help teachers activate students’ schematic knowledge thereby promote their reading comprehension ability. Semantic mapping, also known as ‘mind mapping’ (Zadina, Smilkstein, Daiek & Anter, 2014), question and answer, brainstorming, free discussion, predicting, skimming, attending to pictures, graphics and headers are some pre-reading techniques that teachers can use for the purpose of activating background knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Long & Doughty, 2009).

According to Pearson (2000) semantic mapping was effective with junior high school students in the context of regular classroom instruction. Asking student to formulate questions about a text, inter alia, is an effective strategy of reading comprehension (Long & Doughty, 2009).

The present study attempts to put semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning strategies into action and see which one can better improve the learners’ reading comprehension ability. The expectation is that the results from the present study can be used by teachers to improve the students’ reading comprehension.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension and its Importance

Reading comprehension may be defined as a continuous activity that should be done by the reader so that he or she could comprehend a text in a normal speed and it is not necessary for the reader to vocalize what he or she is reading (Rivers, 1968). A writer tries to create meaning by activating his or her background and linguistic knowledge and the reader should use the same knowledge in order to understand the writer's meaning (Chastain, 1988). Anderson (1999) asserts that readers are constantly busy with building meaning while reading a text because reading is an active and fluent process. He believes it is not right to think that meaning of reading passages should be just searched in the mind of the reader or in the printed page. It resides in both the mind of the reader and in the text itself. McKnight (2000) believes that through the complex and dynamic process of reading comprehension, readers try to decode the printed words and use their past experiences and knowledge to recreate the intended meaning of the writer. Pearson et al. (2002) describe good readers while they are reading in this way:

- Good readers are active readers.
- Good readers typically look over the text before they read, noting such things as the structure of the text and text sections that might be most relevant to their reading goals.
- As they read, good readers frequently make predictions about what is to come.
- Good readers construct, revise, and question the meanings they make as they read.
Good readers try to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts in the text, and they deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed. They draw from, compare, and integrate their prior knowledge with material in the text. They monitor their understanding of the text, making adjustments in their reading as necessary. They evaluate the text’s quality and value, and react to the text in a range of ways, both intellectually and emotionally. Comprehension is a consuming, continuous, and complex activity, but one that, for good readers, is both satisfying and productive (p.1).

Models of Reading Process
Three kinds of reading processing models have generally been distinguished; namely, bottom-up model, top-down model and interactive model.

In the bottom-up model, the reader begins with the smallest unit of language, the letter, and develops the largest unit, the overall meaning. Reutzel and Cooter (2013) define bottom-up model as:

Bottom-up theories hypothesize that learning to read progresses from children learning the parts of language (letters) to understanding whole text (meaning). Much like solving a jigsaw puzzle, bottom-up models of the reading process say that the reading puzzle is solved by beginning with an examination of each piece of the puzzle and then putting pieces together to make a picture (p.1).

In the top-down model, the reader begins with the overall meaning and then relates the content of what s/he reads to her/his own experiences to construct meaning. Chastain (1988) defines top-down processing as "it operates from a knowledge base to work on specific pieces of information"(p.36). During top-down processing, readers try to predict the meaning of the text by activating their background knowledge. Sometimes this expectation is justified and sometimes it is rejected as the reader is progressing reading the text.

It is suggested that both reading processes, top-down and bottom-up, happen at the same time and efficient readers comprehend texts by paying attention to linguistic information of the reading texts and also using their background knowledge, simultaneously (Rumelhart, 1977, 1980). The interactive approaches to reading comprehension involve using different kinds of knowledge so that the reader can extract the meaning from a text. The reader sometimes focuses on the linguistic variables of the text and sometimes relies on his or her own mental knowledge in order to interact with the text and comprehend it at a reasonable rate (Grabe, 1991).

Schema Theory and the Activation of Schemas in L2 Readers
Schemata play a key role in comprehension. Readers regularly use their schema to make sense of what they read According to schema theory, readers use the linguistic information of the reading text and their past experiences and information that are stored in their mind so as to build a meaningful understanding of the content of a text. In other words, both bottom-up and top-down processing are employed during reading comprehension activity. In the process of reading,
"comprehension of a message entails drawing information from both the message and the internal schemata until sets are reconciled as a single schema or message" (Hudson, 1982:182).

Goodman (1967) believes that skilled readers try to find the most meaningful elements of a text to comprehend it instead of going through all the details (cited in Chastain, 1988). Grellet (1981; cited in Chastain, 1988) concludes that proficient readers use a top-down processing in reading comprehension; that is, they start understanding the whole and then working toward comprehension of detailed aspects of the reading. Wixson and Peters (1984) proposed efficient readers use their background knowledge, the written text itself and the context by which the topic has been described in order to produce the intended meaning of the writer.

Grabe (2009) defined reading comprehension "Reading is also an interaction between the reader and the text" (p. 15). Efficient reading is achieved when previous knowledge interacts with new information. Reading different texts, readers are required to adjust their own schemata with the content of the text and build pieces of information that are compatible with their own experiences. The readers comprehend so much beyond the basic meaning of the text. A writer cannot control the readers' prediction of a text. The reader's different attitudes towards texts can have a stronger effect on him or her than the writer's real intention.

Ajideh (2006) believes that:

In most cases a common problem students experience in reading classes is the feeling that they know absolutely nothing about the subject they are reading about. However, this feeling may be more complex than generally thought. The problem may not be the lack of background knowledge, but rather the failure to activate that knowledge (p.1).

It is believed that schema theory is a process through which readers combine their own background knowledge with the information in a text to understand it better. The closer the match between the reader's schema and the text, the more comprehension occurs (Wallace, 1992; Brown, 2001). The goal of pre-reading activities is to activate schemata (background knowledge) and they are very important for EFL/ESL readers (Ajideh, 2003).

Several studies (Taglieber et al., 1988; Ajideh, 2006; Pan & Pan, 2009; Thongyon and Thanyapa, 2011; Mihara, 2012) have been conducted to investigate the effects of pre-reading strategies as a means of providing and triggering off background information prior to the reading task. These studies suggest that pre-reading strategies have a facilitative effect in text comprehension, and that teachers can use them to provide and/or activate necessary background knowledge relevant to understanding the new text. Pre-reading strategies are intended to activate appropriate knowledge structures or provide the knowledge that the reader lacks. Pre-reading strategies “prepare native speakers for the concepts that follow, make the reading task easier, connect the new content more meaningfully to prior knowledge, and make reading more enjoyable” (Taglieber et al., 1988, p. 456).
Reading Comprehension Strategies

In order to become efficient readers, reading comprehension strategies are the ways by which teachers can help students monitor their comprehension of texts. These strategies are divided into two major categories: cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. Williams and Burden (1997) state that cognitive strategies are seen as "mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, that is for obtaining, storage, retrieval or use of information" (p. 148). They include repetition, organizing new language, summarizing, guessing meaning from context, using imagery for memorization, etc. On the other hand, metacognitive strategies include thinking, planning and monitoring of learning process, comprehension and production during language learning. They involve self-evaluation after the language activity is completed. There are three skill techniques in metacognitive strategies: planning, monitoring and evaluation (Cross & Paris, 1988; cited in Senay Sen, 2009).

Semantic Mapping

Johnson and Pearson (1978), developers of semantic mapping technique, believe semantic mapping is a graphic arrangement of words and it shows how new words and ideas related to each other within text. Students should be helped to build semantic maps. Using their prior knowledge, they deepen their understanding of the topics and as a result they construct graphic representations of the relationships and associations of meanings or concepts to the target word (Schwartz & Raphael, 1985).

Semantic mapping is one of the examples of cognitive strategies (Buchard, 2005). Semantic mapping has three applications: general vocabulary development, pre and post reading strategy and a study skill technique (Heimlich & Pittelman, 1986). To clarify the meaning of semantic maps, Heimlich and Pittelman (1986) described them as "semantic maps are diagrams that help students see how words are related to one another"(p.3). Grabe (2009) states that "semantic mapping typically emerges from a reading text and a topic"(p.277). Asking students to fill in a semantic map or create one, the teacher measures their comprehension of a text. Semantic maps can be an aid for students to understand the outlines and details of complex reading materials. It helps students "generate a range of associated words that can then be grouped in relation to the information actually presented in the text" (Grabe, 2009, p.277). Building semantic maps can be done by students individually or in groups and it depends on the complexity of the passages.

Some practical researches (Margosein et al. 1982, Chang et al. 2002, Canas et al. 2004, Onachukwu et al. 2007, Keshavarz et al. 2007 and Thuy 2013) have been done on the effect of different kinds of mapping on reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, etc. The researchers concluded that semantic mapping enhances reading comprehension, it can be used for complex learning tasks, students' retention of word meanings has been increased and they gained positive attitudes toward semantic mapping.

Pre-reading Questioning

One of the examples of metacognitive strategies is pre-reading questioning. Pearson et al. (2002) state that asking questions has an important effect on students' comprehension, but the teacher should help students to generate their own questions about the text. By helping students increase
their responsibility to generate questions, Raphael and her colleagues improved students' reading comprehension; taught them how to ask questions about their reading and where to find the answers to them; helped them to think about the text they are reading and beyond it; and finally inspired them to think creatively and work cooperatively while challenging them to use higher-level thinking skills (Raphael 1982, 1984, 1986; cited in Chien, 2013).

Therefore, re-reading questioning is one of the useful metacognitive strategies that teachers should introduce to students. Some researches (Peng et al. 2007, Kinniburgh et al. 2010, Thongyon & Thanyapa 2011, Yeh et al. 2012 & Supandeni et al. 2013) have been conducted on the effect of pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension. The research results indicated that the pre-reading questioning strategy, if implemented effectively, can increase comprehension of students and provide a strong foundation for reading comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
Research question: Is there any statistically significant difference between the effect of semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores?

In line with the above research question, the following null hypothesis was formulated:

Null Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant difference between semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of this study were sixty female high school students studying in Gharchak, Tehran. They were in grade four. The average age of the participants was 17.5 years. The participants were homogenized by the pretest based on their language proficiency. These participants, then, were assigned to two groups, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning. Thirty participants were in each group.

Instruments
In this study, an instrument was used: University Entrance Exam and the students' textbook, Learning to Read, English for Pre-University Students (Birjandi, et al., 2013) was used as the treatment material.

University Entrance Exam. In order to homogenize the participants and examine the effect of two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, on their reading comprehension; the researcher used two parallel tests of reading comprehension, one as the pretest and one as the posttest. Each test included six texts selected from the University Entrance Exams. To choose the appropriate texts, the readability of the texts used for the treatment was estimated through SMOG index. The readability of the textbook passages were 7 to 12.
Therefore, the texts whose readability were 7 to 10 were selected for the pretest and posttest. Each test consisted of 30 multiple choice items, 5 items for each passage. The time allocated for the test was 30 minutes. One point was awarded to each item. The whole score was 30.

Students’ Textbook. The researcher used students' textbook (Learning to Read, English for Pre-University Students) as instructional material. This book includes 8 reading comprehension passages. The passages were taught through the two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, in two fourth grade classes by the researcher, semantic mapping for one class and pre-reading questioning for the other. Meanwhile, eight blank semantic maps were prepared by the researcher for the first class. The maps were checked by the thesis advisor. The pre-reading questioning class, guided by the researcher, prepared a list including two columns of the things and questions related to the topic for each lesson and used them to comprehend the text.

Procedure
Pre-test. One week before the start of the study, the piloted University Entrance test was administered to 70 students in the fourth grade of high school in Gharchak in order to check the homogeneity of the sample. After scoring the test papers, sixty of the participants were selected as target participants of the research. The results of the pre-test, analyzed through independent samples t-test, showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups. In order to provide an indication of the magnitude of the differences between two groups, the effect size was calculated through eta squared formula. Its magnitude was .1. The guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988; cited in Pallent, 2007) show that .1 is very small. It is safe to claim that the two groups are homogeneous. Then, the participants were divided into two groups, 30 participants in each group.

Treatment. In the semantic mapping class, the researcher began teaching the text by introducing the content words that had been made bold in their textbook. This was done by using the semantic map and guided discussion. The researcher drew the word map on the blackboard so that it was visible to the students. She wrote the topic or main concept in the center of the map. Then she distributed the blank semantic maps among the students and began the pre-reading discussion that focused on the content words. As the students responded to the concept-related questions, the researcher wrote the words, students' responses on the map and directed the students to complete the blank maps in the same way. A sample figure is provided below. When students failed to respond to the concept-related questions, the researcher offered a contextual definition of the word that facilitated understanding of the text. The probable contextualized definitions could be prepared by the teacher in advance. Then the maps were completed and the students were ready to read the passage. While reading, they used their semantic word maps to add to the meaning of words.
In the pre-reading questioning class, the researcher began teaching by introducing the topic of the passage that students were going to read. Once the topic was presented, the students were asked to work in groups and prepare a list of two columns. The first column was supposed to be the list of things about the topic that they were sure of, and the second lists the things that they were not sure/didn't know. Afterwards, the researcher asked one student from each group to write one or two items from their lists on the blackboard, so that interesting items which other groups might not have thought of could be included. Then students were ready to read the passage.

**Posttest.** A piloted posttest, University Entrance Exam, was used. The University Entrance test was administered after the treatment sessions finished. In order to pilot the posttest, the researcher administerd the test to a sample of 30 students who shared the same characteristics as the main participants in the research. The reliability of the University Entrance Exam was .86 which seems to be acceptable. Then, the University Entrance Exam was administered to both groups after the treatment sessions.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**
To achieve the purpose of the study, a pretest-posttest intact groups study was developed. Based on the results of pre-test (Table 1 below), there was no significant difference between the two groups, $t(58)= 1.32, p>.18$. In other words, the groups are homogeneous in terms of reading ability at the start of the research experiment. Therefore, the results of the post-test can safely be attributed to the treatment effect.
One week after the end of the treatment, the posttest was administered to the participants. Since the content and form of the pre-test and post-test were identical, the reliability of the test was checked through test-retest method. To do so, the correlation between the two administrations was estimated. The results, presented in Table 2, indicate that test is highly reliable, $r (60) = .94$.

To examine the effect of the treatment, the results of the post-test were subjected to an independent samples $t$-test. The results, displayed in Table 3, help reject the null hypothesis, $t (58) = 2.54, p < .01$. The mean difference is in favor of the semantic mapping group. Therefore, the researcher can claim that semantic mapping technique has been more effective than question pre-reading questioning.
The aim of this section is to explain the effects of two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, on fourth graders' reading comprehension. The results indicated that the semantic mapping strategy improved the participants' reading comprehension better than the pre-reading questioning strategy. In addition to the finding mentioned above, other important findings from the study are summarized below.

First, good readers try to make connections between what they read and what they already know. When teachers help students make those connections before, during and after reading, they are teaching them one of the most important strategies that proficient readers use unconsciously. The pre-reading strategy, semantic mapping, used in this study guided students to activate their prior knowledge or schemata to better comprehend the texts. Moreover, students who took part in this study as the semantic mapping group had to build semantic maps. They had to identify the main idea first, and then they had to analyze the content and find the second categories, the supporting details and finally they had to organize the map. This proves that reading is an interactive process during which readers try to use their background knowledge in order to interact with the text (Carrel, 1988; Pearson et al., 2002). Sheorey et al. (2001) emphasize the role of metacognitive awareness in reading comprehension. They believe "the consensus view is that strategic awareness and monitoring of the comprehension process are critically important aspects of skilled reading" (p.432). This kind of awareness and monitoring (metacognition) is "the knowledge of the readers’ cognition relative to the reading process and the self-control mechanisms they use to monitor and enhance comprehension" (p.432). Therefore, semantic mapping is a metacognitive strategy (Buchard, 2005) which can help students control and improve their learning before, while and after reading a text.

Second, on the importance of reading comprehension strategies, Grabe (2009) believes that "when reading new information, challenging information, or information for complex and difficult tasks, strategic awareness comes strongly into play" (p.225). This study helped students learn and practice the pre-reading strategy, semantic mapping, that made them achieve independent readers in using strategies. Building semantic maps about a text helps students organize a visual framework of what they know and what they do not know about a topic. Therefore, they may try to think and fill the gaps.

Third, students were made to form groups in order to do the activities. Hence, the results should be interpreted within the framework of cooperative learning. When students are appropriately arranged in groups (both good and weak students are in the groups and their roles are made clear) by the teacher, they know that they should support one another. They should use their personal knowledge and experiences in order to communicate meaningfully in groups. As the teacher has to supervise all the groups and guide them, his or her controlling role is decreased. Therefore, students are left to depend on one another in order to learn the new lesson. They face different people's opinions, reflections, experiences and feedback in group work. Each of these can help the group create a product that reflects a wide range of different views and is thus more complete and comprehensive. In this way, students understand that the responsibility of learning rests on
them. When students interact with people who are close to their own level of understanding, they feel more relaxed. It is the duty of each group member to help others to solve their learning problems and answer the probable questions. As a result, they feel a kind of belonging to the group and are motivated to help their teammates as much as they can. Shy students are encouraged to speak in the presence of their classmates and a kind of warm and close atmosphere is created that help more learning (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Fourth, one of the characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching is that students use the language for meaningful purposes and "teachers to be in general control" (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 48). In Communicative Language Teaching, classroom activities are guided in a way that students participate in a learner-centered, meaningful and real communication. The participants of this study expressed that they experienced a learning situation in which learning was under their control not the teacher's; their background knowledge and experiences helped them interact meaningfully; and they did not repeat teacher's words but said their own words.

Fifth, when students are arranged in groups and are asked to do group activities, they assume some responsibilities and have to obey some rules. This helps good classroom management which is a priority for teachers. The researcher of this study observed a calm, controlled and positive climate in classrooms where group work was running. Students were busy with their responsibilities and in fact they did not have time to disturb others.

CONCLUSION
The research question of this study focuses on the effects of the two pre-reading strategies on students' reading comprehension. Namely, is there any statistically significant difference between the effect of semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores? The result of the comparison between the mean scores of two groups through the posttest revealed the semantic mapping group developed their reading comprehension skill more than the pre-reading questioning group. It should be mentioned that the results would hold for a special range of age and a particular social/economical class. Whether the participants of this study had used other strategies to comprehend the texts was out of the control of the researcher.

REFERENCES


SLA RESEARCH NOURISHING LANGUAGE TEACHING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT
This paper aims at providing an overview of some researchers’ viewpoints about the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and language teaching. Research into language learning and teaching can provide useful input for L2 teaching. SLA research has made relevant contributions to language pedagogy (Long 1990). Lightbown (2000) argues that SLA research is not the only source of information teachers should draw on and offers teachers’ guidance. To this end, this review attempted to highlight the supportive link of SLA to language teaching practice with regard to the researchers' viewpoints about its application in English as a foreign language (EFL) pedagogy.

KEYWORDS: Second Language Acquisition; Language Teaching Profession; Researchers' ideas.

INTRODUCTION
SLA research provides a thorough an in-depth basis for language teaching practice and practitioners. Over the past decades a number of groundbreaking theories have been formed to explain how language learning takes place, discover the variables which contribute to second language acquisition and to provide assistance to second language teachers. These theories of SLA which account for language acquisition from different standpoints, have revolutionized our views of teaching and learning. This review introduces some of the most significant theories of second language acquisition which have contributed to classroom pedagogy.

ROUTE AND RATE OF ACQUISITION
The basic findings of SLA research during the past few decades indicate two main results that firstly second language acquisition is highly systematic, and secondly second language acquisition is highly variable.

Although these two major findings might seem to be conflicting, they are more complementary. The first one primarily refers to the route of development (the nature of the stages all learners go through when acquiring the second language - L2). This route remains largely independent of both the learner's mother tongue (L1) and the context of learning (e.g. whether instructed in a
classroom or acquired naturally by exposure). The second statement usually refers to either the rate of the learning process (the speed at which learners are learning the L2), or the outcome of the learning process (how proficient learners become), or both. We all know that both speed of learning and range of outcomes are highly variable from learner to learner: some do much better much more quickly than others. Such findings had invaluable pedagogical implications for language teaching profession in the sense that if we understand what makes learners learn faster and progress ahead, then we can be better teachers or learners. However, these two research lines are supportive and complementary to our insight of how learners learn. In fact, understanding the route learners follow, and the rate they have, give us a clear expectations of what learners can achieve at given points on the developmental scale; a point which is important for both learners and teachers during the learning and teaching process. In addition, such findings lead us, for example, to a better understanding of the significance of errors in the learning process. Producing them need not be seen as necessarily problematic, but can be regarded to as indication of progress.

Many researchers in the disciple have conducted numerous exploratory and confirmatory research studies to draw the above mentioned conclusions. These two findings have been the basis of many teaching methodologies and teaching practices in the profession.

INTERLANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND LANGUAGE TRANSFER

The term interlanguage (IL) was introduced by Selinker (1969). It refers to the linguistic system an adult second language learner uses to express meanings in the target language. It refers to a dynamic linguistic system that has been made and utilized by a language learner who is not fully proficient but is approximating the target language by maintaining some features of their first language or overgeneralizing target language forms in their language productions.

The interlanguage is viewed as a separate linguistic system which is different from both the learner’s mother tongue and the target language. One main feature of any interlanguage is that it stops to develop at some point. Thus, the adult second-language learner never achieves a level of capacity in the use of the target comparable to that achievable by any child acquiring the target as a native language.

Another basic feature of the interlanguage system is transfer. Odlin (1989, p. 27) defines transfer as the influence of similarities and differences between the target language and the first language. Language transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language learning (Odlin, 1989). IL was the origin of a change in second language acquisition, the theory of language transfer was challenged and reconsidered several times. In 1950s, transfer was considered the most important factor that related to errors. In the 1960s, the study of transfer diminished with Chomsky's criticism of behaviorist learning theory which justified that learners’ errors were not indication of language transfer but the creative construction process.
UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR THEORIES
Universal Grammar (UG) theories are based on Chomsky’s idea that there are certain principles that are foundations of language development. These principles are biologically determined and specialized for language learning (Chomsky, 1969, 1980, 1986). Originally, UG theory did not involve itself with second language learning. It was basically a theory concerning the first language learner. Its principles were later utilized by second language researchers and were applied in the field of second language acquisition. UG was used in order to justify the existence of developmental sequences in interlanguage and to support the view of interlanguage as a natural language which is subject to the constraints of the Universal Grammar (Hilles, 1986:45). The use of UG for language transfer, fossilization and L2 pedagogy was also discussed. Evidence was provided that adults have some sort of access to knowledge of UG, and this knowledge is used in the development of foreign language competence (Bley-Vroman, Felix, & Ioup, 1988).

Generally speaking, UG theories of second language acquisition were generated in order to provide justifications for empirical evidence. UG was basically concerned with the internal mechanisms that lead to the acquisition of the formal aspects of the target language and the similarities and differences between acquiring a particular language as a first or a second language. Although researchers have used UG to generate a number of interesting hypotheses about second language acquisition, and generative theorists regard UG as the best theory of grammar because of its descriptive and explanatory adequacy (Ellis, 1994:429), empirical evidence has been restricted to the acquisition of a small set of syntactic phenomena. A general theory of second language acquisition needs to cover a wider range of phenomena (McLaughlin, 1987:108).

COGNITIVE THEORIES
Psychologists and psycholinguists considered second language learning as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill. Some of the sub-skills involved in the language learning process are the application of grammatical rules, proper vocabulary selection, and the pragmatic conventions which govern the use of a specific language (McLaughlin, 1987:134). These sub-skills become automatic with practice (Posner & Snyder, 1975). During this process of automatisation, the learner organizes and restructures new information that is acquired. Through this process of restructuring the learner links new information to old information and achieves increasing degrees of mastery in the second language (McLaughlin, 1987, 1990a).

From the cognitivist’s point of view language acquisition is dependent “in both content and developmental sequencing on prior cognitive abilities” and language is viewed as a function of “more general nonlinguistic abilities” (Berman, 1987:4).

The language acquisition theories based on a cognitive view of language development view language acquisition as the gradual automatization of skills through stages of restructuring and linking new information to old knowledge. However, the differences between the various
cognitive models makes it impossible to construct a comprehensive cognitive theory of second language acquisition and furthermore, as Schimdt (1992) believes: “there is little theoretical support from psychology on the common belief that the development of fluency in a second language is almost exclusively a matter of the increasingly skillful application of rules” (Schmidt, 1992:377).

MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL
In the Multidimensional Model, the learner's stage of acquisition of the target language is determined firstly by the learner’s developmental stage and secondly the learner’s social-psychological direction.

The Multidimensional Model has both explanatory and predictive power in that it not only identifies stages of linguistic development but it also explains why learners experience these developmental stages and it predicts when other grammatical structures will be acquired (Ellis, 1994:384). Although the Multidimensional Model has made important contributions to second language acquisition research, there are some problems with the “falsifiability” of its predictive framework, such as explaining how it is that learners learn whatever they manage to produce despite the processing constraints (see also Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991:285; McLaughlin, 1987:114-115). Furthermore, the Multidimensional Model does not explain the process through which learners obtain intake from input and how they use this intake to reconstruct internal grammars (Ellis, 1994:388). In this respect the Multidimensional Model is limited.

ACCULTURATION THEORY
Schumann (1978) maintains that: “second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target-language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language.”

Based on Schuman's standpoint, second language acquisition is greatly affected by the degree of social and psychological distance between the learner and the target-language culture. Social distance refers to the learner belonging to a certain social group that is in contact with another social group with a different language. Psychological distance results from a number of different affective factors that involve the learner as an individual, such as language shock, culture shock, culture stress, etc. If the social and psychological distance is great then acculturation is ceased and the learner does not progress beyond the early stages of language acquisition. As a result his target language will stay pidginized. Pidginization is characterized by simplifications and reductions occurring in the learner’s interlanguage which lead to fossilization when the learner’s interlanguage system does not progress in the direction of the target language (for a review see McLaughlin, 1987:110-112).
Schumann’s theory received limited empirical support. Among some of the criticisms that the acculturation theory received was that social factors are assumed to have a direct impact on second language acquisition while they are more likely to have an indirect one (Ellis, 1994:233). Also, pidginization is a group phenomenon, while language acquisition is an individual phenomenon. Finally, the acculturation model fails to explain how the social factors influence the quality of contact the learners experience (Ellis, 1994:234).

OUTPUT HYPOTHESIS
The extent to which learners learn by processing linguistic input or by actually producing (i.e. speaking or writing) the language is an issue of debate in SLA research. Opposed to Krashen’s claim that acquisition is completely based on comprehensible input, most researchers now acknowledge that learner output also plays a role. Skehan (1998) based on Swain (1995) enlists the contributions of output as follow:

First, the learner production serves to generate better input through the feedback that learners’ efforts at production elicit. Second, it forces syntactic processing and forces learners to pay attention to grammar. Third, it allows learners to testify hypotheses about the target language grammar through the feedback they obtain when they make errors. Forth, it helps to automatize existing knowledge. Fifth, it provides opportunities for learners to develop discourse skills. And sixth, it is important for helping learners to develop a ‘personal voice’ by directing conversation on to topics they are interested in.

The importance of creating opportunities for output, including what Swain (1985) has called pushed output (i.e. output where the learner is stretched to express messages clearly and explicitly), constitutes one of the main reasons for incorporating tasks into a language program. Exercises result in output that is limited in terms of length and complexity. It does not afford students opportunities for the kind of sustained output that theorists argue is necessary for interlanguage development. Research (e.g. Allen, Swain, Harley, & Cummins, 1990) has shown that extended talk of a clause or more in a classroom context is more likely to occur when students initiate interactions in the classroom and when they have to find their own words. This is best achieved by asking learners to perform tasks that require both oral and written language.

LEARNING AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFRENCES
Although there are particular universal aspects of L2 acquisition, there is also considerable variability in the rate of learning and in the ultimate level of achievement. Learning will be more successful when the instruction is matched to students’ particular aptitude for learning, and also when the students are motivated.

It is probably beyond the abilities of most teachers to design lessons involving the kind of matching instruction employed in Wesche’s study. However, teachers can cater to variation in the nature of their students’ aptitude by adopting a flexible teaching approach involving a variety of learning activities. They can also make use of simple learner-training materials (e.g. Ellis &
Sinclair, 1989) designed to make students more aware of their own approaches to learning and to develop awareness of alternative approaches. The good language learner studies suggest that successful language learning requires a flexible approach to learning.

Thus, increasing the range of learning strategies at learners’ disposal is one way in which teachers can help them to learn. Such strategy training needs to foster an understanding that language learning requires both an experiential and an analytical approach and to demonstrate the kinds of strategies related to both approaches.

Teachers need to accept that it is their responsibility to ensure that their students are motivated and stay motivated and not complain about the fact that students lack motivation. While it is probably true that teachers can do little to influence students’ extrinsic motivation, there is a lot they can do to enhance their intrinsic motivation.

CONCLUSION
This paper has reviewed a number of influential second language acquisition theories with varying emphasis on different aspects of the second language acquisition process. What all these theories have in common is the fact that second language acquisition is an ongoing process. Whether language learners use strategies, cognitive or innate mechanisms, they still have to progress towards the target language going through various stages of development.

SLA theories are all concerned with providing explanations about how languages are acquired. Yet, no single theory can offer a comprehensive explanation about the whole process of second language acquisition. Each theory offers a different insight in the complex process of second language acquisition. However based on these theories of second language acquisition and also their explanations and justifications, invaluable pedagogical uses have been drawn by researchers and applied linguists.

The findings of research studies in SLA has nourished ELT pedagogy and classroom practice in essence. The emergence of each theory in psychology accompanied the appearance of one or more teaching methodologies along with specific techniques which were aimed at enhancing learning.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF SEMANTIC RELATION STRATEGIES ON IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS’ VOCABULARY RECALL AND RETENTION

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of semantic relation strategies (semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial) on Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. 90 pre-intermediate level students took part in a homogeneity test to determine their homogeneity level. Then they were randomly divided into three groups, 20 learners each: two experimental groups (i.e., semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial) and a control group. Then, three groups were given a pre-test before treatment to determine how well the participants knew the vocabularies of the materials. During an eleven-session course, the three groups covered eight passages selected by the researcher. The experimental group of semantic-concept received instructions on why, when, and how these strategies were used. The experimental group of semantic-pictorial received instructions to classify the words or concepts under pictorial concept determined by the teacher based on the topic, their background knowledge and experience. The control group received traditional vocabulary instructions of using synonyms and definitions or even translation. After the treatment sessions, the participants sat for an immediate vocabulary post-test for the short-term effect, retention, of the vocabularies. Finally, after an interval of three weeks, the participants took the vocabulary delayed post-test as an indicator of the long-term effect, recall, of the vocabularies. Data were analyzed through One-way ANOVA and findings showed significant difference between the groups. The semantic-pictorial group outperformed the other groups in both vocabulary recall and retention. Implications of the study for teaching vocabulary suggest that using semantic-pictorial strategy could be more effective than other strategies in teaching vocabulary to EFL pre-intermediate learners.

KEYWORDS: Semantic Relation Strategies, EFL Learners, Vocabulary Recall, Retention

INTRODUCTION
The outstanding developments in technology and communications have made learning foreign languages in general and English language in particular essential for every individual. English
languag has become an international language and a means of communication among people all over the world. In learning a language, there are four skills that we need to improve for complete communication. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Obviously, vocabulary size influences the four skills. Indeed, vocabulary is the building blocks of every language without which one is quite speechless (Mostaan, 2013). Ellis (1997) believes that vocabulary knowledge can assist grammar acquisition because knowing the words in a text or conversation aids learners to get the meaning of the discourse, which in turn help them to acquire the grammatical patterns. Zhan-Xiang (2004) believed that vocabularies are just like bricks of a high building; despite quite small pieces, they are vital to the great structure. In fact, vocabulary is the most fundamental component, without which communication is not feasible. Comprehension is also important for second language acquisition. If second language learners cannot isolate words from the oral utterances and cannot use lexical information to predict the meaning of the speech, they will not be able to comprehend the utterances. As a result, comprehension of the input depends on vocabulary depth and knowledge (Alnasir, 2012).

Vocabulary knowledge is not only important for oral comprehension, but also for reading comprehension. For instance, learners cannot understand a reading passage if they do not have an adequate vocabulary and do not have the skills to guess meaning from context. In summary, vocabulary knowledge is an essential component of learning a second language for several reasons. Both native speakers and learners recognize the importance of getting the words right because lexical errors are numerous and disruptive. Thus, it is important for learners to have good lexical skills in order to produce sentences and to understand them correctly.

Akbari (2008) suggested that in Iran the method most frequently used in English classes is to consult a bilingual dictionary or the teacher for the meaning of unfamiliar words. Too much dictionary work makes learners bored and reluctant to read, and decreases their comprehension. Also, EFL learners often complain about forgetting words quickly and ask about efficient ways for improving long-term retention of words. Therefore, it seems necessary for teachers to make use of some rather innovative strategies for teaching vocabulary. One of the strategies which can be very effective in improving the knowledge of vocabulary and seems to be neglected in the case of Iranian EFL learners is semantic-relation. Thus, there is an urgent need to study this aspect in order to see if vocabulary recall and retention will be influenced by the use of semantic-relation strategy in Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
The main reason behind learning a second language in general and vocabulary in specific is to achieve the ultimate goal, which is to know and understand information similar to that of native speakers of a language. As a consequence, that would lead to the need to know the vocabulary size of native speakers. Nation and Waring (1997, as cited in Schmitt, 2000), in their literature review of vocabulary size studies, concluded that a native speaker’s vocabulary size is around 20,000 word families, and it is anticipated that a native speaker will add around 1,000 word families every year to his or her vocabulary size. A person will continue to learn new vocabulary throughout his or her lifetime. Furthermore, Nation (2006) claims that second language learners
need to know around 98% of the written or spoken words in discourse in order to understand it very well. In order to reach this percentage in written texts, learners need to know around 8,000 to 9,000 word families. On the other hand, learners need to know around 5,000 to 7,000 in order to understand a spoken discourse. However, Nation and Waring (1997, as cited in Schmitt, 2000) argued that learners can cope with small vocabulary size of 2,000 to 3,000, but if they want to function in English without any unknown vocabulary, the vocabulary sizes which were stated above are necessary.

The concept of a word is rather difficult to explain and there are several different views concerning what a word really is. Singleton (1999) emphasizes that words have a rather privileged status in the popular understanding of what a language is since they are vital to linguistic communication. Indeed, without vocabulary there is no tool to communicate and everybody realizes it. However, different people see words and vocabulary differently and therefore defining a word has its problems.

Words can also have different forms but the forms are not necessarily seen as different words. Furthermore, words can have similar forms but convey different meanings. In addition, idioms cause more confusion in the definition of a word since they function as separate entities even though they consist of several words (Carter, 1998). Carter (1998) summarizes that orthographic, phonological, grammatical and semantic properties of a word are best captured using the term lexical item since it overcomes some problems which the term word encounters.

Sometimes the term vocabulary item is used instead of lexical item. Lexemes are the basic contrasting units in a language. For example, when looking up words in a dictionary, one is often looking for lexemes instead of words. For instance, different tenses of a verb are actually lexemes; different word forms (Carter, 1998). Cook (2001) emphasizes that a word is more than its meaning. Each word has certain forms of the word; a certain pronunciation and spelling which are linked to the pronunciation and spelling rules of the language.

Semantic relationship (SR) skills include recognizing and using knowledge about the relationships among words based on their meanings (as opposed to their phonological or orthographic forms (Berends & Reitsma, 2006). This is achieved by focusing on semantic features of words, the minimal contrastive elements of meaning. In other words, this teaching draws attention to the most fundamental similarities and differences among word meanings in order to develop and strengthen semantic networks. This type of teaching requires teachers and students to go much deeper into their understanding of words, and talk about multiple meanings and connotations. For example, teachers may use a semantic feature analysis to teach a group of related concepts by creating a matrix. On the left is a list of words that share some features but not others. Across the top are words that are features of the words on the left.

Since 1976 that Novak proposed concept mapping, concept maps have been used widely in different fields. The studies have shown the significant effect of concept mapping on meaningful learning (Novak, 2010). Most of the conducted studies have been on first language. But a few studies have been done on second language which some of them are presented below. Chularut
and DeBacker (2004) studied the effect of concept mapping on academic achievement, self-efficacy and self-regulation of students in English classes as a second language have been investigated. The subjects of the study were college and high school students that enrolled for English classes. The findings of the study showed that a group of students that used concept mapping, achieved higher scores in English achievement, self-efficacy and self-regulation in comparison to control group.

Ojima (2006) in a case study investigated the impact of concept map strategy as a pre-task planning on writing skill of three Japanese students. The results showed that concept mapping improved writing skills of English learners on the basis of its complexity and reflectivity in which English was L2. It should be mentioned that most of the studies in the field of concept map strategy have been done by academic researchers and these studies have been their academic projects. In the present study the concept maps in official classes of teachers have been used.

Concept maps represent the relationships among concepts (Novak, 2010). With the visual representation of key words, students can identify main issues of a text and organize these key issues in a meaningful way. Marashi and Azarmi (2012) compared the effect of presenting words in semantically related and unrelated sets in intentional and incidental learning contexts on Iranian EFL learners’ vocabulary learning. 120 female EFL learners were randomly put into four experimental groups. In the first group, vocabulary was taught in semantically related sets and in an incidental learning mode. The second group received them in the same sets but in an intentional learning mode. The third experimental group experienced semantically unrelated sets and in an intentional learning mode, while the fourth group was taught the vocabulary in semantically unrelated sets but in an incidental learning mode. The findings revealed that presenting words in semantically unrelated sets and in an intentional learning mode was more effective on students’ vocabulary achievement compared to the other modes. Waring (1997) replicated the study of Tinkham (1997).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research questions to be pursued in this study are as follows:

RQ1: Do semantic-pictorial and semantic-concept strategies improve pre-intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary short and long retention?

RQ2: Is there any significant difference between the use of semantic-pictorial, semantic-concept strategies and conventional ways of teaching vocabulary to pre-intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary short and long retention?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

In the present study, the population was 90 female students who studied English as a foreign language in Esmatie high school in Ahvaz, Iran. They were all in pre-intermediate level. Non-random sampling method was used for the selection of these participants. They took part in a proficiency test, (Richards, 2007) which was used as a homogeneity test and sixty students whose
scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were chosen as the participants of the present study. They were randomly divided into three groups, two experimental and one control. Each group included twenty subjects. Two experimental groups received semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial strategies while the traditional group received the placebos. The participants were within the age range of 16 to 17.

**Instrumentation**

In order to accomplish the objective of the present study, the following instruments were employed:

1. Homogeneity test: Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy and Zukowsk (2008) test was used to determine the homogeneity of subjects in terms of language proficiency level and divide the sample population into three groups. This test featured 50 multiple choice items covering only grammar items. The allotted time was 50 minutes. To estimate the reliability of the test, the Kuder-Richardson formula (KR-21) was used and a value of 0.814 was obtained as reliability which indicated that the test was satisfactorily reliable.

2. Pre-test: A pre-test containing the actual test items was administered i.e., based on the classroom materials to the subjects before treatment in order to determine how well the subjects knew the contents before treatment. The subjects were asked to answer 40 multiple-choice vocabulary questions selected from the course passages in 40 minutes. The reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 formula. To ensure that students did not give more attention than they should to the words appearing in the pre-test, no mention was made of the subsequent learning lessons and the immediate post-test or delayed post-test. The reliability of the pre-test was 0.728.

3. Immediate post-test: To determine the effect of pictorial-concept and semantic-concept strategy on vocabulary retention, after each session of instruction where students had done the strategies in the experimental group and covered the passage given to them to be read there was a 5 minutes rest and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice question quiz asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. The reliability of the immediate post-test was 0.899.

4. Delayed Post-test: Following the treatment, three weeks later after the end of the course, the instructor showed up in the class to administer the post-test. The sudden, without notice presence of the instructor in the class was to test the retention of words in a longer period to see the real effect of the treatment. All characteristics of the post-test were the same as those of the pre-test in terms of time and the number of items. The only difference of this test to the pre-test was that the order of questions and alternatives was changed to wipe out the probable recall of pre-test answers. Both the pre-test and the post-test were performed as part of the classroom evaluation activities under the supervision of the instructor. The reliability value of these tests was also calculated through KR-21 formula. It was 0.903.
Materials
The material used in this study, reading passages, were the same for the three groups and had been selected from the following source:

Procedure
To accomplish the purpose of the study, first 90 female were selected from Esmatie high school in Ahvaz in district three, then a homogeneity test was administered to the subjects under study to determine their homogeneity and to divide the sample population into three groups. The three groups, 20 learners each, were selected randomly: two experimental and one control group. They met for two and a half hours, once a week.

In the second session of the course, a pre-test containing the actual test items was administered to the subjects before treatment in order to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment. The actual vocabulary instruction began from the third session. In each session, the first hour was allotted to vocabulary instruction and the rest to teaching the course book. The whole research took place in a natural language school classroom circumstance. To motivate and encourage the subjects to pay enough attention and to play more active role in the research program, they were told that the purpose of the extra instruction was to improve their vocabulary knowledge and to enable them to commit the vocabulary to their long-term memory.

The entire research project took place in eleven sessions. Eight reading passages were chosen and a variety of vocabulary that could challenge the students to think about how the words fit together was extracted from the passages. During eight sessions of instruction, 60 minutes each, the extracted words and their related passages were worked on. The experimental groups received semantic relation strategy instructions while the other one received the placebo. In order to teach semantic relation strategies in the experimental classes, the following phases were carried out:

Phase 1: In the first session, semantic relation strategies were presented and described explicitly. Then, they were explained to language learners why, when, and how these strategies were used.
Phase 2: In each session, before reading the passage, the teacher presented the students with the challenging new words extracted from the reading passage printed on a piece of paper. Since the focus of the research was on using semantic-concept and pictorial-semantic to teach vocabulary, the predetermined categories were specified to list of the challenging new words.
Phase 3: The students were gathered in groups of two or three around a table, and after explaining the meaning of difficult words, they were directed to classify the words or concepts under semantic or pictorial concept determined by the teacher, based on the topic, their background knowledge and experience.
Phase 4: The students were given the reading passage to read from which the new words had been extracted.
Phase 5: After each session, there was a five-minute rest and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice question quiz asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. While the experimental group received semantic relation strategies as treatment, the control group did not receive any particular strategies. The students were seated in groups of two or three
around a table as in the experimental group and were simply given the reading passages and required to read them and asked the teacher in case of facing any problems. Similar to the experimental group, after each session, there was a five-minute rest for the control group and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice immediate test asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. Of course, it was administered to three groups. Then, in the end, three weeks after the end of the course, in session eleven, the post-test was given to three groups to evaluate the retention of words in a longer period and to see the real effect of the treatment.

**Data Analysis**

In order to determine whether semantic relation strategies have any effect on vocabulary learning, the collected data were analyzed using different statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations were estimated to describe and summarize the data. The statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA on the three groups’ pre-test scores indicated that the difference among the means was not significant. On the other hand, the amount of observed F (.165) for the three groups was lower than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between three group’s mean was not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test level. The data of the delayed post-test were put into one-way ANOVA to find the significance differences between the groups. Then a post-hoc Scheffe test was run to determine the effectiveness of instruction which influenced the groups during the recall period. Moreover, KR-21 formula was used to estimate the reliability of the test. The independent variable in this study was semantic relation strategies and the dependent variable was vocabulary learning.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results of Three Groups’ Pre-test**

At the beginning of the study, three groups were given a pre-test which their statistical data is presented in Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.4500</td>
<td>10.898</td>
<td>2.43708</td>
<td>4.3491</td>
<td>14.5509</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.4000</td>
<td>2.962</td>
<td>.66253</td>
<td>9.0133</td>
<td>11.7867</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.9000</td>
<td>8.340</td>
<td>1.86505</td>
<td>6.9964</td>
<td>14.8036</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 1, the number of the students in three groups is 20. Initially, each student’s pre-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each groups, were calculated. Results indicated that the average means for every three groups was near and the difference among the three groups’ was not significant. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out that the SD of the semantic group was 10.898, higher than other two groups, and SD of the pictorial group was 2.962 which was the lowest comparing to the other two groups.

In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the three groups was statistically significant, One-way ANOVA for the three groups was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. Table 4.2., displays the results of the statistical operations.

**Table 2: One-way ANOVA of Semantic Relation Strategies (Pre-test)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</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>21.700</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.850</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>3745.550</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>65.711</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3767.250</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the critical F (Fc=3.171) with df=2/57 is greater that the observed F (Fo=.165), the difference among the groups is not significant. Therefore, three groups are homogenous. Table 2 indicates the statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA on the three groups’ pre-test scores. Results of the pre-test on the subject’s scores did not reject the null hypothesis at (p<.848) level of significance which indicated that the difference among the means was not significant, because of the fact that the probability level chosen for rejecting the null hypothesis of no difference was \( \alpha = .05 \), so that the null hypothesis was not rejected if the amount of signification was lower than 0.05. By dividing the between–group variance by the within-group variance and finding the ratio between them, we found the probability that the ratio we obtained would recur if the experiment were repeated an infinite number of times with three sample groups on the same participants or any other experimental groups under the same conditions. The critical F was (3.17) while the observed F was (.165); therefore, the observed ratio was not large enough to convince the researcher that the mean difference was significant. On the other hand, in Table 2., the amount of observed F (.165) for the three groups was lower than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between three group’s mean was not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test level.
Results of the Three Groups 'Immediate Post-test

The descriptive statistics for the three groups on the immediate post-test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Semantic Relation Strategies (Immediate Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.150</td>
<td>13.192</td>
<td>2.9498</td>
<td>12.9760</td>
<td>25.3240</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>39.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.950</td>
<td>8.272</td>
<td>1.8497</td>
<td>6.4284</td>
<td>14.1716</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>26.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the mean in the pictorial group differs significantly from two other groups, and also the mean for semantic group shows difference to some degree from conventional group. The mean for pictorial, semantic, and control groups were 19.15, 14.85, and 10.95 respectively. To describe the statistical significance of the three groups’ mean, One-way ANOVA was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. The results of the statistical operations are analyzed in Table 4.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA of Semantic Relation (Immediate Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>783.433</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>391.717</td>
<td>3.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>6477.300</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>113.637</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7260.733</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 4, the results of the immediate post-test on the subject’s scores rejected the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance which shows that the differences among the means were significant. The amount of observed F (3.447) for the three groups was higher than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between the three group’s mean was significant. Since the probability level for rejecting the null hypothesis was smaller than \( \alpha = 0.05 \), therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. To clarify which group outperformed other groups in the immediate post-test, the Post-hoc Scheffe test was conducted to compare the specific mean effectiveness among the three groups. Data are illustrated in Table 5.
Table 5: Post-hoc Scheffe test (Multiple Comparisons of Semantic Relation Strategies (Immediate Post-test))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) VAR00002</th>
<th>(J) VAR00002</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>-4.30000</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>-12.7730</td>
<td>4.1730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>4.55000</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>-3.9230</td>
<td>13.0230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>4.30000</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>-4.1730</td>
<td>12.7730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>8.85000*</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.3770</td>
<td>17.3230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>-4.55000</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>-13.0230</td>
<td>3.9230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>-8.85000*</td>
<td>3.37101</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-17.3230</td>
<td>-.3770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It can be inferred from Table 5, that pictorial group is significantly different from control group at the 0.05 level. The semantic group is not significantly different from the control group (p<0.408). The results shows that the pictorial group shows the greatest difference in compare to the control group (p<0.039) and it shows that the pictorial-semantic instruction had the most influence on the results of vocabulary retention on the immediate post-test and learners’ scores.

Results of the Three Groups’ Delayed Post-test

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Semantic Relation Strategies (Delayed Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minimu m</th>
<th>Maximu m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.80</td>
<td>11.35</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>7.48</td>
<td>18.11</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>11.61</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>13.06</td>
<td>23.93</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.15</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>12.25</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13.48</td>
<td>10.68</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>10.72</td>
<td>16.24</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that the mean in the pictorial group differs significantly from two other groups, and also the mean for semantic group shows difference to some degree from conventional group. The mean for pictorial, semantic, and control groups were 18.50, 12.80, and 9.15 respectively. To describe the statistical significance of the three groups’ mean, One-way ANOVA was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. The results of the statistical operations are analyzed in Table 7.
Based on Table 7, the results of the delayed post-test on the subject’s scores rejected the null hypothesis at (p<.018) level of significance which shows that the differences among the means were significant. The amount of observed F (4.328) for the three groups was higher than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between the three group’s mean was significant. Since the probability level for rejecting the null hypothesis was smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. To clarify which group outperformed other groups in the delayed post-test, the Post-hoc Scheffe test was conducted to compare the specific mean effectiveness among the three groups. Data are illustrated in Table 8.

As the data indicate in Table 8, there are significant differences between the Pictorial, Semantic, and the control groups. After three weeks interval pictorial group outperformed semantic and control groups. And pictorial group at the 0.05 level shows a great difference to control group.

**Discussion**

Picture instruction is another method that can be used in classroom to teach new vocabulary. Pictorial-concept was found to be produced a better performance than the other groups. This superiority is due to the fact that this method allows direct link with the conceptual system; as a result, connecting directly the L2 word with the corresponding concept. For the picture- method participants of the present study, this superiority is obvious in the delayed post-test because they performed better than the other participants. From this study, teachers may gain insights into the role of picture methods in the learners’ learning process and ways to integrate this method in their
Pictures reliably improve the reading-to-learn process—just as had been concluded on the basis of the pictures-in-text research literature through the 1980s (e.g., Levie, 1987).

Fang (1996) suggests that “the contributions of pictures to the overall development of children’s literate behavior seem to be overwhelmingly greater than its potential dangers.” In this regard, Fang (1996) lists six roles that pictures play in storybooks. Pictures may serve to help (a) establish the setting, (b) define/develop the characters, (c) extend/develop the plot, (d) provide a different viewpoint, (e) contribute to the text’s coherence, and (f) reinforce the text. Fang goes on to list several benefits that pictures provide, including such things as motivating the reader, promoting creativity, serving as mental scaffolds, fostering aesthetic appreciation, and promoting children’s language and literacy.

Based on the result section, there are significant differences between the three groups. The results of the post-test may show the difference between the three groups in case of the use of semantic strategies. The group of pictorial instruction outperformed the group of semantic-concept instruction. It shows that the use of pictorial-concept might be of more use than the use of semantic-concept concerning vocabulary recall and retention. So the second null hypothesis was rejected. Another possible reason may be due to the fact that although both strategies were explained to the participants; however, learners are more interested with pictorial-concept than concept maps. Furthermore, using pictures is easier, comes naturally, and does not need much instruction; while using concept maps is more complicated and may be confusing for the learners who encounter it for the first time. The results showed that the first group’s scores were 15 to 120 percent higher than the second group’s score which shows the positive effect of contextual instruction on vocabulary acquisition, retention, and use.

The results of the delayed post-test, after two weeks, also showed remarkable difference between the three groups and again better performance of pictorial group than semantic - concept group.
The findings of this study concerning semantic-concept strategy did not show a positive effect on vocabulary recall and retention, that is, the results of the study did not indicate the superiority of semantic-concept strategy over traditional ways in terms of improving Iranian EFL learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. The findings of the study also revealed that interval between the immediate and the delayed post-test affects the EFL learners’ vocabulary achievement. This interval may affect the loss of learning. However, it needs further research to study the length of interval and the loss of vocabulary achievement. Concerning the inefficiency of semantic-concept strategy in improving Iranian EFL learner’s vocabulary recall and retention, the researcher also found that this strategy was considered new by some of the participants in the study and they were not used to the new strategy. It should be stated that innovative strategies such as semantic-concept strategy, require strong foundations, that is, learners need to build a background concerning current ideas and strategies in teaching vocabulary before the main course of instructions.

CONCLUSION
This study began with the assumption that applying vocabulary learning strategies could enhance the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. The two experimental groups were taught the new vocabulary through two methods of instruction. And the control
The group did not receive any instruction. The instructor explored to see if the application of different vocabulary learning strategies have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners or to investigate the effect of each approach.

Having administered the post-test and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA, the researchers found that results indicated that the instruction of using pictorial-semantic strategies did affect the learners’ vocabulary acquisition and retention the most. The results also showed that applying the semantic-concept strategy may improve the learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. This study faced several limitations in this study including the small size of the research population. Secondly, students were not really cooperative since they knew they are participating in a research they may not did their best to complete the experiment. Thirdly, the time allocated to the instruction was so limited.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF TEACHING CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES THROUGH VIDEO CLIPS ON DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
This research investigated the effect of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on developing speaking skills among senior high school students. In doing so, a homogeneity test was administered among 150 students at the third grade of senior high school. Accordingly, one hundred students whose scores fell above and below the median were selected as the participants of the study. The students whose scores were above the median were selected as high achievers and the students whose scores were below the median were chosen as low achievers. Then, the two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, the control and the experimental groups. Thus we had two control groups with high and low and two experimental groups with high and low proficiency. Before starting the research, a pre-test was administered among all the four groups. In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers’ traditional handouts while the experimental groups received six video clips and participated in observation tasks. After 6 sessions of treatment, a post-test was given to the participants. Data were analyzed by paired and independent samples t-test. The findings showed that the experimental group of high achievers significantly performed better than other groups. The results suggest that the video clips can be used in conversational classes to develop speaking proficiency among high achievers rather than low achievers.

KEYWORDS: Conversational strategies, Video clips, Speaking skills

INTRODUCTION
Conversation skills are crucial for effective socialization, influencing how easily people make friends and excel in the workforce (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994). Developing good conversation skills often requires that students break bad habits and come up with conversation topics. Although some dynamic and proactive learners can improve their communicative abilities in their own way (finding chances to talk to English speakers or watching English films or TV programs), finding effective ways to prepare students for spontaneous communication is one of the biggest challenges for all current language teaching methodologies. Hence, instruction in
class is important to provide students with conversational strategies to help them avoid or overcome communication breakdowns. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) argued that conversational strategies are particularly helpful for language learners who frequently face difficulties in conversations, because these strategies provide them with a sense of security in the language. Conversational strategies could be divided into nine types in order of significance: message adjustment or avoidance, paraphrase, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, interpretive summary, checking (for comprehension and confirmation), and use of fillers/ hesitancy devices (Dornyei & Thurrell). Based on the teaching context, teachers can teach conversational strategies to students in various ways, for instance, through picture dictation tasks (Kebir, 1994), pair-taping (Washburn & Christianson, 1995), or telephone conversation role-plays (Ting & Lau, 2008).

Speaking is an important skill in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Since learners need it for communication (Nunan, 2001). Students must regularly practice conversing with others to improve their speaking and also to develop conversation skills. The teacher can pair up students with other students and make them comment on topics of interest to them, such as their favorite bands. Although students learn effective strategies for conversing, they still appear awkward, since they are not accustomed to using these skills. In this case, teachers can help by pairing awkward students with friendlier students to help the former feel at ease. Conversation skills do not only involve knowing what to say, but also paying attention to others and picking up on non-verbal cues (Nunan, 2001). The teacher should first indicate different aspects of nonverbal communication, such as eye contact and voice tone. Then, he/she should have students exercise expressing hidden meaning through non-verbal cues, and make other students try to interpret these cues. An integral part of developing conversational skills is learning proper manners. The teacher should reinforce conversation etiquette, and direct to keep his/her students from violating these rules. For example students should not interrupt others when they are speaking. The teacher can kindly remind students when they deviate from these norms. Students are often unaware of their incorrect pronunciation (Nunan, 2001). However, no conversation will run smoothly when improper pronunciation impedes clear communication, an especially significant problem with non-native speakers. Indicating an improperly pronounced word is crucial for students to begin addressing the problem. Some sounds make the throat vibrate, while other sounds do not. The teacher should guide students to feel their vocal cords to determine whether they are properly vocalizing. Some sounds produce a puff of air, while other sounds do not. The teacher should have students place a hand near their mouths to determine if air is coming out of the mouth when it should. Also, the teacher should tell students the proper mouth position when making certain sounds. For example, when making the “f” sound, she should instruct students to touch the bottom lip to the top teeth (Nunan, 2001).

When native speakers and non-native speakers hold conversations, they must ordinarily work together to avoid and overcome communication breakdowns. The strategies and tactics which they use include selecting salient topics, checking comprehension, requesting clarification, repeating utterances, stressing key words, and switching topics (Ellis, 1985). Research shows that the skills involved in negotiating to avoid and repair breakdowns are important for ESL/EFL learners to have. Pica (1987) states that "To engage in the kind of interaction believed to activate
the acquisition process, classroom activities must be structured to provide a context whereby learners not only talk to their interlocutors, but negotiate meaning with them as well" (p. 40). Ellis points out that a one to one native speaker to non-native speaker linguistic environment is superior to the one to many environment of the classroom in providing opportunities for negotiated interaction. Anybody can talk about the news or express basic opinions, but good talkers can frequently tell you things you did not know and that you’ll find fascinating. This is why it’s good to have knowledge into fields such as psychology or sociology, and bring such knowledge out at the right moments in a conversation.

In the current study, video clips were applied in teaching conversational strategies, as Hill (1989) claimed carefully handled videos could provide a good base for speaking tasks. For EFL learners in Asia, the teaching of conversational strategies through video clips may also familiarize them with how conversational strategies are used in native English speakers’ cultures. The present study intends to investigate the effect of teaching conversation strategies via printed and visual modes on developing speaking performance among high school students.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The term conversational strategies indicate those strategies which help speakers to maintain a conversation and to achieve their communicative goal (Nguyet & Mai, 2012). Using conversational strategies has been suggested as one effective way to overcome problems in maintaining conversations. Learning effective conversation skills ranks as one of the most significant social abilities that students need to accomplish. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) proposed that, learners are well equipped to handle instances of naturally arising conversations through using these strategies. Conversational strategies are also regarded as a sub-division of communication strategies. Sometimes the two terms conversational strategies and communication strategies are believed to be exchangeable. The term conversational strategies indicate those strategies which help speakers to maintain a conversation and to achieve their communicative goal. In short, conversational strategies are worth attention because they can facilitate interaction and fluency.

**Effective Factors in Selecting Film**

Nowadays, exposing students to English culture is the best way to study English. Using original films is one of the best approaches because language in movies is rich and dialogues are authentic (Chun-Yi, 2008). In other words, stated clearness, attractiveness, length, and familiarity are four criteria of good films for using in the classes. The students are expected to understand the language of the film. The attractive and appealing film arouses the students’ curiosity. Students' proficiency level in four skills should be considered in selecting the films and video clips. In addition, time pressure is another major performance condition affecting speaking. Language teachers should pay attention to the length of the film because they need to fit the time of the class. Teachers can cut the extensive sections from films while learners understand the entire plot.
For mature and advanced learners, teachers have to select films which deliver a clear message to enhance classroom discussion. King (2002) stated that teachers should choose films that deal with different interesting fields such as education, science, history, marriage, justice, etc. A theme-based discussion allows students to discover relevant issues rose from a variety of perspectives, develop critical thinking skills, elicit responses, engage in conversation freely on all aspects of the movie they watch and release them from inhibiting grammatical rule-binding and detailed-oriented learning habits.

**Speaking Skill**

Speaking is an important skill in learning English as EFL. Language learners and teachers look for effective ways to increase this skill. Chastain (1988) argued that speaking a language includes more than knowing the linguistic components of the message and developing language skills needs more than grammatical comprehension and vocabulary memorization. Speaking is an interactive process of building meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and developing. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be recognized and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange.

Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce special points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (i.e. linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (i.e. sociolinguistic competence). A speaker's skills and speech habits may have an effect on the success of any exchange (van Duzer, 1997).

Speaking has a special and important place in the language learning. Language teachers should keep in mind that speaking is not a skill, which they can improve in isolation. Like other language skills, speaking is a process. Speakers use their background and linguistic knowledge to make a meaningful message to their audience. Converting thought to language, though a subconscious process, is a very demanding task for a second or foreign language learner. Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations (Chastain, 1988). They must also handle discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, a learner involved in the exchange with the salesperson described previously must know the usual pattern that such an interaction follows and access that knowledge as the exchange progresses. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe the item sought, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description if the clerk does not understand, and use appropriate facial expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service. Other skills and knowledge that instruction might address involve the following: producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language; using grammar structures accurately; assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives; selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the
topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs; applying strategies to increase comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension; using gestures or body language; and paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement (Brown, 1994). Teachers should monitor learners' speech production to determine what skills and knowledge they already have and what areas require development. Therefore, speaking is a key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and overall oral competency.

Students often think that the ability to speak a language is the product of language learning, but speaking is also a very important part of the language learning process. Effective instructors teach students speaking strategies, using minimal responses, recognizing scripts, and using language to talk about language that they can use to help themselves expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it. These instructors' help students learn to speak so that the students can use speaking to learn.

In a study, Lee (2010) investigated the effects of using film-based instruction on listening comprehension and speaking skills of Applied English majors. The researcher analyzed students’ performances on listening comprehension tests and oral presentations before and after the instruction. In addition, students’ learning knowledge before and after the instruction compared. The study lasted for a whole semester, from September 2008 to January 2009. The participants of this study were 22 Applied English Department students in Southern Taiwan University who were enrolled in the elected course “Movie English.” Instructional activities were developed out of the three feature films which were selected as the main teaching materials in this research. The top three types of films recommended by students were comedy, dramatic feature and animation. The instrumental tools included pre and post treatment questionnaire surveys, the pre and post of listening comprehension tests and the evaluation sheet of oral presentation. Follow-up interviews were also conducted after the treatment. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively through SPSS program. The students’ responses to the questionnaires and interviews were also analyzed qualitatively. Based on the findings of the study, using film-based instruction was enhanced learning interests and motivation. Also, it was provided the chance for learning real-life conversation and it was improved listening comprehension and speaking ability of learners. Moreover, Subjects responded that dictation and listening exercise assist their listening most and oral presentation and group discussion help their speaking most.

Nguyet and Mai (2012) explored the effects of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on learners’ speaking performance. It was planned as an experimental study conducted with two groups of English majors. All participants received six weeks of instruction on four conversational strategies. The control group received direct instruction from the teachers’ handout while the experimental group viewed six video clips and participated in observation tasks. Data was collected via pre-and post-tests on speaking performance and semi-structured interviews. The results showed that after the treatment with video clips, (a) the frequency of the
use of these strategies increased, (b) the learners’ speaking performance was enhanced, (c) there was a low correlation between the frequency of strategy use and the learners’ speaking performance, and (d) the learners expressed a positive attitude towards the treatment.

Suttinee and Kanchana (2009) aim to obtain empirical data on the types of communication strategies those low-ability students select which may affect their oral communication abilities. Three hundred Thai university students participated in the initial part of this study, 100 of who were randomly selected to complete the Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory, which was developed to elicit responses related to their use of communication strategies. In addition, content analysis was employed to confirm the quantitative analysis. It was found that low-ability students tended to employ risk avoidance techniques, especially time gaining strategies, and needed assistance in developing risk-taking techniques such as social-affective, fluency-oriented, help seeking, and circumlocution strategies.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

This paper specifically attempted to reflect on the following research question: Do teaching conversational strategies through video clips enhance the learners’ speaking performance among high achievers?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

The present study was conducted with the help of 100 students who were selected out of 150 students of the third grade of Farzanegan high school and Hajar high school, Ahvaz, Iran. As some students attend English institutes and have higher English education, the first step was to make sure of the students’ homogeneity in speaking level. Based on Homogeneity test, the students whose scores fell below and above the median were selected as the participants of the study. Fifty of the students were below the median and another fifty students were above the median. Therefore, two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, control and experimental groups. Thus, there were two control and experimental groups with high proficiency and two control and experimental groups with low proficiency, each of them included 25 students. The participants ranged in age from 16 to 17 years old. In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers’ handout traditionally while the experimental groups received six video clips and participated in observation tasks.

**Instrumentation**

Several different testing instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially the pre-test and post-test were piloted on five learners of English at a similar level to the participants of the study to find out if any modifications should be made. There were no significant changes after the piloting of the test.
A homogeneity test was used to determine the students’ homogeneity level. The test contained 50 multiple-choice items and the students were supposed to answer them in 60 minutes. The reliability of this test was computed through Kuder-Richardson-21 formula as \( r = 0.73 \).

A pre-test and a post-test determined the effects of teaching conversational strategies through using video clips on developing speaking skills. Moreover, the post-test included the same dialogues in the pre-test. The inter-reliability values of pre and post tests were calculated through Pearson Correlation Analysis as \( r = 0.72 \) and \( r = 0.81 \) respectively. Furthermore, a checklist (Hughes, 2003) was used in both pre and post tests to measure communicative abilities of participants.

**Materials**

The textbook used in this curriculum for the two groups was "Fundamental Top Notch A and B" written by Joan Saslow and Allen Asher (2007). Considering six sessions for the research at the high schools, the high achievers studied five units of Fundamental Top Notch B and the low achievers studied five units of Fundamental Top Notch A which were selected as the materials of the study. The units were chosen to be compatible with the proficiency level of students. Six two to four minutes video clips were carefully selected from Fundamental Top Notch A and B, which were in line with the speaking level of the experimental groups. Five of the video clips were compatible with the five units of the aforementioned textbook and the sixth clip served as a review for all the strategies used in the supplementary course. The control groups were provided with the hand out of the same selected unit conversations.

**Procedure**

This study was conducted at Farzanegan high school and Hajar high school in Behbahan, Iran. The participants were 100 high school students out of 150 students in the third grade of aforementioned schools. Based on their performance on a speaking placement test designed by Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy and Zukowski (2008), the students whose scores fell below and above the median were selected as the participants of the study. Reliability index of homogeneity test was \( r = 0.73 \). So, we had one group of students with high and another one with low English speaking proficiency. Then, the two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, control and experimental groups, each of them had 25 students ranged from 16 to 17 years old.

The material was five units which were selected from "Fundamental Top Notch A & B" based on students’ level. In the experimental group six video clips were used. Each of them was from 2 to 4 minutes. The five week supplementary course were held on five types of conversational strategies which in high groups they were chosen from Top notch B and in low groups the conversation strategies were chosen from Top notch A to be in line with the level of proficiency of students. The sixth video clip served as a review for all of the strategies used in supplementary course. The selected video clips had to meet some criteria. Existence of some various conversation strategies was the first criterion. The second criterion was their appropriateness based on the students’ English level and their speaking proficiency. Thirdly, in selecting the video clips we had to take into account the participants’ social and religious norms and values as well as the relatedness of the film to the students’ daily life in order to communicate well with
them. The video clips were appropriate and fun for the senior high school students. They also were both pedagogical. So they were suitable for using in classes to discover the effects of teaching conversation strategies on developing speaking skill.

In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers’ handout. A pre-test was administered to discover the speaking skill proficiency at the beginning of research period. Through the pretest, the researcher asked all the four groups of students to practice the five conversations selected by her from "Fundamental Top Notch A& B" in 30 minutes and choose one of them deliberately to practice with their partners. The students were free to choose the dialogue and also add or remove some utterances to them. In fact they were open ended dialogues. The researcher observed the students’ conversations that were done in pair and recorded their voices by mp3 player and transcribed them. A checklist (Hughes, 2003) was used in pre-test and post-test to measure communicative abilities of participants. The recordings were evaluated through inter-rater correlation to arrive at the reliability value which met as (r=0.72). The treatment lasted 6 sessions, 30 minutes a session, twice a week.

During the treatment, in each session, the researcher devoted times to showing the video clips, introducing conversation strategies and their uses and also practicing new words and dialogues. Each video clip was presented and repeated to the students for 10 minutes in every session. During each session, four types of techniques including note taking, question and answer, discussion, and description were used to work on the video clips. Most of the students took notes while they watched the clips for reviewing it. After watching the clips, some questions were asked to discover students’ comprehension of it and then the students practiced the conversation strategies presented in clips in pair. In addition, the students discussed the videos and gave their opinion about them. The control groups were conducted by the same activities which were done in the experimental groups. The only difference between the control and the experimental groups related to the visual phases. Finally, after the six weeks of treatment period, a post-test of speaking achievement covered all the materials was administered to the four groups. Through the post-test, the researcher chose one topic for conversation from the five units of the book that was taught during the course and asked students to do it pair wise. In this phase students could not choose the dialogues themselves. As the pre-test, the students’ conversation recorded and transcribed and evaluated by the Hughes (2003)’ checklist. The recordings were evaluated through inter-rater reliability. Finally, the results of the pre-test and post-test were compared to each other to know the effect of teaching conversation strategies through video clips on developing students speaking performance.

Data Analysis
The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of teaching conversational strategies through video clips among senior high school students. Students' speaking exam was conducted at the first and the end of the research as the pretest and post-test of speaking. Participants' interviews were recorded for analyzing in both pre and post-tests. The data were collected and analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17 in order to determine whether teaching conversational strategies through video clips has any effect on developing speaking skill. In this study, the data were analyzed by Independent and paired samples t-test to see if there
was any significant difference between the control and experimental groups regarding their speaking performance. The analysis went further to find out whether it influences on students' performance in speaking skill; two t-test analyses were applied in this section, for the two groups' performances on speaking. Then, an independent samples t-test was also performed to determine the rate of mean differences, if any, between two groups and this last t-test was used to show the role of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on speaking skill.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine the effect of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on developing speaking skills among senior high school students, once the scores of the pre-test and post-test were obtained, the mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. Then, analysis of paired and Independent Samples t-test was run in order to find out whether the differences between the two paired and independent groups are statistically significant or not. It is important to note that the researcher employed all the formulas with the level of significance set at 0.05 in all their applications. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' speaking pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), means, standard deviations (SD), and standard errors of mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (L)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.16</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (L)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (H)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (H)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 1, shows the number of the students in the groups of low and high achievers in pre-test are 25. The standard deviations in the experimental and control groups of low achievers were (7.79) and (7.00), while the standard deviation in the experimental and control groups of high achievers were (4.54) and (5.99) respectively. Furthermore, the mean of the experimental low and control low was 18.16 and 18. In addition, the means of the experimental and control groups of high achievers were 16.36 and 16.72 respectively. Thus, there were close means between the pairs low and high achievers in the pre-test. The differences between each the two groups were not significant.
Table 2: Independent Samples t-test (Experimental vs. Control in High and Low Achievers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (Low) vs. Control (Low)</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.939</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>-4.05 to 4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>47.45</td>
<td>.939</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>-4.05 to 4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (High) vs. Control (High)</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>.360</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-3.38 to 2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>44.73</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>.360</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-3.39 to 2.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows observed t for experimental and control low achievers is .076 with df=48. This amount of observed t does not exceed the critical t, i.e. 2.00. Thus, both groups are homogeneous. The observed t for experimental and control high achievers is .239 with df=48. Since the observed t does not exceed the critical t, both groups are homogeneous. Consequently, the p values for low and high achievers are .939 and .812 respectively which are more than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the two groups are homogeneous which shows no significant difference between the two groups. So, it can be claimed that two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of the experiment regarding their prior knowledge. Descriptive statistics of students' speaking post-tests are summarized in the Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Low and High Achievers in Groups' Post-tests

<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>Experimental (L)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.72</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (L)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.80</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (H)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.68</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (H)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17.32</td>
<td>9.085</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the number of the students in the groups of low and high achievers in post-test is 25, and in each experimental low and high group is 25 too. The standard deviations in experimental and control low achievers are (2.92) and (7.45) respectively, while the standard deviations in the experimental and control high achievers are (7.57) and (9.08) respectively. In addition, the mean of the experimental and control low achievers are 22.72 and 18.80 respectively, and the mean of the experimental high and control high are 22.68 and 17.32.
Table 4: Independent Samples t-tests of Low and High Achievers in Groups’ Post-tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (L) vs. Control (L)</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>31.20</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (H) vs. Control (H)</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>10.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>46.49</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>10.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test. Thus, the difference between the means of the experimental and control groups is significant. The Independent Samples t-test for the post-test between low achievers showed that the observed t for the experimental and control low achievers is 2.44 with 48 degree of freedom, this amount of observed t is greater than the critical t (2.0). Also the Independent Samples t-test between high groups showed that the observed t for experimental high and control high is 2.26 with 48 degree of freedom, this amount of observed t is greater than the critical t (2.000). Furthermore, t-test analysis showed the significance value as .018 in the low groups and .28 in the high groups are much greater than 0.05. This means that there is significant difference between the means of the fourth sets of scores in experimental and control groups. Thus, the treatment made a significant difference between control and experimental groups’ post-tests. In other words, teaching conversational strategies through video clips developed the speaking performance of the senior high school students.

**Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of teaching conversational strategies through video clips in improving speaking skill. Since the experimental groups outperformed the control groups in both high and low achievers, teaching conversational strategies through video clips are supposed to improve speaking skill among senior high school students. One possible explanation of such a result is that the correct use of video clips in the classrooms may help students to enhance using conversational strategies in developing their speaking skill. This explanation is compatible with Katchen (2003) who discovered that films could be used as the major course materials in listening and speaking course for English majors at the university levels. It also showed that students benefited from using films. Combination of sounds and
images in watching films may be one of the reasons that improve speaking. King’s (2002) ideas are in line with the results of the present research since he stated that the great value of films lies in its combination of sounds, images and sometimes texts. Another explanation for the greater progress of the experimental groups with comparing to the control groups is that using video clips could better demonstrate how to avoid communication breakdown and enhance learners’ conversational fluency. Moreover, it was observed that these video clips could effectively illustrate how the conversational strategies are used with both verbal and non-verbal communication. This enables learners to use vocabularies, speaking expressions, and frequently used grammatical structures in their interactive strategies.

Based on the findings of this research, creating a meaningful environment by use of video clips may encourage students to speak. As Canning-Wilson (2000) supports this idea, the use of visuals, films, cartoons, and some audio-visual materials help learners to clarify the messages and enhance their understanding. Progosh (1996) states the same results and notes that visual imaging systems have widespread among people and is an inseparable part of people’s lives. Thus, video clips provide strong motivation for students to learn English. This is in line with Gorjian and Dorshmal (2013) who found that using films in teaching could be motivated and attractive. Similarly, Istanto (2009) emphasized the use of films in classes and his findings are consistent with the outcome of current study. Istanto also argued that films provide strong motivation for learners to learn the target language and culture because they can learn in more interesting ways compared to traditional class activities. Moreover, Jahangard (2007) took the same position and proposed visual materials increase language learning in classrooms.

Based on the above supports, the video clips may arouse learners’ curiosity and can motivate learners to develop their speaking skill through using conversation strategies. The learners show less stress and tension in the class since they were able to cope with the difficulties of speaking through various activities and putting them into the use. The learners feel more comfortable in the classes which are fun for them. The findings of this study also are compatible with the findings of Bahrani and Soltani (2002) who concluded that learners show great interest in watching films and different programs of TV during their research. The participants attended the classes with low anxiety which led to the high motivation.

The results also showed that teaching conversational strategies through video clips could generally lead to improve the speaking skill. This result might be predictable since the use of video clips in teaching conversational strategies may attract learners’ attention and the observation tasks could raise the learners’ awareness on the strategies used in the video clips. Thus, the frequent use of conversational strategies could enhance the learners’ speaking performance since they can see when and how to use the strategies in an appropriate manner.

Comparing the means of the pre-test and post-test of the two experimental high and low achievers showed the speaking score of the two experimental high and low achievers improved and there was significant increase in mean of the experimental high achievers. The results also indicated that the experimental high achievers outperformed the experimental low achievers in the post-test although this difference was not significantly confirmed. This may be due to the
background knowledge of high achievers and their mastery on the vocabularies and expressions used in the video clips. Therefore, it can be claimed that having good knowledge of English grammar and vocabularies and also having good listening ability can be a key factor in developing speaking skills through video clips. Thus, the use of video clips for teaching conversational strategies in developing speaking skills may be beneficial to high rather than low achievers.

CONCLUSION
This study proposed new way of teaching conversational strategies that facilitate interaction and maintain speaking fluency in daily conversations. Video clips, are suggested as an effective tool for carrying out this teaching process (Gorjian & Dorshmal, 2013). In this respect, high school learners can be familiar with how conversational strategies are used in native English speakers’ cultures. Finally, it is vital for instructors to choose appropriate conversational strategies, video clips, and observation tasks to suit their learners’ needs in specific context. The results of the research indicated that video clips did affect the senior high achievers’ speaking skill; however, the difference between the high and low achievers in the experimental groups was not significant. In other words, both high and low achievers of the experimental groups performed in the post-test without any significant difference.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF PRE-TASK PLANNING & ONLINE PLANNING ON FLUENCY & ACCURACY IN L2 ORAL PRODUCTION BETWEEN INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT
The present study was conducted to compare the effect of pre-task and online planning on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ accuracy and fluency in speaking. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 30 intermediate female learners at the first grade of high school were chosen by means of a sample Preliminary English Test (PET) and randomly divided into two experimental groups of 15 students; the pre-task and online planning groups which were provided with 8 sessions with the last one devoted to the posttest. The students in both classes were given the same tasks (two, three, and five minutes depending on the task complexity) but in one group, the participants carried out the task without any planning beforehand and in the other, they performed pretask planning. After the treatment, the two groups were given a posttest on a narrative task. The results of the T-test indicated that the pretask planning group outperformed the online planning group in terms of speaking accuracy and fluency. This study can have some implications for incorporating task based language teaching in the language classroom.

KEYWORD: pretask planning, online planning, fluency, accuracy

INTRODUCTION
The dissatisfaction with traditional methodologies in language teaching and their failure in bringing about naturalistic language learning in which language is used meaningfully and communicatively resulted in a paradigm shift within language teaching towards the more learner-centered communicative methodologies. One of these developments is known as task-based language teaching, a logical development of communicative language teaching (CLT). Task-
Based language teaching draws on the use of different tasks in the classroom context as a tool to make language learning a meaningful experience in which an outcome is desired.

Historically speaking, an interest in tasks as potential building blocks of second language instruction came to the scene when researchers turned to tasks as second language acquisition research tools in mid 1980s (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Some of the proponents of task-based language teaching (TBLT) (e.g., Willis, 1996) consider this change to be a logical development of CLT since it draws on several principles forming part of the CLT movement from 1980s. In fact, in TBLT, it is suggested that engaging learners in task work provides a better context for the activation of learning processes than form-focused activities. This appears to ultimately provide better opportunities for language learning. As indicated by Samuda and Madden (cited in Crookes & Gass, 1993), task-based learning comes from the belief that language can be learned by doing when attention is focused on meaning. TBLT, therefore, organizes the learning process by tasks to be performed in the target language not by functions, notions, topics, and structures.

One way of accounting for language performance is by examining the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of the language produced. According to Skehan (2009), successful performance in task-based contexts include: complexity, defined as more advanced language, accuracy, in which the performer tries to make as few errors as possible, and fluency, the rate of speech production. Since speaking and writing are seen as complex and multi-faceted phenomenon involving a series of interrelated stages, attention to one aspect of production is likely to be at the expense of the other. Depending on the situation, an L2 learner’s attention might be focused on one of the three aspects of performance while jeopardizing the other two. For example, L2 learners who are more concerned with the correctness of what is said might not pay much attention to how something is said or vice versa. Therefore L2 learners, especially those at lower levels of proficiency, find it difficult to attend to meaning and form at the same time. L2 learners’ problems in production may be lessened if they are given time to plan before they produce an L2 utterance or composition. When learners are given the opportunity to plan the linguistic and propositional content of an upcoming task, they can make up for the drawbacks in their language production and as a result the quality of the linguistic output is improved. In relation to providing learners with opportunities for planning, a number of studies have investigated the impact of planning on language production over the last past decade (e.g. Ellis, 1987; Mehnert, 1998; Ortega, 1999).

Oral tasks are commonly used in second or foreign language classes, which are at times challenging for language learners. The reason seems to be that unlike writing tasks where learners can review and revise their output, an oral presentation demands online language processing. Therefore, students are often given some time to prepare for their presentation prior to the conduction of the task. Ellis (2005) refers to such a preparation as strategic or pre-task planning. Over the past decade there has been a growing interest in the effect of pre-task planning on the subsequent performance. For example, Ortega (2005) claimed that one of the main benefits of strategic planning was that it enabled the learners “to access the upper limits of their interlanguage systems without time pressure, thus, making a wider linguistic repertoire available for subsequent on-line use” (p. 90). In other words, strategic planning reduces the cognitive pressure of online performance. The main focus of the research has been on various design.
features and implementation procedures of the tasks and their effects on different aspects of language use such as the fluency, complexity, and accuracy of task performance. While the previous studies have not provided consistent results, they have recognized the influence of certain variables. Task planning, which is defined as the provision of time before or during performing a task (Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008), is one of the implementation variables producing relatively consistent effects on L2 task performance (Ellis, 2003; Ellis, 2005). Task planning, whether pretask or within-task, has been shown to have predictable effects on certain aspects of language use; however, their influences on these aspects are somewhat different (Foster & Skehan, 1996; Yuan & Ellis, 2003).

With regard to its theoretical rationale, the study of planning is considered within a larger framework, namely information processing. Models of information processing account for how information is stored and retrieved. Information processing models are informed by a number of principles (Ellis, 2005). The first principle of information processing models is a control mechanism that language users need to access when they are performing a new task for which they do not have linguistic knowledge (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974; Baddeley & Logie, 1999). This control mechanism draws on explicit stored knowledge. Therefore, it uses up processing power and thus overloads working memory. In fact, this control mechanism consists of a central executive system and a phonological loop. According to Baddeley and Logie (1999), the central executive system controls the relationship between the working and long-term memory. This system is limited in capacity. Therefore, the extent to which language learners are able to attend to a specific system depends on the extent to which other systems are automatized. Hence, planning, whether pretask or within task, seems to play a role in reducing the burden on short-term memory and thus allows for controlled processing and the linear processing of multiple systems. The phonological loop consists of two components, that is, the phonological store providing a temporary representation of material taken from the input or long-term memory and an articulatory rehearsal mechanism which helps maintain materials in working memory that are subject to vanishing. By using this mechanism, that is, articulatory rehearsal, planning allows learners to attend to one set of material while drawing on another set for modification.

Researchers have distinguished two major types of planning pre-task planning and within-task planning (online planning). These are distinguished based on when the planning takes place either before the task itself or during the performance of the task (Ellis, 2005). Pre-task planning is further divided into rehearsal and strategic planning. According to Ellis (2005):

Rehearsal entails providing learners with an opportunity to perform the task before the ‘main performance’. In other words, it involves task repetition with the first performance of the task viewed as a preparation for a subsequent performance. Strategic planning entails learners preparing to perform the task by considering the content they will need to encode and how to express this content. In pre-task planning, the learners have access to the actual task materials. Within-task planning can be differentiated according to the extent to which the task performance is pressured or unpressured. This can be achieved most easily by manipulating the time made available to the learners for the on-line planning of what to say/write in a task performance. When this is unpressured the participants have the opportunity to conceptualize, formulate and
articulate their messages with some care. Moreover, Yuan and Ellis (2003) define online planning as ‘the process by which speakers attend carefully to the formulation stage during speech planning and engage in pre-production and post-production monitoring of their speech acts’. In the case of pre-task planning, learners plan propositional content and isolated chunks of language to encode it. As the name suggests, online planning takes place during performance of a task, whereas pre-task planning examines how planning prior to performance influences production. Task-based language teaching, which requires learners to transact tasks resembling their real life language needs, demands language learners to perform planning at different stages of their learning. Thus, in this study, we aimed at examining the effect of pretask and online planning on accuracy and fluency of oral tasks.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A number of studies have investigated the effects of planning on L2 learners’ oral performance. Research lends general support to the claim that planning in advance impacts positively on language production, mostly fluency and complexity (Ortega, 1999). Studies by Crookes (1989), Foster and Skehan (1996), Skehan and Foster (1997), Wendel (1997) and Mehnert (1998) report that pre-task planning results in increased fluency. In addition, pre-task planning has a positive effect on complexity, in that more complex language is produced by planners than non-planners (Ellis, 2004). Foster and Skehan (1996) found that detailed planners used significantly more subordination than undetailed planners. Wigglesworth (1997) reports that one-minute of planning time only led to more complex language use in the high proficient learners on the difficult task. Yuan and Ellis (2003) found that pre-task planning had a positive effect on complexity. As thus, it has been found that pre-task planning has a positive effect on fluency and complexity. When it comes to accuracy, however, the effects of strategic planning are less certain.

The body of research has consequently shown that pre-task planning leads to more complex language production (e.g., Ortega, 1999), but the findings for accuracy are somewhat surprising. For example, a study by Foster and Skehan (1996), which investigated the effect of three conditions of individual planning (unplanned, detailed planning, and undetailed planning) on task performance, demonstrated that less detailed planning activity resulted in more accurate language production. Wendel (1997), who also found that pre-planned discourse was not significantly more accurate than unplanned performance, explained that accuracy might depend on online/moment-by-moment processing while learners perform the task and not on the offline/pre-task planning.

As discussed above the findings of research on the positive impact of pre-task planning on complexity have been more conclusive than those on the accuracy. In other words, as mentioned above some studies (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Wendel, 1997) concluded that planning was not effective on accuracy, nevertheless Wigglesworth (1997), who investigated the effect of planning on the performance of different task types and at different proficiency levels in a language testing context, found that planning led to greater accuracy and complexity only on high-proficiency candidates and generally on the most demanding tasks (e.g., summary of a conversation). However, the results indicated that low proficiency candidates did not benefit from
planning time. Wigglesworth suggested that this may have been due to the fact that the low proficiency learners did not use the planning time effectively or may have focused on the content rather than the language of their performance. However, later investigation by Mochizuki and Ortega (2008) advanced the proposal that guided planning that involves specific grammatical features may be a suitable pedagogical tool to be used with beginning levels in foreign language classrooms since this type of guided planning may lead to a balance between communication and grammar.

Crookes, in line with Wigglesworth (1997) found that planning opportunity resulted in significantly more complex language in terms of longer utterances, higher number of S-nodes per utterance, and more and longer subordinate clauses. Regarding accuracy, however, no support was found for the hypothesized favorable effect of the planning condition. Crookes (1989) concluded that a tension appeared to operate in the L2 production between complexity and accuracy, and that planning opportunity seemed to have a more powerful effect on language complexity than on language accuracy, in that the urge for complexity may undermine or weaken simultaneous efforts in achieving accuracy. This pay-off between complexity and accuracy led Crookes to the conclusion that no differences in accuracy are to be expected when learners are given opportunity to plan.

Kawauchi (2005) used three different proficiency levels to show the effect of the interaction between proficiency and pretask planning on task performance. Sixteen low intermediate, 12 high-intermediate, and 11 advanced L2 Japanese learners participated in this study. The content of pretask planning was also specified through choosing three kinds of planning: writing, rehearsal, and reading. The results of the study showed that while strategic planning improved fluency, complexity, and accuracy, it appears that strategic planning worked to the advantage of high-intermediate L2 learners since they performed at the same level of fluency as the advanced L2 learners. Planning also had a negative effect for advanced L2 learners in terms of repetition as an aspect of fluency. In addition, planning appears to have improved complexity in the high-intermediate learners more than in the advanced intermediate learners. Advanced learners were also at a similar level of accuracy to the high-intermediate learners under both planning and non-planning conditions. The low intermediate learners benefited most from the planned task in terms of accuracy.

In another study on the effects of planning condition, task structure and gender on different aspects of written performance, Jafari (2006) found that there was a significant difference between planned and no-planned groups in terms of performance measures (i.e., strong and positive effects of planning on all aspects of learners' performance were observed). There was also an interaction between task structure and planning condition. That is to say, the effects of planning were greater with the personal (i.e., picture-description tasks) and narrative (i.e., narrating stories from some picture strips) tasks than with the decision-making task. In contrast, no interaction was found among task structure, planning condition and gender. Rahmanian (2004) examined the relationship between pre-task and online planning and fluency, accuracy and complexity. He concluded that pre-task planners outperformed other groups in terms of fluency. However, the difference in accuracy and complexity of different planning groups did not reach
conventional level of significance and the mean difference was not considerable. Regarding the effect of task type, he found that descriptive tasks, being easier than narrative tasks and freeing up more attentional resources, were not only significantly more accurate, but also more complex.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study was designed to answer the following research questions:
1. Is there a significant difference in the accuracy of EFL learners’ speaking ability in the pretask and online planning conditions?
2. Is there a significant difference in the fluency of EFL learners’ speaking ability in the pretask and online planning conditions?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of this study were 30 EFL students. They were all Iranian adult females, ranging in age from 14 to 16 who were at the first grade of High School in Torbat-e-Heydariyeh, Khorasan razavi, Iran. The participants were homogenized by a sample Preliminary English Test (PET) at the beginning of the term. As the classes were assigned for the teacher, the sample was selected based on convenient non-random sampling. After homogenizing the participants, they were randomly divided into two experimental groups of 15 students, one served as the pre-task planning group and one as the online planning group.

Preliminary English Test (PET)
At the onset of the study, a sample of Preliminary English Test was used to homogenize 60 students among the 105 first grade students of the mentioned high school. The PET consisted of speaking section and 67 items in the reading, writing, and listening sections. The test had a total score of 75 and the administration of the test took 120 minutes. The mean of the scores was calculated and students who achieved between one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen as the participants of this study.

Procedure
Every session, a task was given to the participants as part of their regular classroom instruction. The instruction was carried out over 7 sessions and the 8th session was allocated to the posttest. The participants in the pre-task planning group listened to the teachers’ description of the task and were told that they would receive some time to plan (two, three, or five minutes depending on the task complexity) during which they could think about what they would say when they carry out the task. The participants in this group worked on the pre-task planning individually. After the planning time, two students were randomly asked to talk about the task.

However, the participants in the online planning group worked on the same task in groups with the same planning time and the same teacher’s description of the task but without having time to preplan the task. As the posttest, an oral task the same as one of the task types used during the treatment period was selected by the researchers and was given to the participants in both classes.
at the end of the term. The task type was narrative and supported by visual material, but required some degree of organization of material to tell a story effectively. The participants in first class (pre-task planning) listened to the teachers’ description of the task and had five minutes planning time. The only difference in the posttest of the two groups was that the individual pre-task planning group did the planning in the posttest individually while group pre-task planning group carried out the planning in groups of five. The rationale for different conduction of planning in the posttest was that each group had a different experience during the treatment period and thus, the same context needed to be set for the posttest.

**Fluency**

Fluency has been defined as the production of language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). It could be defined also as the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulations (Ellis, 2003). Following Foster and Skehan (1996), Skehan and Foster (1999), Elder and Iwashita (2005), fluency was measured by counting the number of repetitions (of the same word or phrase), false starts (utterances abandoned before completion), reformulations (phrases or clauses repeated with some modification to syntax, morphology, or word order) and replacements (substitution of one lexical item for another).

**Accuracy**

Accuracy is defined as the ability to produce error-free speech (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). Ellis (2005) stated that accuracy can be defined as the ability to avoid errors in performance, possibly reflecting higher levels of control in the language as well as a conservative orientation. In the current study, accuracy was measured by calculating the number of error-free clauses. All errors in syntax, morphology, and lexical choice were counted. High means indicate less number of errors and as a result better performance. The same measure was used in some previous studies (Yuan & Ellis, 2003; Guará-Tavares, 2008).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To test the first research question, independent sample t-test was used to measure the statistical differences in means between the groups in the results of the post test. The result is shown in Table 1.

<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>treatment</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-6.035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the findings and on the basis of calculation of sample t-tests, observed value of 2-tailed statistic for the groups and (.00) was less than the alpha level of .05. So, we concluded that
Fatemi, M. A., et al.

there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in their performance on the posttest.

To examine the second research question independent sample *t*-test was used to measure the differences in developing students' speaking skill between groups. The result is shown in Table 2.

### Table 2: Independent sample result for fluency

<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>treatment</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>6.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the mean score of accuracy group in pre and posttest.

### Table 3: Group Statistics for accuracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretask</td>
<td>14.56</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td>17.46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see in the above table, students in this group have improved over their speaking ability in the posttest. The following table will show the result for the fluency group.

### Table 4: Group Statistics for fluency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretask</td>
<td>16.26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the first research question posed, examining the effect of pre-task and online planning on accuracy, it was found that the participants in the online planning group outperformed the pre-task planning group in the number of error-free clauses produced. In a way, this finding is consistent with the results that Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984), Ellis (1987), and Yuan and Ellis (2003) obtained. These three studies suggest that the time learners are given for online planning improves the accuracy of their production. In terms of the second research question the results of the present study indicate that pre-task planning positively affects fluency. In pre-task planning the participants are given time prior to the speaking performance. During this time the participants in most cases try to understand the story illustrated in the pictures, organize the information that needs to be conveyed, establish the setting and describe the characters without feeling any pressure. In line with our findings, a number of studies have confirmed that giving learners the opportunity to plan results in greater fluency (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Skehan & Foster, 1997; Wigglesworth, 1997; Wendel, 1997; Mehnert, 1998; Ortega, 1999).
CONCLUSION

Many studies have been done on the effect of pre-task planning on students’ language performance (e.g., Crookes, 1989; Foster & Skehan, 1996, 1999; Mehnert, 1998; Sangarun, 2005; Wendel, 1997; Wigglesworth, 1997; Yuan & Ellis, 2003). What research evidence has shown so far is that giving learners extended planning time before task performance seems to have beneficial effects for complexity, but the findings have been controversial for accuracy. For example, Yuan and Ellis (2003) found that whereas pre-task planning time promoted higher complexity and lexical variety, it did not have significant effects on accuracy. The purpose of this article was to explore the effects of two types of planning (pretask and online) on oral output. This study, being in line with Ellis and Yuan’s (2004) study, suggests that pre-task planning has a positive effect on the fluency and complexity of the Oral output, whereas online planning has an influential impact on the accuracy of the Oral product. This has important implications for Oral pedagogy. Depending on the purpose of Oral tasks teachers assign EFL learners, different aspects of the Oral performance can be emphasized by altering the type of planning conditions.

This study has some limitations. The number of learners participating in this study is small so it limits the generalization of the study. Also, the study has been limited to female students. Moreover, the number of session that students underwent treatment is limited to

REFERENCES


Guarà-Tavares, M. (2008). *Pre-task planning, working memory capacity and L2 speech*...


THE POVERTY OF THE STIMULUS ARGUMENT AND THE ACQUISITION OF STRUCTURE DEPENDENCY IN PERSIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
Universal Grammar-oriented second language acquisition research has primarily been interested in investigating whether second language learners, called L2 learners henceforth, have access to Universal Grammar (UG) principles and parameters in their interlanguage grammars. Recently, the pendulum has swung to the poverty of the stimulus argument. Drawing upon the poverty of the stimulus argument, the present study was intended to examine whether Iranian adult L2 learners of English show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, and whether their level of L2 proficiency influences their understanding of this principle. To this end, a Grammaticality Judgment Test was administered to 63 Persian learners of English (29 freshmen and 34 senior students) who were classified into two levels of language proficiency (the lower-proficiency level and the higher-proficiency level) based upon their institutional status. The results from an independent-samples t-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the two proficiency levels. Similarly, the results from within-group comparisons indicated that the participants in both groups scored highly on structure dependency violations despite the fact that they do not have syntactic movement for questions in their mother tongue implying that their knowledge for structure dependency must be innate as it comes neither from their L1 nor from the L2 input.

KEYWORDS: UG principles, Structure dependency, Poverty of the stimulus argument, L2 acquisition

INTRODUCTION
Since the early 1980s, UG-oriented SLA studies, inspired by Chomsky’s Government and Binding Theory, have proliferated (Ellis, 2008). That is to say, the question of whether SLA is mediated by UG and to what extent has been extensively probed since then.

In the case of L2 acquisition, White (2003a) has emphasized the need to distinguish between two issues: the logical problem of language acquisition, on the one hand, and UG availability (access), on the other hand. These two issues are by no means identical, “although they are often
collapsed” (White, 2003a, p. 22). The former is concerned with whether L2 learners develop unconscious syntactic knowledge or a mental representation that goes beyond the L2 input they encounter (Hawkins, 2001; White, 2003a), and the latter seeks to find out whether or not such knowledge is achieved by means of UG (whether UG is available or accessible to L2 learners) (White, 2003a).

The first decade of UG-based SLA research has principally focused on UG availability to L2 learners drawing upon three sets of hypotheses: no access, partial access (indirect access), or full access (direct access). However, “as hypotheses about UG access developed, interest began to shift from overarching questions like ‘Is UG available?’ or ‘What kind of UG access is there in L2?’ to a closer examination of the nature of the interlanguage grammar, with particular focus on whether interlanguage grammars exhibit properties characteristic of natural language” (White, 2003b, p. 17). As far as the second line of research is concerned, “it is conceivable that there is a logical problem of L2 acquisition” (White, 2003a, p. 22), for there appears to be a mismatch between the input (whether naturalistic input or classroom input) L2 learners are exposed to and the output they represent. Therefore, research which has taken into consideration the issue of the logical problem L2 acquisition or the problem of the poverty of the stimulus has looked for evidence as to whether UG principles constrain interlanguage representations (White, 2003a; Ellis, 2008).

To demonstrate that UG principles constrain interlanguage grammars two conditions must hold:

i) The phenomenon under investigation must be underdetermined by the L2 input.

ii) The phenomenon in question must also be underdetermined by the L1 grammar.

“Thus, the strongest case for the operation of principles of UG in interlanguage grammars can be made if learners demonstrate knowledge of subtle and abstract linguistic properties which could neither have been learned from the L2 input alone nor derived from the grammar of the mother tongue” (White, 2003b, p. 22).

A UG principle that since Chomsky has been used as the archetypal example to discuss the innateness hypothesis is the principle of structure dependency (Cook, 2003). Therefore, the present study is an attempt to provide further evidence for the poverty of the stimulus argument through investigating the acquisition of the principle of structure dependency by L2 learners of English from an L1 background without syntactic movement.

**Structure dependency**

Most SLA researchers focusing on UG availability have narrowed down the scope of their studies to parameter resetting in the L2 and the way it deviates from parameter setting in the learners’ L1s, or the way parameters are related to a particular principle (Cook, 2003). Yet few studies have been dedicated to how principles are acquired in the L2 and how they constrain interlanguage representation.
A specific UG principle is the principle of structure dependency, which since Chomsky (1971) has been utilized to set forth the idea of principles (Cook & Newson, 1996). In essence, the principle of structure dependency provides a test-case for UG-oriented studies of both the L1 and the L2 acquisition (Cook, 2000). In the L1, the existence of the principle of structure dependency provides basic evidence for the innateness of UG, and in the case of L2 acquisition, testing structure dependency is tantamount to demonstrating that L2 learners show knowledge of this principle regardless of whether or not they have syntactic movement in their L1s (Cook, 2003).

The principle of structure dependency assumes that “the knowledge of language relies on the structural relationships in the sentence rather than on the sequence of words” (Cook & Newson, 1996, p. 4). That is to say, the grammatical processes within a language function on the basis of the underlying structures in the sentence rather than the linear order of words within the sentence (Sadeghi, 2007).

Structure dependency is closely related with movement. Movement relates the surface structure to the underlying structure wherein the sentence elements are in positions constrained by the grammar (Cook, 2003). The principle of structure dependency stipulates which element in the structure should be moved “not which word in the sequence or which type of word” (Cook, 2003, p. 203). In other words, “the element to be moved must have a particular structural role in the sentence, not be in a particular place in its linear order” (ibid). For instance, the rules for question formation in English do not rely on the linear order of words rather they are structure-dependent.

According to Cook and Newson (1996), in Chomsky’s writings, the principle of structure dependency has often been introduced through questions like the question in (1) that is related to the statement in (2):

1) Is Jack going?
2) Jack is going.

In forming yes/no questions in English, it is not the 2nd word that is moved; otherwise, the statement in (3) would become the question in (4):

3) On Tuesday, Jack is going.
4) * Tuesday on Jack is going?

Rather it is the auxiliary within the structure of the sentence that is moved. However, it is not sufficient to specify the kind of word or phrase (e.g., the auxiliary) that is moved (Cook & Newson, 1996). This could be illustrated by (5), Chomsky’s archetype in the discussion of structure dependency and its related question (6), in which he has combined a question with a relative clause consisting of a copula verb:

5) Sam is the cat that is black.
6) Is Sam the cat that is black?

It must be noted that only the copula verb in the main clause can be moved not the copula be in the subordinate clause; therefore, (7) yields an ungrammatical question in English:

7) * Is Sam is the cat that black?
It follows from the discussion above that movement is a matter of moving the right element in the right phrase (Cook & Newson, 1996; Cook, 2003; Sadeghi, 2007), and while structure dependency is closely related to movement, it enters into almost all aspects of language in a way that it affects the interpretation of sentences (see Cook & Newson, 1996, for detailed discussion).

English language shows structure dependency in questions as it forms questions through the syntactic movement of certain elements within the sentence. Persian, on the contrary, forms questions by adding the question particle *aya* to the beginning of the sentence rather than moving elements within the sentence; thus, it does not need structure dependency for the formation of questions. So in case Persian learners of English show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, it surely does not come from their L1.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

“Actual L2 research into structure dependency has been sparse” (Cook, 2003, p. 206). In a study, Naoi (1989), as cited in Cook (2003), found that Japanese learners of English showed knowledge of the principle of structure dependency despite the fact that the principle of structure dependency is not required for question formation in Japanese.

In the same vein, Cook (1994), as cited in Cook and Newson (1996), administered a Multi-parameter Universal Grammar Test (MUG test) to a group of native speakers and L2 learners of English from different language backgrounds. The participants were asked for their grammaticality judgment on sentences involving different principles and parameters. The results from the grammaticality judgment tasks revealed that the native speakers rejected sentences with structure dependency violations. As for the L2 learners, all groups with different L1s showed an understanding of the principle of structure dependency, although they demonstrated some variations in their judgment depending on whether they have syntactic movement in their L1s.

In Iran, Sadeghi (2007), in an empirical study, investigated the acquisition of structure dependency among Persian EFL learners by giving a group of 30 adolescents a recognition test, along with a UG adoption test, after training them on relative clauses for four sessions. The results from both tests revealed that the participants showed knowledge of structure dependency, and the few errors they made did not violate structure-dependency indicating that Persian learners of English have the same access to UG as in their L1.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study generally seeks to establish that Persian EFL learners’ interlanguage grammars are UG constrained and more specifically to provide further evidence for the presence of an innate knowledge of a UG principle called the principle of structure dependency in the minds of Persian learners of English, who do not have question movement in their L1.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The following research questions have been raised for the present study:
1) Do Iranian EFL learners from a language background without syntactic movement show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?
2) Do lower-proficiency and higher-proficiency learners show any significant differences in their knowledge of structure dependency? (i.e., does the level of language proficiency have any impact on the knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?).

METHODOLOGY

Participants
The participants for this study were 29 Iranian freshmen (26 females, 3 males) and 34 senior students (26 females, 8 males) studying English as a Foreign Language at an institute of higher education in Shiraz, Iran. The participants, aging from 18 to 40, were selected through convenience sampling.

It must be pointed that in the selection of the participants for the present study, the researchers have chosen to suffice to Persian EFL learners and to dispense with native speaker participants in order to avoid the foul of Bely-Vroman’s comparative fallacy (cited in White, 2003a; Ellis, 2008), who argued that interlanguage grammars are worth studying in their own right, and what really matters in the study of UG principles and parameters is “whether the interlanguage grammar shows evidence of certain distinctions: does learners’ performance on grammatical sentences differ significantly from their performance on ungrammatical sentences?” (White, 2003a, p. 26).

Instrument
For the present study, a Grammaticality Judgment Test (GJT) was administered as GJTs, despite their methodological problems, have been proven to be the conventional method in the UG-related L2 studies, and the results they yield are comparable to those of other research (Cook, 2003).

The grammaticality judgment test included a total of 12 test items (8 grammatical and 4 ungrammatical sentences) adopted from an earlier study conducted by Cook (2000). The sentences, which were modeled on Chomsky’s classic examples (Cook, 2003), came in 3 types: relative clauses with copula, questions with relative clauses, and structure dependency violations wherein the wrong copula had been moved. There were 4 cases of each sentence type (see the Appendix).

Data Collection Procedure
Prior to the administration of the GJT, the participants were assigned to two groups of language proficiency based on their institutional status, in a way that the freshmen were classified as the lower-proficiency group, and the senior students fell into the higher-proficiency group. Then, the test was carried out in a paper-and-pencil format. The test required the participants to read and
judge each sentence making one of the three choices: Ok, Not Ok, and Not Sure. It must be noted that the researchers adopted an unspeeded format for this study to allow the participants to have sufficient time to judge the grammaticality of each test item using their explicit knowledge of the acquired grammatical rules (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

**Scoring Procedure**

As for the scoring procedure, a binary system (0 and 1) of marking the GJT was adopted in a way that Not Sure and blank responses as well as the overtly wrong responses were counted as incorrect while Ok and Not Ok responses in case correctly assigned to the right sentence type were treated as correct. As a result, the correct answer was Ok for relative clauses and questions with relative clauses, and Not Ok for the structure-dependency violations.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researchers in this study have been interested in the interlanguage grammars of individual learners in addition to their group behavior. Hence, as group results may conceal individual variations (White, 2003a), the results of the grammaticality judgment test are going to be presented first for the two groups under scrutiny and then for the individual participants. In addition, two one-way repeated measures ANOVAs and an independent samples t-test were conducted to provide opportunities for both within-group and between-group comparisons, the results of which have been tabulated in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7.

**Table 1: Repeated measures results for freshmen (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>Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.551</td>
<td>11.010</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>27.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.449</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Exact statistics  
b. Design: Intercept

Within Subjects Design: Type

**Table 2: Pairwise comparisons for freshmen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Type</th>
<th>(J) Type</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Difference</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-.655</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>-1.373</td>
<td>1.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-1.069*</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-1.897</td>
<td>-.241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-.655</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>-1.373</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-1.724*</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-2.643</td>
<td>-.805</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1.069*</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>1.897</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1.724*</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.643</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on estimated marginal means  
a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.  
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
Table 1 suggests statistically significant differences in the mean scores obtained by the freshmen on the three sentence types (p < .0005). The partial Eta squared value indicates a moderate effect size (Pallant, 2007, citing from Cohen, 1988). Table 2 demonstrates significant differences between Type A vs. Type C sentences on the one hand, and Type B vs. Type C, on the other hand. However, the differences between Type A and Type B sentences are not statistically significant.

Table 3: Repeated measures results for senior students (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>Type Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.541</td>
<td>13.594a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>32.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Exact statistics
b. Design: Intercept
Within Subject Design: Type

Table 4: Pairwise comparisons for senior students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Type</th>
<th>(J) Type</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.a</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Difference</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-.176</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.703</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.1206</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.843</td>
<td>-.569</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.350</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.1029</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.577</td>
<td>-.481</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1.206a</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>1.843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.029a</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>1.577</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on estimated marginal means
a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

In the same vein, Table 3 indicates a significant difference in the senior students’ scores on the three sentence types and a moderate size effect. Table 4 reveals non-significant differences between Type A and Type B sentences, yet significant differences between Type A and Type C or Type B and Type C.

Table 5: Correct responses for each sentence type (group results)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Lower-proficiency Level</th>
<th>Higher-proficiency Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Possible Score</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Relative Clauses</td>
<td>57 (49.13%)</td>
<td>72 (52.94%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Questions</td>
<td>39 (33.62%)</td>
<td>77 (56.61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Structure-dependency Violations</td>
<td>86 (52.94%)</td>
<td>110 (80.88%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it is illustrated in Table 5, both the freshmen and the senior students scored higher on the sentences with structure dependency violations in comparison with the two other sentence types. Also, the freshmen found questions containing relative clauses more difficult than Type A sentences. This is while the senior participants scored almost similarly on Type A and Type B sentences. The results are in line with Cook’s (2003) findings that all groups of participants from seven different language backgrounds “strongly reject violations of structure dependency and accept the other two sentence types less strongly” (p. 210). For the sake of a better visualization of the obtained data, see Figure 1 below:

![Bar chart showing correct responses for each sentence type (group results)](chart)

Figure 1: Correct responses for each sentence type (group results)

In order to report the results individually, the scores must be reported in terms of the number of participants scoring at each level from zero to four. Table 6 demonstrates the scores individually for both freshmen and senior students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence Types</th>
<th>Scores (Out of 4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Relative Clauses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Questions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Structure-dependency Violations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it is illustrated in Figure 2, Type A sentences show a gradual rise from 0 to 2, then fall at 2. Type B questions, however, move rather steadily from 0 to 3 and fall at 3. Finally, Type C sentences show a gradual rise from 0 to 3 and suddenly peak at 4, showing that 37 participants got 4 out of 4 on Type C sentences. This is while Type A sentences became second, and Type B sentences had the fewest number of individuals obtaining 4 out of 4.

Thus, referring back to the research questions posed earlier in this study (1. Do Iranian EFL learners show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency? 2. Does the level of language proficiency have any impact on the knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?), it must be pointed out that Persian EFL learners show a good understanding of the principle of structure dependency as they could detect violations of this principle by 74.13% for the freshmen and 80.88% for the senior students. This has been established by earlier studies on syntax. Sadighi (2008), for instance, quoting from Shapiro (1997), maintains that no one has yet found instances wherein the L2 learners breach principles like structure dependency. Therefore, the first research question could be answered positively. As for the second research question, it is worth mentioning that an independent-samples $t$-test was conducted in order to compare the scores on the GJT obtained by freshmen and senior students. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the two groups in question at .05 level (see Table 7), indicating that the level of language proficiency had strong impact on the participants’ performance on the grammaticality judgment test leading us to conclude that language proficiency does influence this innate endowment. Interestingly, this is in sharp opposition to Jalilifar and Shooshtari’s (2009) findings, who concluded that language proficiency has no part in parameter resetting, the case of null subject value.

**Table 7: Descriptive statistics and independent samples $t$-test results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GJT Scores</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>-2.187</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Students</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating whether the principle of structure dependency is known by the Persian L2 learners of English and demonstrating the innateness of this knowledge among L2 learners who do not have syntactic movement for polar interrogatives in their L1.

As it was mentioned before, using the poverty of the stimulus argument to highlight the innateness of a particular aspect of syntax in the L2 learners’ interlanguage grammars requires fulfilling the following stages:

A) providing evidence for the very fact that the L2 learner knows a particular aspect of syntax
B) demonstrating that this aspect of syntax could not have been acquired from the L2 input
C) showing that it could neither have been acquired nor transferred from the L1
D) concluding that it must be innate coming from within the L2 learners’ minds.

Hence, if L2 learners show knowledge that does not come from their first language or the L2 input it must then come from their own minds. As for this very study, the participants in both groups showed knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, for they could spot sentences with structure dependency violations, despite the fact that they do not have syntactic movement for question formation in their native language. In addition, the senior students outperformed their lower-proficiency counterparts on the grammaticality judgment test indicating that the level of language proficiency might increase L2 learners’ knowledge of UG principles.

Obviously, grammaticality judgment tests do not always yield clear-cut results as L2 learners’ intuition tend to be unstable and at times unreliable (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). However, “rejecting the method itself as unsound would undermine most second language acquisition research in the UG paradigm” (Cook, 2000, p. 5).

In the end, it must be pointed out that some scholars including Reali and Christiansen (2005) have challenged the idea that the poverty of the stimulus argument could be applied to auxiliary fronting in interrogatives, which has long been used as a cornerstone in the argument for the innateness hypothesis and have proposed that the basic assumptions of the poverty of the stimulus argument need to be reappraised. Therefore, this study can be considered as a “what if” paper, to use Cook’s (2003) terminology, in a sense that it is concerned with what consequences will be gained if the poverty of the stimulus argument holds true. Of course, further studies are required to reveal the hidden depths of the poverty of the stimulus argument.

Limitations of the study

The results from the present study might have been limited on several grounds by the methodological problems inherent in the grammaticality judgment test. In essence, the major limitations of this study have arisen from the limitations of the GJT itself. Firstly, the problem of interpreting performance data as evidence of competence might have imposed certain limitations on the findings of the study. Secondly, as Ellis (2008) noted, it is not obvious whether the participants’ rejection of particular sentences has been due to the grammatical properties of the sentences or the difficulty they have faced in an attempt to parse the sentences. Finally,
variability in the participants’ judgment might have thrown doubt on the reliability of the grammaticality judgment test which has rarely been examined even by eminent UG researchers and has remained unchecked in the present study. The reliability of the GJT for this study could have been examined through a test-retest procedure if the researchers were not pressed for time.

On the whole, had the researchers administered the multiple task technique for the data collection procedure, the findings from the study could have been interpreted with more conviction.

REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Grammaticality Judgment Test

Age: ----------
Sex: M--------- F----------

Directions: Read the following sentences and decide if they are grammatically ok or not. In case you are not certain, check “Not Sure”.

1. Sam is the cat that is black.
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

2. Sarah is the woman who is English.
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

3. Bill is the student who is French.
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

4. Joe was the man who was late.
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

5. Is Joe the dog that is black?
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

6. Is Bill the man who is English?
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

7. Is Sarah the woman who is early?
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

8. Was Peter the student who was French?
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

9. Is Sam the cat that is brown?
   Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

10. Is Sarah the woman who is early?
    Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

11. Was Bill the man who is French?
    Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

12. Was Sarah the teacher who is English?
    Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

Thank You
EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, THEIR SELF-ESTEEM, AND GENDER

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ABSTRACT
This research effort examines the relationship between Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers’ cultural intelligence (CQ) and their self-esteem (SE) and the effect of gender on these two variables (SE & CQ). To this end, 118 Iranian English teachers from different parts of Iran (Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table), both male (N=53) and female (N=65), participated in this project. Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Cultural Intelligence Centre in 2005 and self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) were used in this study. The results indicated a direct significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their self-esteem(r=.342, sig=.000). Also it was found that gender does not have any significant effect on EFL teachers' self-esteem (two-tailed=.189>.05) nor does it have any significant effect on their cultural intelligence (two-tailed = .0933>.05). The relationship between cultural intelligence and self-esteem can directly or indirectly lead us to conclude that teachers with higher level of CQ are expected to enjoy higher level of self-esteem, whereas gender has no effect on those variables. These results can have implications for those who are engaged in teacher training programs.

KEYWORDS: Iranian EFL teachers, Self-Esteem, Cultural Intelligence

INTRODUCTION
Recent research shows that teachers have great potential to affect students’ educational outcomes (Anderson, 2004). The teacher is an educational leader and decision maker, who directly affects and indirectly influences the students and responsibility of the teachers to guide and inspire students, to enrich his disciples an inculcate values. Research on teacher effectiveness has yielded a wealth of understanding about effective teacher characteristics (Hughes, Abbott-Campbell & Williamson, 2001) on education and learning. These effective teachers have some features that make them different from others.

It is clear that a person who teaches a foreign language and aims at mastering it requires enough information about the culture of the people whose language s/he is trying to teach.
Now, more than ever, cultural intelligence becomes a critical part of preparing youth for their 21st century careers. As the world of work becomes more automated and robotic, cultural intelligence becomes a crucial way to stand apart. As the 21st century presents a deepened global experience through internet resources and more accessible modes of mobility, a greater number of individuals have the opportunity to interact with persons from different cultural backgrounds (Templer et al., 2006). Many ESL students are most comfortable by learning through rote memorization or by mastering grammatical rules that doesn’t necessarily mean they won’t benefit from other methodologies that you might view as more effective. But teaching with cultural intelligence means you begin with where your students are most comfortable and then find ways to strategically prepare them for alternative strategies. All teachers are aware of the role of English as international language, but only few of the teachers make efforts to teach intercultural activities in language classrooms (Livermore, 2014).

Cultural intelligence (CQ) can be defined as an Individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings” (Ang & Dyne, 2008, p.3). It also gives insights in how one performs effectively in culturally diverse settings. As a result, teachers need to be culturally intelligent in order to classroom management and teach intercultural activities in language classrooms. A great deal of what’s required to work effectively in a cross-cultural context requires creative solutions

Self-esteem can strongly influence thoughts, moods and behaviors. Psychologists notice that deep feelings of worthlessness (loss of self-esteem) are the root of many psychiatric disorders (Shamlou, 1991). Self esteem simply means as an individual’s overall evaluation of one’s self worth or self image (A. Maslow 1954 and Rogers 1980). Teacher self-esteem may be defined as the evaluation of each characteristic contained in teachers’ self-concepts.

According to Maslow’s need hierarchy theory of motivation, the esteem needs have two versions, a lower one and a higher one. The lower one is the need for the respect of others, the need for status, fame, glory, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, even dominance. The higher form involves the need for self-respect, including such feelings as confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom. So having high self-esteem means a person wants to find the courage to do things that previously did not.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Thomas and Inkson (2004) argued that Cultural intelligence (CQ) is a multidimensional competence that is composed of knowledge of other cultures, mindfulness, and a set and of behavioral skills. Cultural intelligence is consists of four dimensions (1) meta-cognition, (2) cognition, (3) motivation, and (4) behavior. Meta-cognition is defined as higher-order mental processes which are concerned with the acquisition, monitoring, and control of cultural knowledge (Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2009). Cognitive intelligence refers to an individual’s knowledge about different cultures, including their norms, traditions, and practices (Ang & Dyne, 2008; Ng et al., 2009). Motivational aspect of CQ involves ones interest in learning and functioning in cross-cultural situations (Ang et al. 2006). Behavioral intelligence includes the
capability to behave appropriately in a cross-cultural setting using different relevant verbal and nonverbal behaviors and practices such as culturally appropriate gestures, facial expressions, and tones (Hall, 1959; Ng 2009, Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Chua, 1988).

McNab and Worthley (2011) examined the relationship between CQ and individual characteristics. Their findings indicated that there is a positive relationship between general self-efficacy and CQ. McNab and Worthly (2011) concluded that general self-efficacy is a salient feature in CQ education and development efforts.

Petrovic (2011) investigated teachers’ level of cultural intelligence and the factors that may be regarded as the predictors of CQ. In order to this 107 elementary teachers were participated in this study. These teachers were taught in culturally heterogeneous classes. Contacts with other cultures, communication in a foreign language, reading of foreign literature, watching TV travel shows, the importance of knowing other cultures, experiencing multicultural classes as a challenge, enjoyment of intercultural communication, and openness to cultural learning were selected as the factors for CQ predictors. The result indicated a high level of CQ in these teachers (mean= 67.79, SD= 9.21).most of teachers showed a high (66.4%) or very high (22.4%) level of CQ.

On other hand, most research has confirmed a positive association between self-esteem and achievement. People who think of themselves favorably should be able to learn and work more efficiently. Someone with a high self-esteem would expect to do well (Kohn,1994). Self-esteem, a relatively old concept in psychology, was coined by William James in 1890.James (1890) in his ‘Principles of Psychology’ defined self-esteem as being the sum of our successes divided by our pretentions i.e. what we think we ought to achieve. Rosenberg (1965) made an important contribution to defining self-esteem by introducing the concept of ‘worthiness’. Worthiness is whether a person judges him or herself as good or bad and is therefore an evaluative attitude towards oneself.

Heyde (1977) conducted a study about the relationship between self-esteem and oral production in ESL performers at the University of Michigan. He reached the conclusion that there is a high correlation between global self esteem and teacher ratings of oral production. Langroudi and Amiri ( 2014) examined the relationship of academic Self-esteem, academic self-efficacy and academic self-concept to academic achievement among Iranian EFL University Students. The findings of this study revealed that first, there was a significant positive relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic achievement; second, there was a significant positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement; third, there was no relationship between academic self-esteem and academic achievement.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The questions that drive our research are:

Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ self-esteem and their cultural intelligence?
Does gender have any significant effect on self-esteem?
Does gender have any significant effect on cultural intelligence?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**
This study was carried out in some cities in Khorasan Razavi, Iran. The study participants consisted of 118 Iranian English language teachers who worked at public schools or English language institutes. Both male (N = 53) and female (N = 65) participants were included in the study. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to over 50. They were either BA or MA. Their teaching experience ranged from 1 to over 20 years. The participants were selected randomly.

**Instrumentations**
Two questionnaires of cultural intelligence scale and the self-esteem scale were used in this study.

**Cultural intelligence scale** developed by Cultural Intelligence Centre in 2005. It consisted of 4 components. The first one, Metacognitive CQ, included 4 items, the second one which is cognitive CQ was comprised of 6 items, the third one which is motivational CQ consisted of 5 items, and the last component, behavioral CQ, was composed of 5 items. The reliability of each component was reported as follows: metacognitive CQ = 0.72, cognitive CQ = 0.86, motivational CQ = 0.76 and behavioral CQ = 0.83 (Ang et al., 2007). The items of this questionnaire are on the basis of a five point Likert scale, i.e., strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

**Self-esteem scale** (Rosenberg, 1965) which comprises 10 statements, 5 positively worded and 5 negatively worded. This 10 item scale assesses an individual's feelings of self-worth when the individual compares himself or herself to other people. The scale is an attempt to achieve a one dimensional measure of global self-esteem. It was designed to represent a continuum of self-worth, with statements that are endorsed by individuals with low self-esteem to statements that are endorsed only by persons with high self-esteem. The scale can also be modified to measure state self-esteem by asking the respondents to reflect on their current feelings. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The reliability this scale was reported as follows:
A correlation of at least .80 is suggested for at least one type of reliability as evidence; however, standards range from .5 to .9 depending on the intended use and context for the instrument. Internal Consistency: Ranges from .77 to .88. Test-Retest: Ranges from .82 to .85. Aside from the materials which were mentioned earlier, the researcher used no other instrument during the administration of the tests. But for data analysis which is the strong base of this research, some software including SPSS 17.0, Excel 2010, and SAS 9.0 were quite useful or better to say essential to carry out the statistics properly.
Participants of this study were 118 Iranian English language teachers from different language institutes and public school from Khorasan Razavi, Iran. They were from both genders and from different ages with different years of experiences. Surveys are usually conducted by using questionnaires. In this study, for collecting the data, different English language teachers answered the questions of questionnaires in the form of emails (using Google drive) or on the paper. Collecting data started on December 2014 and lasted for about 3 weeks. Finally, in order to answer the research question, the responses obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software. Then, the correlation between these two variables was calculated.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
After collecting data obtained from the instruments, data analysis was conducted by using SPSS (16.0).

Participants' Demographic Information
Table 1 shows data related to participants' demographic information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>85.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Certificate</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 shows a total number of 118 EFL teachers (53 males; 65 females) took part in the study. Participants' age ranged from 20 to over 50 years. The majority of them were 20 to 39 (N=101). Regarding participants' degree, the majority of them (N=107) were either BA (N=54) or MA (N=53). Concerning teaching experience, the majority of them (N=90) were partly novice whose experience was less than 10 years. Only 10 participants had experienced teaching for over 20 years. The rest had the teaching experience between 11 to 20 years.
Correlation between EFL Teachers' Cultural Intelligence & Self-Esteem

In order to see if there is a statistically significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' cultural intelligence and their self-esteem Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test was conducted (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cultural intelligence</th>
<th>Self-esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural intelligence</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.342**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As Table 2 displays there is a statistically significant correlation (r=.342, sig=.000) between EFL teachers' cultural intelligences and their self-esteem. Based on the present finding it can be concluded that a high level of cultural intelligence results in a high level of self-esteem. This may be due to the fact that cultural intelligence may make teachers’ aware of similarities and differences between their own culture and the culture of other groups. So this understanding may increase teachers’ level of self-esteem. According to Jersild (1955) and toneslon (1981) teachers' self esteem is closely related to students' self esteem. Teacher with high self esteem is able to evaluate themselves more accurate (vukovish & pheiffer, 1980). Teachers who have higher level of self-esteem are more productive (Schultz & Hausafuse, 1982) and also these factors have a positive impact on their healthy and stress.

Role of Gender in EFL Teachers' Cultural Intelligence

In order to compare scores obtained by males in cultural intelligence with females' independent samples t-test was conducted. Results are summarized in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig(two-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>74.96</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>74.80</td>
<td>11.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 shows there is not any statistically significant [df=116, t=.085, sig (two-tailed) = .0933>.05] difference between males (N=53, M=74.96, SD=9.41) and females (N=65, M=74.80, SD=11.02) with respect to their cultural intelligence. Therefore, gender is not viewed as a factor affecting EFL teachers' cultural intelligence.

Role of Gender in EFL Teachers' Self-esteem

Once again, independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate the effect of participants' gender on their self-esteem (Table 4).
Table 4: Results of independent samples t-test for males' & females' self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig(two-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26.09</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>26.64</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 shows there is not any significant difference \([df=116, t=1.32, \text{sig (two-tailed)}= .189 > .05]\) between males \((N=53, M=26.09, SD=2.55)\) and females \((N=65, M=26.64, SD=1.97)\) with respect to their self-esteem. Therefore, based on the present finding it can be concluded that gender does not have any significant effect on EFL teachers' self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

This research project explored the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their self-esteem. Cultural intelligence, in a general sense, is the capability of having successful interactions with people from different cultures. In order to get such conclusion, an EFL teacher should teach intercultural activities in language classrooms and, a teacher with high self-esteem want to find the courage to do things that previously did not.

The findings of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ CQ and their self-esteem \((r=.342, \text{sig}=.000)\). Based on this relationship, teachers with high level of cultural intelligence enjoy intercultural communication, openness to cultural learning and contact with people from other cultures, and able to adaptability with different cultures. Thus, because of the significant effect of teachers' self-esteem and cultural intelligence on effective teaching, it seems that teachers with higher self-esteem and cultural intelligence should be employed. The second aim of this paper was to find any relationship between males and female with respect to their cultural intelligence and their self esteem. The results of the analyses revealed gender is not viewed as an affecting factor on EFL teachers' CQ and SE, Therefore, we can conclude that gender does not play a significant role in training and employment of teachers with high self-esteem and cultural intelligence.

This study has some limitations. The result is based on the correlation between cultural awareness and self-esteem and there has been no treatment such as teaching cultural intelligence to the teachers. Also the number of teachers who participated in this study is small. In order to be able to generalize the finding we should search more teachers. Also, the study is limited to EFL teachers in a province in Iran and is not generalizable to other places.

REFERENCES


Ang, S., & Van Dyne, L. (2008). Conceptualization of cultural intelligence: Definition, distinctiveness, and nomological network. In S. Ang & L. Van Dyne (Eds.), Handbook of cultural intelligence: Than- y, measurement, and applications (pp. 3-15)


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Appendix A: Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)
The 20-item, Four Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)
Instructions: Select the response that best describes your capabilities.
Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CQ Factor</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CQ-Strategy:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC1</td>
<td>I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC2</td>
<td>I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC3</td>
<td>I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC4</td>
<td>I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CQ-Knowledge:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG1</td>
<td>I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG2</td>
<td>I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG3</td>
<td>I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG4</td>
<td>I know the marriage systems of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG5</td>
<td>I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG6</td>
<td>I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CQ-Motivation:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT1</td>
<td>I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT2</td>
<td>I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT3</td>
<td>I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
disagree                  agree
MOT4 I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

MOT5 I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

CQ-Behavior:
BEH1 I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

BEH2 I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

BEH3 I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

BEH4 I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

BEH5 I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.  
Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly

Appendix B:
Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities...  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.  
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly
9. I certainly feel useless at times.
   Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

10. At times I think I am no good at all.
    Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
THE PROCESS OF THE IMPLICIT KNOWLEDGE OF LISTENING SKILL DEPENDING ON THE NOTION OF AUTOMATION IN DEVELOPING INTONATION IN EFL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT
The present study investigated the role of implicit knowledge of listening comprehension on promoting intermediate language learners' intonation. To achieve this purpose, a language proficiency test was administered to 58 female language learners studying English in Pars language institute. Ultimately, 40 intermediate language learners were divided into an Experimental and a control group. The participants in the Experimental group were instructed to practice listening comprehension strategies explicitly and use intonation types and rules implicitly whereas the participants in the control group received some placebo for ten sessions. Statistical analyses were conducted through Paired and Independent Sample t-tests following the post-test administration. The analyses of the post-tests showed that explicit instruction of listening comprehension for language learners proved to be effective in developing the general listening and specifically the intonation which is the purpose of this study. Independent Sample t-test analyses revealed that there was a significant difference between control and experimental groups. The statistical test proved that there was a considerable difference between the post-test of the experimental group and the control group. This study suggests that intonation should be introduced implicitly and then empowered through a lot of practices in the EFL context.

KEYWORDS: Implicit knowledge, Listening skill, Automation, Intonation

INTRODUCTION
The process of listening comprehension thought to be a passive activity but now described as a dynamic interpretive process consisting of a series of complicated interactive processing stages that a listener goes through. As mentioned there exist many interpretations of these processes and different authors make their own distinctions in gradation and the rank order in which some processes occur.
Although intonation has been noticed by linguists in general to be an indispensable component of language and communication in the field of listening, there are few listening specialists who do more than mention its importance and then proceed to ignore it in proportion to other areas of focus (e.g., Mendelsohn, 2001). This may be because of several factors, one being that, perhaps because of the nature of intonation and its obvious connection with sound, it seems to be more often associated with pronunciation and speech production than listening and is usually seen to fall outside the domain of listening comprehension. It is mainly from authors in the field of pronunciation and speech production; however, that advice is to be found recommending a focus on prosodic elements in the sound stream to facilitate listening.

Developing intonation which is considered as a part of productive skill has been discussed for a long time and has been paid attention to through different aspects in language research. This piece of research has tried to observe intonation and its developmental stages differently. Considering the necessity of listening skill in language learning generally, decision is made to look more deeply on the possible effects which listening skill could have on intonation as a part of the receptive process implicitly. Listening has been looked upon and utilized in teaching explicitly and also the results have been implemented in teaching procedures explicitly to measure the listening effects on different skills and sub-skills of the language. In this namely piece of research a considerable job has been done to show the implicit effects of listening through different materials on the intonation to see whether intonation could progress this way or not in EFL context.

In modern language teaching and learning, listening has gained its active and communicative value while, as comes in the literature, it had been neglected for years or less emphasis was laid on this skill. Due to the technology development, these days the teachers and researchers benefit from various listening tools to display tasks in the classroom to hone learners' listening comprehension ability. Yet, students in each level may have problems listening to audio programs.

Listening has remained a difficult skill to teach students since setting listening task is considered time-consuming and boring if the strategy itself is problematic to enhance the students' level of proficiency. Learning a language, students may encounter some affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, inhibition and so forth that let them keep the pace forward or give up and quit the scene unsuccessfully. It seems the primary step overcoming the barriers would be to understand the language spoken in a context. If the recipient do not listen attentively, understanding may be undergone some difficulties interacting in sides.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Listening Comprehension

The act of listening plays a vital part in our daily life. Celce-Murcia (1996) states that listening is the most frequently used skill in our daily life compared to the other three skills. 45% corresponds to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading and 9% to writing (Hedge, 2005). Morley (1991) maintains that “we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times
more than we read, and five times more than we write in our daily life” (p. 82). However, Nunan (1988) comments that listening is the “Cinderella Skill” which is overlooked by “its elder sister” speaking in second language learning. Brown (2006) asserts that the number of published books on listening comprehension and its classroom practices in many countries demonstrate that listening is regarded as the least important skill in language teaching. Until 1950s and 1960s, language learning and teaching were limited to grammar, reading and literacy. Later on, primarily the Direct Method and then the Audio Lingual Method highlighted the oral skills which are listening and speaking. From 1970s on, instructional programs expanded their focus on pragmatic skills to include listening and other language skills (Osada, 2004). Researches into listening over the past three decades have emerged that listeners need to integrate phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information to comprehend spoken messages (Celce-Murcia, 1996).

Comparing past approaches, in which listening materials were frequently based on a series of post-listening comprehension questions, in modern language teaching teachers can help students listen more effectively if they spend more time teaching them about the purpose for listening (strategy training). As such, it helps students organize and reflect on their learning (Brown, 2006). Furthermore, since listening is so challenging, teachers need to think carefully about making students' activities successful and the content interesting. They can help students explore a way to lessen the difficulty of listening by training them in different types of listening: systematic presentation of listening for main ideas, listening for details, listening and making inferences (Brown, 2006). When students miss one word or phrase while listening, they might be distracted, stop the task, and lose the link, which seems to be the reason for showing fear and anxiety (Underwood, 1990). Hence, students' motivation (e.g. listening to songs & stories) can play a significant role in learning listening and soothing the problem.

Language learners may encounter some difficulties in understanding the incoming speech. Hedge (2005) divides these difficulties into two types as internal and external problems. Internal problems can be listed as the lack of motivation, high level of anxiety, lack of knowledge of the topic under discussion and unknown vocabulary of what is being heard. On the other hand, external problems are related to listeners’ failure in understanding as a result of the speakers’ characteristics and environmental noises.

Buck (2001) defines strategies as “the thought of ways in which a learner approaches and manages a task” (p. 104). He classifies strategies as cognitive and metacognitive. For him, “Cognitive Strategies are the mental activities related to the comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory for later retrieval” (Richards, 2008, p. 11). This group consists of three processes as Comprehension Process, Storing and Memory Processes, Using and Retrieval Processes. On the other hand, “Metacognitive Strategies are conscious or unconscious mental activities that perform an executive function in the management of cognitive strategies” (Richards, 2008, p. 11) these are assessing the situation, monitoring, self-evaluating and self-testing.
In English, meaning is not only expressed through lexical choices, but also through intonation, whether that is within through groups, sentence-final intonation, or by paragraphs. Intonation can convey a wealth of information, from syntactic and informational material to attitudinal and emotional viewpoints of the speaker. Intonation can be used to manage conversation topics, negotiate turn-taking, and show awareness of information, all of which may not be apparent by other linguistic means (Swain, 1995). As a logical consequence of rich and multidimensional meaning being conveyed through one linguistic feature, many cross-cultural misunderstandings can be attributed to misinterpretation of intonation features in English (Ellis, 1994).

In English there are many types of intonation patterns, depending on the type of sentence. Under the broad category of 'questions' there are different types of questions, each having its own intonation pattern. They are also several different types of intonation patterns for questions alone: yes-no questions, echo questions, calls for confirmation, alternative questions, rhetorical questions, disbelieving questions, and questions to oneself. Despite the fact that, most questions are accompanied by rising intonation (and L2 learners of English are thus taught this), wh-questions are accompanied by falling intonation, which has been the subject of study in the past.

Research and observation are constantly extending the scope of language awareness with the result that the list of skills to be aware of in learning and teaching are constantly being expanded (Swain, 1995). On the whole, most of the studies carried out in the second language classroom (e.g., Buck, 2001); have noted a general positive impact of awareness giving on learners’ subsequent post-exposure performances.

In a study conducted by Zhang, Li, Lo and Meng (2010), perception of English intonation by L1 Chinese speakers was measured by dividing sentential intonation into three categories: declarative statements with intonation signifying continuation or termination, wh-questions and yes-no questions. As stated, Wh-questions carry rising intonation, while yes/no questions and declarative statements are expressed through falling intonation. Participants were to listen to a recording of an L1 English speaker saying statements including these intonation types, then mark whether each sentence contained rising or falling intonation. Students scored high on yes/no questions and declarative sentences, but their scores were equivalent to random guessing on wh-questions, showing they were unaware that Wh-questions are accompanied by falling intonation. Results were the same for continuation statements; participants were unaware of the rising intonation that accompanies these types of sentences. This study suggests that intonation in general is a feature of English that requires a student’s attention, whether through explicit instruction or implicit learning. More specifically, this study also suggests that different types of intonation patterns are acquired before others. Not only does a L2 English speaker have to perceive and learn the pitch contrasts between different types of statements, but he or she also has to learn the meaning tied to these contrasts.
Levis (1999) argues that current pedagogical materials on intonation lack communicative purpose and present an inadequate view of the functions of intonation. He further claims that current pedagogical materials and texts have overlooked more recent research. One way current materials rely on “outdated and inaccurate descriptions of intonational forms and function” (p. 37) is in describing English intonation patterns. Current research supports a need for three patterns to describe pitch: rising, falling, and a half-fall or unfinished pattern. All three are needed to fully teach comprehensive intonation of conversation, especially for students to learn accurate response cues. Levis (2002) presents four principles for improving intonational teaching methodology. He encourages teachers to teach intonation in explicit context; this is the most effective way to example dialogic intonation assignment. Secondly, teachers should make learnable and generalizable statements about meaning. Levis offers guidelines for teaching emotional-attitudinal effects on intonation meaning. Thirdly, teaching intonation should be in the context of a communicative purpose, not just the pattern. Otherwise, intonation is treated as subordinate to its communicative value. Lastly, it is important to teach intonation with realistic language. If the primary goal of classroom exercises is communicative proficiency, the unnatural language that has been included in textbooks in the past will no longer be applicable.

Overall, the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase scored higher on the perception post-test than those who received no treatment, although the improvement was not found to be statistically significant. A small number of learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the Experimental group did not significantly improve in their perception of intonation patterns compared to their peers. Overall, the difference in scores between the pre- and post-tests is higher for the Experimental group (7.29% vs. 4.55% increase) meaning the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase made more gains than those who received no treatment. There were visible patterns or significant gains in one isolated sentence type, Wh-, tag, or declarative. Despite overall improvement, learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the Experimental group significantly got improved in their perception of intonation patterns. These findings suggest that implicit attention to sentence-final intonation supports acquisition for students with reported musical familiarity, though a further area of research could be separating L2 English speakers’ perception of intonation pitch and the meaning attached to it for possibly different results. It is possible that musical familiarity is beneficial to the second language learner only after prolonged experience to a form, or sometimes after the new form is introduced.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY
The main research questions in this study are as follows:
Does implicit knowledge or automation affect learners’ intonation in the experimental and control groups through listening activities in an EFL context?
METHODOLOGY

Participants
The samples of the study were gathered of 58 students in an institute located in Ahvaz. The participants are at the same level, taught by the same instructor. Afterwards, they were randomly assigned into two groups based on the results of a standard test administered (FCE); one control group and the other one experimental group, each containing 20 students, respectively. With regard to the timing of the study, all students participating in the research project received course book treatment. Both groups shared similar social and cultural characteristics and were selected as homogeneous in the intermediate institute level. For selecting homogenous participants, a standard listening comprehension test which is known as ‘First Certificate in English’ (FCE), was administered to a group of EFL learners who were learning English in a language school called Pars Institute. The participants were 58 intermediate female Iranian EFL learners whose average age range was between 18 and 29. According to the standard structure of the test, each item possesses 1 mark and in order to select homogenous participants, those who had between 10-19 correct answers out of 30 questions were selected for the purpose of the study. After selecting the homogenous participants, they were assigned into two groups namely experimental and control groups according to (+1 -1 SD) one standard deviation above and one below the mean. There were 20 female learners in the experimental group and 20 female learners in the control group.

Instrumentation
Initially, before the final administration, the homogeneity test was piloted with a similar group of 10 students. After piloting the test was found to be appropriate for the participants. A reliability index for this test was calculated through KR-21 (r=.81). Then 58 participants took the FCE Homogeneity Test. The test contained thirty multiple-choice and fills in the blanks items and one mark has been specified for each item. Based on the obtained scores two groups were specified according to (-1 +1 SD) above and below the mean. Each group included 20 participants.

A teacher made test was designed and piloted with a similar group of 10 students, then item analysis (item facility and item decimation) was employed through item analysis. Some items were modified or discarded and replaced with new ones. The reliability index for the pre-test was (r=.76). After piloting the instructor concluded that only 25 questions could be used in the pre-test level. So a pre-test including 25 items was administered to determine the effectiveness of experimental and control groups regarding implicit listening comprehension to enhance intonation automatically.

For the post-test the instructor administered a test with 25 questions similar to the pre-test to estimate the amount of enhancement caused through the treatment course. It was piloted with a similar group of 10 students. After piloting, the test was found to be appropriate for the participants. The reliability index for the post test was (r=.78). It is important to note that both pre and post-tests are teacher-made developed by the instructor.
Another instrument was the course book that was used during the treatment level. ‘Listen Here’ is a British accent-based book which includes twenty-eight units plus a pronunciation bank at the end. It was written by Clare West (1999).

**Procedure**

During the study, the Experimental and Control groups went through different procedures. While the Control group did not receive any treatment, the Experimental group received the treatment. Both classes met two times a week at different times of the day, covering the same content and material for all the groups with the Experimental group receiving the treatment and the Control group not receiving any implicit intonation teaching. To enhance the reliability and validity of the study, the same material was used by the same teacher (the researcher). The tasks used for the classroom were selected from the book ‘Listen Here’ (West, 1999). This writer’s book is well known in the field of listening and speaking. This book is most commonly used in Iran for listening classes for intermediate learners and the listening tasks used are authentic and compatible with EFL contexts. The course of treatment lasted 5 weeks. Every week, students in the Experimental group were taught on each listening skill during two sessions. In each week, the teacher tried to implicitly involve the students with the intonation aspects as written or spoken varieties of intonation.

The common practice in such English classes is that firstly the participants were asked to answer the listening tests using the audio CD at home with a lot of repetitions, then checked their answers through their answer key, provided in the book and corrected the wrong answers if any. To analyze the learners’ improvement they marked and discussed the wrong answers with the teacher in the class. In this part of the task the teacher presented the learners with some listening comprehension skills and techniques for answering questions related to the listening tasks and also gave them some tips for the following lessons which are supposed to be answered the next session. These techniques included those strategies which deal with different question types and the best ways to answer them. In addition they were familiarized with the ‘time hunting’ technique for better listening comprehension in which the listener tried to use the short periods of time given during the task to check the previous answered questions and also prepared for the following questions. Then the teacher played the audio again and made the participants look at the audio scripts presented at the end of the book and started performing the intonation practicing tasks implicitly. The skills which are taught to familiarize the learners with the intonation types and kind implicitly were as follows: how to stress individual words and also complete sentences, how to recognize which part of the sentence possesses the highest emphasis, when and where in speech the speaker can use a tonic accent, in which kinds of questions we can use rising or falling intonation and what changes in meaning we can notice if we alter the intonation of tag questions, etc.

Students in the Experimental group were taught some different listening skills explicitly. On the whole, the classes were held for 10 sessions, which emphasize explicit teaching of the different learning strategies of the listening and implicit teaching of intonation. On the other hand the Control group received the same teaching as was mentioned for the Experimental group but with no implicit intonation teaching. When the implicit intonation teaching sessions and exercise-
giving sessions were over for the Experimental and Control groups respectively, a post-test was administered to all the groups to test their listening comprehension enhancement and most importantly as the goal of the present study to test their intonation enhancement. The scores in both Experimental and Control groups were calculated and separated for the data analysis using SPSS package (version 18).

**Data Analysis**

The data were obtained on FCE then analyzed by using an Independent Samples t-test to insure the homogeneity of Experimental and Control groups regarding listening comprehension before starting the experiment. Furthermore another Independent Samples t-test was also used to see if there was any significant difference between Experimental and Control groups’ participants’ performance on the listening pre-test before starting the treatment. Next, a Paired Samples t-test was used to see any difference between pre-test and post-test of each group. Finally, an Independent Samples t-test was used to examine the difference between Experimental and Control groups’ post-tests.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section deals with the results obtained throughout the research and analytically scrutinizes the groups' performance in the study.

Tables 1 and 2 indicate the descriptive statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the homogeneity test (First Certificate in English).

<p>| Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Homogeneity Test |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|</p>
<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><strong>FCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.0000</td>
<td>2.361</td>
<td>98.52815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.0500</td>
<td>2.625</td>
<td>28.58703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 indicates that the mean score for Experimental group in First Certificate in English (FCE) homogeneity test was 15.00 and for the Control group was 15.05 and the standard deviations were 2.36 and 2.62 respectively.
This statistical test was used to make sure that there was no difference between two groups before the experiment. Since the sig. (2-tailed) was .06. This confirms that the difference between two groups was not significant. Thus the two groups were homogeneous before the treatment period.

As it can be seen in Table 3 the experimental group obtained the mean score of 31.40 and standard deviation of 7.94 and the control group obtained the mean score of 32.65 and standard deviation of 7.92. To see if the mean score of both experimental and control groups are statistically significant an Independent Samples t-test is used.
Calculation of observed P-value between Experimental and Control groups (sig=0.62) and comparing it with the critical value of P=0.05 shows that observed differences is not meaningful and the participants of both experimental and control groups were homogeneous and at the same level of listening knowledge before starting the treatment.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental Group (pre-vs. post-tests)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31.4000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.94322</td>
<td>1.77616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>66.0000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.88776</td>
<td>3.55261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident in Table 5 the pre-test mean score of the experimental group was 31.40 while that of post-test was computed as 66.00. A short look at the table indicates that a considerable difference between two sets of scores could be observed. To see that if this difference was statistically significant, a Paired Samples t-test was run.

**Table 6: Paired Samples Test of Experimental Group (pre-vs. post-tests)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.  (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test – Post-test</td>
<td>-34.60</td>
<td>16.91</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>-42.51</td>
<td>-26.68</td>
<td>-9.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in Table 6 the t-observed value was computed as 9.14 by the degree of freedom of 19. Since the sig. (2-tailed) was less than 0.05 it indicates that there was statistically significant difference between the performances of participants in pre-test and post-test.

**Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Control and Experimental Groups (Post-test)**

<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>Post-test</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.0000</td>
<td>15.88776</td>
<td>3.55261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.0500</td>
<td>13.03629</td>
<td>2.91500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the descriptive statistic of Table 7 the mean score of the Experimental group was computed as 66.00 while that of Control group was calculated as 46.05 and nearly corresponding standard deviation between two groups could be observed. To see that the difference between Control and Experimental groups was significant an Independent Samples t-test was used.
Table 8: Independent Samples T-test of Control & Experimental Groups (Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2 tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>19.950</td>
<td>4.595461</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 8 the t-observed value was 4.34 by the degree of freedom of 38. Moreover, since the sig. (2-tailed) value was less than 0.05. This statistical test proves that a considerable difference between the post-tests of Experimental group and Control group in a favor of Experimental group can be seen.

Discussion

Results of the study indicate that there was statistically significant difference between the performances of participants in pre-test and post-test for the Experimental group. In this case the null hypothesis for question number one is rejected because there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the Experimental group. Based on the activities which the teacher performed during the treatment period, a significant improvement can be seen in the post-test of the Experimental group which received these treatments. The teacher trained the participants both in the class and out of the class as homework and this had a considerable effect on their listening comprehension and also using intonation in their speaking.

The learners in the Experimental group answered the given questions after listening to the audio CD of the book and this was just as a warm up for the further class activities. Through this kind of homework the teacher used the time of the class for implicit training. The transcriptions were comprehensive enough to teach the basic rules of word stress and sentence intonation implicitly because they included nearly all kinds of word forms such as content or function words and also were rich in various statements and questions to show and emphasize the overall intonation both rising and falling. The improvement of the learners in Experimental group was noticeable after each week and for the teacher to make sure of this improvement, he was asking them to produce some sentences and questions according to what had been said weekly to see if they are practicing and doing their homework correctly.

The findings of this study are in line with the study of (Arjmandi, Ghanimi & Rahimy, 2014) which investigated the effects of audio story practice (task) on EFL learners’ listening comprehension. In the Control group the regular method was used to teach English language and in Experimental group audio story task was applied as a supplementary material. A pre-test
on listening comprehension was run to determine the initial level of participants' listening comprehension ability. Then, both groups received a semester treatment sessions (6 weeks). The classes met three sessions each week, each session for 90 minutes. The Experimental group received 30 minutes audio story task treatment at the end of a couple of sessions each week (8 sessions a semester). A post-test measure was run to see whether there is any development in each group' performance after a semester instruction period. The findings of the study showed that there was statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group. That is, the experimental group outperformed the control group in development of the study.

The results of the study say that there was a significant development in Experimental group's listening comprehension ability using audio story task after the treatment sessions. This development can be defined because of the audio story task as a complementary material to classroom activities. Designing stories to the educational space are considered helpful. However, audio story is strange a bit at the initial step. That is, affecting factors can build obstacle and barriers to improving language learning and teaching procedure, especially listening skill. Yet benefiting from the native speakers' performance (stress, intonation, pitch, and rhythm) is something important in improving intonation. Therefore, the teacher actually tried to somehow consider participants feelings and prepared them for the task. On the other hand, the control group using the regular English class also developed at the end of the project. The development in control group is undeniable because the learners are expected to improve listening comprehension along with the other skills after they receive one semester instruction. However, comparing two groups, the development of the experimental group is statistically more significant than the control group. Therefore, teaching listening can be integrated with audio story task as an effective input to improve learners' listening comprehension ability.

Overall, the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase scored higher on the perception post-test than those who received no treatment. Overall, the difference in scores between the pre-test and post-tests is higher for the experimental group, meaning the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase made more gains than those who received no treatment. Learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the experimental group did significantly improve in their perception of intonation patterns. These findings suggest that implicit attention to sentence-final intonation may support acquisition for students with reported musical familiarity. It is more likely that the students with musical familiarity could perceive the intonation contrasts more than those without musical experience and therefore answered the questions correctly. Within the group of students with self-reported musical familiarity, there was much variation in the amount and type of musical training. The time studying music ranged from three months to 10 years. Some students were self-taught, others had formal training, and the age at which that training took place varied from student to student. But according to the test-type administered, musicality was a factor that aided students in making intonation gains.
CONCLUSION

Language studies in the domain of language learning strategies, especially listening comprehension in developing, intonation types and skills, are well advised to take the implications presented in this study into thoughtful considerations. This study could be a striking inception of extensive investigations to be launched into discovering the influence of listening comprehension on intonation in EFL context. The listening comprehension skill and the use of proper strategies in promoting listening comprehension should be investigated by teachers as researchers before launching them for better understanding of the task.

Many language teachers in EFL contexts treat the listening comprehension skill in a traditional way. They are considerably careless in teaching this skill, overlooking the insight that they can give language learners by using listening strategies in general and intonation application strategies in particular. Teacher trainers should first introduce the importance of proper listening strategies to language teachers. Then, they must receive some instruction on how and when to utilize these strategies for enhancing better understanding. Subsequent to getting acquainted with these types of listening strategies, they should be highly recommended to employ and teach them at suitable levels of language learning.

In language classrooms, it is suggested that language teachers familiarize their elementary and pre-intermediate language learners with listening comprehension tasks. Since this study manifested that explicit instruction on listening strategies of understanding and answering properly to listening comprehension questions was useful for intermediate learners of English, it is recommended that language teachers explicitly instruct their intermediate language learners in the use of these strategies, and also leave them to use them on their own.

The application of explicit strategies for listening comprehension skill may result in successful learning among female intermediate learners. Language learners who are successful in their listening comprehension skill might draw on this strategy more frequently than do those who are poor in their listening comprehension skill. Learners should try to change their views toward listening and their understanding in that they do not have to expect themselves to understand every piece of the given listening. The modern tactics for listening practitioners suggest a whole understanding of the given listening skill, but they also suggest a detailed attention in case of answering detailed questions. For the listening textbooks to be more effective it is helpful to pay attention more to the pre-listening activities. There should be a part to warm up and negotiate the tasks which are given in each lesson. Material designers should try to apply this part to their listening books to increase the effectiveness of their books. The present study has been carried out at the intermediate level. Succeeding studies had better evaluate the effect of listening comprehension on intonation development at the beginning and advanced levels.

REFERENCES


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THE EFFECT OF RECONSTRUCTION PODCASTS ON PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS’ SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT  
Recent studies have suggested that the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Moodle programs affect language learning and teaching but there are not any researches on podcasts and reconstruct of them. The present study aimed to investigate the effect of reconstruction podcasts on pre-intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners’ speaking proficiency. It attempted to examine students’ speaking skill among Iranian Islamic Azad University of Ahwaz at BA course level. Sixty participants were non-randomly divided into two groups (the treatment group and the control group) from Richards’ (2008) proficiency placement test and the Cambridge oral unlimited placement interview test (2010). Before the period of treatment, the oral sample test was given to eight students who were not in participants’ members, but they were at the same level to follow piloting the pre and post-tests. Then, the participants were interviewed a pre-test based on the reconstruction podcast. The present study examined the effect of the podcasts after the reconstruction during treatment on experimental groups. Finally, a post-test was administered to two groups and data were collected. Results showed that the reconstruction podcasts instruction affected the experimental group more than the control group significantly (p<0.05). The present study suggests that the use of the reconstruction podcasts in speaking proficiency could be a beneficial activity which improves both fluency and accuracy of the EFL learners’ speaking skill.

KEYWORDS: Reconstruction, Podcast, Speaking proficiency (fluency & accuracy)

INTRODUCTION  
By growth of technology and increase of significant of English learning in business, scientific and so on, make learners learn English through CALL, Moodle, and Internet. The life of people, nowadays, is affected by their powerful personal computers and net connection (Mishan, 2005). According to Gulek and Demirtas (2005), they prefer to rely on writing e-mails, chatting on yahoo, sending online cards, reading online News, at all using Computers and Internet for their connections. While, according to the Office of Information Technology of the University of Minnesota in the United States (2006), these days are a shift from e-learning to mobile learning, as podcasting is a time-shifting technology. The scope of English teachers and learners (as second or foreign language) is to speak and write English the same as native speakers. According
to Celce-Murcia (2001), some people believe that speaking is the central aim in language learning and shows interlocutors’ abilities of that language and makes accomplished skills in real communication. Richards and Renandya (2002) propose that learning to speak a foreign language needs the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structural exchange and the knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. They believe that speaking the target language fluently and appropriately is difficult for EFL learners because oral communication proficiency needs the ability to interact in social context. Appropriate interaction involves both verbal communication and paralinguistic elements of speech include pitch, stress and intonation. They argue like the other linguists and philologists such as McCarthy (1991) that the above issues affect paralinguistic elements, non-linguistic elements such as gestures and posture/body language, facial expressions to convey appropriate message during oral communication. They would be occurring by placing the EFL learners in native position among extra listening contents.

According to Son (2008), podcasts have so realistic and authentic contents. Fang (2008) argued that listening and speaking are complementary and listening to the sound before talking is so beneficial for speaking (Celce-Murcia, 2001). For improving fluency and accuracy of speaking, the learner needs the ability to negotiate in social context for appropriate interacting verbal communication and paralinguistic elements (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Iranian EFL learners have also many difficulties in speaking accuracy and fluency (Dolati & Seliman, 2011). The teachers could help learners by giving them opportunity to be in this kind of position. The podcast programs are online learning programs which are so realistic. The EFL learners would practice in real native situations by listening to these podcasts. The purpose of present study based on improving speaking proficiency (fluency and accuracy) through reconstructing of the extra podcast programs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Warschauer (1996), CALL has gradually improved over past 30 years; this improvement occurs in three phases, behavioral CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL. Behavioral CALL which has been started from 1950s until improved in 1960s-1970s, was based on the ten-dominant behaviorist theories of learning. Programs of this phase entailed repetitive language drills and can be referred to as drill and practice. The computer utilizes as a tool or vehicle for delivering instructional materials to the student.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, behavioral CALL was undermined by two important factors. First, behavioral approaches to language learning had been rejected both at theoretical and pedagogical level. Secondly, the introduction of the microcomputer allowed a whole new range of possibilities. The second phase was followed by the communicative approach for teaching which became proponent in the 1970s and 80s. Proponents of this approach felt that the drill and practice programs of the previous decade did not allow enough authentic communication to be of much value. The third phase integrative (multimedia technology and the Internet) of CALL was developed on the integration of skills like listening with reading. Hypermedia makes multimedia powerful and it makes authentic learning environment by listing up through seeing, skills are...
easily integrate, students by themselves control their own learning, and facilitates a principle focus on the content, without sacrificing a secondary focus on language form or learning strategies which are important advantages of hypermedia.

The other step of integrative is the Internet. The most use of Internet increase writing and reading skills through online chat speaking and listening. This phase puts all theoretical language teaching principles into practice that is integrating meaningful and authentic communication into all aspects of the language learning curriculum. In addition the combination of internal and external glossaries help learners to significantly recall a greater number of ideas when reading the text than when they only accesses to an external dictionary while reading an online text. Podcast online programs that accessible these days are more authentic and realistic with different topics for huge inherence input (Son, 2008). By using different strategies of listening for instance, the reconstructing of the podcasts might improve accuracy and fluency of speakers. In addition, Podcasts are more effective than Moodle system in vocabulary, reading and listening development (Son, 2008).

Harmer (2001) believes that for speaking fluently, interlocutors should correctly pronounce phonemics, use appropriate stress and intonation in the different range of genre and situations, range of conversational and conversational repair strategies. According to Fang (2008), listening and speaking are complementary. Listening comprehension is prior to production in speaking a language. In everyday life, listening is the most frequently used language while Morley (1991) argued, we listen twice as much as we speak, four times as much as we read, and five times as much as we write. According to Richards (1983), a learner can control relatively narrow range of vocabulary at his or her own utterance during expression of an idea in speaking, but when listening to the response he or she no longer deals with the choice of vocabulary (cited in Richards, 2006). Richards (2006) argues that teachers should increase classroom activities in which students need to negotiate meaning, use communication strategies to avoid potential breakdowns in communication. Therefore, an individual must possess a much broader competency in listening comprehension than speaking (Fang, 2008).

Podcast programs are online learning English programs with realistic dialogues and lectures that would be placed learners on real situation. Constantine (2007) believes that for finding new materials in teaching listening, podcasts are so advantage instead of repetition and bad habits of listening materials repeatedly. Podcasts provide new voices and relevant contents. She argued that a teacher must also be committed to teaching good listening techniques such as listening for details. At the end of the day students must be able to do something with what they have heard. As students respond positively to listening tasks, they will be motivated to learn more. The goal of every teacher should be to help students gain confidence in hearing and understanding what is spoken in their new language.

The teacher could bring the appropriate context at EFL learners’ home, work and school. The teacher may select best topics of podcasts that correspond with the learners’ interest and purpose to lack of native situation for EFL learners could be another reason to use reconstruction podcasts. According to Son (2008), podcasts programs or CALL programs are so beneficial. Nida
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RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The main questions to be investigated in this study are:
RQ1. Do the reconstruction podcasts affect Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ accuracy in speaking skill?
RQ2. Do the reconstruction podcasts affect Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ fluency in speaking skill?
METHODOLOGY

Participants
The present study was constructed at Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, Iran. The Interchange Placement Test (Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy & Zukowski, 2008) was used to homogenize the learners. 60 out of 90 Iranian EFL students took the homogeneity test. This test included 50 items and the participants should gain 25 to be placed at the pre-intermediate level. Those pre-intermediate participants whose scores were between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of the study who were revealed homogenous participants. The Cambridge English Unlimited Placement Test (Oral Test, 2010) was interviewed students to estimate their speaking proficiency level. This test was a face to face interview on the reconstruction of the podcasts. These participants were divided by non-random sampling into two groups of control group (n=30) and an experimental group (n=30). The experimental group was taught by the reconstruction podcasts instruction and appropriate listening strategies. The control group was taught through the conventional method of English language teaching "New interchange 1" developed by Richards.

Instrumentation
The Richards (2008) homogeneity test was given to participants to find out their homogeneity level. It was comprised 50 items of multiple-choice on language accuracy. The reliability coefficient of the test in this research was calculated by Kuder-Richardson formula (KR-21). The reliability coefficient for the proficiency test was (r=0.823).

The Cambridge English Unlimited Placement Test (Oral Test, 2010) was interviewed students to estimate their level of speaking proficiency. The oral test included placement items concerned with the several selected topics. It was used as a speaking test to homogenize the participants’ accuracy and fluency levels.

Interview pre-test (The Reconstruction Podcast Test) was the next instrument that was consisted of listening comprehension and speaking test. This test was downloaded from pre-intermediate podcast programs to determine the participants’ proficiency of their listening comprehension and their speaking proficiency before the treatment period. The topic of the pre-test was general due to being relevant to the participants’ background knowledge. Before listening to this podcast, the interviewer asked some relevant questions based on the test content related to the participants’ real life to familiarize them with the content of the test for more comprehension. The participants were requested one by one to listen to the podcast for 3 to 5 minutes (pre-test) carefully and then they were asked to reconstruct what they were hearing in 2 minutes. Their voice was recorded during their reconstruction. Oral pre-test inter-rater reliability was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as (r=0.791).

The post-test (The Reconstruction Podcast Test) was also interviewed participants to find out the effect of training by podcasts through reconstruction strategy and to estimate their accuracy and fluency of their speech after period of instruction from both classes. The participants of both classes were taken post-test the same as the pre-test. The topic of the post-test was relevant to the pre-test. The interviewer asked some relevant questions and they reconstructed the podcast. The
participants listened to 3 to 5 minutes of podcast carefully and then they asked to reconstruct what they were hearing (about 2 minutes). Then, their voice was recorded during their reconstruction. The oral post-test inter-rater reliability was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as (r=0.902).

These podcasts were downloaded from www.zappenglish.com whose topics were consciously selected through participants’ interests, purposes and level of their speaking proficiency for pre-, post- test and treatment materials. The Check list was used to score the participants’ oral proficiency developed by Hughes (2002) for rating performance of the participants both pre- and post- tests. This checklist comprises six items of fluency and accuracy. The fluency consists of three items to estimate participants’ ability of coherence, communication and speed and each of them includes 5 sub-items (15 items), whiles accuracy includes three items to rate participants’ ability of vocabulary, structure and pronunciation again each of them includes 5 sub- items (15 items), at all 30 items utilized for estimating fluency and accuracy in details.

**Materials**

The main materials were worked on the reconstruction podcasts. The technology revolution among CALL, Moodle and Web- based give positive facilities to teachers and learners for learning and teaching EFL /ESL, in these days. Podcasts are new technology for broadcasting audio programs on the Internet (Selingo, 2006). Podcasting was originally for conveying information and entertainment. But soon educators saw that it has the huge potential for teaching (Adams, 2006). Many writers believe that podcasting can offer language education, especially developing learners’ listening and speaking skills (Pun, 2006). Radio and Independent podcasts are two types of podcast programs. Radio podcasts are such as BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong). Independent podcasts are Web- based podcasts produced by individuals and organizations such as Zappenglish. The second type is so beneficial for ELT. We can find these podcast programs from these websites such as http://www.podcastalley.com/, http://epnweb.org/, http://recapltd.uk/podcasting/ and http://zappenglish.com.http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Listening/Podcasts/, etc. (Man- Man, 2006).

The materials of the study were downloaded from podcasts’ online programs, www.zappenglish.com, to be used offline. Therefore, podcasts were utilized as offline for instructing materials in the class and online podcasts were utilized as outside activities (when participants have facilities of net connection). Eighteen contents of podcasts were downloaded from this site and were copied on CDs according to participants’ interest, purpose and level of speaking proficiency. It was comprised of the different subjects who follow the same titles. On the other hand, one topic for example "Job and Work" follows by separate contents; listening in vocabulary, listening in formal and listening in colloquial (informal) and each files of the podcasts had its own e- book which includes a transcript, all the colloquial expressions, their definitions and finally some extra written exercises for the instructors’ guide. The study looked forward to extra listening in different situations in which improve learners’ skills. Then, the CDs consisted of eight topics and five of them followed by listening in vocabulary, listening in formal and listening in colloquial contents and three of them just included listening in formal contents. In addition to these CDs, the instructor guide’s CD has transcripts of all contents, too. Ten
contents were taught by instructor in the class during 10 sessions and the rest of them for more listening at home, in car or anywhere that participants liked to listen to. These podcasts have so authentic and realistic contents in different situations for proficiency levels.

**Procedure**

The whole research project took place in 14 sessions. First session of the present study started by Interchange Placement Test which 90 students of Islamic Azad University taken this test. Sixty students out of 90 were selected as research’s participants. Richards et al’s (2008) Placement Test was comprised of 50 multiple-choice grammatical items. This test took 45 minutes. Those participants whose scores were between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of this study. Then, the Oral Cambridge Placement test (2010) was interviewed students for estimating their level of speaking proficiency. The participants were at the same level of speaking proficiency and homogenous and then were divided into two groups through non-random convenience sampling method. Thirty of the participants were in the experimental group and 30 ones were in the control group. The aim of this oral (interview) test was to discover the appropriate level of the speaking proficiency of the participants at the beginning of the treatment. Next time, Eight other students which were out of participants were asked to listen to one podcast to inform researcher about learners’ interest, background language and time of each podcast spending for each reconstruction in the oral test. This test was beneficial for researcher to get information about the problem of reconstruction and utilizing appropriate strategies during listening and reconstructing the podcasts. It is necessary to say that, those eight students were homogenous and in the same level of speaking proficiency of participants, too.

Then, the pre-test was given to both experimental and control groups which concluded unseen podcast at the level of participants’ speaking proficiency with general and relevant topic. This pre-test included an oral (interview) test and a listening comprehension test. The participants of both classes were requested to listen to offline selected podcast and to reconstruct what they were hearing one by one, their voice was recorded by the interviewer. The CDs of offline podcast treatment were available to the experimental group. During the treatment, the experimental group listened to the topics of podcast and reconstructed the content. In this way, the instructor was asking some questions from students and let participants become familiar with the content before listening to it. The instructor asked them to listen twice to each podcast. After listening, participants reconstructed or retold what he or she was hearing about 2 or 3 minutes and the other participants were listened or participated in the retelling activities. Selected podcast programs were downloaded from www.zappenglish.com website which they were corresponded to appropriate participants' level for the experimental group. These podcasts were taught and added to routine conventional course, 30 minutes during 10 sessions of instruction. These podcast programs included 18 podcasts containing so interesting subjects. The podcasts were taught in the class with reconstruction strategy of listening and then speaking procedures. Podcasts are programs that could be daily listened to with different realistic topics. The learners were requested to listen to this podcasts everywhere and try to retell or reconstruct what they were hearing alone and made efforts to record their reconstruction by themselves. Through these podcasts, learners explicitly learn culture, intonation, pitch, stress, and other functions of target
language. Then learners unconsciously use all of them in their speech. The control group was taught routine instruction, the conventional method of teaching English language including working on the text book of New Interchange 1 units dealing with dialogues, discussions, question and answers, etc.

Finally, a post-test was given to the experimental and control groups. It included two- or three-minutes’ interview on the selected unseen podcast for both groups. It estimated the reconstruction of the unseen podcast through both groups. Data was recorded and scored by two raters. The inter-rater reliability showed that the scoring consistency. Then the scores were analyzed through SPSS version 17. The descriptive and inferential statistics such as Paired and Independent Samples t-test were done to find any differences between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Pre-test and Post-test
Descriptive statistics of the pre- and post- tests are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Pre-test (Experimental)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>18.6452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test (Experimental)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>22.0323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test (Control)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>17.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test (Control)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>17.9667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, the number of participants in experimental group is 30 and control group is 30, too. Statistical data in Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of the two groups, experimental and control, before and after using treatment. Table 1 shows the mean of experimental pre-test group is lower than the mean of the experimental post-test.

In pair (2), the mean of control in the pre-test group is approximately as the same as the post-test of this group. In order to find out whether the differences among the performances of the two groups were statistically significant, the Paired Samples t-test (pre-test versus post-test) was applied, and the results of the tests were interpreted from the two values of t- observed. Since the descriptive statistics cannot show the significant difference between the groups, Paired Samples t-test was run in Table 2.
Table 2: Paired Samples t-Test (Pre-test vs. Post-test/Experimental and Control groups)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Paired 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Pre-test (Experimental) vs. Post-test</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.707</td>
<td>4.831</td>
<td>1.942</td>
<td>4.788</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>Pre-test (Control) vs. Post-test</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>2.741</td>
<td>1.208</td>
<td>.794</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.434</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 provides the values of the two pre- versus post- test of experimental and control groups before and after the treatment in terms of the reconstruction podcasts. Table 4.2 indicates the statistical analysis of Paired Samples t-test (experimental and control group). Since observed t (4.788) with df= 29 is greater than the critical t (2.042), the difference between the two tests are significant at (p<.05) in the experimental group. According to pair 2, the observed t (.794) with df= 29 is less than the critical t (2.042) in the control group. Thus, the difference between these pre- and post- tests is not significant at (p<.05). To calculate the mean difference between pre- and post-tests of the groups, descriptive statistics of the tests is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups (Pre-test)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>3.125</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>3.507</td>
<td>.640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the mean of the pre-test among the experimental group (18.64) is nearly the same as the mean of pre-test among control group which is 17.200. There is no much difference between these two tests. In order to find out whether the similarity among the performances of the two groups was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups (Pre-test)

<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>Pre-tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 provides the means of the two experimental and control groups’ pre-test analyzed through Independent Samples t-test before the treatment in terms of reconstruction podcasts and number of participants, means, standard deviations (SD), standard error, lower and upper bounds. As shown in Table 4, since observed t (1.70) with df= 58 is less than the critical t (2.00), the difference between the groups is not significant at (p<.05). This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test (Oral Proficiency Test). The podcast scores are analyzed in Table 5 to find any significant difference between the two groups.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups (Post-test)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.32</td>
<td>3.134</td>
<td>.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.96</td>
<td>3.169</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that the mean of experimental post-test is higher than the mean of control one. It reveals that the reconstruction podcasts and the conventional method both performed better in post-test, but the reconstruction podcasts in experimental group outperformed. In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups in post-test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied in Table 6.

Table 6: Independent Samples t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups (Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-tests</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Differe</th>
<th>Std. Error Differe</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Differe</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>.405</td>
<td>.527</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4.065</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td>2.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>56.71</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>4.065</td>
<td>.834</td>
<td>2.395</td>
<td>5.736</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 6 indicates, since the observed t (4.88) with df= 58 is greater than the Critical t (2.00), the difference between the groups is significant at (p<.05).

Discussion

Results of the pre-test and the post-test showed an improvement in overall participants’ speaking proficiency skill through instructions and strategies used during this study. However, the most important issue is the usefulness of the reconstruction podcasts activities in order to obtain better
results. Thus, the results will be discussed in this part, was involved with the following research questions. As it was mentioned before, according to data analysis, the experimental group who worked on the reconstruction podcasts instruction has outperformed the control group. It affected both fluently and accuracy in the experimental group rather than the control one.

Based on the results, there are significant differences between the post-tests of groups. The results of the post-test may show the difference between the two groups in case of the Reconstruction podcasts. The group of the reconstruction podcasts instruction outperformed the group of conventional instruction. It shows that the application of pre- and post-listening podcast and reconstruct what they were hearing might be of great help in approving the learners’ speaking proficiency. By comparing the both post-test scores of the two groups of experimental and conventional instructions, it can be inferred that the difference may be due to the enormous listening relevant and authentic podcasts and reconstruction.

The ability of fluency is a bit higher the accuracy in the control group is post-test while the ability of accuracy before treatment was a bit higher. It revealed that accuracy was higher than fluency in both groups. This shows that there is a difference between the ability of fluency and accuracy in the experimental group. Fluency and accuracy in the experimental group’s post-test were higher than control group. As it was mentioned earlier, it indicates that the accuracy of the learners is higher because of the background knowledge of grammatical competence before treatment during their curriculum at school. The reconstruction podcasts instruction affected more positive improvement on fluency rather than accuracy. This agrees with Rezapour, Gorjian, and Pazhakh’s (2012) who argued that listening on these podcasts improve confident and fluency of learners and if participants work forward on this way they past faster their level than ever thought in which prove direct evidence of improving fluency in speaking. By comparing fluency in the experimental pre-test and post-test, fluency is reinforced in the experimental post-test. The experimental group outperformed the control group, but in comparison to accuracy in the experimental group. It reveals that their accuracy scores were higher than the fluency in the tests. It also showed that the background knowledge of both groups may reinforce more by the reconstruction podcasts instruction. The lower scores of the control group may be due to the teacher-centeredness of the instruction or low motivation of participants that may make the students bored.

The results of the descriptive statistics showed that, after the post-test, the mean of the reconstruction podcasts, and conventional instruction groups were different. These results might show that both pre- and post- listening podcasts affected learners’ fluency in the treatment sessions. This is supported by Zamari, Adnan, Idris and Yusof (2011) who proved the evidence of improvement learning materials through using online language. Braun (2007) also supported these results that authentic and relevant podcasts have a positive effect on librarian speaking skill and their motivation. Rini (2012) also believed that unconscious listening improves speaking skills of learners. Therefore, based on the results of Descriptive Statistics and the answer to the above second research question, the second null hypothesis was also rejected. Thus, there was significant evidence that the reconstruction podcasts affect pre-intermediate EFL learners’ speaking fluency and accuracy which it approximately affect accuracy higher.
CONCLUSION

The present study began with the assumption that applying the reconstruction podcasts instruction could enhance the pre-intermediate EFL learners’ speaking proficiency. The experimental and the control groups were taught through two different methods of instruction. The participants of experimental group were taught through reconstruction online and offline podcasts and other group as control group were simultaneously taught the traditional instruction. The instructor explored to see if the application of enormous listening of offline podcasts and reconstruction what they were hearing have any effect on the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ speaking proficiency and to investigate the effect of them, separately, on the ability of accuracy and fluency in speaking.

Having administered the pre-, post-tests and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples t-test and Paired Samples t-Test, the results indicated that the instruction of using the reconstruction podcasts did positive effect on the learners’ speaking fluency and accuracy. Based on the present study results, the following conclusions may be made:

1. CALL approaches generally and especially the reconstruction podcasts may influence EFL learners' speaking proficiency.
2. Exposure to language materials through a synchronous approach is an influential factor for EFL learners.
3. The online or enormous offline podcasts reconstructing instruction do have more significant impact on the learners’ speaking proficiency (both fluency and accuracy) than conventional instruction.
4. During the offline reconstruction podcasts instruction, the learners listen and reconstruct what they were hearing independently and freely. Therefore, produce and process their utterance better.
5. During the reconstruction podcasts instruction, the familiar questions by teacher and replied by learners can influence learners’ listening comprehension ability to reconstruct it better.
6. Online or offline enormous podcasts listening out of the classroom or at class can improve prior knowledge of paralinguistic elements (implicitly master on stress, rhythm and intonation patterns).
7. Online or offline enormous podcasts listening out of the classroom or at class can improve the ability of accuracy and fluency during speaking in which accuracy improves a bit higher than fluency.
8. Conventional instruction based on task- based language teaching can also affect listening comprehension and speaking proficiency but its effect is less than the reconstruction podcasts instructions.

The following suggestions are drawn based on the limitations of the study. They may be applied in future researches. They are as follow:

1. As the study was only conducted at the university, more research is needed in similar situations to support the findings and to find more about the effect of the podcasts constructing instruction on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. It can also be applied at the schools or institutes for different range of ages and levels.
2. This study was conducted to measure the improvement of speaking proficiency ability and in some part listening comprehension ability. Future research can be done regarding the effect of the Reconstruction podcasts on other skills such as writing or reading.

3. The Podcasts instruction associated with some limited pre- and post-listening and speaking activities in this study. In future researches, other useful listening strategies and tasks such as note taking, questionnaires, and multiple-choice questions for better comprehension can be examined or comparing effect of multiple-choice questions with reconstructed for useful speaking.

4. In the present study, the synchronous way of instruction in case of listening was just used. Future research can cover synchronous way of applying podcasts with pictures as the material of speaking.

5. There are different websites containing effective podcast resources. Regarding learners’ age and level of proficiency, other websites can be used instead of the "www.Zappenglish.com" website used in this study.

6. Instead of using conversation’s content through podcasts, other kinds of literature such as songs, poem, lectures and novels or other kind of podcasts, videos, clips or Mp3 files can be used in future researches.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF FREQUENT SELECTED-RESPONSE VERSUS FREQUENT CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE QUIZZES ON DEVELOPING IRANIAN EFL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS’ FORMAL GRAMMAR IN WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT
The aim of the present study was to investigate the role of testing, especially a frequent one, as the facilitator of learning among Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) high school students. This study investigated the effect of two quiz formats (selected-response versus constructed-response) was studied among Iranian EFL high school students’ writing skills specifically their command of formal grammar on the summative achievement tests. In order to arrive at a logical answer to the research questions, a sample population of 83 female senior high school participants, which was finally reduced to 60 participants, was chosen through a pre-test, namely, Nelson Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). After selection of the participants, they were randomly assigned into three groups (two experimental groups and a control one). Then the experimental groups were provided with the treatment; eight quizzes were given to them frequently. A summative post-test was administered to the groups at the end of the treatment period. One-way ANOVA determined the effect of the variables. The findings of the study revealed statistically significant difference between the experimental groups and control one. The results also showed that constructed-response quizzes with eight times frequency of administration resulted in the development of Iranian high school students’ performance on the formal grammar in writing skills (p<.05). Therefore, employing appropriate test or quiz formats in the language teaching environment can assist learners to improve their writing through testing. Thus, the frequent administration of quizzes may pave the way for better learning and motivate the students to learn.

KEYWORDS: Frequent selected-response, Frequent constructed-response, Formal grammar

INTRODUCTION
Since English as a foreign language (EFL) has found its place among other subjects in the syllabus of Iranian schools, it seems necessary to pay attention to the techniques that can promote language abilities of Iranian learners. The issue of improving student learning has also been of salient interest in the administrative and academic community, therefore, the importance of
assignments, quizzes, and tests and their relation to student learning is a considerable topic (Smith, Zsidisin & Adams, 2005). This concern for assignments, quizzes, tests, and the role of them in developing students’ writing, especially their formal grammar, is the foundation for this study. According to Heaton (2000), teaching and testing are closely related to each other so that it is impossible to work in either field without considering the other. As Harris (1996) points out, “classroom tests are generally prepared, administered, and scored by one teacher. In this situation, test objectives can be based directly on course objectives and test content could be derived from the specific course content” (pp. 1-2). Consequently, tests or quizzes during a given term can make the students better aware of the course objectives. The analysis of the test results reveals the students’ areas of difficulty and, accordingly the students will have an opportunity to make up for their weaknesses. Therefore, teacher-made tests: 1) measure students’ progress, 2) motivate students, and 3) provide an opportunity for the teacher to diagnose students’ weakness.

The effect of testing on teaching and learning is called wash back effect, which can be beneficial or harmful to teaching. It is beneficial when the test improves teaching and learning processes (Birjandi, Bagheridoust & Mossallanejad, 2006).

As Baker (1989) states if a test is regarded as important and the stakes are high, preparation for it can come to dominate all teaching and learning activities. Moreover, he believes that wash back can be viewed as part of something more general; the effect of assessment. The effect on educational measurement is not limited to the impact of assessment on learning and teaching, but extends to the way in which assessment affects society as a whole. Bachman (1990) argues that the selected-response items can involve simply selecting the correct answer among several alternatives or the identification of an incorrect alternative as in a sentence with several different words or phrases underlined; only one is incorrect. In the selected-response items, the test taker must select one response among two or more possible alternatives. Farhady, Jafarpur and Birjandi (2003) suggested that in selected or discrete-point items one element should be tested at a time, that only one skill should be gauged at a time, and that only one aspect of a skill should be tested at a time. Constructed-response tests or integrative tests consist of a single sentence or utterance, and can range from two sentences or utterances to virtually free composition, either oral or written form and also are designed to use several skills at one time, or more precisely, to employ different channels, modes or both of the languages simultaneously and in the context of discourse. Advocates of the integrative-sociolinguistic movement would argue that such a test is complex, as actual language use is complex.

Werner (1993) believes that constructed-response questions stimulate the student to construct acceptable answers rather than just recognize ones. The construction may be very brief and short or long. He added that constructed-response items are the key to more authentic assessment and they should be more widely used. As Martin (2011) states, unlike speaking or listening, when one writes he has to think about the correctness of his product. The writer should generate unambiguous ideas and edit them at the same time because his document may entail unchangeable implications for the readers when s/he is not there to clarify misunderstandings or misconceptions. Mirhassani and Ghasemi (2007) state that to put language to use we require two kinds of knowledge, known respectively as schematic knowledge or knowledge of the world and
systematic knowledge or knowledge of the language system; we referred knowledge of the form of the grammar.

Writing is a central communication skill and is a fundamental process of learning the language. Learning a foreign language, with its four skills, is a very complicated process and different domains should be considered during language learning. One of these important domains is the test item format such as selected-response test versus constructed-response one. Most instructors confine themselves to multiple-choice or selected-response test in their examination for the sake of objectivity (Brown, 2001). The role of frequent administration of constructed-response quizzes in which the student must construct the correct answer, whether in a word, sentence, or essay form is somehow neglected in our high schools during the term quizzes; this will result in a poor writing.

This research clearly suggests that frequent (weekly) quizzes are important in learning writing skills. Therefore, the result of this study can be beneficial and bring to notice by the interested audience, ELT practitioners, and teachers to promote Iranian EFL learners’ writing abilities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The field of study wash back effect has not been so welcomed in Iran and the literature is really scant and seems that it is in its infancy (Kheirkhak & Ghonsooly, 2014). Gorjian (2011) investigated the impact of different response formats (selected versus constructed) administrations on pre-intermediate Iranian EFL university learners’ general writing skill specifically their command of formal organization. The result revealed that constructed-response quiz with ten times frequency of administration resulted in the improvement of Iranian EFL learners’ performance in the formal organization in general writing skills. Thus, he found that repeated constructed-response quizzes received the first priority. Therefore, there was a significant difference between, the writing’s performance of the group who received ten times constructed-response quizzes and the group who did not receive any quizzes. The findings indicated that constructed-response quizzes can be used for promoting different skills and component of language learning. Bryan (1998) conducted a research on factors contributing to a reduction in race based subgroup differences on a constructed-response paper and pencil test of achievement. Results showed that the constructed-response item format may be a viable alternative to the traditional multiple-choice one in predictors of job performance and simultaneously reduce subgroup differences and subsequent adverse impact on tests of knowledge, skill, ability, and achievement. However, additional research is needed to further demonstrate the appropriateness of the constructed-response format as an alternative to traditional testing methods. Several studies (e.g., Davis, 1999) indicates that students study more efficiently for essay-type examinations than for selection (multiple-choice) tests; students preparing for essay tests focus on broad issues, general concepts, and interrelationships rather than on specific details. Essay tests also give you an opportunity to comment on students’ progress, the quality of their thinking, the depth of their understanding, and the difficulties they may be having. However, because essay tests pose only a few questions, their content validity may be low. In addition, the reliability of essay tests is compromised by subjectivity or
inconsistencies in grading. Also short answer tests depending on your objectives, can call for one or two sentences or a long paragraph.

Constructed-response quiz items as Johnson’s (2006) findings show are related more strongly to measures of student achievement than did selected-response items. It may be that constructed-response quiz items, which required the actual input of words, engaged students in course content at a deeper level than simply checking selected-response items. However, no significant relationship emerged among the number of constructed-response quizzes and student achievement as measure by conceptual test items. It might be that constructed-response quiz items may not have facilitated the cognitive processing necessary to respond to conceptual measures of learning. He found that students take in quizzes were associated with academic achievement, but the quiz format differentially related to achievement across cognitive domains. On the other hand, Sheaffer and Addo (2013) measured and compared student performance on constructed-response and selected-response questions in a pharmaceutics course; and collected student feedback on the use of differing question types. Results showed that students correctly answered more selected-response questions than constructed-response questions and felt more confident in doing so.

Gorjian (2011, 2014) stated that weekly, in-class quizzes are based on some testing specialist have been associated with positive learning outcomes including increased student achievement, attendance, and confidence. Their studies show that frequent quiz reportedly maintains student study effort and promote course engagement; for example, Gorjian’s study showed that weekly quizzing (constructed-response) was important in learning English writing skills. The results of the study showed that the students who took weekly constructed-response quizzes would show better retention of grammatical patterns than would students who were not engaged in the weekly graded constructed-response quiz. He believes that weekly quizzes and reviews, it is easier for an instructor to know earlier on how well the students understand each lesson or concept and that is best learning when the instructor actively engages or involves students to learn by doing the quizzes. Therefore, the weekly and frequent quiz can have great impact. Results of Greene’s (2000) studies indicated that students perceived daily essay quizzes, had an enhancing both learning and class preparations.

Mirhassani and Rahimipour (2003) examined the relationship between quiz, frequency of administrations, and Iranian EFL learners’ performance on summative achievement tests. They found that the frequency of quiz administration improved the performance of Iranian EFL learners. Their study showed that completion quizzes with ten times frequency of administration work better with the improvement of Iranian EFL learners’ performance on summative achievement tests. They stated that the more students receive quizzes on the content of the book taught, the more they learn the materials taught in depth. If they fail to perform well on one quiz, they try to make up for the other. Moreover, some education research has confirmed that frequent quizzes do yield benefits; for example, Ballard and Johnson (2004) compared tests’ results of students who were exposed to quizzes with a control group who had no quizzes. They found significantly higher scores of students who experienced quizzing and concluded that frequent quizzes influence learning performance. The mean scores of these students were significantly
higher than for students in the group who experienced no quizzes. However, studies of science students indicated that students’ performance was not strongly affected (Drouza & Fleming, 2003). But study of Tuckman (2008) shows that frequent testing provides incentive motivations. Frequently tested students outperform other students on examinations. He mentions that what it might be drove a student to get information into long-term memory are tests. Tests motivate students because they create the opportunity or necessity to achieve success or avoid failure. In that way, tests provide an incentive to learn and they are a source of incentive motivation. The overall results clearly showed that the frequent tests enhanced motivation for students who have typically performed poorly to get content into long-term memory rather than merely targeting for them what to study. Thus, Hughes (1988) reported the benefits for learning that the introduction of a new test can bring about. However, most recent research in this area has found that language tests affect certain aspects of teaching but not others. Thus, language tests seem to be effective in bringing about changes on teaching content, but might have only limited apparent effect on teaching methodologies (Barati, Ghasemi, & Ravand, 2013).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The impetus for this study is to find answers to the following questions:
1. Do frequent selected-response quizzes affect the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?
2. Do frequent constructed-response quizzes affect the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?
3. Is there any significant difference between the effect of frequent selected-response and that of frequent constructed-response quizzes on the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 senior high school girls with the age mean of 18 majoring in empirical sciences in Dezful, Iran. They were all Persian native speakers and had learned English chiefly in formal EFL classroom contexts. All participants had a common English background; they had taken English courses for at least six years in high schools and junior high schools. The rationale behind selecting senior high school students was to have more proficient students. The participants were administered a Nelson language proficiency test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976) as a pre-test at the outset of the experiment in order to ascertain their homogeneity in terms of general English proficiency prior to the study. The rationale behind selecting participants suitable for this study was to select homogeneous participants who were in the same range or near each other; regarding their grammar language proficiency. To do so, participants with scores one standard deviation above and one below the mean were selected. To make sure of their homogeneity, One-way ANOVA formula was applied in the pre-test level. Then after selecting the students, they were randomly assigned into three equal groups; the first and third groups (odd-numbered ones) as experimental groups who received treatment and the
second group (even-numbered one) was the control one who received a placebo treatment (N= 20 for all groups).

Instrumentation
The following instruments were used in this study to collect data from the subjects: The first instrument was a general language proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) as a pre-test in order to find out linguistic abilities of participants. The test consisted of 50 multiple-choice items. To validate this test, it was piloted to a similar group of 20 students to try out items in order to determine their reliability or effectiveness and to determine the reactions of students to the items (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1992). It enjoyed the reliability index of (r= .72) obtained through Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) formula.

The second instrument used in the study was a validated summative achievement test, developed by the instructor according to the course objectives and administered as a post-test in order to check out the effects of the research variables. To validate this test, first it was piloted to a similar group of 20 students and the reliability was calculated (r= .73). The test had a total score of 40 and it was validated against the standard test of Nelson. It consisted of 40 completion questions (including open-ended and short-answer items). Situations in the two testing instruments comprised the formal grammar in writing skills. The post-test was rated by two raters, who were familiar with the content of the study, in order to control the rater’s variable (subjectivity evaluation). To measure the inter-rater reliability, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula was used. The inter-rater reliability of the two raters’ judgments was estimated as the reliability value (r= .81).

Materials
Eight paired quizzes of selected-response and constructed-response items, considered as treatment in this study, were extracted from the book “Reading through Interaction One” written by Farhady and Mirhassani (2008); researcher used it as a supplementary reading book in her classes. Farhady and Mirhassani (2008) claim the book (Reading through Interaction One) seems to be an excellent textbook for improving knowledge of students, in general, and Iranian students in particular. The reasons justifying this position are many, a few of which are mentioned here. First, the book was designed on the basis of reading techniques and meets the scientific principles of the reading skill quite satisfactorily. Second, the reading materials seemed quite authentic and the exercises fairly communicative. Third, the idea of the variety of materials and activities that could be one of the major factors to motivate the readers can be observed in the preparation of the book. Finally, the texts were arranged in a progressively difficult order within the chapters. The researcher found out that the book was a new and interesting textbook to the participants, and also it was suitable for their proficiency level.

The instructor taught one lesson every week, and demanded participants to carefully read it in preparation for a quiz on the next week. The ten items in selected-response quizzes consisted of five multiple-choice, two true or false, and three matching items. The seven items in constructed-response quizzes, consisted of a) two “broken sentence” items in which a series of words are given to the examinees to incorporate them into meaningful sentences b) three short-answer items
which examinee was required either to complete a sentence or to compose one of his own according to the directions provided c) two essay items; a traditional method of testing writing abilities in which students were required to express themselves by composing their own relatively free and extended written responses which is ranged from limited number of words to several sentences to problem set by instructor.

Procedure
At the beginning of the study, a general language proficiency test was given to 83 senior high school students (i.e., all female in Shahid Beheshti High School in Dezful, Iran) who were invited to take this test as a pre-test in this study. This test included 50 multiple-choice items which were adapted by the researcher in accordance with an authentic testing book written by Fowler and Coe (1976). After collecting data, the responses of participants were analyzed. Then sixty students whose performance ranged from one standard deviation above and one below the mean were chosen for this study, and then the selected participants, were randomly divided into three groups: two experimental groups and one control group. Treatment was the second phase of the study. This study focused on developing formal grammar in writing skills. Over a ten week period, a spring semester in 2014, the first experimental group received frequent (weekly) selected-response quizzes, the second experimental group received frequent (weekly) constructed-response quizzes, and the third group served as the control group to validate this study. In the control group learners received no treatment (no particular quiz) and they were not exposed to any evaluation except some oral questions. Rather they engaged in reading comprehension exercises. Over all, two experimental groups received eight quizzes which lasted about 15 minutes, during eight weeks. The first week of the study was spent on the explanation of the procedure and also participants were asked to attend and take a language proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). From the second week till the end of the term the participants took weekly quizzes. All sessions occurred weekly for eight weeks (on consecutive weeks), at the same time of the day, covered the same content, used the same textbook, and were taught by the same instructor. The researcher believed treatment period was enough to control the time variable. Following each section, students’ quizzes were collected and graded by the researcher, and they were informed that the average of their grades on these quizzes on general English book would count toward their final grade as much as one of the major course examinations (to motivate them to participate actively in the experiment). Post-test was the final phase of the investigation. At the end of the experiment (last week), all the experimental and the control groups sat for the summative test so that their performance could be compared. All of the participants were tested regarding their performance on their formal grammar in writing skills. By using the same instructor for all sessions, the author control variation in instruction and materials coverage also account for variation in their abilities.

RESULTS
Some statistical analyses were performed on the data to answer the research questions posed in this study. As the researcher noted before, the major purpose of this study was to investigate the relative effect of two quiz formats on developing writing performance. To address the research questions, the students’ variables were measured. In this study, the independent variable was quiz...
format at two levels: (1) the selected-response quizzes and (2) the constructed-response quizzes. To test the research hypotheses, as the study deals with comparing more than two means of quizzes formats in frequent administrations, data were submitted to a parametric technique for analyzing the quantitative data. The results of this study were significant for all the hypotheses at the 0.05 level. The Table 1 below shows the descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test of 20 participants as pilot studies with reliability r= .72 and r= .73, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.15</td>
<td>6.46</td>
<td>41.73</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>35.88</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19.57</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>38.80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to ensure the homogeneity of the three groups in terms of language proficiency prior to the experiment, the results obtained from pre-test were analyzed. Our null hypothesis would be that there is no meaningful difference among the groups; that they are just three samples of the same population. Table 2 is a report of the results of pre-test which was administered as the homogeneity test and shows the descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance in three different groups on pre-test, concerning maximum scores, minimum scores, means, standard deviations (SD), considering their level of proficiency. The mean scores showed that the three groups did not much differ in relation to their background knowledge. The low standard deviation signifies that the students’ performance was very close to each other. In other words, their mean scores showed no significant differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.541</td>
<td>6.35 - 8.64</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>6.25 - 8.54</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>6.83 - 8.36</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>6.94 - 8.05</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the Table 2, the three groups were similar concerning their performance on pre-test and the mean and standard deviations of the groups were approximately similar. But we could not simply look at the mean scores of groups and concluded that they were the same or different and the researcher needed to be certain that they were truly equivalent groups before she began the treatment. Therefore, to determine the difference among the groups, the students’ scores on the Nelson test of the three groups was put in One-way ANOVA formula. A simple and common-sense understanding of ANOVA is the comparison of MSW (means within groups) and MSB (means between groups). If the value of the MSB (which includes the treatment effect) is not greater than MSW, then we know that our treatments are all similar. We must recognize the data
as just the samples from the same population. In other words, if the F value is 1 or less, it represents no treatment effect (Hatch & Farhady, 1999).

As Table 3 shows, the observed F value is .041. Since the critical F value corresponding to the degree of freedom of 2 at the probability level of 0.05 is calculated to be 3.171, which is greater than the observed value of F, and the calculated significance equals .960, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the three groups concerning their performance on the pre-test (F observed < F critical) and fortunately, the researcher is quite safe in accepting the null hypothesis. Therefore, the results presented in Table 3 showed that the students’ homogeneity in terms of their language proficiency.

At the end of the term, a summative achievement test was administered to the students. Each student’s score on the summative achievement test was obtained. The results were three subjective measures of the students’ performance. That is the summative achievement test of selected, constructed, and control groups. The next step was to analyze the results obtained from the post-test and the descriptive statistics, mean, and standard deviation of each group were calculated. Results showed that the students’ performances in the final examination were drastically different. Table 4 shows the post-test results descriptively.

A glance at the Table 4 and comparing the mean of each group with the corresponding mean obtained from pre-test, reveals that the participants’ in all groups performed better on post-test and the means of three groups increased. Descriptive statistics provided an indication of the extent of the students’ performance of selected-response and constructed-response groups on the post-test. The mean scores have changed signifying; this suggests that the treatment has been
influential. The standard deviation indicated that the dispersion of scores was higher than the scores on the pre-test, which means that the students performed differently on the post-test.

As it is shown in Table 4, the mean score of the group who received constructed-response quizzes indicates that they have performed better than the group who received selected-response quizzes. Whereas the mean of the group who received selected-response quizzes, had not significantly changed, in comparison with their mean score on pre-test. Although the performance of this group enhanced, but not as much as the group who took constructed-response quizzes. This shows that frequent constructed-response quizzes caused an improvement in the students’ performance in constructed-response group. Therefore, constructed-response group achieved the highest mean, followed by selected-response group and control group respectively. Regarding the standard deviations of the groups, it was found out that the standard deviations of the selected group were much higher than the constructed and the control group, suggesting that the selected group acted less homogeneous than the other two groups. The low standard deviation in constructed-response group showed that the students’ performance was similar to each other than the other groups.

Now the question is whether or not the mean scores are different enough to conclude that the means are indeed different, not due to error variability but to real differences associated with treatment. However, descriptive statistics could not offer the researcher sufficient information on the comparison of the groups to reject or accept the null hypotheses of the research. In order to find out whether the differences among the participants performance on post-test were statistically significant, One-way ANOVA for the groups was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio (Table 5):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>of df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>556.933</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>278.467</td>
<td>36.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>438.800</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7.698</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>995.733</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5, the null hypotheses can be safely and strongly rejected and the results indicated that the difference among the means was significant and not due to the chance. The results of One-way ANOVA for the constructed group and selected group depicted significant effects of these variables on the writing performance of the sample population. That suggests a strong relationship between frequent constructed-response quizzes and students’ writing performance. To find out exactly where the difference lies and which group performed better, a multiple comparisons were performed using the Scheffe’s method. The results are shown in Table 6.
Table 6: Post-hoc Scheffe Test (Multiple Comparisons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I)</th>
<th>(J) VAR00001</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>-1.90</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>-4.1053</td>
<td>.3053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Constructed</td>
<td>-7.20*</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-9.4053</td>
<td>-4.9947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>-.3053</td>
<td>4.1053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Constructed</td>
<td>-5.30*</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-7.5053</td>
<td>-3.0947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructed</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>7.20*</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4.9947</td>
<td>9.4053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>5.30*</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.0947</td>
<td>7.5053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The multiple comparisons of the results show differences between the selected group and the control one, but not significant; however such a difference is observed when comparing performance of the participants in other groups, that is, the control and the constructed groups, and the selected and the constructed groups respectively (Sig= .000).

Since the significance level set for the study is 0.05, it can be concluded that participants in constructed-response group performed significantly better on the post-test comparing the participants in the control group. This means that frequent constructed-response quiz was the most effective quiz format in developing formal grammar in writing skills.

Discussion

This section involves discussion of the results and findings presented in chapter four in order to provide answers to the research questions and thereby to reject or accept the null hypotheses which was introduced in chapter one. The results of One-way ANOVA of post-test showed that there was a significance difference among groups, regarding their formal grammar in writing skills. Thus, it can be concluded that the null hypotheses of the research are strongly rejected. These findings clearly suggest that frequent constructed-response quizzes are important in developing formal grammar in English writing skills. Harris (1996) claimed that it is important to reinforce the learning of specific grammatical points or lexical items in writing exercises. Hedge (2005) states the nature of writing is not interesting enough to motivate English learners to practice regularly. Mastering skills entails much practice, writing is no exception. Learning to write is difficult, especially for those writing in a second or a foreign language and effective writing is considered to be a problem for EFL learners. Teachers’ experiences also showed that EFL high school students generally have problem and insufficient knowledge of English writing skills. This has encouraged us to emphasize the importance of constructed-response quizzes as one of the most effective instruments to develop writing skills. This is due to the fact that the treatment applied to the constructed group resulted in higher scores and significantly outperformed the selected and control groups. By comparing the mean differences of the groups and levels of significance in Table 4, and examining the complementary results of the Scheffe test, it is concluded that participants in selected group have performed better in post-test than those in the control group. This means that selected group was in the second place concerning the effectiveness in developing formal grammar in writing skills. But this superiority was not totally tangible. The improvement among the writing abilities of participants was significant where they took constructed-response quizzes. Because the participants took a pre-test at the beginning of the
study, it is possible that the students in these three classes were at the same level of background knowledge and the students in the constructed group were better writers.

The results of this study confirmed our prediction that students who took frequent constructed-response quizzes would show better retention of grammatical patterns than would students who were not engaged in the frequent constructed-response quizzes. The preference of constructed-response quizzes (in which students are free to answer questions and the response required may range from one word answer to one or two sentences) might be that they required the productive skills of language in written form and engaged learners in meaning at a deeper level than selected-response quizzes (in which students simply recall or recognize information required to select the appropriate response and no new knowledge is constructed). This increased attention leads to more focus on the comprehension, which in turn causes more retention of the grammatical forms. Besides, since students are familiar with the test, this prior experience or test witness can affect performance on the test task (Bachman, 1995) and they will be able to match what they want to answer with what they had learned as input; therefore, they have less stress for final examination. As a consequence, frequent quizzes, that is, constructed-response items are more probable to help the students remember the materials, especially grammatical points. Thus, the most important point is the effect of the frequent administration of quizzes, which may lead to enhance students’ performance on the summative achievement tests. Classroom tests or quizzes, according to many researchers (e.g., Birjandi, et al., 2006; Farhady, et al., 2003; Heaton, 2000) make students better aware of their course objectives and areas of emphasis, as well as their weakness and thus increase their achievement. It may be that students who did not take frequent quizzes may have been characterized by generally disorganized behavior and also quiz is an important motivation for many students. More studies with different population majoring in other fields of study are needed to improve our understanding of how student’s performance is influenced by frequent quizzes, for instance, pre-university students or courses in mathematics.

In this study, it was not possible to distinguish the effects of reading practice of writing practice. Did the students’ performances improve because frequent quizzes encouraged them to learn to read more carefully, or because they learn to develop and express their written ideas with more clarity, or a combination of the two? Although the writing performances of the three groups were comparable, it might be that the constructed group learned to read more carefully because they were tested by open ended items at every class period. If that is the case, the better performances of the constructed group may be due, at least in part, to more practice reading as well as more frequent writing. The somehow similarity of final examination scores between the selected and control groups and the fact that all three groups were at the same level, the possibility cannot be ruled out in the results on the basis of this study. In general, little research has been conducted in language testing related to the frequent administration of quizzes (Felix, 2005).

CONCLUSION
The results of this study are limited to a sample population of 60 female Iranian senior high school students majoring in empirical sciences. Whether the same findings would be obtained by other high school students studying in other majors (mathematics, or social sciences), or with
other levels (pre-university or even junior high school students), remains unknown. Therefore, a replication of this study with different population is suggested. Another limitation of the study was that due to some limitation it was not possible to assign male participants. Since male and female students’ learning styles have been proved to be different, it is suggested that the possible effect of gender be investigated in a study similar to this one. Students vary in their preferences for different test formats, thus using a variety of methods will help students do their best (Davis, 1999). Hence, a replication of this study using other quiz formats or a combination both formats (constructed and selected) is highly recommended so that more consistent information becomes available. The present study investigated the effect of frequent administration of two quiz formats on developing formal grammar in writing skills. Other studies can explore the effect of frequent administration of quiz formats on other language skills such as listening, speaking or reading. Finally, a variety of student strategies are available to syllabus designers, test designers, teachers, and students; the current investigation focused only on the effect of two quiz formats on the formal grammar in writing skills. A deeper understanding of students’ patterns of student behavior is required, for example, the influence of various patterns of learning style on achievement.

REFERENCES


TEACHERS’ PROFESSIONALISM AND ITS AFFECTING FACTORS: A REVIEW ON EFL TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT
Teachers are believed to play direct roles on the achievement of education goal. This implies that teachers’ professionalism matters, as professional teachers make better achievement. As teachers’ professionalism becomes an important issue, it is crucial to trace factors underlying professionalism. This paper tries to elaborate a number of factors that affect teachers’ professionalism acquisition. The discussion covers current theoretical issues on the affecting factors of teachers’ professionalism and the finding of a study on EFL teachers’ perceptions towards the affecting factors of professionalism. This study was conducted to 119 EFL teachers of senior and junior high schools. Data were taken through questionnaire designed in Presence-Absence Questions and Rank-Ordering Questions, to reveal respondents’ opinion towards the contribution of the variables used in the study on teachers’ professionalism acquisition and to disclose respondents’ opinion as to the order of importance of each of the variables towards its contribution to teachers’ professionalism. Six variables used in this study were General Knowledge Ability, Focus Training, Knowledge of Subject Matter, Teaching Experience, Certification, and Academic Degree. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The findings of this study suggest that respondents believed that all of the variables have positive contribution to the acquisition of EFL teachers’ professionalism. Thus, the writers believed that the six variables have to be considered in developing teachers’ professionalism.

KEYWORDS: EFL teachers, professionalism, affecting factors.

INTRODUCTION
Common belief on the role of teachers as one of important contributors towards the achievement of learners is acceptable. It is because teachers are the ones whose job directly affects students’ success (Hattie, 2003). According to Hattie, teachers make the second most significant contribution to students’ achievement. Hattie argues that the first factor that affects students’
achievement is an internal factor that comes from students themselves which accounts for about 50%, while teacher factor accounts for about 30%, and other factors only account for 20%. Teachers are held responsible for the success of learning. In Indonesia, the issue of teachers’ role in education has been widely discussed as the government has officially acknowledged that the job of teaching is a profession. The affirmation of teachers’ job as a profession by Indonesian policy makers is mandated by a number of regulatory documents (Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, Government Regulation No. 74/2008 on Teachers, and National Education Ministry Regulation No. 16/2007 on Teachers’ Academic Qualification and Competencies).

The effect of teachers on students’ achievement suggests that teachers’ professionalism is a crucial factor in education. Thus, there is a need for finding out innovative and systematic approaches to teachers’ professional development, including factors that have strong contribution to teachers’ professionalism building.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Nature of a Profession

To understand teaching as a profession, one cannot separate teaching profession from the basic characteristics of other professions. The term ‘profession’ is a broad concept that involves many aspects (Sanusi et al., in Saud 2008; Shulman, in Bransford et al., 2005; Hamied, 2009; Sackett, 2009; Banks et al., 2005, and Kaufman, 2009). Sanusi et al., (in Saud, 2008) elaborate a number of terms related to the concept of profession which include the terms profession which means that the job requires expertise, professional which refers to the performance of the person carrying out the job as required by a profession, professionalism which refers to the commitment of members of the profession to improve their ability, and professionalization which refers to the process of professional development to meet professional standards.

Another concept of profession is mentioned by Shulman (in Bransford, et al., 2005). Shulman mentions six characteristics shared by all professions. A profession is a job that entails a service to society, requires a body of scholarly knowledge, demands engagement in practical actions, maintains dynamics, takes into account the importance of experience, and grows as the development of a professional community.

Hamied (2009) also mentions a number of characteristics of a profession. According to Hamied, a profession must maintain a significant social function in communities and its members must have expertise which is gained from accountable education or training. He also adds that members of a profession should uphold high discipline and ethical conduct and should gain income from the profession.

Teaching as a Profession

As a profession, teaching also upholds general principles shared by all professions as mentioned in previous sections. However, there are specific aspects that are attributed to teaching profession. In Indonesian context, as mandated by Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, and Ministry Regulation No. 16/2007 on Teachers’ Academic Qualification and Competencies,
teachers must qualify for four competencies: pedagogical competency, personal competency, social competency, and professional competency, each of which is measured through a number of indicators (Government Regulation No. 74/2008 on Teachers). The regulation provides the competency standards on each subject for different levels of schools. The standards seem to have been based on theories of good language teaching (Brown, 2001).

Good teaching theories have long become dynamic discussions by educators and education researchers. In discussing teaching as a profession, Bransford et al., (2005) mentions three aspects on essential knowledge required for teaching which comprises knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of teaching.

Knowledge of Learners
The importance of knowledge of learners for teachers has been discussed by a number of scholars (Banks, et al., 2005; Luke & Elkin, 1988; Clark & Medina, 2000; Nikitina & Fumitaka, 2009; and Gebhard, 1996). According to Banks et al., (2005), one of the aspects that teachers should know about their learners is learner diversity. Diversity is the nature of human being and students are always different from each other. Their differences can include their culture, economic background, cognitive ability, and motivation. Professional teachers should know how to handle culturally diverse students. Teachers need to have a broad set of teaching strategies to deal with students with different cultural backgrounds. Banks et al., (2005) add that the knowledge of culture can include knowing of self and of others. Besides knowing their students’ cultural backgrounds, teachers should also know that learners also live in social setting where literacy practices are always changing. This situation demands that teachers need to be familiar with the uncertainty and dynamics of learners’ daily life (Luke & Elkins, 1988; Clark & Medina, 2000).

In addition to such external factors as cultural backgrounds, literacy practices, and discourses, internal factors coming from learners are also dominant aspects that construct diverse learners (Nikitina & Fumitaka, 2009; Gebhard, 1996). Nikitina & Fumitaka (2009) and Gebhard (1996) argue that these internal factors are such factors as motivation and cognitive ability. Different learners may have different motivation when learning. Some learners may have high motivation while others may have low motivation. Similarly, different learners may have different cognitive ability. Teachers should be prepared with the knowledge of learners’ diversity and the knowledge of how to deal with the diversity.

Banks et al., (2005) emphasize the importance of knowing the diversity on learners’ cultural background, Clark & Medina (2000) and Luke & Elkins (1988) point out the importance of understanding diversity on learners’ daily life environment, and Nikitina & Fumitaka (2009) and Gebhard (1996) concern with the importance of knowing learners’ diversity on cognitive and motivation differences.

Knowledge of Subject Matter
Bransford et al., (2005) mention knowledge of subject matter as another aspect that a teacher should possess. Knowledge of subject matter includes knowledge of subject being taught and
knowledge of how to teach the subject. Knowledge of subject matter is scholarly knowledge that a teacher has gained from schooling as well as from individual knowledge development.

Grossman et al., (2005) and Darling-Hammond & Berry (2006) also mention the importance of knowledge of subject matter for teachers. According to Grossman et al., teachers should possess deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. Similarly, Darling-Hammond & Berry (2006) also acknowledge the importance of knowledge of subject matter. Darling-Hammond and Berry say that a teacher’s knowledge of subject matter has a significant role on students’ achievement.

**Knowledge of Teaching**

Knowledge of teaching is also an important aspect that triggers the success of teaching. Theories of knowledge of teaching have been proposed by a number of researchers (Alatis, 2007; Jenkins, in Bransford et al., 2005; Borko et al., 2009; Harmer, 2007; Pennington, in Brown 2001; and Brown, 2001). According to Alatis (2007), in language teaching, good teaching will be met when the teachers meet the following aspects: competency, encouraging personalities, and care. This statement implies that there are prerequisites for successful teaching. First, it must be done by competent teachers; second, it requires non-discouraging teachers; third, the teachers must use accommodative approaches; and fourth, the teachers must care for the students lovingly. These prerequisites imply that good teaching can be understood as a part of nurturing.

There are many variables that apply across teaching situations (Jenkins, cited in Bransford et al., 2005; Borko et al., 2009). These variables can be grouped into four categories: nature of the content, teaching and learning activities, characteristics of the learners, and criterial tasks. These variables affect the effectiveness of teaching. Jenkins (in Bransford et al., 2005) also mentions that teaching practice happens as a collaborative process of four aspects: content, activities, tasks, and learners – each of which has an important role in the achievement of the practice. Thus, it can also be justified that teachers must know knowledge of teaching content, knowledge of teaching activities, knowledge of learners’ characteristics, and knowledge of criterial tasks. Knowledge of criterial tasks is the knowledge on the level to the extent students should attain in their learning. These are such levels as to recognize, to recall, or to practice problem solving.

Jenkins (in Bransford et al., 2005) further elaborates her idea that appropriate levels of difficulty should also be taken into account in selecting and designing teaching materials so that the materials can function as a means of attaining goals, that the teaching and learning activities should be made varied that may include lectures, simulations, hands-on (offering active participation), and problem solving, and that the students should develop motivation and attitudes to foster their achievement in attaining knowledge and skills, while the tasks should include recognition, recall, problem solving, and should create effectiveness of new learning.

**EFL Teachers’ Professionalism and Its Indicators**

On the issue of professional characteristics, a number of writers have elaborated the concept of professional teachers. Brown (2001), for example, identifies qualities of professional language teachers by classifying his ideas into four categories: technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills, and personal qualities. First, foreign language teachers must be...
knowledgeable on a number of aspects such as linguistic system, principles of language learning and teaching, knowledge of language skills, knowledge of how language is learnt, knowledge of the connection between language and culture, and knowledge of issues on language through conference and workshop attendance.

Second, professional foreign language teachers must be skillful in two aspects. These are pedagogical skills and interpersonal skills. Language teachers must be well-informed with theories of language teaching and various teaching techniques. This will help teachers make classroom decisions. They should also be able to design and execute lesson plan. Professional language teachers should not be dependent on others. They must be self-subordinated and they should not be under the control of other teachers. They must be under self-control. Professional teachers must be the ones who are ready to give optimal feedback to their students. They must promote student interaction and create teamwork. They also should be creative, effective, and innovative.

Third, professional foreign language teachers must have interpersonal skills. The interpersonal skills include: the awareness of cross-cultural differences and the sensitivity of students’ cultural background, ability to respect students’ opinion, a sense of patience, ability to promote students’ critical thinking, good cooperation with colleagues, and positive habit of knowledge-sharing.

Fourth, professional language teachers must have personal qualities. They must be well-organized, conscious in meeting commitments, and dependable. They must also be flexible when things go awry. Professional language teachers must always curiously try to create new ways of teaching. Next, professional teachers must have short-term and long term goals for their continued professional growth. Last, they must maintain high ethical and moral standards.

In discussing the qualities of EFL teachers, Allen (in Brown, 2001) mentions nine characteristics of good EFL teachers. According to Allen, a professional EFL teachers must hold a degree in TESL/TEFL, love English language, be critical thinkers, be persistent to upgrade oneself, be independent, get ready to go extra mile, be familiar with cultural adaptability, be a professional citizenship, and love the job of teaching English. From these characteristics, we can argue that in order to become a professional EFL teacher, one must hold an academic degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, must have positive attitudes of English language, must have positive attitudes on language teaching profession, and should be a critical person.

A professional EFL teacher must hold a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. In Indonesian context, based on Law No. 14/2005, English teachers must hold a four-year college education (undergraduate degree) in English language teaching. This becomes the basis of the licensure for the teachers. This is an important issue since one of the problems of education (in Indonesia) is the fact that there are still many teachers who do not hold this degree. A significant number of them only hold a two-year college or three-year college education. Many of them even do not have degree at all in English education. They are out-of-field teachers. Of 2,783,321 teachers in Indonesia less than 35% of them hold an undergraduate degree in their subject.
Positive attitudes of the English language is also an important factor for EFL teachers (McGroarty, 1996). It becomes the initial and crucial factor for becoming creative EFL teachers. McGroarty also adds that positive attitudes of the English language will raise teacher’s and students’ awareness to use English. The awareness of using English is an important factor for the success of the teaching process considering that in EFL situations, the opportunity to use English in community is very minimal especially for speaking. Therefore, interaction in the classroom becomes the major opportunity for students and teacher to practice using the language. According to Sockett (2009), positive attitude is part of teaching disposition that becomes one of qualities that a professional teacher must possess along with knowledge and skills. Thus, positive attitude of the English language is part of teaching dispositions for EFL teachers. It is a virtuous aspect that can trigger the teachers to become more creative and to become more motivated in doing their job (Sockett, 2009).

Professional EFL teachers are supposed to be knowledgeable and sensitive to cultural differences that exist between English language and learners’ first language (Yeh, 2005; Boyle-Baise, 2005). Language is part of culture. Thus, having positive attitude of the English language includes having positive attitude of the English cultures as teaching language entails teaching cultural aspects of the language. For example, some students feel confident when their errors are corrected directly, while other students like indirect correction (Houten, 1980). Wrong treatment of student’s error may hinder interaction.

Professional teachers must promote critical thinking. They are the architects of intellect (Fogarty & McTighe, 1993). Current educational practices move from teacher center to learner center and this requires teacher to give learner more opportunity to express their ideas, argument, and reasoning. Classroom practices should not oppress learners by depositing knowledge to learners (Freire, 1993). Learner center practices require the interaction among learners and learners and interaction between learners and teacher. For this reason, teachers must possess a certain level of cognitive ability since cognitive ability becomes the prerequisite to thinking.

Gebhard (1996) argues that foreign language teachers must create an interactive classroom. Good language teaching should provide opportunities for students to interact. To create an interactive classroom, teachers must understand aspects that can promote students interaction. At the same time, they must also recognize some aspects that may hinder students to interact. Gebhard adds that to do so, teachers must learn from their experience, must realize their role, and must be able to identify the problems that EFL/ESL teachers face in teaching. Knowing the principles of interactive classroom is fundamental for current foreign language teaching as the teaching of foreign language has changed to a new direction, that is shifting from teaching grammar to teaching communicative function.

The previous practices of foreign language teaching had undergone a fashion where teacher-centered model became common traditions (Gebhard, 1996). Besides teacher-centered fashion,
the materials were focused on grammar. This kind of practice did not promote interaction between teacher and students and between students and other students. And when interaction happened the role of teacher was very dominant. In order to promote classroom interaction using the target language, teacher needs to provide opportunities for students to interact. Gebhard also argues that interactive classroom requires teachers to create situation where students talk more and teacher talk less. This can be done only if teachers are creative in making or providing topics which are interesting to students and accommodative to the students’ cultural differences.

A professional foreign language teacher must be able to accommodate every student’s cultural differences; otherwise, he/she will not be able to create interactive classroom (Yeh, 2005). Interactive classroom is the one that is culturally responsive (Grant & Gillette, 2006; Boyle-Baise, 2005). According to Grant & Gillette, a culturally responsive teaching means that the teachers must accommodate expectations and needs of all learners. Similarly, Boyle-Baise also argues that teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching accommodate learners’ experience. Therefore, in their teaching, they see every learner as a student, family, and community member.

Teachers should also let students express their opinion and ideas in their own ways (Gebhard, 1996). This may mean that what is meaningful for teachers may not be so for students and what is not interesting for teachers may be interesting for students. In promoting interactive classroom, students must be given opportunities to negotiate meaning between students. Teachers should let students ask and clarify their opinion. The topics of interactive classroom should not come from teachers only but can also come from student.

**Factors Affecting Teaching Professionalism**

In this section, the writers elaborate theoretical issues on aspects that affect teachers’ professionalism. Drawing ideas from a number of sources on the issue of teachers’ professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002; Alatis, 2007; Bransford, 2005; Sweed, 2008; Kealing, 2008) the writers believe that the acquisition of teachers’ professional characteristics does not come from one source. The writers believe that at least six aspects play a significant role on teachers’ professionalism. These are general knowledge ability, focused-training, teaching experience, knowledge of subject matter, certification, and academic degree.

**General Knowledge Ability**

One of the aspects that influences the success of teaching is believed to be the teachers’ general knowledge ability (Whitehurst, 2002). This is one of the reasons why a teacher candidate is required to hold a specific degree or qualification. According to Whitehurst, general knowledge ability is the cognitive ability to acquire knowledge. It is a mental action or process of acquiring knowledge through thought, experience, and the senses. This general cognitive ability takes an important role in forming teachers’ professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002; Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996). A teacher with high cognitive ability is able to design learning activities that inspire learners’ interest in order to strengthen learners’ motivation (Cochran-Smith, 2003).
Teacher professional development has an important role on teachers’ professionalism (Smith, 2005; El-Okda, 2005; Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009; Levin, Hammer, & Coffey, 2009; Cohen and Hill, in Whitehurst, 2002). Smith (2005) argues that professional development involves learning to improve existing conditions. Similar argument is proposed by El-Okda (2005). According to El-Okda, professional development is part of teacher learning process and it must be conducted continuously along with teacher life-services (El-Okda, 2005). El-Okda also adds that inexperienced teachers must get more training, as there is distinct expertise between experienced and inexperienced teachers. Teacher training is essential for inexperienced and novice teachers because they are often unable to attend students’ thinking until they are able to identify classroom routines (Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009). They add that teacher training is also believed to have an important impact on teacher competence (Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009). According to Levin, Hammer, & Coffey (2009) teacher training must include many aspects of teaching that comprise curriculum, materials development, teaching techniques, and teaching evaluation.

A study by Cohen and Hill (Cited in Whitehurst, 2002) on the role of professional development training suggests that training has a significant contribution on teacher professional development. Whitehurst suggests that training should be focused on subject matters, academic content, and curriculum.

Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is also believed to be one of important aspects that make up teachers’ qualities (Johnston et al., 2005; Yeh, 2005). The role of teachers’ experience on the acquisition of professional qualities has been studied by Johnston et al., (2005). Their study revealed that teachers’ experience takes a crucial role on the development of teachers’ professionalism acquisition. Alatis (2007) also argues that experience contributes to teachers’ theory building. Alatis mentions several aspects that make up teachers’ theory building. These are teachers’ experience as a language learner and as a teacher, professional development (training), classroom practices, and teaching reflection. These all become teachers’ collection of cognitive information. The collection of cognitive information then shapes the teachers’ characteristics and their characteristics are represented in their daily teaching activities along with their teaching career development.

As has been mentioned, teachers’ experience is part of aspects that form teachers’ characteristics and this in turn affects teachers’ personal theory building that affects teachers’ classroom teaching practices (Levin & He, 2008). It is a common practice that teachers learn from their daily activities to improve their teaching performances. Teachers’ experience can be derived from two periods which include the period of before teaching services and the period of while teaching services (Alatis, 2007; Woods, 1996). According to Woods, experience during services enriches teachers’ theory building along their career. Thus, there is a cyclical process involving teachers’ experience and their theory building.
Knowledge of Subject Matter

A teacher’s knowledge of subject matters is the essence that directly affects students’ achievement (Whitehurst, 2002; Grossman et al, 2005). As Grossman et al. argue, this comprises two major aspects (the knowledge of subject being taught and the knowledge of how to teach the subject). A teacher’s knowledge of subject matters is gained from many different sources such as from academic institution, training, and self-development.

Certification

It is a common sense that good teachers are the ones who are talented in teaching and educating learners and good teachers might not be made through certification. Thus, good teachers are communities certified teachers. However, from the authority point of view, certification program can be seen as one of government policies aiming at improving teacher quality (Tamir & Wilson, 2005). Teacher certification has long been at issue in education (Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein, 1999; Whitehurst, 2002). In Indonesia, teacher certification has been an important issue. It has been part of professional development policy of the Ministry of National Education which has gained support from the Indonesian law makers (Law No. 14/2005).

Academic Degree

Academic qualification is one of triggers of teachers’ professionalism acquisition. The contribution of a teacher’s academic degree is in most part resulted from the conceptions of professional teaching standards set up by the academic institution a teacher candidate spent his/her study. The conceptions of professional teaching standards have been designed by policy makers, educators, and teacher educators. The process setting professional teaching standards involves academia from various universities and government agencies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was aimed at answering the following research questions:

• Do respondents agree on the positive role of the six variables used in this study towards the development of EFL teachers’ professionalism?
• What is the order of importance of each of the variables?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this were 119 EFL teachers of senior and junior high schools from 3 districts in Cimahi, West Java-Indonesia. Subjects were taken from 31 schools through quota-random sampling.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in two types (Presence-Absence Questions and Rank-Ordering Questions, based on Jackson, 1995). The Presence-Absence questions were to reveal respondents’ opinion towards the contribution of the variables used in the study on teachers’ professionalism acquisition, while the Rank-Order
questions were used to disclose respondents’ opinion as to the order of importance of each of the variables towards its contribution to teachers’ professionalism. Six variables used in this study were General Knowledge Ability, Focus Training, Knowledge of Subject Matter, Teaching Experience, Certification, and Academic Degree.

Procedure
Data were taken through a number of steps. First, the researchers chose 31 schools out of 77 schools from three districts. The choice of the schools was based on the status, level, location, and classification of the schools. Of the 31 schools chosen, 14 schools were junior high schools, 10 schools were senior high schools, and 7 schools were vocational schools. The total number of English teachers from the 31 schools was 124. Second, questionnaire was given to 124 teachers with 119 of them responded the questionnaire and 5 of them did not respond it. The final step was analyzing the data using descriptive statistics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
The findings suggest that Knowledge of Subject Matter got the most positive response where 100% (119) of respondents said Yes and 0% said No towards the contribution of this factor to the acquisition of teachers’ professionalism, followed by Focused-Training with 116 (97.5%) respondents agreed and 3 (2.5%) respondents disagreed. Third place was for General Knowledge Ability and Teaching Experience with 122 (94.1%) respondents agreed and 7 (5.8%) respondents disagreed. The fourth place was for Academic Degree with 101 (84%) respondents agreed and 18 respondents (16%) disagreed, while Certification got the lowest agreement from respondents with 87 (73%) agreed and 32 (27%) disagreed. This suggests that respondents believe that all factors discussed above have important contribution to the acquisition of teacher professional characteristics. The results also show that knowledge of subject matter is believed to be the most important aspect of the acquisition of teacher professional characteristics while certification is the least aspect that contributes to the acquisition of teachers’ professional characteristics.

The findings also suggest that most respondents considered General Knowledge Ability, Knowledge of Subject Matter, and Academic Degree have a strong effect on teachers’ professionalism acquisition. On General Knowledge Ability, 47% respondents put it in the first rank and 11.7% in the second rank, on Knowledge of Subject Matter, 45.37% respondents put it in the first rank and 34.45% respondents in the second rank, and on Academic Degree, 47.89% respondents put it in the first rank and 10.08% put it in the second rank. In the middle rank were Focused-Training and Teaching Experience, while the lowest rank was Certification where only 24.36% put it in the first rank and 45.37% respondents put it in the sixth rank.

From the findings, it can be said that most respondents believed that all six factors have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers’ professionalism. These findings confirm the theories that claim the six aspects to have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers’ professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002). Of the six factors, certification is an interesting phenomenon. Although certification is believed to have positive contribution to teachers’ professionalism acquisition, the number of respondents who disagree on it is relatively significant.
which made up of (27%) of the total respondents. This suggests that certification is not as important as other factors in fostering professionalism development. In addition, although respondents considered that certification has contribution on professionalism, its contribution was relatively minimum.

Respondents agreed on the mastery of knowledge of subject matter as the most contributing aspect of professional EFL teachers because of two reasons. First, knowledge of subject matter is the essence of teachers’ qualities. It is the reason for a teacher’s presence in the class. Another reason is that teachers without subject knowledge mastery will not be innovative. Knowledge of subject matter can be gained from many different sources such as formal education (academic degree), training, teaching experience, and such individual factors as general knowledge ability, learning motivation, and learning strategies.

General knowledge ability is an individual factor. This deals with a person’s level of intelligence. It is believed that smart teachers are able to think creatively and therefore can build their professionalism faster. Teaching experience, academic degree, and focused-training also have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers’ professionalism. Experienced teachers are believed to be more professional than inexperienced teachers as they learn from their experience when dealing with students’ problems. Academic degree also has positive contribution to teachers’ professional development. Holding academic degree takes a long process of learning which has to be gained from a formal institution such as a college or a university. Focused-training is another factor that is believed to have positive contribution to teachers’ professionalism. Focused-training includes activities that have to be taken during teachers’ in-service periods as part of teacher professional development.

The controversy over the importance of certification on teacher professional acquisition is due to a number of reasons. Respondents who believe that certification has positive contribution to teachers’ professionalism development argued that certification program, indeed, motivates teachers to work better. It also reminds them to teach better. In spite of their positive justification about certification, respondents also acknowledged that certification is a controversial program. For them, certification is also a reward that should have been given automatically without taking a test of it. Teachers who believe that certification does not contribute significant professionalism for teachers also have a number of reasons. For them, certification does not change teachers’ personalities and behavior. Respondents who have negative perceptions on the contribution of certification acknowledge that certification is a government effort to improve teachers’ performance but they believed that the beneficial effect of certification happens to teachers’ welfare instead of to their professionalism growth. Certification does not guarantee teachers’ professional acquisition.

CONCLUSION
This paper has discussed EFL teachers’ professionalism and its affecting factors from both theoretical contexts and research findings. From theoretical point of view, teachers’ professionalism is a broad aspect in which in order to acquire professionalism, one must take into
account a number of aspects that are believed to trigger the acquisition. The finding of the study suggests that the variables used in this study (General Knowledge Ability, Focused-Training, Teaching Experience, Knowledge of Subject Matter, Certification, and Academic Degree) are believed to have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers’ professionalism. This means that, in general, the finding of the study confirms the existing theories. Drawing from the findings of this study, the writers offer three suggestions. First, the policy makers in education take necessary measures to control the quality of teacher education. This is to make sure that teacher candidates undergo all standards mandated by the educational regulations. Second, the process of teacher recruitment should apply high academic standards to make sure that the accepted teachers are those who qualify for the job. Finally, on the issue of certification, there should be periodical evaluations to those who have been certified to make sure that they maintain their qualification and that they improve their quality.

The findings have revealed EFL teachers’ beliefs on factors having positive contribution on the development of teachers’ professionalism and have provided new insights and elaborative explanations on aspects that support teachers’ professionalism development. In addition to its positive contribution, this research also has limitations. First, the number of participants was relatively small (119 EFL teachers), and therefore, the findings of this study may not always apply for different groups in a different period. Second, the design used in this study was descriptive quantitative. Thus, to some extent, the findings may be subjective in nature.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE REPRESENTATION OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM NEGOTIATION IN NEWSPAPERS: TEHRAN TIMES VS. LOS ANGELES TIMES

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed to investigate how The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times manifest their attitudinal representations in the discourse dealing with Iran’s nuclear program. The two newspapers were selected non-randomly to cover an Iranian and an American newspaper for the purpose of comparison. To narrow down the scope of the investigation, four macro and five micro features were used based on vanDijk’s (2002) framework to analyze 300 pieces of news in both of the newspapers. The frequency of the discourse strategies were calculated by two reviewer to arrive at the inter-rater reliability index through Pearson Correlation Analysis as (r=.725). The percentages of the structures were calculated and Chi-square analysis was used to show whether the differences were significant. It was found that the two newspapers represent their ideas differently on the same event. They used the macro strategies (i.e., to show positive or negative attitudes against the West or Iran). Thus at the macro level, the newspapers are significantly different. The Los Angeles Times emphasized the positive things about the West while deemphasized the positive things about Iran. At the micro level, there was significant difference between the frequencies of stability, accusing, authority, threatening and blaming used as micro discourse features in both newspapers. The implications of the study could be used for EFL teachers in teaching reading comprehension and ESP courses in politics.

KEYWORDS: Iran's nuclear program, negotiations, newspapers, Tehran Times, The Los Angeles Times

INTRODUCTION
Reading comprehension may be enhancing through the understanding of the textual components including the grammatical, lexical, graphic organizers and the attitudes behind the writers’ sentences (Fairclough, 1993; Khaghaninezhad, 2012). The present study used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)-based investigation to show the differences between two popular newspapers’ (i.e., Tehran Times as an Iranian media and The Los Angeles Times as a sample of the US) attitudes towards presenting positive or negative ideas regarding the nuclear negotiations between Iran and West with the leading power-the USA- and its allies-EU, Russia, and China). Thus it
dealt with discourse features in which the used some macro and micro features from the CDA perspectives.

Using vanDijk (2002) socio-cognitive model, this study tries to reveal how Iran's nuclear program negotiation are represented in the Tehran Times and Los Angeles Times. Iran's nuclear program negotiations as a political event have attracted the attention of media since 2013. This point should not be ignored that the focus of the study is on the role of language, and the way it is manipulated utilizing the micro and macro-discursive strategies suggested by vanDijk’s socio-cognitive model.

The vanDijk’s (2002) model was used to analyze the discourse features in the present study. 300 English political pieces of news were critically analyzed both at micro and macro levels in both Tehran Times (i.e., 150 news reports) and The Los Angeles Times (i.e., 150 news reports). However, the other research conducted by Ahmadian and Farahani (2014a, 2014b) on the same newspapers with the different discourse features among the discourse strategies introduced by vanDijk’s model (e.g., hyperbole, distancing, implication, illegality, presupposition, etc.) They worked on both micro-level included lexical features based on vanDijk’s model and grammatical features based on Fairclough's (2001) framework.

There is a general assumption that the speech of the press shows attitudes against the other sides. Critical Discourse Analysis is an approach aimed at analyzing and describing the attitudinal of discourse features. The CDA practitioners offer need to follow the frameworks through which they check the discourse features at the macro and micro levels to carefully illustrate the ideas behind the pieces of news. These distinctions as macro discourse features are the general ideas of the news in both positive and negative modes (vanDijk, 2004) or at the micro level such as threatening (i.e., shows the threats of the opponents), authority (i.e., shows the power and supporting by legal powers, e.g., the UN, the EU, or The Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), blaming (i.e., blame the other side), accusing (i.e., accuse the other side to violate the rules) or stability (i.e., resist on their policies without tangible change). There are other frameworks to analyze the discourse features of the media (e.g., Fairclough’s (2001) framework). These frameworks deal with relational and expressive values of linguistic features are of considerable significance for analysts.

The focus of this study is on the discourse features of the events, actions, states, relationships, people and other participants involved in Iran nuclear program i.e., on the macro or micro level. Thus vanDijk’s (2002, 2004) framework was studied and modified to employ the analysis. Using this theoretical framework, this study was to illuminate how an analysis based on a systemic functional approach, and the aims of CDA can be brought into play in looking at political discourses. The study of cross cultural discourse features in written texts has been an area of growing interest in the last decades. CDA is concerned with discourse in forming and being formed by social political practices (Fairclough, 2001). It is a paradigm of research, a program, or as Wodak (2001) suggests, a school, with leading scholars who have different backgrounds of their own and have their own approaches with different analytical tools. According to Wodak (2001), CDA “allows for open discussions and debates for changes in the aims and goals and for
innovation” (p. 8). However, all CDA methods share a view about the “social processes of power, hierarchy building, exclusion and subordination” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 3). Other issues like racism, gender inequality, sexism, colonialism, employment, war, nuclear weapons and nuclear power (Fowler, 1996) are among the topics in which most of critical discourse analysts are interested. In general, CDA aims to raise the readers’ consciousness of the power of language in changing the events and influencing the readers’ views (Reiseggl & Wodak, 2001).

CDA hypothesizes that different cultures may have different ways of organizing ideas which become a very important research area. Casting a brief look at the history of CDA studies, one can see that the growing interest in these studies was for its concern with practical pedagogical purposes and pedagogical implication. One area for which teaching English as a foreign language has received criticism is that, students, when placed in professional settings (e.g. studying ESP/EAP, teaching reading comprehension and translation). These insights help the EFL practitioners not only teach political features of the professional genres, but also aware of the discursive realities of them. Furthermore, in the newspaper genres, the knowledge obtained from identifying discourse features of various types of texts can also allow both the language teachers and students to cope with the important cultural elements that affect the nature, usage and production of these texts. The number of CDA studies investigates discourse cultural patterns in which languages such as English are taught as a foreign language comparing with countries in which English is used as a second (L2) language (Caple, & Knox, 2012). The main objective of this type of studies is to present a comparative genre analysis of newspaper reports across two cultures as represented by the newspapers which are released in Iran as a non-native culture (e.g., newspapers released in United States as a source and native culture in regard to English language). The aim is to describe some of the cross-cultural and discoursive differences. In particular, these studies investigate a number of discourse and linguistic features in the newspapers mentioned above. Finally, the fact is that the primary goal of CDA has principally been pedagogical interests in EFL contexts to assist non-native Iranian students with the acquisition of English rhetorical strategies. Moreover, the primary goal of this research is to investigate the pedagogical implications to enhance practical genre knowledge of Iranian students teachers, journalists and news translators. Language is an instrument to be manipulated for fulfilling the purposes which may be in spoken or written form. Effectively, language is deployed for transmitting knowledge, ideas and emotions which are loaded with attitudes and perspectives (van Dijk, 1998).

Understanding the macro and micro structures of Newspapers' reports can help EFL learners to comprehend the meaning of the texts. One of the main problems among Iranian EFL learners is the lack of knowledge on the discourse features which make the meaning unclear, especially in the political texts (van Dijk, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009). Although there are several studies (e.g., Ahmadian & Farahani, 2014a) which work on macro and micro discourse features, the features in the present study have not covered in those researches. These discourse features included stability, authority, blaming, accusing, and threatening. The language is manipulated by the newspapers in order to fulfill the objectives and ideologies of supporters of the newspapers. Thus, there is no doubt that newspapers' reports are insightful sources of information that covers different events which are (re)presented based on the perspectives and ideology followed by the
newspapers (Reah, 2002). In order to reveal the utilized biased language and raise the students' consciousness about the way they can elicit the comprehension by which the language is manipulated, the researcher attempts to make a comparative study on the representation of Iran's nuclear program negotiation in two newspapers of Tehran Times and the Los Angeles Times.

Thus, findings from CDA research can indeed offer valuable information to material writers and language teachers for foreign language classrooms (Behnam&Khodadust, 2010). CDA studies are, for example, capable to provide teachers and students with knowledge about the preferred patterns of writing (Connor, 2003). These studies uncover specific discourse features patterns, which might be culturally and contextually specific. Thus, such knowledge can provide the basis for explicit strategies which Iranian students of journalism, news writers and even news translators might use to comprehend and produce effective English news. The other implications of such studiers for the ESP teachers is to know more about the sophisticated practice of writing news in a foreign language News articles comprise significant resources for language teaching which present authentic materials. Effectively, analyzing the social issues presented in the newspapers may reveal the perspectives and ideologies through which Iran's nuclear program negotiation are represented in the two daily newspapers of Tehran Times and Los Angeles Times which is beneficial in raising the consciousness of students regarding the manipulated language and the hidden meanings of the texts. Hence, equipping the students with the critical reading helps them to get access to the opaque and obscure meanings of the texts. Accordingly, the results of the study will be insightful for language learners, teachers, teachers' trainers and even course designers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
This research investigated The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times discourse features dealing with Iran’s nuclear program in a comparative research design. Thus there is a need to take a look at the previous related studies to provide the researchers of the present study with enough theoretical and experimental backgrounds in the analysis these two newspapers. Iran’s nuclear negotiations of using discourse features refer back to the history of Iran nuclear history and the two popular newspapers in Iran and the US are introduced briefly as follows:

**Iran's Nuclear Program** started in the mid-1960s under the authoritarian and pro-American regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi with U.S. support for the program. In 1967, the United States supplied Iran with a 5-megawatt nuclear research reactor to establish the Tehran Nuclear Research Center Iran signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), on July 1, 1968, the first day the treaty was circulated for signatures. Iran subsequently ratified the treaty on March 5, 1970, the same day that the treaty was ratified by the United States. The treaty allows the non-nuclear weapon states further the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament” (International develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The member countries with nuclear weapons (United States, Russia, China, Britain, and France) were allowed to keep the weapons but agreed to refrain from spreading them to other countries and promised to work toward nuclear disarmament. Israel, India, and Pakistan are the only nuclear
countries that are not parties to the NPT. The partially completed reactors were severely damaged due to six separate Iraqi attacks launched between 1984 and 1987. The present study selected 300 pieces of news from both Tehran Times and Los Angeles Times to compare their macro and micro discourse features strategies in Iran’s nuclear negotiations (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015).

**Tehran Times** began in 1979 as a foreign-language newspaper to air the voice of the Islamic Revolution. The policy that the newspaper has been following has been based on the guideline set that it is in English language to be searched online and in paper. It shows the Iranian policies from the beginning of Iranian Revolution. In the calendar year 1390 (21 March 2011) all the newspaper’s pages are printed in color. In 2002, Tehran Times established a news agency which later came to be known as the Mehr News Agency (MNA) (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015). Its Web site is: http://www.tehrantimes.com. It holds a wide circulation around the world. In the present study, the Archived newspapers from 2011 to 2014 were reviewed to study Iran’s nuclear negotiations with 5+1.

The **Los Angeles Times**, commonly referred to as the Times, is a daily newspaper published in Los Angeles, California, since 1881. It was the largest metropolitan newspaper in circulation in the United States in 2008 and the fourth most widely distributed newspaper in the country. In 2000, the Tribune Company, parent company of the Chicago and local television station KTLA, purchased the Los Angeles Times. It is currently owned by Tribune. It is a daily newspaper with the circulation of 653,868 daily (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015). In the present study, the Archived newspapers from 2011 to 2014 were reviewed to select the news covering Iran’s nuclear negotiations with 5+1. Its Web site is:http://www.latimes.com/.

The news reports can influence the readers and persuade them to take actions. A news report is defined as a text in a newspaper that gives the opinion of the news writer or a journalist on a topic or item of news. News report in the journalistic terms is explained as soft news which is a piece of news dealing with editorial comments rather than hard news which is a piece of news that avoids editorial comments since it represents the partial, national and private opinion of journalists. The news editors practice the foreign policies of the country rather than reporting just the events (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). For the purpose of any study in analyzing media and their attitudes towards a social and international event, newspaper reporters select the appropriate audience for a number of reasons including the use of discourse features for their political and social interests. First, news report as an important professional text type with a big size of readership in different cultures, constitute a useful set of data for conducting cross-cultural genre analysis. For the sake of this research therefore, we can say that they are written by professional journalists and therefore, reflect discourse patterns of experienced writers representing the types of writing in the aforesaid newspapers. Second, the news reports typically represents the metropolitan values of a society, evaluating government decisions and practices and even it can influence policy making on various issues. And third, unlike hard news, news reports do not represent straightforward information but they are written in a way that their analysis requires greater effort and knowledge from students for decoding the message of them. This indicates that although news reports are not easy to analyze since they are
subjective. Thus using them in the language classrooms may be problematic in terms of their argumentative and discursive nature.

It seems that news reports can be useful resources for assessing and enhancing the linguistic and cultural knowledge of the foreign language learner (Hernandez, 2008). In this respect, a comparative study of news reports across different cultures can be a useful step toward making the pedagogical connections to enhance the students' awareness of certain subtle differences in written discourse structure. This can be used in teaching any language skills to develop ESL writing, reading and even listening and speaking in the classrooms. It can be an attempt to explain and understand the different discourse strategies found in the compositions written by non-native speakers of English.

Several studies (e.g., Ataei & Mozaheb, 2013) have focused on the narrow view of text analysis by looking at texts as finished products and attempted to adopt a more comprehensive view of text analysis (i.e., text not only as product but as process) by analyzing articles. He then proposed a four move model to analyze an article: Move 1: Establishing the field by showing centrality, Move 2: summarizing previous research, Move 3: Preparing for present research by indicating a gap, raising a question or extending a finding, and Move 4: Introduction of the present research by stating the purpose, or briefly describing present research. These studies mainly focus on a "broader" scope of text analysis as discussed above by exploring the nature of the genre of new reports from various perspectives. Based on what was mentioned above, news reports are key texts for students of journalism and so should be key materials for teachers of journalism in English language in EFL contexts (Ataei & Adriani, 2009). The newspapers are considered as resources for language learning since they are authentic, original, interesting and based on the events which are real and can be seen in the environment (Fairclough, 1992). The CDA may give the teachers invaluable resources to be used in the classrooms (1993). This fact is acknowledged by many language learners, being able to read and write a newspaper in a foreign language without too much difficulty for second language acquisition.

**New Reports Analysis**

Bell (1998) believe that news reports can be effective in terms of their excerpts as their accessibility, their influence on speech communities, culture, politics, ideological beliefs and social life, their disclosing of a great deal about social meanings and embedded stereotypes and finally there in formativeness as exemplar instances of text and talk. However, from the point of view of media experts, this process goes through certain stages of selection and transformation that the commonly held belief about the neutrality of the news cannot be anymore authenticated and relied on (Fowler, 1991). In this regard, the mediating role of language in yielding a piece of information which is loaded with a specific line of thought and a particular way of seeing the world is seen to be highly probable which is in turn a testimony for embarking on specific analytical assets (van Dijk, 2009). Moreover, various forms of linguistic expression, including phonological, syntactic, lexical or semantic, are utilized by news producers for certain purposes. Accordingly, a critical discourse analytic framework is deemed to yield better assessment of the purported corpus in this study than a non-critical
one, because as it is argued by Fairclough (1992) “Critical approaches differ from non-critical approaches in not just describing discursive practices, but also showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants” (p.12).

Behnam and Khodadust (2010) showed how lexical features of repetition and synonymy as well as the structural and thematic feature of passivization, nominalization and predicted theme were utilized by discourse producers to impose their desired ideologies to the viewers with regard to the events of September. In one of the few studies with attention on semiotic resources, Bertrand (2009) discussed racial issues with respect to semiotic resources. Bertrand examined exchanges that occurred within the context of a videotaped Focus group of white males. To analyze the data, Fairclough (2001), van Dijk’s (1991) frameworks together with Goodwin and Goodwin’s (2001) approach for semiotic resources were used. This composite methodology allows for added insight and helps to show positive self and in-group presentation and negative other and out-group presentation if conducted correctly. The analysis of the data showed the ways the participants relied on place names to index race and framed the differences in school quality relative to tar chive of SID Goodwin’s approach indicated that men used a range of semiotic resources to float their efforts to present themselves positively and Others negatively.

The textual analysis through a closer reading of headlines revealed a polarization between scared, implicitly Swedish victims and immigrant-outsider perpetrators. The writer finally discussed the little importance of race and color compared with the mere ‘otherness’ of the muggers or robbers. Also, the Swedish youth robber was seen as a scapegoat, as a symbolic tool in a capitalist society. However, the authors of the present paper believe that the comparisons made between Sweden and the UK are inaccurate because Sweden is not a capitalist country in the sense that the UK is Hakam (2009) helped to explore how ideology was reproduced and resisted in the English-language Arab press. The choice of lexical items by Arab newspaper was also discussed via concordance programs. The researcher investigated discourse to find salient examples of ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ paradigm.

Some linguistic features were examined in the search for ideological aspects of discourse; modality, naming and description collocation incongruity, presupposition, and signals of affiliation (Rasti & Sahragard, 2012). The data for the study (news reports, editorials, news analyses) came from websites of 19 English language Arab newspapers representing 12 different countries. The results of the research showed that the set of word frequencies and collocations taken from major European news agencies about Arab communities differed significantly from that of Arab-generated or Arab modified samples. Deghat (2009) applied some of the most agreed upon guidelines of CDA to analyze the tape scripts of 2008 presidential campaign speeches of democratic candidates (i.e. Hillary Clinton and Barrack Obama) in terms of the discursive structures in the text which carry and enforce certain ideologies. She made use of Hodge and Kress’s (1979) framework and compared and contrasted the transcribed texts of fifty tape scripts. She concluded that although the effect of
race and gender were evident in Clinton and Obama’s speeches, both nominees did not want to inject race or gender in this presidential campaign and in this regard had strived to win the whole American voters.

One of the comprehensive studies carried out in Iran related to the macro-strategies mentioned above was Rahim and Sahragard’s (2007). They analyzed some Persian and English texts to find the ideologically laden words of the texts and their ideological effect of the whole texts. They gave particular attention to euphemization and derogation. They resorted to vanDijk’s (2004) theoretical framework. The materials used included the emails on the life, achievements and death of the Late Pope and articles from the economist magazine, Tehran Times, Iran News Persian radio program entitled “The analysis of Foreign Radios and the critiques on the movie Shoran (Hemlock). The analysis of the data proved that the categorization of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is an effective tool in the hand of the writers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The research questions of the present study are as follows:

RQ1. Is there any difference between the two newspapers of Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive US policy against Iran) concerned with attitudes on Iran’s nuclear program negotiation?

RQ2. Is there any difference between the two newspapers of Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive Iran’s policy against the West) concerned with attitudes on Iran’s nuclear program negotiation?

METHODOLOGY
Data
In order to compare and analyze the macro and micro discourse markers across different newspapers, this study relied on two newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times during January, 1, 2011 to January, 1, 2014. These newspapers were non-randomly selected and the news on Iran’s nuclear program was selected based on the availability of the news in the newspapers. In each newspaper, the number of words was the criterion for select the number of pieces of news. Generally, 165 news reports from Tehran Times and 114 news reports in The Los Angeles Times were non-randomly chosen regarding their topics on Iran’s nuclear program and the related negotiations in both sides. Thus in Tehran Times, there were 15240 words and in The Los Angeles Times, there were 15450 words. The data included which totally 30690 words were gathered to be analyzed at the macro and micro levels.

While Tehran Times is English and is considered as a domestic newspaper in Iran, The Los Angeles Times is supposed to be a US or foreign newspaper. They could be considered as a non-native or native data. Here, the word data is used since the size of the pieces of news may not be large enough to reach the generalization. There are some reasons behind this selection. First, there is the availability of the newspapers online to be searched very easily. Second the two
Azizi, P., & Gorjian, B

Instrumentation
The present study employed the vanDijk’s (2000) framework for the analysis of the macro and micro levels as discourse features. The framework used was based on the taxonomy of several features. Based on this checklist there are four macro strategies and 28 micro strategies though which 5 ones were non-randomly were selected since the previous studies (e.g., Fairclough, 2001; Gee, 2004; Khaghaninezhad & Rostami, 2014) worked on the other macro strategies and micro strategies.

Procedure
This study began with the collection of English newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times. The pieces of news in each newspaper were selected based on the words in each rather than the number of articles. Thus both newspapers included approximately 30690 words to compare the macro and micro levels as discourse features as discourse devices. Totally, 165 news reports were selected in Tehran Times and 114 news reports in The Los Angeles Times based on non-random sampling. They were chosen with regard to their topics on Iran’s nuclear program and the related negotiations in both sides. Thus in Tehran Times, there were 15240 words and in The Los Angeles Times, there were 15450 words. The words were gathered to be analyzed at the macro and micro levels. The analysis included descriptive statistics and the frequency of discourse features and inferential statistics in terms of using Chi-square analysis.

These data were developed by selecting newspapers from 2011 to 2014 and included editorials, columns, and articles published during this period which is more authentic and recent corpora. The authors and columnists were not realized as a factor in selecting the newspapers writings. Just the topics on Iran’s nuclear issues were put into consideration. Some samples of these topics were introduced in the Appendix B. The frequency of each macro and micro discourse features was observed by the researcher and a teacher who was expert in finding the related discourse features. The rating was done and the inter-rater reliability of the counting was estimated by Spearman Correlation Analysis as (r=.892). However, the counting of the discourse appeared to be a very complicated activity since some instances could be categorized in two categories according to the vanDijk’s framework. The meaning of some phrases and sentences had many visible and invisible layers. Thus, preparing higher accuracy could be difficult at the macro and micro levels (Behnam & Moshtaghi, 2008).

There were about 30690 words are generally collected. All the pieces of news were saved on a computer to produce an electronic data in words which showed the number of the words in 179 pieces of news. The counting did not include all the figures and symbols that did not consist of alphabetically letters (e.g., numbers). By doing so, it became possible to make intra-group comparisons. Afterwards, the Word software was used to highlight and count the frequency of each macro and micro discourse features in each newspaper based on the framework presented earlier in this section. Selection of frequency of each macro and micro discourse features was
according to their functions and meaning in the sentences. Although some words appeared to be macro and micro discourse features according to the mentioned framework, they did not function as macro and micro discourse features in the text. So they were not counted as macro and micro discourse features.

The frequency and percentage of each macro and micro discourse feature in each newspaper were calculated separately and then both newspapers were compared with each other. Then, the Chi-square test was used to show whether the differences in the corpora were statistically meaningful or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Macro discourse features
The first step taken in the analysis of the macro and micro discourse features in the mentioned newspapers was to run word count to determine the length of the data. A total of 30690 words were calculated among the pool of data. The total average of macro and micro discourse features uses was 2.5 percent of all the words.

The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the macro discourse features; rows numbered 1 to 4 representing the features applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all features in each of the four categories under study are shown in columns in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and percentage of Macro Structures of Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Macro</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total structures</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasize positive things about us</td>
<td>Emphasize negative things about them</td>
<td>Deemphasize negative things about us</td>
<td>Deemphasize positive things about them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehran Times</td>
<td>320 28.90</td>
<td>347 31.34</td>
<td>200 18.06</td>
<td>240 21.68</td>
<td>1107 55.66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>180 20.40</td>
<td>169 19.16</td>
<td>311 35.26</td>
<td>222 25.17</td>
<td>882 44.34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total frequency</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>1989 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Us refers to the newspapers’ country and them refers to the opposite side

Table 1 shows that the macro discourse features in the newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times. In the categories of “Emphasize positive things about us” and “Emphasize negative things about them, the Los Angeles Times used more macro discourse features than Tehran Times while in the “Deemphasize negative things about us” and “Deemphasize positive
things about them” the Los Angeles Times used less macro discourse features. Table 4.2 shows the Chi-square analysis which was run to reveal the difference between the two newspapers.

Table 2: Chi-square Analysis of Macro Structures of Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emphasize positive things about us</th>
<th>Emphasize negative things about them</th>
<th>Deemphasize negative things about us</th>
<th>Deemphasize positive things about them</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tehran Times</strong></td>
<td>320 (314.49)</td>
<td>347 (291.22)</td>
<td>200 (210.71)</td>
<td>240 (290.59)</td>
<td>1107</td>
<td>9.467</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Angeles Times</strong></td>
<td>180 (185.51)</td>
<td>169 (171.78)</td>
<td>311 (124.29)</td>
<td>222 (171.41)</td>
<td>882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the two newspapers are significantly different in using macro discourse features since the critical $X^2 (9.467)$ with df=4 is less than the observed $X^2 (101.259)$ at the significant level ($p<0.05$). Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage of micro structure presentations are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and percentage of Micro Structures of Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Stability</th>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Blaming</th>
<th>Accusing</th>
<th>Threatening (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
<td>Freq. (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tehran Times</strong></td>
<td>98</td>
<td>26.18</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18.28</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>24.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Angeles Times</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>14.80</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>25.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total frequency</strong></td>
<td>175</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>882(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Us refers to the newspapers’ country and them refers to the opposite side

The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the micro discourse features; rows numbered 1 to 5 representing the features applied here in this study. The Chi-square analysis of all features under the study is shown in columns in Table 4.
Table 4 shows that the two newspapers are significantly different in using micro discourse features since the critical $X^2$ (11.070) with df=5 is less than the observed $X^2$ (73.364) at the significant level (p<0.05).

Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of macro and micro discourse features in the two newspapers showed significant differences in using the features. Thus there were significant differences in using macro and micro discourse features in the two newspapers.

**Discussion**

The focus of VanDijk's (2000) framework is on the discourse and language through which the positive points of the West (i.e., our side) which emphasized and the negative points of West (i.e., our side) was de-emphasized. Furthermore, it clearly shows that the positive points of others (i.e., opposite side) were de-emphasized and the negative points of others (i.e., opposite side) were emphasized. The present study reviewed the emphasized issues concerned with CDA at the macro level. For instance, the presentations of the negative point which was emphasized in the Los Angeles Times is "lack of cooperation in Iran to talk on the nuclear program" or the deemphasized of a positive point presented by the same newspapers as "Iran responses the world lately". According to vanDijk's (2000) model, the uses of these emphatic presentations could be intentionally done to minimize the role of the opposite side and to maximize their role in cooperation. Thus, the CDA-based study is an attempt to probe into the manipulation of ideologies in translations of political texts.

The results of the present study is in line with Fairclough (2001) who believes that the newspapers which belong to the government's policies or they are close to those policies are biased in attitudes towards the other side. VanDijk (2004) was adopted to conduct this research. Three hundred English political pieces of news were critically analyzed both at micro and macro levels. At micro-level, lexical features based on vanDijk's (2004) model and at the micro level the discourse features were selected based on the framework and were analyzed. The most common macro discursive strategies of this framework was "emphasizing the positive things about us" with the highest frequency and "deemphasize the negative things about us" with the lowest frequency". This showed that the news reports in this study along with descriptions according to vanDijk (2000) who supported the results of the study. Therefore, these strategies used to keep face by stating our positive characteristics first, and then focus on their negative attributes. This could be supposed as socio-cognitive devices which may,
for instance, be employed by the use of demonstrative pronouns instead of naming or describing others. In sum, the difference between the uses of these macro strategies was significant since the two newspapers used these macro structures differently.

Sometimes a situation is compared to positive or negative events in history, either as a positive self-presentation or negative other-presentation strategy. This device by which the out-group members are characterized as criminal or law breaker and they try to show that the other side's good activity is negative while their own negative activity is positive. The frequency of the macro structures showed that the macro structures are a means to show that the writers/speakers are firm to be objective in what they are discussing is not just their opinions but 'facts’. This is a prevalent semantic strategy which divides people in two groups of in-group (US) and out-group (THEM). The results of this study showed that the used these macro structures differently. For instance, the two newspapers of the Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times use discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive Iran’s policy against the West) differently concerned with attitudes on Iran's nuclear program negotiations or the other side. The Los Angeles Times has a specific function in the general strategy of emphasizing the West positive things and deemphasizing Iran's negative ones. They also use some presupposition to the sense that most of the meanings of a text are not explicitly expressed but presupposed to be known by the recipients. Presuppositions are used typically to speak about the controversial ideas or to assume the truth of some preposition when such truth is not accepted at all. These findings are in line with Fairclough (2001) who argued that this strategy may be used to overlook others' ideas and emphasize their own ideas. In this case, speakers/ writers do not have specific information about a subject but implicitly put forward that they know about it but they try to degrade the other roles. This kind of an ‘apparent knowledge’ generally appears in the presentations, like: “I do not know, but Iran dislikes solving it.” or "The US wants not to solve the problem".

The sources for data gathering will be two newspapers of Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times. In effect, the reports on the representation of Iran's nuclear program negotiation will be collected from the websites of these two newspapers. The main issue in these newspapers is that the Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times are opposite newspapers from two opposite perspectives. This result is matched with Yaghoobi (2009) who believes that the expressions can convey the meanings behind the surface level. Thus, the analysis examines all the presentations which were supposed as macro discourse features according to vanDijk's (2002) model. The macro discourse features were used in this study included "stability, authority, blaming, accusing and threatening" which could be found in words or phrases and they became known as the Iran or West policies on the Iran's nuclear program between the years 2011 to 2014. The pool of data was analyzed to find the negative or positive attitudes against the other side and their frequencies were calculated with their percentages. In the "stability" feature, the highest frequency and percentage belong to the Los Angeles Times which tried to show the West stability to solve the problem by a means even the military invention. However, on the other side, Tehran Times, get the lower frequency and percentage and tried not show the stability but a kind of flexibility to have the talks rather than to be involved in a war against the West.
The macro discourse features "authority", "blaming", "accusing", and "threatening" were used mainly by Tehran Times more than the Los Angeles Times in a significant way. The Iranian side accused the West to follow the US in War policy and threatened that the US bases in the Middle East would be endangered if they wanted to follow their threats. The Tehran Times also blamed the group of 5+1 to follow the US policy and they did not have an independent policy in making decision to take the steps in solving the problem. Tehran Times also confirm that Iran has the right to enrich uranium based on NPT treaty and do this in future. Thus Iran has the authority to follow its nuclear program in a peaceful manner. This finding is in line with Ataie and Adriani (2009) who, among many other studies conducted a research through the CDA frameworks and found about the biased representations of events and social groups in newspapers. Moreover, the findings lend supports to vanDijk's (2000) belief that “discourses express, confirm, instantiate or constitute ideologies” (p. 86), and to the fact that ideologies are injected in discourse by the use of different kinds of discursive strategies like the ones which are included in the framework. As such, the findings of this study call attention to the importance of being aware of the potentiality of language to manipulate the facts and realities. Accordingly, the findings of the Chi-square analysis showed that there were significant differences between the two newspapers in the representation of their sides against the other sides. Their biased representations could be understood through their expression at the macro and micro discourse levels.

After examining the incorporation of different voices throughout the full text stories of the editorials, it was found that there is a sharp discrepancy between representing the either side of the conflict. While Iranian's voice is negatively heard in Western newspaper of The Los Angeles Times, mostly via quoting Iranian president or nuclear case officials, the voice of the Western side is rampantly heard more than Iranians in which the American, European, and the IAEA's officials at every level either president, vice president, or spokespersons, are frequently quoted. It is interesting to note that the infrequency through which the Iranian' voice is heard implicates in a series of negatively loaded quoting verbs while the other side is represented through positive attitudes or even neutral manners.

Iranian officials are shown to be often accusing the others illegitimately while their Western counterparts are demonstrated to be stating or saying something with regard to the nuclear case in a quite legitimimized manner. The kind of analyses which were conducted throughout this research compellingly demonstrated that in order to yield a better examination of discursive events. Thus, one must utilize a critical discourse analytic approach so that according to Fairclough (1992), not only the involved practices are optimally described. However, the theses ideas are involved in the interrelationships of power, ideology and discourse would be efficiently revealed. Accordingly, the analysis of the kind of discourse which was used in the sampled editorials of American newspapers and news agencies reveals that Iran's nuclear issues are given negative representations throughout the newspaper’s voice by using certain discursive features. Generally, the biased representations of the both sides could be seen in their representations on the negotiations of Iran's nuclear case.
CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that there was an existence of a biased reporting arising from the particular world-view of the papers, amounting to legitimization or legitimization of the Iran’s nuclear program. Misrepresentation of Iran nuclear program and, the positive image of the West and the negative one in the Iran’s side showed hostility towards Iran. Thus in English papers such as the Los Angeles Times the discourse features of positive images of Iran became deemphasized by the West newspaper. On the other hand, It was revealed that the same image was seen in the Tehran Times which tried to emphasize the Iran’s authority of pursuing the nuclear program and deemphasizing the role of the US in the negotiations. In addition, The Los Angeles Times showed that in the English newspaper, Iran is mostly portrayed as the illegal power and a social deviant. The dominant pattern that emerges appears to encode a view of a polarized world, a world of us and them, representing the EU and ‘Iran’ respectively. Reports on the Iran nuclear program often occurred in connection with Iran’s secret nuclear activities and its enrichment of uranium for no peaceful purposes (Ataei&Mozahed, 2013). In particular, the stability of the West on the blockage of Iran’s nuclear program and blaming the Iran’s officials to pursue ambitious attitudes towards the nuclear programs could be seen so clearly.

The Los Angeles Times clearly accused Iran as a Threat not only to the US but also to the Israel as a close friend. This makes Iran’s nuclear program more complicated; however, this issue was seen in Tehran Times as a clear issue in which Iran is authorized to pursue its nuclear program and has the right of uranium enrichment. While The IAEA agency is highlighted the problem and overlooks Iran’s legitimate right. The process percentages by themselves were not too illuminating of the messages conveyed; the distribution of the participants and their corresponding number of tokens facilitated the processes of interpretations far more. Both the Iranian conservatives and the reform-seekers agree that Iran is entitled to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and it has fully complied with its international obligations regarding nuclear activities. b) In order to continue its nuclear program, Iran is proceeding on two parallel tracks: a political-diplomatic track with the EU or the UN, and a belligerent track. In its political-diplomatic track with the EU which is mostly taken by the reformists.

Language use and discourse are crucial social practices influenced by ideologies, which in turn also influence how we acquire, learn or change ideologies. Ideologies are not innate, but learnt. We learn most of our ideological ideas by reading and listening to other group members, beginning with our parents and peers (Wodak & vanDijk, 2000). Later, we learn ideologies by watching television, reading textbooks at school, advertising, the newspaper, participating in everyday conversations with friends and colleagues, among a multitude of other forms of talk and text. With respect to the mentioned channels through which ideologies influence us and are reproduced in society, it is suggested that critical awareness of language has to be public knowledge, while the mass media itself may provide discourse study of language in a digestible way to lay people and persuade viewers and/or readers of the value of analyzing mass media itself and other mass print such as textbooks. In the age of globalization and at a time when democratic practices appear to be influx, we believe that the equilibrium that many seek is impossible to create; however, critical language awareness awakens us not to be gullible.
The present study worked on the macro and micro discourse features in a limited way. It is suggested other features come into the inquiry. The Appendix A introduced several discourse features based on vanDijk’s (2002) framework. The other international newspapers could be analyzed to study these features deeply.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF PICTURE-CUED TASKS ON THE
ACQUISITION AND RECALL OF SEPARABLE AND
INSEPARABLE PHRASAL VERBS BY PRE-INTERMEDIATE
IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the effect of utilizing picture-cued tasks on the learning and recall of English phrasal verbs. A total number of 60 pre-intermediate language learners were chosen from a language institute to take part in this study. The participants were non-randomly divided into control and experimental groups. Then, they sat for a pre-test of the phrasal verbs at the beginning of the study. The results showed that the two groups were homogeneous at the onset of the study in terms of their knowledge of English separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. Both groups were taught phrasal verbs through two different approaches. While the experimental group received picture-cued tasks as their treatment, those in the control group were taught traditionally through translation and dictionary use techniques. After ten sessions, each lasted 45 minutes, the immediate and was given to the participants immediately after the treatment period. Finally, after two weeks interval the delayed post-test was given to the both groups to assess the degree of their recall. The results of Independent Samples t-test showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on both the immediate and delayed post-tests. Moreover, there was no difference between the results obtained for separable and inseparable phrasal verbs on these two post-tests. Thus the picture-cued tasks could affect the participants’ retention and recall significantly. This study suggests that using picture-cued tasks helped learners grasp the abstract meaning of English phrasal verbs through concrete pictures. The implications for learners, teachers, and educators are that they can consider this promising technique in their learning/teaching practices.

KEYWORDS: Picture-cued tasks, Acquisition, Recall, Separable and inseparable phrasal verbs

INTRODUCTION
Second language learning is a demanding enterprise since one would encounter a multitude of difficulties in grasping the meaning of the words. Words are supposedly the prime means of communication and, as one might rightly expect, a limited vocabulary repertoire keeps learners from expressing their real thoughts and feelings. Ample vocabulary, on the other hand, provides
Numerous authors have highlighted the important role of vocabulary in the process of language learning. Many L2 learners see language mastery as essentially a matter of learning vocabulary, so they spend much time on memorizing lists of words and sections of bilingual dictionaries. Harley (1995) also contends that vocabulary acquisition studies show that vocabulary is a unique window on the process of acquisition of language. Having word knowledge should be, according to Willis (1990), prior to learning of sentence structure since it is the word meaning that determines the grammaticality of structures, not the other way round. Burton and Humphries (1992) also herald the significance of vocabulary in language learning: “Good readers and listeners usually become good writers and speakers but none can be possible without learning sufficient vocabulary” (p.73)

A good number of English words are verbs and a lot of verbs in English are phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb is a verb formed from two or sometimes three constituents: a verb and an adverb or preposition. Most of the phrasal verbs are formed from a small number of common verbs (such as get, go, come, put and take) and a small number of adverbs and prepositions (such as away, out, off, up and in). Phrasal verbs constitute a very important aspect of the language learning. They are not only used in spoken and informal English, but are also a common part of written and even formal English. The meanings of some phrasal verbs can easily be guessed (e.g. sit down or look for). However, in most cases their meanings are idiomatic, that is quite different from the sum of the meaning of the verb and the particle(s) they are formed from. For instance, boil down to can mean 'to be the main point or cause of something' and this meaning has no obvious connection with the meaning of 'boiling' something. In this case, phrasal verbs create special problems for students, not only because there are a multitude of them in English, but because the juxtaposition of verb and particle(s) makes up a thoroughly new meaning.

Phrasal verbs are often divided into the dichotomy of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. Separable phrasal verbs can remain together when using an object that is a noun or noun phrase. An example could be He paid back the debt or He paid the debt back. They must be separated when a pronoun is used: We ran it up by $50,000 not We ran up it by $50,000.

Inseparable phrasal verbs, on the other hand, always remain together. It makes no difference if a noun or pronoun is used. As an illustration, take the following sentence: They splashed out on new office furniture not They splashed it out. The objective of the present study is to investigate the effect of picture-cued tasks, as a means of teaching vocabulary, on the acquisition of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

A picture-elucidation task is one type of cognitive awareness-raising task (Skehan, 1998) in which learners’ attention is directed toward salient features of one or a series of pictorial sketches, cartoons or photos rendering a more concrete aspect of the meaning of a linguistic expression. This concrete aspect then gradually leads learners to recognize similar salient features in more abstract pictorial elucidations of the linguistic expression in question. The selection of
picted-cued tasks, as a technique for teaching English phrasal verbs, in this study is due to the fact phrasal verbs appears to be highly demanding for second language learners, while this class of verbs creates less of an obstacle for native speakers as they come across abundant evidence of their use from an early age (Mandler, 2004; Tomasello, 2003). This early, gradually expanding experience undoubtedly aids the native speaker in forming the necessary image schemas whose properties would then scaffold the construction of abstract concepts signifying in turn relevant linguistic expressions which embody abstraction in meaning (Geeraerts&Cuyckens 2007).

A number of research studies have illustrated that native speakers are subconsciously aware of such image schemas and constantly manipulate them in their application and comprehension of figurative language (Gibbs, Bogdonovich, Sykes & Barr, 1997). The researchers believe these image schematic patterns are indispensable to appropriate understanding and use of figurative language.

To sum, as it was stated previously, the aim of the present study is to find out whether picture-cued tasks, as a means of teaching vocabulary, has any significant effect on the acquisition of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every language learner is prone to admit that phrasal verbs are remarkably important in the process of language learning. They also contend that inferring the meanings of these vocabulary items and the appropriate use of them present a challenge for language learners. This contention is also approved of by researchers such as Kurtyka (2001) who claims that phrasal verbs in English can cause problems for many learners because they have idiosyncratic meanings. These difficulties are sometimes increased by the way in which phrasal verbs are presented in course books or by teachers advising their students that they will just have to learn them by heart. Another source of difficulty might be the very nature of English phrasal verbs, some of which are separable and some are not. In an attempt to help EFL learners master English phrasal verbs, a number of vocabulary teaching tasks, including translation, sequential contextualization, metaphorical conceptualization, and picture-cued tasks, have been invented and used by the experts in the field. The present research study will be devoted to investigating the short-term and long-term effectiveness of picture-cues tasks in learning separable and inseparable English phrasal verbs. More specifically, the current study is going to find answers to the following research questions.

The Importance of Multi-Word Units and Phrasal Verbs

MWUs, lexical phrases, chunks, and prefabs are some of the preferred terms used by researchers to refer to different types of word-combination. It is estimated that prefabs account for 58.6 per cent of spoken English and 52.3 per cent of written English (Erman& Warren, 2000). There is also convergent evidence that the number of different multi-word items may exceed the number of individual words in the lexicon (Jackendoff, 1995). Willis (2003) for instance, claims that, “much of the language we produce is made up not of individual words, but of strings of words which we carry around with us as fixed phrases” (p. 43).
As far as PVs are concerned, they are ubiquitous in English. It is generally assumed that PVs are mainly used in spoken rather than written discourse and they are very common in informal rather than formal registers, while their one-word equivalents are more often used in more formal contexts. However, De Cock’s (2005) comments in her contribution to the pedagogical mid-matter in the *Macmillan Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* that “native speakers of English use approximately half as many PVs in formal writing as in informal speech” (p.17). This is confirmed in corpus statistics set out by Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad andFinegan (1999), where they find the usage of PVs to be greatest in conversation and fiction with over twice the frequency in academic writing, with news journalism between the two extremes. This suggests that PVs are not completely absent from formal discourse and there are many instances in formal occasions in which the use of PVs is more appropriate and sound more natural in expressing certain ideas (Fletcher, 2005). Apart from that, most PVs are metaphorical in meanings, and it is believed that metaphoric intelligence has an important role to play in all areas of communicative competence and can contribute to language learning success (Littlemore, 2001; Littlemore & Low, 2006). This further suggests the importance of PVs to language learners and without having good knowledge of PVs and an ability to use them appropriately, it is almost impossible for learners to gain fluency in English. Thus, it is clear that this particular language form deserves equal attention and better treatment in language teaching and learning.

MWUs and PVs Problematic learners
Despite the importance of MWUs and PVs in language learning discussed above, there is general consensus that they are difficult for L2 learners to master (De Cock, 2005). Many classes of multi-word items, such as PVs, which are the main focus of the present study, are very common and highly productive in the English language as a whole (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). In addition, many multi-word items have multiple meanings themselves. For example, Gardner and Davies (2007) found that the 100 most frequent PVs in the BNC have 559 potential meaning senses, or an average of 5.6 per PV. Thus, learners may find learning MWUs is rather complicated, particularly as there are issues with respect to idiomaticity and semantic non-compositionality, which can be very confusing to learners, as also applies to PVs. Furthermore, the status of particles in PV construction (i.e. preposition or adverb particle), particle movement, and the transitivity of PVs are among other aspects that can cause further confusion for learners. Because of these reasons, most often, learners will avoid using PVs or use their one-word equivalents instead, since these are much easier to learn and understand.

Phrasal Verbs
Many studies have been conducted with respect to PVs (e.g. Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Side, 1990; Schmitt, 2000; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007) and various terms have been used to refer to this particular language form, such as separable verb (Fraser, 1994), two-word verb (Taha, 1960) and verb-particle combinations (Fraser, 1994).

Separable and Inseparable Phrasal Verbs
In addition to the transitivity of PVs, ‘separability’ or “the inability of the particle to be moved to a position after [ ] noun phrase” (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, p. 1156) is another important concept with respect to PVs, which is closely related to the notion of transitivity.
discussed above. Most transitive PVs are separable and they allow particle movement either before or after the object noun (e.g. Please turn off the computer/Please turn the computer off).

**Phrasal Verb Research Studies in Iran**

In the context of Iran, many studies have addressed PVs. Some examples suffice to know what Iranian researchers have been interested in. As an illustration, Nassaji and Tian (2010) studied and compared the effectiveness of two types of output tasks (reconstruction cloze tasks and reconstruction editing tasks) for learning English phrasal verbs. They wanted to see if doing the tasks collaboratively led to greater gains of knowledge of the target verbs than doing the tasks individually and also whether the type of task made a difference. The results revealed that completing the tasks collaboratively led to a greater accuracy of task completion than completing them individually. However, collaborative tasks did not lead to significantly greater gains of vocabulary knowledge than individual tasks. The findings, however, showed an effect of task type, with the editing tasks being more effective than the cloze tasks in promoting negotiation and learning.

Khatib and Ghannadi (2011) investigated the effectiveness of interventionist and non-interventionist approaches to the recognition and production of phrasal verbs. The results of the study revealed the superiority of interventionist groups over the non-interventionist group in both recognition and production of phrasal verbs. In addition, the interventional explicit group greatly outperformed the interventional implicit group in both recognition and production.

Behzadi and AzimiAmoli (2014) conducted an experiment to investigate the effect of two task types on phrasal verb’s learning on Iranian EFL learners. They selected 60 EFL learners, who were studying in higher levels of English in different language institutes and divided them into two groups. Their study indicated that the context learning condition was more beneficial than the translation learning condition. However, translation learning task was good for short recall learning. Although their participants learned more in translation task group, the retained knowledge was more in context learning group. Moreover, the higher level students preferred not to translate phrasal verbs. Additionally, it was revealed that the translation task was advantageous to learning some complicated phrasal verbs with figurative meanings.

In another study, Ganji (2011) investigated the metaphor’s central position in the memorization, retention and prediction of the meaning of phrasal verbs. He selected 45 Iranian EFL learners from Chabahar Maritime University were who were divided into three groups. In control group, the phrasal verbs were presented with their Persian equivalents and students were asked to memorize them on their own. One of the experimental groups received the phrasal verbs in the context of a sentence, and students were asked to make new sentences with them in the class. The other experimental group was exposed to the orientational metaphors underlying the meaning of the particles of phrasal verbs. All the three groups took three tests in which the correct particles of the phrasal verbs had to be provided. The first test, carried out just two hours after the instructions, dealt with the taught phrasal verbs. The same test was conducted five weeks later to measure the long term retention of phrasal verbs' meaning. Finally, the third test tested the participants on 20 untaught phrasal verbs which had the same particles as the taught ones. One-
way ANOVA results revealed that the difference between the groups’ performances on the immediate test was not statistically significant, while the efficiency of metaphorical conceptualization, and sentential contextualization on the delayed test, and untaught test was considerable. There was, however, an insignificant difference between the two experimental groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study attempted to answer the following research questions:
1. Do picture-cued tasks affect EFL learners’ recall of separable phrasal verbs?
2. Do picture-cued tasks affect EFL learners’ recall of inseparable phrasal verbs?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
Forty EFL learners, studying American English File 2 in a language school in Ahvaz were asked to participate in this study. The rationale behind choosing pre-intermediate learners was that beginners were highly likely to have unconquerable problem learning phrasal verbs since their vocabulary repertoire was limited and their level of proficiency was not developed enough to learn phrasal verbs. Intermediate and advanced learners, on the other hand, might have encountered and learned the phrasal verbs intended to be taught in the current experiment. The participants of this study were supposed to enjoy the same level of proficiency since they studied at the same level in the institute. However, to further ascertain that they were not very much different in terms of their proficiency levels, the researcher included in the research those whose final scores on American English File 1 had ranged between 90 and 100. The learners were then randomly assigned to a control and an experimental group.

Materials and Instruments
The pictures, drawings, and photos used in classroom tasks were selected from various sources. Some were conveniently taken from the World Wide Web, while others were drawn by an available cartoonist. One important feature that was kept in mind while choosing pictures or having them sketched was that the pictures had to conspicuously display the intended meaning figured in a certain phrasal verb. For instance, if a schematic image of "hold on" were to be displayed, the researcher made sure the picture chosen contained features that would readily provoke a mental image of "hold on" in the mind of the user.

As for the instruments, pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test of phrasal verbs, were used in this study. All the instruments were researcher-made tests, the reliability index of each was determined in a small-scale pilot study. The split-half reliability indexes of the pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test were found to be (r=.91, r=.86, and r=.78) respectively. Tests of phrasal verbs were fill-in-the-blank tests of the phrasal verbs taught in this study. The pre-test was administered to make sure the learners were not different in terms of their knowledge of phrasal verbs. The immediate posttest was administered upon the completion of the treatment sessions. Finally, the delayed post-test was given to the learners after a two-week lapse of time.
Each of these tests comprised 30 fill-in-the-blank items in which the students were expected to complete the sentences with appropriate verbs and particles. Each test comprised 15 questions on separable and 15 questions on inseparable phrasal verbs.

**Procedure**
At the beginning of the study, the learners took a pretest on phrasal verbs. The aim of this pretest was to help the researcher make sure that the learners in both groups were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of phrasal verbs. The learners in the experimental group were exposed to picture-cued tasks, while the learners in the control group simply memorized the meanings of phrasal verbs, with their dictionary definitions and Persian translations. At the end of the experiment, the learners sat for an immediate posttest on phrasal verbs. After the passage of a couple of weeks, the learners were asked to take a delayed test to help the researcher see if the learned phrasal verbs could be retained in the learners long-term memory or not. The way the experimental group was treated is explained in the following: The instruction and practice procedures the learners went through essentially included pictures, photos, images, and drawings that were representative of the image-schematic concepts giving rise to a certain phrasal verb meaning. First, students were randomly divided into groups of two or three. Copies of the initial picture and its accompanying sentences containing the use of an English phrasal verb were given to every group. They were told to read the sentences carefully, look at the picture drawing, and try to recognize the meaning of the phrasal verb in context. The teacher would then point out the fact that the picture represented an image which encompassed the meaning they were looking for. After correctly identifying the meaning of the verb, the learners were given time to think over and discuss their explanations of salient picture features before they presented their oral/written, first/second language explanations to the teacher and other groups in class. The purpose for this presentation by students was two-fold: to determine if they had worked out the appropriate meaning of the phrasal verb in focus and to correct any possible misconceptions about the intended features shown in the pictures.

**Data Analysis Procedure**
The scores of the students on the pretest, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest of phrasal verbs were recorded. Each test had 30 questions, so the scores ranged from 0 to 30. The data were analyzed using the SPSS version 17. Descriptive statistics and Independent Samples t-test were employed to see if there were any significant differences between the two groups’ performances on these tests, and between separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results of the Pre-test**
The purpose of the pre-test was to make certain that the CG and EG was homogeneous with respect to their knowledge of (separable and inseparable) phrasal verbs at the outset of the study. The results of the comparison of the two groups on the separable phrasal verbs pretest are displayed in Tables 1, and 2.
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing the CG and EG Pre-test

<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>CG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such descriptive statistics as mean and standard deviation are shown for both groups in Table 1. The mean score of the CG ($M = 2.60$) was greater than the mean score of the EG ($M = 2.40$). This difference did not seem to be significant, but to ascertain whether it was or not, one needed to look down the $Sig$ (2-tailed) column in the $t$ test table below.

Table 2: Independent-Samples $t$ Test for Separable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Differe</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances Assumed</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-.83</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances not Assumed</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>-.83</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 2, there was not a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs pretest scores for CG ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.42$) and EG ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.78$), $t$ (38) = .391, $p = .69$ (two-tailed). This was so because the $p$ value was greater than the specified level of significance (i.e. .05). Were the $p$ value less than the alpha level (that is, the level of significance), the conclusion would be that the two groups were heterogeneous prior to the experiment.

**Results of the Post-test**

The results obtained upon the administration of the separable phrasal verbs posttest are presented in this section. Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the post-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Separable Post-test

<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>CG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As could be seen in Table 3, the mean score of the CG ($M = 7.15$) was less than the mean score of the EG ($M = 11.15$). To make sure whether this difference was statistically meaningful or not, one needed to check the $Sig$ (2-tailed) column in the $t$ test table below.
Based on the information in view in Table 4, there was a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs posttest scores for CG (\(M = 7.15, SD = 1.84\)) and EG (\(M = 11.15, SD = 1.46\)), \(t(38) = -7.60, p = .000\) (two-tailed). The immediate conclusion could thus be that picture-cued tasks were effective as far as learning separable phrasal verbs was concerned.

**Results of the Delayed Post-test**

This section presents the results obtained after the administration of the separable phrasal verbs delayed post-test. Table 5 pertains to the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the delayed post-test.

Table 5 shows that the mean score of the CG (\(M = 4.2\)) was substantially less than the mean score of the EG (\(M = 9.9\)). However, to make certain this difference was statistically significant, one needed to cast a glance at the \(Sig\) (2-tailed) column in the \(t\)-test table which follows.
Table 6: Independent-Samples t-Test for the CG and EG Separable Delayed Post-test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>T-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances Assumed</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances not Assumed</td>
<td>-13.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs delayed posttest scores for CG (M = 4.20, SD = 1.43) and EG (M = 9.90, SD = 1.33), t (38) = -13.00, p = .000 (two-tailed). It could thus be inferred that the effect of picture-cued tasks on learning separable phrasal verbs could last in the long run. Thus, the difference between the separable phrasal verbs delayed posttest scores of the CG and EG was substantial.

Results of the Second Research Question
The second research question of the study was set up to figure out whether picture-cued tasks could enhance EFL learners’ learning and recall of inseparable phrasal verbs or not. To find an answer to this question, like what was done for the first research question, independent-samples t-test was conducted three times: the first time for the comparison of the pretest scores of the CG and EG right at the beginning of the study, the second time for comparing these two groups’ posttest scores after the completion of the experiment, and the third time to compare the delayed posttest scores of the two groups after the passage of time. The results of the related analyses are presented in this section.

Results of the Pre-test
The rationale behind administering the pretest was to make sure that the CG and EG was homogeneous with regard to their knowledge of phrasal verbs before the commencement of the study. The results of the comparison of the two groups on the inseparable phrasal verbs pretest are displayed in Tables 7, and 8 below.
Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

<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>Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pretest</td>
<td>CG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that the mean score of the CG ($M = 3.05$) was greater than the mean score of the EG ($M = 2.85$). Although this difference did not seem to be significant, to make certain whether it was or not statistically meaningful, one had to look down the Sig (2-tailed) column in the $t$-test table below (Table 8).

Table 8: Independent-Samples $t$ Test for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances Assumed</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.660</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-.71, 1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances not Assumed</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>34.77</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-.71, 1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 8 shows, there was not a statistically meaningful difference in inseparable phrasal verbs pretest scores for CG ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.19$) and EG ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.63$), $t (38) = .443$, $p = .66$ (two-tailed). The conclusion could be that the two groups were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of inseparable phrasal verbs prior to the experiment. Thus, the difference between the inseparable phrasal verbs pretest scores of the CG and EG was very small.

Results of the Post-test
The post-test results of the inseparable phrasal verbs are depicted in Tables 9 and 10. Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the post-test.
Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test

<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>Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.55</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 indicated that the mean score of the CG ($M = 7.85$) was smaller than the mean score of the EG ($M = 11.55$). To make sure whether this difference was statistically significant or not, one had to check the $\text{Sig. (2-tailed)}$ column in the $t$ test table below (Table 4.10).

Table 10: Independent-Samples $t$ Test for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. Sig. t df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances Assumed</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-6.54</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variances not Assumed</td>
<td>-6.54</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-3.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the information displayed in Table 4.10., there was a statistically significant difference in inseparable phrasal verbs posttest scores for CG ($M = 7.85$, $SD = 2.10$) and EG ($M = 11.55$, $SD = 1.39$), $t (38) = -6.54$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed). The conclusion could thus be that picture-cued tasks were effective so far as learning inseparable phrasal verbs was concerned.

Discussion
The first research question of the study was “Do picture-cued tasks enhance EFL learners’ learning and recall of separable phrasal verbs?” The experimental and control groups were roughly equal on the pretest; however, their posttest and delayed posttest results showed that picture-cued tasks were indeed effective since the experimental group outperformed the control
group on these two tests, giving rise to the conclusion that the treatment helped the learners learn and recall separable phrasal verbs. It seems that the enhanced recognition of concrete/abstract meanings in English phrasal verbs has been the result of the participants’ establishment of meaningful connections between concrete/abstract image-schematic visual stimuli presented to them.

An encouraging dimension of the experimental group performance is their relative success in the effective retention of meaning of phrasal verbs, compared to the significantly low outcome achieved by the control group. It is evident that both groups have been subjected to memory loss over the time lapse between the immediate and the delayed posttest which is a natural part of any short-term course of language instruction. This is already in agreement with findings from other studies of mnemonic variables in pictorial elucidations motivated through a cognitive linguistic approach (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). Boers and Lindstromberg, for example, examined ways in which pictorial elucidations of concrete linguistic expressions aided learners’ recall of their more figurative usage. Similar to the results in this study, they found that pictorial representations of concrete/abstract meanings were highly beneficial to learners who tended to think in pictures; their data also demonstrated, perhaps surprisingly, that such representations further encouraged learners with a tendency to think in words to opt for visual imagery that seemed more motivating and helpful in nature. The results of the current study are, furthermore, in line with the results of Muhammadi, Farsani, Moinzadeh and Tavakoli (2012) who showed that picture-elucidation techniques was conducive to the learning and retention of English phrasal verbs.

Similar to this conclusion was what Ganji (2011) found to be the case. He found that from among the techniques of translation, sentential contextualization, and metaphorical conceptualization, the second and third techniques were superior to translation in delayed posttest and in a test of untaught phrasal verbs. This conforms to the findings of the current study. However, on the pretest, he found no statistically significant difference among the three techniques. This would also mean that translation was as effective as sentential contextualization and metaphorical conceptualization for short-term purposes.

CONCLUSION
As it was previously stated, this study was set up to investigate the effect of using picture-cued tasks on the learning and recall of English phrasal verbs. After the subjects were divided into control and experimental groups they sat for a pretest, the results of which showed that the two groups were homogeneous at the outset of the study. They then were taught phrasal verbs through two different approaches: while the experimental group subjects received picture-cued tasks as their treatment, those in the control group were taught traditionally. The immediate and delayed posttest results showed that the experimental group subjects outperformed the control groupers. Moreover, there was no difference between the results obtained for separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. All this boils down to the conclusion that picture-cued tasks, as a techniques employed for teaching phrasal verbs, came to learners’ assistance in forming picture-schematic structures in their minds. To put it differently, picture-cued tasks helped learners grasp the
abstract meaning of English phrasal verbs through concrete pictures which accompanied those phrasal verbs.

As Mandler (2004) points out, humans create mental image schemas and their relevant abstract conceptual patterns through a process of reanalysis of perceptual experience arising from recurring experiential encounters with the tangible events in the surrounding socio-cultural context. It is a serious mistake to assume that this genuine, enduring process can ever be replaced by a few sessions of experience and activity on the part of the foreign language learner in an artificial classroom environment. Nevertheless, the aim of this research was to demonstrate that such a natural process of sensory experience could be mimicked, though minimally and insufficiently, to enhance learners’ awareness and raise their consciousness toward bits and pieces of such experience as to render it slightly more meaningful to them.

The same study could be carried out with the students of differing levels of proficiency to see if the same results will be obtained or not. Furthermore, the method of input delivery could be altered (i.e. instruction can take place in a, say, web-based fashion) to observe if the gains will change accordingly or not. What is more, the technique of picture-cued task could be compared with other suggested techniques which were shown to be effective for teaching English phrasal verbs (e.g. sentential contextualization or metaphorical conceptualization, to name just a few).

REFERENCES


TRANSLATION TRAINING AND CONSTRUCTIVISM:
APPLICATION OF THINK-ALOUD IN IMPROVING STUDENT TRANSLATION COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT
Over the last decades think aloud-protocols have been used in translation studies researches extensively as a data collecting method. Researchers tried to access to the mental process of translators as subjects of studies. The present paper argues that think aloud protocols (TAPs) not only can be used as a method for collecting data in empirical translational research, but also it can be used as a technique in translation workshops. Think aloud protocols can be effective to improve student translation competence according to the constructive approach toward a pedagogy of translation training. In this study, there are seventy-five English as a second language (ESL) intermediate students who are taught translation for about fifty-five hours, according to a syllabus which was organized based on structures of general English and general Persian Language. In the following the students attended in a ten hour translation process workshop in which think aloud protocols (TAPs) used as a technique in teaching translation. The teacher and students were using think-aloud protocols in translating texts in groups and in joint translation. The study shows using TAPs in teaching translation may increase student translation competence. In this study, four methodologies have been used; think-aloud protocols, screen recording, sight translation and interview. This study is one of the first steps toward teaching the process of translation rather than translation product, and it useful for translator trainer to help students discover learning by observing and analyzing their teacher mind.

KEYWORDS: Think-aloud protocols, Translation competence, Translation training, Constructivism, Cognitive Translation.

INTRODUCTION
One of the merits of using Think Aloud Protocols in pedagogical approach is its non-prescriptively and practicality. (House, 2000: 152), it is first seen through the process of translation, which is conducted by a professional and then help teachers and theorizer to put those finding in theory and in classroom activity.

So far, Think-Aloud, due to the nature of gathering data, helps teachers, practitioners and researchers locate how and when translators and students solve the problems in a translation process (e.g. Amirian & Baghiat, 2013). This study, however, has a different look toward Think
Aloud-Protocol as one of the techniques in teaching translation. It is found that using think-aloud protocol in the class as a technique for teaching or as a drill in translation workshops may help increase student translation competence.

The application of Think Aloud in classroom teaching as a technique refers to teachers verbalizing and helping students understand the process of translation, which is happening in their mind, and also asking students to do the same. Students and teachers should verbalize much of their thought as; what is the aim of their choices when they are uncertain about which option is the best, the translation brief, consisting; What are their clients’ needs, and so on. To get to the best result the text which is translated verbally shouldn’t be read by the translators, whether they are students or the teachers of the class. During the verbalization of the teachers, students are allowed to ask questions and have some kind of conversation with their teacher. They also can have a joint translation with their instructor.

This study tries to use of this data collecting method, as a way to teach students to be conscious of their and their peers’ process of translation. In the classroom, teachers were supposed to verbalize the translation process to their students and students are allowed to ask questions. In join translation activity, students work with their teachers and partners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Think aloud protocol
Since solely evaluating the translation final product wasn’t sufficed in understanding of translation, for the last decade, researchers have increasingly been looking for a translation cognitive aspect of translation, they’ve wanted to know what is happening inside a translator brain while they are translating.

A number of attempts have been made to reach the process of translation in translator minds; one such attempt has simply asked the translator to express themselves during the translation activity, such method of data collection is called think aloud.

Think Aloud-Protocols refer to a type of data, which are collected in empirical translation process research; in this method, the subjects of study are asked to verbalize whatever cross their minds during the performance. The written transcription of this verbalization is called Think Aloud-Protocols (TAPS).

The theoretical method for TAPs is borrowed from cognitive psychology (Ericsson & Simon, 1984/1993). Accordingly, the information is stored in different locations, some of them in short-term memory (STM) which is characterized easy access and harshly limited storage capacity, and in long-term memory (LTM) which is more difficult to access and larger storage capacity. Only the information which is in STM can be verbalized by the subjects because it can be directly accessed and reported.
The first application of this method to translation was carried out by Gerloff (1986), Kring (1986), Lorscher (1986) which was related to classical verbal report in which the person observes their own process of thought. Ericson and Simon (1984/1993) conducted a more serious regulated method of data collection, they stated that when there is a controlled and instructed method of think aloud protocols, TAPs don't change the process of translation except for slowing down. There exists some limitation to what kind of information Think-aloud reveals according to Ericsson and Simon (1984/1993); the information which is in Short-term memory, the unconscious memory, is inaccessible. Think Aloud-Protocols may enclose a shadow of the cognitive process of translation, but not a complete one. To have an integral and reliable picture of mind of translators, Think Aloud-protocol might be accompanied by the product of the process of translation, screen recording, questionnaire, keyboard logging data like Translog. (Jakobsen, 2003).

**Translation competence**

Translation competence is an important aspect of the cognitive process of translation, which enables the translators and interrupters to render completely the act of translation successfully. The notion of competence has been used in many disciplines within the field of applied linguistics since 1960s. Literature differentiates between competence as the underlying skills and the ability to communicate in specific cognitive situations. Communicative competence consists of some sub competence like grammatical competence (knowing about how to apply grammatical codes), socio-linguistic competence (knowing how to act in a different socio-linguistic context), discourse competence (knowing how to produce an appropriate spoken and written text), strategic competence (knowing how to communicate effectively in case of starting, planning, execution and assessment of speaking).

Competence is related to the field of cognitive psychology, and it is studying about expert knowledge and skills. Competence defined as “consistently superior performance in a specified set of representative tasks for the domain that can be administrated to any subjects” (Ericsson & Charness, 1997 as cited in Shreve 2006). It accordingly studies in the field shows that expert knowledge consists of a wider range of complex structural knowledge, which is required by the subjects during a long period of practice and study, and it may need an application of problem-solving and require a high load of meta cognition. There is a distinction between declarative (know what) and procedural knowledge (know how) which both are focused in studying the notion of competence. In the field of psychology, competence is a complex know how, which is comprised of knowledge, skills, and attitude and so on. In pedagogy; competence defined as “a complex know how to act resulting from the integration, mobilization and organization of a combination of abilities and skills (which may be cognitive, affective, psycho-motor or social) and knowledge (declarative knowledge) used effectively in a situation with common characteristics”. (Lasnier, 2000). This model distinguishes between subject specific competence (specific to particular discipline) and generic competence (common to all disciplines).

Translation competence is a combination of knowledges, attitudes and aptitudes that a translator or interpreter must have to render the product successfully. Translation competence or TC is underlies the work of experts in translation and interpretation activity, which enables them to
carry out the cognitive operation which is needed for the adequate translation process. Translation competence was first introduced in the late 1970s (Wilss, 1976; Koller, 1979), there are some other terms which have been used for translation competence: translation expertise, translation skills and translational or translator competence.

Translation is a complex, heterogeneous activity, since translation is a combination of different skills, which are very distinctive from each other in nature, knowledge of a wider range of different subject is necessary, and every brand new situation of translation needs new information to learn (Neubert, 2000). Because of this complexity and heterogeneity, rendering a definition for translation competence is very hard to reach. One of the first definitions of TC is “knowledge and skills the translator must possess” (Bell, 1991: 43). Translation competence is considered as an expert system which is led primarily by strategic components. (Albir & Alves, 2009: 63).


PACTE sees translation competence as expert’s knowledge, and it defines translation competence as declarative and procedural knowledge, according to the PACTE transition competence comprises seven sub competences in which strategic competence is the most important one; Bilingual sub competence, extralinguistic sub competence, Instrumental sub competence, Strategic sub competence, psycho-physiological sub competence (PACTE 2003).

Shreve (2006) sees translation competence as expertise studies, and he considers translation competence as the individual ability of using some related cognitive resources to perform the translation activity. He subdivided translation competence in four sub competences; linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, textual knowledge and translation knowledge which is the ability to use translation tools, resources, strategies and procedures.

From the pedagogy approach Kelly (2005, p. 162) explains translation competence as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aptitudes of a translator for translating a specific text. Kelly categorized translation competence in some sub competences as communicative, cultural, intercultural, textual, subject area, professional, attitudinal, psychophysiological, strategic, instrumental, and interpersonal (working with others) competence. Pym (2003) criticized the componential models of translation competence. However, and identified two skills necessary for TC; first, the ability to produce more than one acceptable target text for one source text and second one, the ability to choose only one of them quickly with justified confidence.

Alves and Goncalves (2007) categorized translation competence according to relevance-rhetoric as a general and specific translator competence. General translator’s competence is all the knowledge, abilities, skills a translator possesses to render a successful, viable translation, specific translator’s competence, however, related to maximization of interpretative resemblance.
and the metacognitive conscious process of translation. Note that most of the models for translation competence have not been empirically tested; just a few of them have been tested experimentally like PACTE (2005) Alves and Goncalves (2007) and Goncalves (2005),

**Constructivism, think aloud and Translation Competence**

Kiraly (2000) social constructivism approach in teaching translation argues translators actively construct the text which they are translating just as students who are learning a language. Kiraly’s constructive approach stands for practical experience, discussion and consensual understanding. Students should learn by finding their ways in group work, and they should speak about what they are doing. In this study, students try to be actively participating in class and moreover, learn translation by looking into their teacher's mind and then analyses and assesses their improvement in translation.

A wide range of classroom situation might explain why they are several approaches and theories about what have to be done in translation workshops and classrooms. One of the of the useful distinctions is made by Kiraly (2000) is between “translation competence” and “translator competence” which, according to Bernardini (2004) there is a significant difference between “translation training” and “translation education” in translation training, translation competence mostly accompanied by linguistic skills, which are needed to render a translation. Translation education, on the other hand, like translator competence is a broad range of interpersonal skills and attitude which a translator needs to acquire. Moreover, the student needs to how to work with other translators, terminologist, project manager and clients. Students are not simply taught linguistic elements, but also applying them and evaluating them is important points as well. The translator student should also work in an authentic situation and young translators must be allowed to work as a member of a team among professional translators in a long-term training program.

Kiraly in constructive philosophy made a distinction between ‘transmissionism’ and ‘social constructivism’. According to the former, knowledge would pass from a passive container to another container. Translation is like a conduit which flows through some kind of passage and goes to another language. Constructive theory, on the other hand, is understood as an individual activity in which an individual will construct knowledge about the world. According to social constructivism, people should construct their knowledge in an interactive situation with others and themselves. And this interaction is exactly what has to be happening in classrooms. This view is opposite of transmissionism view, which sees individual translators as passive receptacles of knowledge which the knowledge of a teacher pass through a conduit to the student knowledge store. The role of the teacher in constructivism is a facilitator, guiding the student, opening the space and facilitate the situation of learning as in choosing which text to translate, evaluates the activity, deciding on the objectives of studies and so on. According to the Kiraly (2000) the teachers remain the authorities, deciding what should be learned and what should be translated and how a successful evaluation should be like.
For Kiraly, the transmissionism model (equivalence model) as well as some other paradigm of pedagogy like Grammar translation belongs to the past. In constructive theory, a translator, actively makes an interpretation for source text and renders distinct target text according to different purposes. Kiraly doesn’t exclude discussion, practical experience and consensus in the translation classroom; his method is based on practice, by which student should learn from their own experience and active role in the translation process. Students interactively work in groups. They get together and talk about what they are doing.

Lots of discussion has been carried out on how to apply constructivism in translation classrooms. The basic model is to let students translate a text and read the translated target text and then have them evaluate the text. Nord (1996) instructs some class activity; partial/complete translation, small-group work, sight translation, use of parallel texts, simulating interpreting situations, gist translation, documentation and reviewing. House (2000) emphasizes on small groups and in pairs. Many scholars have emphasized working on the source text and intended function of the source text situation and also working on the communicative purpose of source texts and target texts. (e.g. Ulrych, 1996; Nord, 1997). Kiraly (2000) and Gouadec (2007) are speaking in small groups, including; translator, reviewer, terminologist, project manager. At the earliest stage of translation, many quite different activities have been suggested; as bilingual crossword puzzles, terminology search, filling the blanks and etc. Gonzalez Davis (2004) as an example suggests some discussion forums and acting out some communicative task like oral presentation of translation.

There is a growing research in translating training one of the reasons for this is the non applicability of theory into translating classes and failing the current teaching training. According to study by Li (2002) there is a desirable need toward authenticity in classroom activities. Translation training should more be based on empirical research and the process of translation rather than products. Using think-aloud protocols, keystroke loggings, screen recordings and eye tracking. There are plenty of researches dealing with the difference between students of translators, bilinguals, professional translators in this matter (Shreve 2006, Amirian and Baghiat 2013). These studies show the skills a translator needs to be taught. The finding offers translators to use paraphrase than literalism (Kussmaul, 1995; Lorscher, 1991; Jensen, 1999). Translate the text in a larger unit of translation (Tory, 1986; Lorscher, 1991; Tirkkonen-Condit, 1992). Read text faster and focus more on the target text than on source text (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2008). Translating based on top-down processes and translating according to the purpose (Fraser, 1996; Jonasson, 1998; KUnzli, 2004; Seguinot, 1989). The importance of encyclopedic knowledge (Tirkkonen-Condit 1989), incorporate the client into the task and risks (KUnzli, 2004), automaticity in some complex tasks (Krings, 1988; Tirkkonen-Condit, 1991; Englund Dimitrova, 2005). Show confidence, critical reading in their decision-making process (KUnzli, 2004).

It is also not advisable to jump from the empirical research findings to pedagogical practical application. This is not just because that empirical studies have been done on small groups it is also because some of these findings are overlapped and in some cases they're rare contradictory. Some of the findings of empirical research may due to the type and kind of methodologies. In that situation, we need to use more methodologies in one research like
triangulation methodology. Some factors which represent the experts’ skills may just because of hours practicing rather than form some clear-cut teaching in classrooms. Just keep doing some jobs of translating and in the end, the product is acceptable. Automaticity is one aspect of experienced translator behavior. According to Jensen (2001) professional translators overcoming trivial problems and they ask fewer questions than the novice translators about the texts they are translating. They indeed may pay attention less to the communicative situation of translation; they accept translation as it is without question about clients’ instruction.

Process researches deal with some notions, which are scarcely used in product researches; like speed, risk management, the use of external aids like looking up dictionaries and using other interfaces as the Internet and the rule of revision in translation. One way to teach students in the class is to make them aware of their activity base on the constructive theory of Kiraly (2000). Students by using Think Aloud-Protocols, screen recording, sight translation, and eye tracking movement and working in groups and monitoring each other can be conscious about their own translating and their peer translating. They also in joint translation can be aware of the process which is going on their teacher’s mind who is considered a professional translator.

In addition to accessing to that nature of translation process Think-Aloud Protocols were used in translational research for better teaching by understanding the process of translation. In fact, mostly, all the research about the process of translation potentially can be helpful for pedagogical purposes (e.g. Amirian & Baghiat, 2013). As an example, scholars may compare the process of translation of professional translators with novice and bilingual translators and sum up to some rules, general pattern and habit which an experienced translator acquire and apply the findings to the classrooms to make translation teaching more purposeful. What’s more, we can also locate the students' errors and mistakes in the translation process and make our teacher aware of those mistakes. And as in Wakabayashi (2003) we can create a profile for each student for understanding their level of learning.

**RESEARCH QUESTION(S)**
Can think-aloud protocol as technique in teaching translation be helpful in increasing students' translation competence?

**HYPOTHESIS**
There is no significant change in students' translation competence in teaching translation process by the use of think-aloud protocol.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**
Think Aloud-protocols have been used for decades as a method for data collecting in empirical research in translation studies. This study attempts to see this method as a technique in translation pedagogy. This study was done on seventy-five upper intermediate ESL students. Students pass FCE (first certificate in English) exams with A or B Grade.
In this study, four methods were used: screen recording which is carried by Camtasia 8 software, sight translation method, Think Aloud-Protocols, and interview (think aloud retrospectively).

Procedures
Subjects of study passed First Certificate in English test with the score of A or B. They also in a pass a placement test of Grammar structure, which was organized according to Oxford Grammar practice basic by JAHAD Language Center of University of Isfahan. There are four methodologies in this study; screen recording, sight translation, TAPs, and interview. On screen, recording each student was instructed to translate the texts by a software called Camtasia Version 8, students were allowed to use dictionaries, the Internet and other interfaces provided they are observable by the screen of their computers. Sight translation is ostensibly hybrid between translation and interpretation. The students were asked to read the written text and translate the text orally. The students were instructed to record their voices. This study used the two kinds of think-aloud protocols; retrospective or concurrent verbal report and retrospective verbal report. Introspective or concurrent think-aloud is simultaneous verbalization while retrospective, think aloud happens exactly after the translation is finished. In this study, retrospective verbal report is called interview. This study was conducted in one pre-test and two post-tests:

Pre-test
Students each translated some texts, which be organized according to material of Translation workshop, which was going to be taught. Students were asked to translate the texts by Camtasia v.8 software, there were instructed well not to use any other references apart from softwares or other interfaces observable by their computer screen. Students are allowed to use software dictionaries and other interfaces like the Internet. All the thing should be held in their desktop or laptop computer monitor. Their screen recording data, were analyzed by the author of the paper and then in an interview student were asked about the process of translation, which was happening during the translation process. The evaluation was based on comprehension competence, transfer competence and strategic competence of students in the performance.

Posttest A:
Students were instructed through the translation workshops with a book called 'translation technique' by Pazargadi (2010), students were tested by translating some texts parallel with pretest and posttest. There were three kinds of parallel tests. Students were asked to translate them respectively by screen recording method (Camtasia 8 Screen), sight translation Method, and think-aloud method. After each of the methods, students passed an interview like the one in pre-test. The data were evaluated based on comprehension competence, transfer competence and strategic competence.

Posttest B:
Students in an ten-hour translation workshop were taught translation using Think-aloud protocols. The teacher verbally translates the texts, and students were allowed to participate in the translation process in a joint translation. Students themselves in a group verbalized the process of translation to their partners. Students in three kinds of methods were asked to translate the texts,
parallel to pre-test and post tests A, by screen recording method (Camtasia software 8), sight translation method, and thinks aloud protocol method, and after each student was interviewed about the process of translation happening in their mind. In the interview, they were supposed to verbalize the process of translation, (think aloud retrospectively).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The subjects of this study consisted of seventy-five students of upper intermediate English as a second language. The students had passed FCE test with the score of A or B. Every student in this study before the class had passed a placement test, an English grammar test, which had been organized according to Oxford Practice Grammar (Basic) (Norman Coe et al. 2010). The material of the translation workshop was organized according to Farsi and English Grammar structure. The book which taught was 'Translation Technique' by Dr. Aladdin Pazargadi (2010) table 1 illustrates the syllables of the translation workshop.

After fifty-five hours of teaching translation, Persian into English and English into Persian, according to the syllabus, Table 1, students were exposed to ten hour teaching with Think-aloud protocols. First think-aloud protocols were introduced, and students learned how it works. Then the teachers introduced each lesson and translated some text, which hadn't been translated or overlooked before, by using think-aloud protocols. Students were allowed to ask questions during the verbalization of their teachers in addition, students were permitted to translate the texts in joint-translation with their instructors. Moreover Students in their groups were instructed to use think-aloud protocols and ask and answer questions, finally each group should have prepared a verbal report, and then each report was discussed in the class. The PACTE group has devoted years of study and research on translation competence; they focus on theoretical and procedural aspects of translation. The PACTE which stands for Process of Acquisition of translation competence and evaluation, defines translation competence as "underlying system of declarative and procedural knowledge, predominantly procedural knowledge required to translate," accordingly, translation competence is predominantly procedural non declarative, which comprise some interrelated sub competence. PACTE considers the sub competence of translation competence are; the strategic and knowledge about translation sub competence, strategic competence, which is of particular importance guarantees the efficiency of the translation process. (Hurtardo Albir, 2010).

Bilingual competence, predominantly declarative, which comprises the grammatical, pragmatic, socio-linguistic and textual knowledge of each language.
Extra-linguistic knowledge, predominantly declarative, includes the declarative knowledge both implicit and explicit, general world, domain specific, bicultural, encyclopedic knowledge.
Translation knowledge competence, predominantly declarative, is about knowledge of translation methods, processes, practices and procedures.
Instrumental competence, predominantly procedural, refers to documentation by using technological interface tools applied to the process of translation. (e.g. Dictionaries, translation memory tools, etc.)
Strategic competence, Predominantly procedural, which is functioned to carry out the efficacy of the translation project, selecting most appropriate methods, evaluate the process, activate the differentness sub competence and compensate any shortcomings, uncertainty management and problem solving.
Psycho-physiological component is a different kind of cognitive and attitudinal component like memory span, creativity, logical reasoning and synthesis

55
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Material of Teaching</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Introducing the books, teachers, students, giving students insights. Translation introduction (e.g. what is translation, what do we need to be a good translator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Translation at word level, and translation of words and expression.</td>
<td>Words, idioms, collocations, proverbs, slangs, different grammatical categorization of words (e.g. verb, adjective, adverb,…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>English Grammar tense and its usages</td>
<td>Simple present tense, present continuous, past tense, present perfect, past perfect, past continuous,…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Persian Tense</td>
<td>Persian &amp; English tense contraceptive Analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Translation at sentence level, sentence constituent</td>
<td>English and Persian sentences kinds and structures, (e.g. statement, interrogative, imperative,… as an example: Agent, patient, predicament,… Doer, experience, instrument,… All kinds of subjects, verbs, objects,…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Simple sentences Persian and English</td>
<td>Sentences with no objects one or two objects; (subject, verb, two objects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Translation of 'it', 'there'. Translation of passive sentences</td>
<td>'It' and 'there' in English role as a filler and they don’t have any specific semantic in meaning. Some passive sentences in Persian have active form in Persian and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Future perfect, simple sentences with infinitive To,</td>
<td>Sometimes the future perfect is translated ماضی تقلبی /M ziyā neqāli/ in Persian language or ماضی تقلبی /Məzəqəblı/ in Farsi TO plus infinitive verb is translated as &quot;که /kə/&quot; (e.g. Didn’t he tell you to be there before six. /مگر آیا به شما نگفته بود که قبل از ساعت 6 انجا باشید؟ MəÊer 6 b ܣائەم /Məqoftë Bûd K 佶١BL چەز /6 ᵀ١ ١٨١٧١٠ /))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Present Participle Verbal noun, gerund</td>
<td>I like sitting in the sun. /من دوست دارم در نور بنشینم / ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Compound sentences; question phrases, Conjunctions</td>
<td>And, but, … Tag questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Clauses; adverbial, adjective and noun clause.</td>
<td>He told me that he had successful. The man who was sick went to see the doctor. A driver should take care when he drives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>If clause, causatives.</td>
<td>Zero, one, two, three, real and unreal to have, to get, to make.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Discourse markers; result, cause and reason, agreement.</td>
<td>Agreement, contrast, conclusion, reference,… Ex: streets are lighted so that people see where they are going.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As strategic competence is the core competence among other sub competences of the translation, this study mainly argues about translation strategic sub competences. Table 2 shows the overall strategic competence in details.

**Table 2: Strategic Competence Specifics.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Translation</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>TRANSLATION AIDS</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>PROBLEM SOLVING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PAUSE IN READING THE TEXT, TRANSFERRING AND WRITING THE TARGET TEXTS, WORD, BEYOND WORD LEVEL LOWER THAN SENTENCE LEVEL, SENTENCE LEVEL AND BEYOND SENTENCE LEVEL</td>
<td>USING INTERFACES WHICH ARE DISCLOSED IN CAMTASIA SCREEN RECORDING TOOL, VOICE RECORDING IN SIGHT TRANSLATION AND TAPs VERBAL REPORT</td>
<td>USING INTERFACES WHICH ARE DISCLOSED IN CAMTASIA SCREEN RECORDING TOOL, VOICE RECORDING IN SIGHT TRANSLATION AND TAPs VERBAL REPORT</td>
<td>PROBLEMS RECOGNITION INDICATORS ARE AN EXTENDED PAUSE, REREADING THE SOURCE TEXT &amp; TARGET TEXT, USING INTERFACES, SOLUTION PROPOSALS ARE A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS WHICH IS WRITTEN OR SAID WHEN THE TRANSLATORS ARE TRANSLATING TEXTS, SOLUTION EVALUATION IS THE NUMBER OF REWRITING OR RE...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit of translation

Unit of translation is defined as a communicative, textual and cognitive unity, which is applied by a translator in the process of translation. Textually speaking, there is complex textual unity between parts of a text which a translator at a granted moment pay attention to one particular part of text considering the context. In cognitive perspective, the unit of translation is defined as a comprehension and processing unit which is independent of a particular size or format of the text, the translators at a given moment give attention to a specific cognitive part of a text according to their discerning requirement. In this study, the cognitive perspective of the unit of translation is considered, but the manifestation of it is on the linguistic level. Units of the translations are categorized according to table 3 as word, beyond word, sentence and beyond the sentence level.
Table 3: Unit of Translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Word Level</th>
<th>Beyond Word Level</th>
<th>Sentence Level</th>
<th>Beyond Sentence Level</th>
<th>Unclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>47.36%</td>
<td>8.44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Test A</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>13.64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Test B</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>45.18%</td>
<td>29.52%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring to Table 3, participants who are taught the process of translation by the use of Think-aloud protocol in the process of rendering the text are more likely to translate texts toward the sentence and beyond the sentence level. Table 3, may indicate; students by looking through the process which is happening in a professional translator’s mind may get aware to look outside the boundary of textual unit and take the whole text as a unit of reading and translation instead.

**Problem solving**

**Comprehension level**

Problem solving metacognitive translational activity may happen in three interrelated translation process stages; comprehension stage, transfer and production stage.

Problem solving in Comprehension location during the process of translation is related to the level of reading the text, understanding the main idea and re express the main idea in mind before utterance or writing on paper. The indicator of recognizing a problem in the comprehension part is extended pause, re-reading, and dictionary looks-up. This location starts from the students' linguistic knowledge about English language structure, words. Students' screen and voice recording and their verbal reports indicate student uncertainty in the comprehension phase of the translation process. Screen recording and voice recording methods show the student way of reading; extended pause, re-reading and checking new vocabulary. Verbal reports show participants' metacognitive activity before their production on paper or utterance (Table 4).

Table 4: Comprehension Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Pre Test</th>
<th>Post Test A</th>
<th>Post Test B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit of Reading</td>
<td>Words and Terms 12%, Clause and Sentences 78%</td>
<td>Words and Terms 9%, Clause and Sentences 81%</td>
<td>Words and Terms 11%, Clause and Sentences 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar Tense</td>
<td>83.23%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>98.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clauses</td>
<td>52.62%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>98.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrases</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>89.63%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse Markers</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjections</td>
<td>41.15%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>55.82%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pause</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary Looks-up</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time</td>
<td>4:56</td>
<td>3:2</td>
<td>2:54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants in posttest B, show the significant difference in linguistic knowledge, which consists of grammatical competence, semantic and syntactic competence; they also respectively show the increase of comprehension competence relevant to decrease a number of pauses, re-reading and total time of reading. Students in post B read the text more holistically at sentence level this means students in translation process workshops acquire the competence of reading.

**Transfer level**

Whatever happen on paper before the last phase, revising, is called transfer level. This is the most important part in which strategic competence, related to solving problem, applied significantly. Decoding the message into Target language, translators in the process of translating encounter the problems, though, extending pause, re-reading the source text and transfer text, dictionary looks up and editing are indicators of translators attempt to solve translation problems. Table 5, illustrates the transfer level of the process.

**Table 5: Transfer level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>participants</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest A</th>
<th>Post test B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average number of Pauses 3+</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of Using a dictionary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of Using the net</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading the text</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of rewriting and revising while translating unit of translation (deleting, adding, and….)</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>24.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of proposals for problem solving</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time of reading the translation text</td>
<td>3:20m</td>
<td>3:5m</td>
<td>1:8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of transferring (- reading)</td>
<td>6:50m</td>
<td>4:5m</td>
<td>3:21m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time of pause</td>
<td>8 s</td>
<td>5:3 s</td>
<td>2:1 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of writing the last draft</td>
<td>1:58m</td>
<td>1:02m</td>
<td>1:22m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of translation</td>
<td>Lexis 43.2% term 26.4% phrase 06.6% syntax 14.36% sentential 9.44% macro level 0%</td>
<td>Lexis 35.1% term 29% phrase 11% syntax 11.26% sentential 13.64% macro level 0%</td>
<td>Lexis 12.3% term 14.3% phrase 20.64% syntax 10.24% sentential 29.52% macro level 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of problem recognition</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time of solving problems</td>
<td>10 s</td>
<td>7 s</td>
<td>4.3 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of clicks</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cursor movements</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 illustrates student's translation competence, increasing. Students' translation unit in the translation process workshop, post test B, are more towards context, sentence and beyond the sentence level. Moreover, Students with less effort and time manage to solve translation problems; significant lower number of pauses, dictionary looks up, time, clicks, cursor movements and time manifest students confidence and automaticity in problem solving. Student
increasing number of Editing and solution proposals explain students solve the problem of translation on sight, and they don’t postpone it to the last level (the production level) as in professional translation according to Angelone (2010).

**Production level**

Production level or revising the level is the location where students re-read the translation and try to make some amends. Table 6, shows the revising phase in detail.

Table 6 argues participants at the translation process workshop got more aware about the substantiality of production level. They are accordingly more active in revising phase; the increasing number of adding, omitting, replacing and allocation time may confirm the fact.

**Table 6: Production level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>PRETEST</th>
<th>POST TEST A</th>
<th>POST TEST B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF OMITTING AND ADDITION PER PERSON PER TEXT</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIT OF REVISING PER PERSON PER TEXT</td>
<td>SENTENCE 11% NOT REVISING 89%</td>
<td>SENTENCES 46% TEXT 13.7% NOT REVISING 49.3%</td>
<td>SENTENCES 59.82% TEXT 28.6% NOT REVISING 12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE TIME OF REREADING PER PERSON PER TEXT</td>
<td>0:59</td>
<td>2:68</td>
<td>5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE NUMBER OF PAUSES PER PERSON PER TEXT</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>7.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL TIME OF REVISING AND PRODUCTION PER PERSON PER TEXT</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>2:9</td>
<td>3:4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring to table 7; solving problem levels, students who were teaching translation process by the use of TAPS are solving problems, mostly in transfer level where as students before attending the translation process workshop tend to solve problems in production level.

**Table 7: Solving Problem Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TESTS</th>
<th>COMPREHENSION</th>
<th>TRANSFER</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>UNCLASSIFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRETEST</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30.22%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>3.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTTEST A</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>54.33%</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST TEST B</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>47.32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Problem solving procedure**

The first phase of solving problems is recognizing them, which is indicated by an extending pause. Instantly after problem recognition the translator tries to solve the problem by proposing some solutions. Searching on the net, dictionaries and other interfaces show the Meta cognitive attempt of a translator to solve the problems. Translators reread, rewrite the text as many times as they find a better solution. A number of rereading, re editing the text shows the problem. A Number of solution proposals are clearly observable in the translators’ verbal report. And a
number of problem evaluations can be understood from the translator's screen, voice recording and also TAPs.

Table 8: Translation Problem Solving Procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Problem Recognition</th>
<th>Proposals for Solving Problem</th>
<th>Evaluate the Proposals</th>
<th>Unclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Test</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Test A</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Test B</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 argues that students after participating in the translation process workshop using the verbal reports (TAPs) may act approximately like a professional translator, this means students are getting well aware about what is going to be the problem in the process of translation, and they take more time in comprehending, read and re-reading the text before starting to produce a physical draft.

Students after watching thoroughly the process of translation using TAPs understand that a professional translator gives more time recognizing the problem of translation in the comprehension level. A professional translator read and reread the text before they are going to render any written or spoken format. Participants in the translation process workshop may produce more suggestions, and they are more certain in evaluation due to their professional like behavior requiring during the workshop (table 8).

CONCLUSION
Think-aloud protocols have been used practically as a data collecting method in empirical studies of translation. The theoretical method borrowed from cognitive psychology (Ericson & Simon 1984/1993). Since then scholars have used think-aloud protocols to capture the process of translation activity in professional mind as a guideline for teaching student in a classroom atmosphere. This study considers think aloud protocols not as a data collecting method solely but also as a technique for teaching translation.

Teachers translate a text impromptu for their students to show the real process of translation. Students' role is asking their teacher about the translation process, and they are allowed to help their teachers in translating the text in a joint-translation. Students afterward in groups try to translate texts with their partners, and teachers have an observer role of evaluating student's verbalization. This study has seventy participants, students attended in a translation fifty-five-hour translation workshop. Students were intermediate and upper intermediate of ESL (English as a second language). They scored A or B in FCE test. After fifty-five hours of teaching based on organized material, students participated in a ten-hour translation process workshop in which teachers teach the translation process by the use of Think-aloud protocols.

According to the social constructivism approach by Kiraly (2000) translators should actively construct the text they produce just as a student of foreign language actively participates in the process of learning, accordingly using think-aloud as technique of teaching translation may help students in building their knowledge and help them have an active role in the process of
This study argues Think-aloud protocols may be significantly an effective technique in training translators in an increasing student’s expert like behavior and competence. Translation classroom approach, designs and practice may be more useful if they deal with the process of translation rather than just product of translation. The translation - process workshops may be the future of translation pedagogy in which students observe, construct and acquire translation competences. Further researches and studies may be needed to find more about how to apply a translation-process workshop in practice.

**Limitation of study**
As far as validity and reliability of the research concerns this study tries to use four methods to decrease the possibility of student awareness effect of being under study. Students in this study had to record their voices and use screen recording method at home so they may re-record their voices or rewrite their work in order to look nicer toward their teacher’s eyes. One of the limitation of this study was non existence of a specific laboratory with an observer to check whether students are following the instructions that they were given correctly. Using think aloud as a technique in teaching translation is a brand new topic in translation training field so lack of prior study was another limitation of this study. So the author had to develop a typology according to the translation competence. Finally, accessing human mind and coming into conclusion is a long run study, which is not going to be covered by a paper on some students in a specific situation. There have to be more theses and papers on this subject to reach to the complexity of human mind of a translator in order to see what have to be taught and learnt in a translation training setting. This study may be one of the first steps toward having more process oriented, student centered classes.

**REFERENCES**


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USING HEDGES IN ENGLISH SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES AMONG ENGLISH NATIVE AND IRANIAN NON-NATIVE RESEARCHERS: THE CASE OF CONCLUSION SECTIONS

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ABSTRACT
This study attempts to compare and analyze the use of hedges in research articles (RA) from three disciplines of physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics written in English. It aims to find the similarities and differences in using hedging devices by English writers of physics and computer articles. It also tries to compare and contrast the use of hedges in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian authors. To achieve this goal, 424 RA, from international and national journals from 2005 to 2012 were selected: 165 physics, 93 computer engineering, 77 applied linguistics articles written by English writers, and 89 applied linguistic articles written by Iranian writers. A classification of hedges formulated by Salager-Meyer (1997) was used as a model. After determining the frequency and percentage of each hedging devices, Chi-square analysis was used to see if the differences between these disciplines are significant or not. Findings reveal that computer engineering writers used hedges more than physics writers. The intra-discipline analysis showed that Persian writers of applied linguistics RA, used more hedges than their English counterparts. The implications of this study will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to teach hedges in writing and reading comprehension activities.

KEYWORDS: Hedges, Scientific articles, Researchers, Conclusion sections

INTRODUCTION
An important feature of academic writing is to evaluate evidence and draw conclusions from the data. Scientific writing is full of mitigating devices and expression that carry the writers’ attitudes. That is, academic writing cannot be considered as exclusively objective and factual, but there are features situated in text that encode the writer’s point of view (Crompton, cited in Jalilifar, 2011). These features serve as mediators between the information presented in text and
writers' factual information. Metadiscourse markers such as hedges signal the speakers or writers' points of view in using the spoken or written format. Scientific writing has special characteristics which make it unique among other types of writing. While most readers expect scientific reports to be quite objective, the fact is that there do exist interactive elements whose role is to show a connection between the writer's personal opinion and the data presented in the text. One of these interactive elements is hedging which shows the writer's doubt and uncertainty. Clemen (1996, p. 1) maintains that hedging limits the writer's commitment to what he proposes, and helps him to avoid errors. He argues that the writer may demonstrate reserve by emphasizing the universal validity of his statements and if he is unsure, lacks knowledge or belief, or wishes to avoid dogmatism, he can cite higher authority. A better understanding of hedges can provide insights into the interactional and rhetorical nature of the scientific research articles (RAs). Hyland (1994, p. 319) argues that “hedging is a substantial means by which the professional scientist confirms his or her membership of the community”. Therefore, this line of research can make an important contribution to our understanding of the practices of practical reasoning and persuasion in science (Hyland, 1999). Hedging does not necessarily refer to uncertainty to all contexts. Hyland (1995) mentions that some writers have suggested that hedges are a means of signaling distance between a speaker and what is said or to convey purposive vagueness in writing. Despite the crucial role of hedges in scientific writing, not many studies have been conducted concerning the presence and frequency of hedges in different disciplines or genres. The purpose of the present study is to compare conclusion sections of research articles written by native speakers of Persian and those written by native speakers of English concerning the use of hedges. Although a number of researches (e.g., Hyland, 1995) have been carried out on the existence of hedging devices in different types of texts, many questions are still unanswered in this relation. For example, one might wonder in what genres hedging happens more or to what extent a certain discipline, e.g. applied linguistics, is hedged. Moreover, the lack of comparative research on the use of hedging strategies has created some sort of unawareness as to which disciplines are more hedged compared with other disciplines. There is no perfect answer to questions like these due to the small number of researches carried out in this regard. Hyland (1995, p. 34) maintains that there has been little work into how hedges work in academic genres based on analysis of adequate corpora and we know virtually nothing about the expression and function of hedges in scientific research articles. The previous studies on hedges mainly dealt with specifying the types of hedges present in the research articles on a specific discipline e.g. Research Articles on Cell and Molecular Biology Hyland (1995). Comparative studies on frequency and type of the use of hedging have been rare and this requires more studies to be conducted comparing native and non-native writers in the use of hedging as a pragmatic strategy. Recently, Jalilifar (2011) in a research accounted for metadiscourse variation in the discussion sections of articles written in English and Persian published in Iranian as well as international scholarly journals focuses on type, frequency and function of hedges in discussion sections of the articles. However, still few published studies have specifically looked at the type and frequency
The present study investigates the frequency of occurrence and types of hedging devices in conclusion sections of research articles written in hard sciences, soft sciences, and applied sciences. Although a number of researches have been carried out concerning the role of hedging devices in different disciplines and different sections of research articles, it seems that, only few have dealt with comparing hedges in conclusion sections.

Thus the purpose of the study is to investigate the use of hedges in conclusion sections of articles published by Iranian writers as NNRs and English writers as NRs in computer engineering, applied linguistics, and physics fields of study. As mentioned earlier, the hypothesis is that Iranian researchers underuse hedges in their scientific articles. It is hoped that the results of this study will shed some light on academic writing problems for Iranian researchers. The insights gained from the results of the study may provide English practitioners with better idea on writing scientific papers through using hedges appropriately and adequately. It is also hoped that the results of the present research will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Metadiscourse markers**

Metadiscourse is discourse about discourse, intended to address rather than inform readers (Williams, 1981). Metadiscourse includes linguistic elements which do not refer to aspects of external reality (as propositional or referential elements do) but to the organization of the discourse itself and to aspects of the relationship that develops between the author and the reader (Crismore 1989). What Vande Kopple (1985) labels referential ‘meaning’ is equivalent to what Halliday (1978) calls ‘ideational’ meaning. Vande Kopple (1985), using the broad definition of metadiscourse, suggests that metadiscourse conveys interpersonal and/or textual meanings. Dafouz-Milne (2008) states that "metadiscourse refers to those features which writers include to help readers decode message, share the writers view and reflect the particular conventions followed in a given culture" (p.97).

Arguing the importance of metadiscourse devices, Camiciottoli (2003, p. 9) states that “metadiscourse markers produce a desired effect, depending on writer's underlying purposes and perceptions of the reader's expectations”. They help writers to present information in a clear, convincing and interesting way to promote acceptance and understanding, as well as reader-writer solidarity. They act as persuasive devices to affect and influence the reader's reactions to texts according to the values and established rules and conventions of a discourse community.
Classification of metadiscourse markers

Hyland and Tse (2004, p.169) propose a model of metadiscourse in academic texts which distinguishes interactive and interactional dimensions and recognizes more specific functions within them. This schema is discussed in detail and summarized in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive resources</td>
<td>help to guide reader through the text</td>
<td>in addition/but/thus/and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>express semantic relation between main clauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame markers</td>
<td>refer to discourse acts, sequences, finally/to conclude/ or text stages my purpose here is to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endophoric markers</td>
<td>refer to information in noted above/see Fig/ other parts of the text in section 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidential</td>
<td>refer to source of information from other texts according to Y (1999), Z states</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code glosses</td>
<td>help reader grasp the function of ideational material namely/e.g./such as/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedges</td>
<td>withhold writer's full commitment to proposition might/perhaps/ possible/about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boosters</td>
<td>emphasize force or writer’s certainty in proposition in fact/definitely/ it is clear that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude markers</td>
<td>express writer's attitudes to proposition unfortunately/ I agree/surprisingly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement markers</td>
<td>explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader consider/note that/ you can see that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-mentions</td>
<td>explicit reference to author(s) I/we/my/our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hyland and Tse (2004, p.168) further note that “interactive resources are those devices are used explicitly by writers in an argument”. They are used to organize the discourse, help and guide the reader through the text. Readers can get the intended meaning and interpretations of all the text through explicit use of these devices which can be recovered from the text. And interactional devices, on the other hand, engage the readers in the discussion by alerting them to the writer's attitudes and propositional information and readers themselves. Metadiscourse from this point of view is used to express attitudes, judgments, the degree of intimacy, and the degree of reader involvement. This part deals with the way that writer presents his ideas and attitudes in the text and the degree of reader and writer engagement in the argument. Hedges, as one of the groups of discourse markers, have been defined by some of the scholars to be presented briefly.

The concept of hedges/hedging

Schroder and Zimmer (1995, p. 45) maintain that the term “hedging research' refers to a complex research area within the fields of pragmatics, linguistics, semantics, logic and philosophy”. In pragmatics, however, the concept of ' hedge/hedging ' is linked to politeness phenomena, mitigating vagueness and modality. A hedge is either defined as one or more lexicosyntactical elements that are used to modify a proposition or as a strategy that modifies a proposition. Schroder and Zimmer (1995, p. 36) argue that “the term hedging is used to refer to the textual
strategies of using linguistic means as hedges in certain contexts for specific communicative purposes, such as politeness, vagueness, mitigation, etc”.

There are only a few entries in linguistic dictionaries dealing with the concept of 'hedge' and 'hedging'. Furthermore, only in Wales'(1989) Dictionary of Stylistics there is a specific entry for 'hedging'. The German dictionary entries present a semantic definition of the concepts while the Dictionary of Stylistics gives a twofold definition of hedging from the point of view of semantics and pragmatics (including discourse analysis and speech act theory).

The notion of "hedging" was first introduced by Lakoff (1972, p.195) who spoke of "words whose job is to make things fuzzy" and since then the term has been used to refer to devices which qualify the writer's expression. Lakoff (1972) gives an example of what he means, the way we might talk about birds. Eagles, for instance, are birds; so are kingfishers and albatrosses. But what about, for example, a chicken? Lakoff suggests that we might find ourselves saying: A kitchen is a sort of bird. That 'sort of' is a hedge. According to Lakoff, the logic of hedges requires serious semantic analysis for all predicates.

Zadeh (1972) followed Lakoff in using the designation 'hedge' and analyzed English hedges, such as very, much, more or less, essentially and slightly and more complex ones like technically and practically from the vantage point of semantics and logic.

Hedges vary in their dependency on context. Holmes (1988) studies hedges from the point of view of teaching and learning English as a second language. She defines hedges as devices for attenuating the strength of utterance as a part of epistemic modality.

Skelton (1988, p.37) argues that “there are a very large number of ways in which one can hedge in English. He suggests the following categories: The use of a) impersonal phrases b) the modal system c) verbs like: seem, look and appear d) sentence introductory phrase, like: I think, I believe) the addition of “ish” to certain (but not all) adjectives”. Skelton (1988, p.37) gives the following examples of hedging with unhedged version on the left:

1. It is good. It may be good.
2. The world is flat. It is said that the world is flat.
3. Sarah has red hair. Sarah has reddish hair.
4. David Gower has a forceful personality. I doubt if David Gower has a forceful personality.

According to Skelton (1988), “it is by means of hedging system of a language that a user distinguishes between what s/he says and what s/he thinks about what s/he says”(p.38). Therefore, without hedging the world is purely propositional, a rigid (and rather dull) place. With a hedging system, language is rendered more flexible and the world more subtle. Skelton (1983) believes that it is impossible to avoid hedging, yet describe or discuss the world. Since the early 1970s the concepts of ' hedge ' has moved far from its origins, particularly since it was adopted by pragmatics and discourse analysts. Hedges are considered to be of two types: 'shields' and 'approximators'. They suggested that in shields, the speaker is hedged: his or her degree of
commitment to a proposition is stated. On the other hand, in approximators, the proposition itself is hedged: the extent to which it is true is stated. Thus as an instance of shields one might have: *I suspect the moon is not made of green cheese after all.* And as an instance of approximators: *It is made of some sort of rock stuff.*

Yang (2006), focusing on a corpus of 10 texts in material science discipline, explored the use of hedging both by Chinese and English writers. The results of this study showed that RAs written by Chinese writers tend to be more direct and authoritative in tone which may be related to the nature of the language in that particular discipline. Martin (2008) in his study analyzed hedges in English and Spanish written RAs in Clinical and Health Psychology disciplines. The results of his study revealed that there are similarities between the two languages regarding the distribution of hedges across the different sections of the RAs, although a certain degree of indetermination strategy occurs in English texts and showing English RAs in the field of Clinical and Health Psychology provide more protection to the author’s face. What is gained is that nationality is less powerful than the discipline in affecting the writing style.

Jalilifar (2011) examined 90 research article Discussion sections’ hedges and boosters in two disciplines of Applied Linguistics and Psychology by three groups of writers; English writer, Perlish (Iranian writers write in English), and Persian writers (Iranian writers write in Farsi). The results of analyses showed significant differences in frequency, type, and functions of these devices in the texts. Jalilifar claimed that differences might be attributed to lack of awareness of the conventional rules of English rhetoric, limited knowledge of academic English by Persian writers, and lack of explicit instruction and exposure to pragmatic and sociolinguistic rules of English by Persian researchers. It seems that Iranians researchers should be thought enough about the role of hedges in the academic community. To address the theme of the present study, the following research question was proposed.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**
Is there any significant difference between the types and frequencies of hedges used in conclusion sections of scientific English articles (i.e., including computer engineering, and physics) published by NRs?

**METHODOLOGY**

*Corpora*
In order to compare and analyze the hedges across different disciplines, this study relied on RAs from three English native corpora (physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics) and the non-native corpus of applied linguistics in English. There are some reasons behind this selection. First of all, there is a standard typology for the classification of academic knowledge distinguishing between 'pure' or 'applied' and 'hard' or 'soft' disciplines (Becher & Trowler, 2001). In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure, the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied, the humanities are classed as soft-pure and the social professions such as education and law are classed as soft applied. In
accordance with this classification of academic discourse, the researcher decided to work on physics as a hard-pure, computer engineering as a hard-applied, and applied linguistics as a soft-applied academic discourse. The reason for which the researcher used applied linguistics is our familiarity with and good command of that. Furthermore, this is the discipline with the deep affinity to linguistics analysis of texts. We are well-acquainted with this discipline, as anyone in the field of TEFL should be. Hence, it seems that these disciplines, as they represent different academic discourses, are good choices for this study and can represent social science disciplines.

Moreover, the researcher compiled a non-native corpus of applied linguistics in English which included RAs written by Iranian authors to see if there is any difference between native and non-native authors in the same discipline (AL) with regard to the hedging devices. Furthermore, as the current generations of researchers are required to be skilled in writing RAs; accordingly, the selection was pedagogically motivated to be in line with the rapid growth in the number of academic papers; especially, among non-native English researchers.

**Disciplines**

As mentioned above, this study relied on three disciplines- physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics, each including approximately 37500 words to compare them in terms of hedging devices. Physics discipline comprised of 165 articles with 91 words in the shortest and 823 in the longest conclusion sections. Computer engineering discipline comprised of 93 articles which range in length between 93 words to 1295 words. Applied linguistics discipline consisted of two sections, one written by English native speakers and other one written by Persian native speakers. The first section, articles written by native authors, comprised of 77 articles with 95 words in the shortest and 1287 words in the longest conclusion sections. The latter part, articles written by Iranian writers, comprised of 89 articles which range in size from 78 words to 1354 words in the conclusion sections. On the whole, in all the mentioned disciplines 424 articles which include 150 thousand words were analyzed. These corpora were developed by selecting articles published internationally from 2005 to 2012. In order to compile more reliable and recent corpora, only RAs published since 2005 onwards were selected. The RAs were collected from prestigious journals representing the disciplines in focus. These journals were suggested by experts in the field who have published papers in the journals in each discipline field (see Appendix C for a complete list of the journals). The rationale behind the selection of the RAs was that writing RAs appears to be a very complicated activity with many visible and invisible layers. Thus, preparing to write RAs requires understanding higher levels of discourse (Abdi, Tavangar Rizi, & Tavakoli, 2000).

**Instrumentation**

The present study employed one framework for the analysis of hedging devices. The framework used was Salager-Meyer taxonomy of hedges based on Salager-Meyer (1997, p. 4). Based on this checklist there are 59 hedging devices among which according to Salager-Meyer (1997) the first category is of the most frequency. On the account that some of hedging devices were not observed in any disciplines, they were excluded from the study. The omitted hedging devices are as follows: 1) fifth category and seventh category which are introductory phrases and compound hedges respectively. Among other categories of hedging devices the following were omitted: if
Procedure
This study began with the collection of English papers published internationally in prestigious journals to compile three corpora of three disciplines- physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics. Then a non-native corpus of applied linguistics was compiled by collecting papers written by Iranian authors in English. The selected RAs were obtained directly from the electronic versions of the relevant journals and conclusion sections of the RAs were selected and then converted to Word format. Then the conclusion sections of the RAs were divided into four groupings:

Group A: Articles on Physics written by English native writers (165 RAs).
Group B: Articles on computer engineering written by English native writers (93 RAs).
Group C: Articles on applied linguistics written by English native writers (77 RAs).
Group D: Articles on applied linguistics written by Iranian native writers (89 RAs).

There were about 37500 words in each group. All the conclusion sections of each group were saved on a computer to produce an electronic corpus of about 150000 words which showed the number of the words in all the four groups neglecting all the figures and symbols that did not consist of alphabetically letters (e.g., numbers). By doing so, it became possible to make intra-group comparisons. Afterwards, the Word software was used to highlight and count the hedges in each group based on the checklist presented earlier in this section. Selection of hedging devices was according to their functions and meaning in the sentences. Although some words appeared to be hedges according to the mentioned checklist, they didn’t function as hedges in the text. So they were not counted as hedges. Here are two examples in which the word ‘about’ is used in two different ways:

a) It leaves unanswered a number of questions about the effects of both speaker and listener proficiency in the L2 on intelligibility.
b) Concerning the amount of input, the immersion children were supposed to spend about 4400 hours on Japanese instruction from kindergarten to the fifth grade.

In the above examples the word ‘about’ functions differently: In the first example it is a proposition which means on the subject of or connected with. In the second example it is an adverb which means approximately. In the first case the word ‘about’ does not function as a hedge while in the second example it does. So in in this study the word ‘about’ and the like in such examples as example (a) were not taken into account as hedges. Moreover, the researcher calculated the inter-rater reliability through the calculation of correlation between the raters based on Spearman formula to make sure whether he did the analysis in the right way. The results of the inter-rater reliability calculation are presented in the table below:
The frequency and percentage of each hedging devices in each group were calculated separately and then group A and group B were compared with each other. And so were group C with group D. Then, the Chi-square test was used to show whether the differences in the corpora were statistically meaningful or not.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Results of quantitative analysis*

The first step taken in the analysis of hedges in the mentioned articles was to run word count to determine the length of the corpus. A total of 2951 hedges were identified among 150000 words. The total average of hedge uses was 1.97 percent. Of all the hedges found, 788 were used in computer engineering RAs (37600 words), 511 were used in physics RAs (37200 words), 735 were identified in native applied linguistics RAs (37600 words), and 925 in native applied linguistics RAs (37600 words).

*Frequency and percentage of hedges in RAs*

The four groups of RAs investigated in this study were analyzed concerning the frequency of occurrence of hedges in each of the 5 categories of the taxonomy used in this study. The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the articles; rows numbered 1-5 represent the taxonomy applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all hedging devices in each of the four groups of RAs under study are shown in columns under each discipline as well. Total number of hedging devices is also given.

**Frequency of occurrence of hedges in RAs**

In the following the five categories of the taxonomy of hedges presented are introduced:

1. **Modal Auxiliary Verbs**
   The first category in the classification used here represented the modal auxiliary verbs. Different modal auxiliary verbs were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers. However, the least amount of this category was found in physics articles. The sum of the occurrence of this category in the four groups equaled 1589 cases (53.73% of all the hedges) among which modal auxiliary “can” had the highest frequency while “might” had the lowest.

2. **Modal Lexical Verb**
   The most frequent modal lexical verb was found in computer engineering texts. While the least amount of this category was found in applied linguistics articles written by non-native researchers. This category had the frequency of 707 cases in all the four groups (23.9% of all the hedges) among which Modal lexical verbs “suggest” had the highest frequency while “speculate” had the least.

3. **Adjectival, Adverbial, Nominal Modal Phases**
   This category occurred 384 times in the four groups (12.9% of all the hedges). The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles among which the hedge device “possible” had the highest frequency while “apparently” had the least.
4. Approximators
This category was found to be repeated 143 times (4.83%) in the articles studied. Different approximates were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by native writers. While the least amount of this category was found in computer engineering articles among which “often” had the highest frequency while “roughly” the least.

5. If clauses
The fifth category of hedges in the classification of hedges in the present study deals with the conditional phrases. The overall number occurrence of this category was 134 cases equal to 4.53% of the hedges highlighted in this study. The most frequent type of this category was found in in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles. The amount of inter-rater reliability shows that the recounting of hedges was reliable at (p<. 05 or p<. 01)

Descriptive Statistics
There were some differences in the frequency of hedges used by English and Persian writers of the mentioned RAs. Consider the following table to find the details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.40</td>
<td>104.04951</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>274.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>157.40</td>
<td>152.72950</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>391.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied native</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>147.00</td>
<td>134.06715</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>363.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied non-native</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>184.60</td>
<td>218.39254</td>
<td>34.00</td>
<td>561.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table, the researcher calculated Mean and Std. Deviation to find more details. N is the number of items we considered through our study. Physics articles had the least mean while the applied non-native had the most one. But we need to find Chi-Square to see if the differences are significant or not.

Cross-disciplinary variation of hedges in RAs
The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between physics and computer engineering articles in terms of using hedging devices. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X2 stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:
Table 5: Chi-Square analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Categories of Hedges</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physics articles</td>
<td></td>
<td>274</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>130.40</td>
<td>104.04</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer engineering</td>
<td>engineering</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>157.40</td>
<td>152.72</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The difference between physics and computer engineering articles was found to be significant at (p<0.05) since the Observed X² (13.6) is greater than the Critical X² (7.81) with df=4.

**Inter-disciplinary variation of hedges in RA**

The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers in terms of using hedging devices. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X2 stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:

Table 6: Chi-Square analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Category of hedges</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied native articles</td>
<td></td>
<td>363</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>147.00</td>
<td>134.06</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied non-native articles</td>
<td></td>
<td>561</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>184.60</td>
<td>218.39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers was found to be significant at (p<0.05) since the Observed X² (29.3) is greater than the Critical X² (7.81) with df=4.

Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of hedges in computer engineering articles and physics articles showed significant differences in using hedges in the two groups. So the Null hypotheses mentioning that there were no significant differences in the types and frequencies between the two groups was rejected and so were articles written on applied linguistics by English and Iranian researchers.
Discussion

In answering the first research question, the researcher proposed the following discussion: The results of the Chi-square analysis showed that there are some differences and similarities between computer engineering, and physics RAs. The most frequent types of hedges used by computer engineering researchers were modal auxiliary verbs, and the least used ones were approximators like following examples:

1. Codification processes in the scientific communication structure can perhaps be considered as the longer-term selectors upon the variation generated by shorter-term S & T-policy program.
2. They create large quantities of postings, and these postings are often archived.

In physics articles, the most frequent items of hedges were modal auxiliary verbs, but the least used items were if clauses. In both disciplines, the fourth types of hedges, approximators, occurred approximately the same times like following examples:

1. This would have several advantages, such as reducing the cost for the lasers, and thus the overall cost of patterning systems.
2. If the laser diode is operated in pure nitrogen, we observe also the buildup of a thick deposition on the facet.

In computer engineering articles, 788 words out of 37600 were hedges whereas in physics articles they were 510 words out of 37200. Generally, the writers of computer engineering articles used more hedges than those of physics articles.

The differences between disciplines in using hedges have been approached differently by researchers. Some scholars like Markkanen and Schroder (1997) suggest that the differences in the use of hedges between texts in different fields are not as significant as some scholars have assumed.

Markkanen and Schroder (1997) have considered the different bases of argumentation various fields as the major reason for variation in the use of hedges. According to this view, some fields like linguistics and philosophy would favor more hedging than other fields like natural sciences and technology. This could be matched with Spillner, as cited by Markkanen and Schroder (1997), who stated that argumentation in natural science and technology is based on experimental data and concrete evidence, whereas this end is accomplished in other fields (e.g., social sciences) through the styles of writing. The results also agreed with Markkanen and Schroder (1997) who have stated that the use of hedges and other linguistic devices are significant in convincingness of an argument in the texts belonging to "soft" fields (e.g. philosophy and linguistics). On the other hand, the differences in the overall incidence of hedges in different disciplines can be explained by considering the object and general nature of disciplines as well as the kind of materials and methods used in the study. The field of physics, for example, can be categorized under "hard" sciences which by nature are different from psychology as a "soft" science. The "soft" science is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative
nature, whereas in "hard" sciences are "more closely related to the traditional rigorous empiricism of the natural sciences.

Another source of difference can be traced to the nature of the fields. In researches such as physics, the setting of the experiments is more controlled and the material and procedures can be closely measured. The researchers in these fields can explain the procedures of the experiment and also make conclusions with more confidence. This can partly account for the lower occurrence of hedges in this field as compared to computer engineering.

The possible reason for higher occurrence of hedges in computer engineering is that although computer engineering generally represents technological information, it gives information about some issues which are not absolutely technological; for example one of the articles published in Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication was entitled: Social Science Approaches to e-Science: Framing an Agenda. Thus it has some characteristics of "soft" science which is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative nature.

In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure; the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied. So physics and computer engineering can be considered as hard science; therefore, they are expected to have some common characteristics. This can justify similarity between these two disciplines in terms of using same categories of hedges-in both disciplines modal lexical verbs were of the greatest frequency and also both disciplines use approximators approximately equally.

In the view of the second research question, the analysis showed that there were disciplinary similarities and differences in the use of hedges in applied linguistics RA, written by English and Iranian authors. In both set of articles, the most frequent were modal lexical verbs. Modal lexical verbs and adjectival, adverbial, nominal modal phrases occur in the second and third position respectively. In applied articles written by native writers the least frequent hedges were if clauses while in native counterparts the least frequent ones were approximators. Consider the following examples in which modal verbs are used in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian respectively:

1. The results may be interpreted as consistent with a number of recent investigations that have reported intact prosodic processing at the lexical level implicit tasks.
2. However, their perception of the events may be very much different from the original event.

As can be seen in examples above the hedging device "may" is used in the two groups of articles. Look at examples in which Modal lexical verbs are used in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian respectively:

1. The results of our study seem to support the use of meaningful output practice as well as meaningful input-based practice in the L2 classroom environment as a means for building fluency and accuracy
2. Most of the sociopragmatics studies seem to be both geographically and culturally restricted to western societies and cultures.
As can be seen in the above examples, the hedging device "seem" is used in the two groups of articles. In computer applied linguistics articles written by native authors there were 735 hedges out of 37600 words whereas in the Iranian ones 924 hedges out of 37200 words. In other words, Iranian writers used 0/06% more than English writers; however, there was not a significant difference.

The results of this study are not consistent with Marandi’s (2003) work. Her findings showed that Iranian writers used significantly fewer hedges than English native writers. The results of this study are in conflict with the claim of Hyland (1995). Unlike the results of previously mentioned researchers’ findings, the results of this study are in line with Nassiri (2012). The results of his study showed that despite some variations among the types of hedges, no statistically significant differences were observed between the American and Iranian writers in terms of utilizing hedging devices in the discussion sections of their research articles. As it can be seen, both English and Iranian writers in this present study seem to be approximately equally proficient in using various hedging devices to assert their claims in an acceptable manner. This similarity can be attributed to the fact that both sets of articles are from the same discipline or social science. For example, the two groups made the most frequent use of modal lexical verbs which can be indicative of the nature and the rhetorical structures or shared stylistic features of the two groups. This also might be due to their majors which dealt with English language studies and applied linguistics.

Some cultural, social, and educational factors might help to justify the differences between English and Iranian writers in terms of using hedges. The possible reason for the overuse of the hedging devices in RAs written by Iranian researchers can be indicative of the fact that because Iranian writers are not fully mastered in linguistics and are not completely sure of the results, they show this weakness in using more tentative language. They also may be uncertain on the results of their speculations and ideas. Another possible reason is that by using too much hedges, Iranian writers try to avoid the risk of being criticized by readers.

**CONCLUSION**

This study showed that the distributions of hedges in the RAs are not evenly distributed across disciplines and languages. The writers of physics articles used more hedges compared with the writers of computer engineering articles which showed the different nature between these two disciplines. Iranian researchers of linguistics slightly hedged their statements more than their English counterparts. The difference between this two groups showed variety of differences between the writers of the articles and similarities between these two groups stem from the fact that both of them deal with the same discipline.

Ataei and Sadr (2006) stated that familiarizing and involving students with the rules of academic writing may improve their reading ability and can help them to know what kind of discourse they have to produce and understand in academic settings. If we have a good knowledge and good command of hedging devices, then we will be able to use them adequately and appropriately according to the context and the audiences. Then we know where to hedge and what types of
hedges to use to have a better effect on the audiences and readers in a way that gains readers’
attention and creates a reader-friendly text to have maximum interpersonal and persuasive effect.

Finally, the results of this study can be useful for EFL teachers to teach how to use the forms and
functions of the hedges in speaking and writing skills. Further research may be carried out to compare hedges in other disciplines of English articles written by English and Iranian writers to find if these devices are used differently. It is possible to compare scientific articles written by authors with other language background; for example, between German writers and English writers. It is also possible to compare other metadiscourse markers such as boosters in research articles.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF BODILY INTELLIGENCE AND SOUND ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ VOCABULARY RETENTION

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this experimental study was to investigate the effect of bodily intelligence and sound on Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) learners’ vocabulary retention. In doing so, 75 female students who enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran took a homogeneity test of Cambridge University Press (2010) and the learners whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the research sample. Sixty female selected participants were randomly divided into two experimental (N=30) and control (N=30) groups. Before period of treatment, the pilot test was given to eight students who were not participated in the study but with the same background. The aim of the pilot test was to assess the reliability of the homogeneity, pre and post-tests, and the time allocated to take the tests. Furthermore, the bodily intelligence and sound programs were matched with the participants' interests in conducting the research procedures. Then, the participants were given a pre-test on vocabulary achievement to assess their vocabulary knowledge at the beginning of the study. Both the experimental and control groups were taught forty vocabularies during eight sessions, 30 minutes. Students in the experimental group were taught vocabularies through bodily intelligence and sounds, while the students in the control group were taught through conventional method by focusing on oral presentations. Finally, a post-test was administered to two groups and data were collected. Data were analyzed through the Interdependent Samples t-test and descriptive statistics utilized to analyze learners' scores. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. This study suggests that the use of bodily intelligence and sound could be more effective activities in teaching vocabulary to the beginners.

KEYWORDS: Bodily intelligence, Sound, EFL learners, Vocabulary retention

INTRODUCTION
Learning vocabulary seemed to be one of the easiest things about learning a language but it is somehow burdensome for some learners and also one of the hardest things to do, especially when the students had reached a certain level of proficiency. Fortunately, the need for vocabulary is one point on which teachers and students agree (French Allen, 1983). Moras(2001) claims that students might had a receptive knowledge of a wide range of vocabularies, which means they can recognize the items and their meanings; nevertheless, their productive use of vocabulary is
normally restricted, and this is one of the areas that need greater attention. Based on Hornby's (2004, p. 1091) definition, retention is "the ability to remember things". Those words that are easy to learn will better retain.

In the classroom of second language acquisition, the teacher teaches students with the same teaching method. However, some students acquired the language successfully while others failed. Why does this happen? It may have something to do with some learning strategies. The same learning strategies may be useful for some students but useless for others (He, 2010). Wenden and Rubin state that learners bring a varied repertoire of learning skills in the process of language learning (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. xvii). It means that the learners should master some learning strategies to make their L2 learning more effective. Many studies also showed that apart from teaching methodologies, learner strategies are another crucial factor that affected foreign language acquisition. They can help learners become more autonomous and made the learning process more effective (He, 2010).

Gardner (1983, 1995) claims that all human beings had multiple intelligences (MI), which are common among all the people, but with different portions. The MI-based instructions can help learners to acquired words faster and improve academic achievement. The basic theory of multiple intelligences is that there are a number of different types of intelligences. Traditionally, schools used logical and verbal intelligences to taught language-English in this case. However, it is also possible to taught English through the use of other types of intelligences, which the bodily intelligence is one of them. The different intelligences are of neutral value; none of them is consider superior to the others. In their basic form, they are present to some extent in everyone, although a person is generally more talented in some than others.

When you think about communication, you probably think of words. When we converse with someone, we exchange about 200 words per minute. But just because we are speaking does not mean that is the only communication that is going on. About half of our communication is non-verbal occurs without words. Gestures, postures, facial expressions, eye contact and the way we view and use our personal space convey just as much about what we are thinking as the words we speak.

Sometimes our hearing memory worked better than our visual memory. It is true that a number of words in any language are onomatopoeic (echoing natural sounds). From the birth we learnt most of the words by sounds around us. Sounds are associated with other experience and tied to meaning. Sound like, language, is natural to humankind and as such both phenomena are universal. Sounds accompanied our everyday activities, made learning easier and also made effort lighter, and was using as an excellent pedagogical tool in language teaching. The learning to Listen Sounds is sometimes called Sound-Object Associations: a sound is associated with an object. Sounds and music are defined as powerful aids to language learning, memory and recall. However, learning foreign languages is not easy, as many variables need to be considered (Chion, 2009).
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Language acquisition has been a major topic of research in linguistics for several decades. In the classroom L2 acquisition, the teacher teaches students with the same teaching method. However, some students can acquire the language successfully while others fail. Why does this happen? It may have something to do with some learning strategies. The same learning strategies may be useful for some students but useless for others. Wenden and Rubin state that learners bring a varied repertoire of learning skills in the process of language learning (Wenden & Rubin, 1987: xvii). It means that the learners should master some learning strategies to make their L2 learning more effective. He (2010) suggests that many studies also show that apart from teaching methodologies, learner strategies are another crucial factor that can affect foreign language acquisition. They can help learners become more autonomous and make the learning process more effective.

Two major kinds of learning strategies have been discussed recently: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive strategies. The cognitive learning strategies refer to the steps or operations used in language learning or problem-solving that requires direct analysis, translation, or synthesis of learning materials, while metacognitive learning strategies refer to the knowledge of cognitive process and regulation of cognition or executive control or self-management through such process as planning, monitoring and evaluating (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 23). The second type of strategy is called "communication strategies". This stresses the effect of practice and focuses on the process of taking part in a conversation (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 27). The third type of strategy is "social strategies". Rubin defined it as the activities that afford learners the opportunities to be exposed to the target language. They are different from the communication strategies. Social strategies do not provide opportunities to practice the knowledge learnt (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 27).

To start with, we are clarifying what we mean when we use the term "vocabulary". According to the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (Owen, 1989), "the vocabulary of a language is the total number of words in it' and "someone's vocabulary is the total number of words in a language that he or she knows"(p.1629).

When learning the meaning of a word, most learners may find it quite difficult. Aitchison states that there are two main arguments about word meaning, the fixed meaning assumption claims that for every word there exists a basic meaning, and when learners acquire the basic meaning of a word, the core of the word is acquired. Unlike the fixed meaning viewpoint, the fuzzy meaning viewpoint argues that word cannot have a fixed meaning (Aitchison, 2003, pp. 41-52). A word has a fuzzy meaning, which means that a word may have different meanings in different contexts, e.g. skinny, in a dictionary it means "very thin" when describing a beauty's slim body, however, it also means "so thin as too be unhealthy or unattractive" when describing a starving old man (Schmitt, 2000, p. 31).

Words do not have fixed absolute values. Word meaning changes through history. During its changing process, some words drop away, some change into new meanings, and some survive
and develop multiple meanings. These words become polysemous (Aitchison, 2003, pp. 151-154).

**Bodily Intelligence**

This intelligence refers to the ability to use the body to express oneself, to handle physical objects dexterously. According to the ancient Roman saying, *mens sana in corpore sano*: working on this intelligence not only affects health and fitness but also is important for cultivating the powers of the mind. In many classrooms, students sit in rows for hours and are asked to pay attention to verbal input. The human need for movement is totally overlooked and therefore, its potential value for creating higher energy levels and maintaining attention is greatly reduced (Morgan & Fonseca, 2004).

Neurophysiologist Hannaford has studied the relationship between learning and the body, and the points to the benefits of taking the physical side of learners into account and incorporating movement in the classroom, including bringing a greater supply of oxygen to the brain and increasing the energy level of students. Hannaford (1995) summarizes one of the main reasons why movement and the body are important for learning:

Intelligence, which is too often considered to be merely a matter of analytical ability- measured and valued in I.Q. points-, depends on more of the brain and the body than we generally realize. Physical movement, from earliest infancy and throughout our lives, plays an important role in the creation of nerve cell networks which are actually the essence of learning (p. 96). The use of role-plays, drama, games, surveys, project work, shadow puppets, and many activities related to group dynamics directly address the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence in the language classroom.

Non-verbal aspects of communication are also very relevant in language teaching. For example, gestures are movements of the body used to communicate an idea, intention or feeling. Speech-independent gestures (emblems) or autonomous gestures are nonverbal acts that can replace speech or help to organize the flow and rhythm of interaction and to maintain attention by adding emphasis (Knapp & Hall, 1992).

**Body Language**

Knowing how and what to say to whom is a cornerstone of communicative competence. Our aspiration as teachers of foreign or second languages is to challenge our learners to go beyond the grammaticality of being able to put the subject, verb, and object in the correct syntactic order, and achieve what Canale and Swain (1980) called discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic competencies. These communicative abilities, however, demand that learners go beyond the linguistic context and heed the nonverbal cues of their interlocutors (Gregersen, 2007). Gregersen says that communicative competence is the ability to communicate successfully in a wide variety of circumstances. With the emphasis of language instruction moving from grammatical accuracy and phonological correctness to making oneself understood, we need to take a closer look at all of the resources at our disposal that enhance mutual intelligibility. Kinesics, or the way gesture, facial expression, and gaze behavior is used to communicate messages, is one of those undercapitalized means. Gregersen research suggests that nonverbal
behavior plays an important role in the overall communicative process, yet little attention has been given to practical teaching techniques that will help teachers incorporate this essential element into their language classrooms.

Simply stated, nonverbal communication includes "all communication other than language" (Andersen, 1999, p. 2). Inherent in this definition is that language is solely a human endeavor and that arbitrary symbols are used to convey meaning. DeVito and Hecht (1990, p. 4) describe nonverbal communication as "all of the messages other than words that people exchange."

A research has been done by Gregersen (2007) about the role of nonverbal communication in second language communicative competence. This study considered the interplay of body language, particularly gestures, facial expression and gaze behavior; and also discussing specific activities that bring the visual and auditory channels together through drama, video, role play and interviews. However, in this case the gestures and drama are elaborating.

**Studies on Music and Sound Learning**

Music is used in many divers' ways in language teaching. Teachers of English as a second language (ESL) from around the globe enthusiastically report about their successful use of music and associated song lyrics with ESL students. Huy Le (2007), a Vietnamese ESL teacher, observed that music is highly valued by both students of English and teachers in the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Other reports by teachers from the United States (Baez, 1993), Taiwan (Katchen, 1988), Canada (Maghay-Johnson, 1984), Japan (Moriya, 1988), Mexico (Domoney & Harris, 1993) supported the importance and usefulness of music and music activities in the teaching of ESL learners. Indeed, ESL teachers recognize that music animates their teaching and enlivens their classroom.

Shabani and Torken (2014) conducted a study to examine the relationship between musical intelligence and foreign language learning. To this means 140 Persian native speakers (100 females, 40 males) ages 15 to 18 participated in this study. They were students in Kish Mehr institution at intermediate level of English language proficiency. To conduct this study, two instruments were employed: English language proficiency test and a musical intelligence questionnaire (Howards Gardner Multiple Intelligence Questionnaires, 1983). To find the relationship between musical intelligence and foreign language proficiency a Pearson correlation was used. Briefly, the statistical results illustrated that there is positive strong correlation between musical intelligence and language proficiency. In other words, high level of musical intelligence correlated with high level of language proficiency.

Li and Brand (2009) did a research for the purpose of examining the relative effectiveness of use of songs on vocabulary acquisition, language usage, and meaning for adult university-level students in the People's Republic of China. Results of the study showed that for these Chinese students, varying the degree of use of songs produces different English language achievement scores. Specifically, the subjects who were exposed to the most music obtained higher posttest scores immediately following treatment as well as on the delayed posttest three weeks following treatment. Curiously through, the results for the study showed that ESL instruction containing no
music is apparently more effective than instruction containing a mix of music (half music and half no-music).

Also, Zybert and Stepien (2009) research showed that musical aptitude is a determinant and a predictor of success in foreign language learning. It also indicated that musical training had a positive effect on FL learning. Medina (1990) showed that primary students improved their rate of vocabulary recall significantly when they were exposed to stories accompanied by musical and visual stimuli.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The present study aimed at answering the following research question: Does bodily intelligence and sound learning have any effect on Iranian EFL learner's vocabulary retention?

METHOD

Participants

To select the homogeneous participants, the researcher administered the unlimited placement test, prepared by Cambridge University Press (2010) to seventy five students who enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran. Following that, sixty students who scored one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. The selected participants were female students and their ages were ranging from 11 to 13 years old. Then they were randomly divided into two experimental (n=30) and control (n=30) groups. Participants enrolled in vocabulary achievement sessions during the summer term, 2014, a period of 15 sessions, three times a week.

Instrumentation

Initially, the participants took a homogeneity test (Cambridge University Press, 2010) to determine their level of linguistic knowledge. The test contained fifty multiple-choice items of vocabularies. Based on Cronbach Alpha method the reliability of the test was (α=.821).

The second instrument was a researcher-made matching and multiple-choice pre-test of vocabulary; including 30 items (i.e., 10 definitions, 10 pictorials, and 10 aural items) used as a pre-test by the researcher in the first session of the research period. Reliability index of the pre-test was calculated based on Cronbach Alpha as (α=.721). Another instrument was a vocabulary post-test which immediately after the treatment (at tenth session) administered. Its contents were modified in format but similar to the pre-test (i.e. 30 vocabulary items; including 10 definitions, 10 pictorials, and 10 aural items). The test reliability index was met based on Cronbach Alpha as (α=.811).

Materials

Forty vocabularies were extracted from Institute books "Tiny Talk1A and 2B" written by Susan Rivers (1997); "Pockets 3" written by Mario Herrera and Barbara Hojel (2005) ; "Hip Hip
Hooray (Starter)” written by Beat Eisele, Rebeca York Hanlon, and Barbara Hojel (2001); and "First Friends 1 and 3” written by Susan Lannuzzi (2009). The experimental students were exposed to CD record sounds and body language activities.

Procedure
For the reliability of the test instruments a pilot test conducted on eight students at the same level (beginners) for homogeneity, pre and post- tests. A homogeneity test (prepared by Cambridge University Press, 2010) conducted to the seventy five female students enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran, one week prior to the study. Sixty students whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean (beginner level) were selected as the participants of the study. Sixty participants were divided randomly into two groups of thirty, experimental group and control group. The treatment performed during the summer term, 2014 in a period of fifteen sessions, three times a week.

In the first session a self-designed matching and multiple-choice test of vocabulary were administered as a pretest by the researcher for both experimental and control groups. The pretest was included thirty questions; ten definition questions, ten pictorial questions, and ten auras questions. The first question of each section was answered as an example. The part of auras questions were played twice for the examinees. They had forty five minutes to answer the questions.

During the treatment students were learned forty new vocabularies through eight sessions (five vocabularies each session), as an extra activity beside their book. Each session, about fifteen minutes the teacher had a review on the previous lessons, and then she taught their book through thirty minutes, after that the five new vocabularies were taught to and practiced by the participants in thirty minutes. Through the experimental group the forty new vocabularies were taught via different kinds of strategies such as: body language, physical demonstration, using mime and gesture, role play, imitation, and listening to CD record sounds. For example through the bodily intelligence learning the meaning of a word like "exercise" was demonstrated by stretching hands up, left and right. Another example for learning by means of sound is that participants listened to the sound of raining and then teacher said the vocabulary "Raining". In experimental group instruments were used and repeated several times as to clarify the vocabularies meaning. When the teacher finished her teach, she wrote the new vocabularies on the board and asked of the students to write them down on their note books, and follow that the teacher asked them to imitate her role, mime, and role play in small groups.

Through the control group the teacher used of the traditional method to taught the forty new vocabularies. She wrote the vocabularies on the board, and was used of flash cards and her natural sound for demonstrating their meanings. Then she wrote the vocabularies meanings (in Persian) and reading them aloud several times, students repeated after their teacher. Follow that students read the vocabularies aloud one by one, and then the teacher asked of them to write the vocabularies and their meanings down on their notebooks.
Teacher gave homework to both experimental and control groups. They were asked to write about half of the page for each new word; by this exception that the students of control groups wrote vocabularies within their meanings in Persian.

Immediately after teaching the forty vocabularies, at ninth session students took a post-test which was identical to the pre-test. Both experimental and control groups pre and post-tests were held in the same time, so that they were unable to collaborate with one another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test was given to both groups of learners and results are presented in Table 1.

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.1333</td>
<td>3.37060</td>
<td>.61538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.7667</td>
<td>2.72515</td>
<td>.49754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Table 1 shows that the mean of pre-test among the experimental group (M=8.13) is nearly the same as the mean of pre-test among control group which is 8.76. There is no much difference between these two tests. In order to find out whether the similarity among the performances of the two groups in pre-test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied. The results are presented in Table 2.

<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>1.602</td>
<td>.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the observed t (O_{t}=.800) with df= 58 is less than the Critical t (C_{t}=2.000). Thus, the difference between the groups is not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test. To analyze the post-test, the researcher presented descriptive statistics in Table 3.
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.1667</td>
<td>5.76005</td>
<td>1.05164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.6000</td>
<td>6.52105</td>
<td>1.19058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the experimental and control groups’ post-test shows that the mean of experimental post-test (M=19.16) is higher than the mean of control one which is 15.60. Therefore, there is a difference between these tests. As the data analysis in this Table indicates that there are significant difference between bodily intelligence and sound treatment (experimental group) and traditional treatment (control group), it reveals that experimental group and control group both performed better in post-test, but bodily intelligence and sound in experimental group outperformed. However, to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups in post-test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<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>.387</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.245</td>
<td>57.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 indicates that the observed t (O_t=2.245) with df= 58 is greater than the Critical t (C_t=2.000). Thus, the difference between the two groups is significant.

**Discussion**

The descriptive statistics and means of experimental and control groups showed that there is no difference between these groups and they are homogeneous at the pre-test stage. The mean of experimental post test (M= 19.16) was higher than the control one (M= 15.60). So, there is a difference between experimental and control group. Within a comparison by the pretests means (experimental group (M= 8.13); control group (M= 8.76). Table 1 reveals that the experimental and control groups both performed better in post-test, however, the bodily intelligence and sound
group outperformed. As far as the mean could not indicate whether the difference among the two groups is significant, the Independent Sample t-test was applied results.

The observed $t (O_{t}= 2.245)$ with $df= 58$ is greater than the Critical $t (C_{t}= 2.000)$; therefore, the difference between the two groups is significant. The mean of pre-test versus post-test of the experimental group was -11.03 and the mean of pre-test versus post-test of the control group was -6.83, which indicates that there is a difference between these groups. The observed $t$ of the bodily and sound group (-14.540) is significantly higher than the control one, which is -6.127. Therefore, students in bodily intelligence and sound group performed better than the students in the control group. So the results rejected the null hypothesis, which claim that bodily intelligence and sound learning do not have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

The improvement of bodily intelligence and sound can be due to that the students are less bored in experimental class since they act constantly in class and collaborate with each other. Using of role-plays and mime makings them eager and it also observed that students fearless volunteer for repeating actions after teacher. Working in small groups was fun and also beneficial for those students who were ashamed to do actions individually. When students are learning a word while acting, it stuck on their heads. In addition, students were eager for listening to record sounds and learning the related vocabularies, whiles trying to guess the words. The students listened to the CDs and recorded sounds to use later. This reinforced their vocabulary knowledge.

Learning foreign language vocabularies seems to be difficult especially for beginner students who want to start the process of learning with a wide range of vocabularies. Therefore, teachers are always looking for new and the most effective methods to teach the materials to the students. Most teachers still use the traditional methods; however, the main purpose of this study was to find new methods to ease the process of teaching and learning English vocabularies to beginner students. The results rejected the null hypothesis. Beginner students were found to perform significantly through the bodily intelligence and sound group; however, both experimental and control groups had promotion. These findings are in line with the study of Kuo, Hsu, Fang and Chen (2013) who claimed a highly positive level of acceptance toward the proposed learning approach (embodiment-based TPR approach). The results of this part seem to endorse Zybert and Stepień (2009) who emphasized that musical aptitude is a determinant and a predictor of success in foreign language learning. It also indicated that musical training has a positive effect on FL learning.

CONCLUSION

This study began with the assumption that bodily intelligence and sound method could enhance the beginner language learners' vocabulary retention. The instruction lasted for five weeks. During this time, the teacher (researcher) employed bodily intelligence and sound methods and taught the thirty female subjects in the experimental group. The participants (N=30) in the control group, on the other hand, did not receive any instruction on the use of these strategies. Having administered the pre, post-tests and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of descriptive statistics and Independent Samples, the results indicated that the instruction of using
the bodily intelligence and sound had positive effect on the beginner EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

Results of this study conformed to the studies (e.g., Hsu and Lin, 2012) conducted a study in field of TPR. The immediate and maintaining effects of TPR on listening comprehension for learning English vocabulary were found. Huy Le (2007), a Vietnamese ESL teacher, also observed that music is highly valued by both students of English and (ESL) teachers in the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Other reports by teachers from the United States (Baez, 1993), Taiwan (Katchen, 1988), Canada (Magahay-Johnson, 1984), Japan (Moriya, 1988), and Mexico (Domoney & Harris, 1993) support the importance and usefulness of music and music activities in the teaching of vocabularies to L2 learners.

The application of the body movements and sound resulted in successful vocabulary learning among beginner female EFL language learners. It is suggested that EFL learners intending to promote their vocabulary learning in body language and sound classes, first by listening carefully to the teachers instructions and then by being active in class, taking part in role-plays, and listening carefully to sound record parts (Gorjian, Mombeini & Pazakh, 2013). The implications of the present study may bring out for language teachers for teaching vocabulary to beginners. Language researchers may use bodily intelligence and sound for teaching vocabulary retention and recall.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF LEXICAL DENSITY AWARENESS (LDA) ON DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS: HIGH ACHIEVERS VERSUS LOW ACHIEVERS

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the effect of lexical density awareness (LDA) on reading comprehension skills among Iranian high school students. To do the experimental design, four groups of learners were selected from one high school in Khuzestan Province, Iran. Two homogeneous groups as high achievers as experimental and control groups and two as low achievers of experimental and control groups were chosen. Therefore, third grade of high school students were considered as high achiever groups and first grade ones selected as low achievers because the mount of English knowledge of lexical and grammatical among third grade students are naturally more than first grades. At first 4 pre-tests according to learners' English text books lexical from the reading parts of their text books were administered to high achiever groups and low achievers. The LDA just given to the experimental groups but two control groups just were taught reading without LDA. At the end of each treatment, the learners were tested. In order to test this hypothesis, and at the end of treatment period post tests were administered to check reading comprehension of four groups of high and low achievers. The results showed that there were significant difference between these two experimental groups of high and low achievers than their control groups test scores. The mean score experimental groups were higher than the control groups. The result showed that there were significant differences between experimental groups of both high and low achievers than their own control groups. Implications of this study could be used for effective teaching of reading comprehension.

KEYWORDS: Lexical density awareness (LDA), Reading comprehension, High achievers, Low achievers

INTRODUCTION
In EFL contexts such as Iran, which English used as a foreign language not a second language, language learning is limited to some textbooks at high schools, some courses at university and some English institutes. Iranian EFL learners receive restricted amount of input concerning listening and speaking skills so, they have tendency toward reading. For many years reading
comprehension has drawn the attention of second or foreign language practitioners and researchers and it has been studied from different perspectives. Reading comprehension is an inseparable part of teaching and the most important and irreplaceable skill in learning a foreign language (Mirhassani & Farhady, 2012).

Reading is a valuable input for language learning (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Reading is gradually being recognized as one of the main sources of language input, particularly for students in learning environment in which fluent speakers of English are generally not available to provide other kinds of language input. Furthermore, reading reinforces the learners' other language skills. Krashen (1985) confirms that those who read more have larger vocabularies, do better in grammar tests, write better, and spell better (Kim & Krashen, 1997). Reading is regarded as a skill of great importance to the learners because (a) it provides them with access to the great quantity of further experience of the language, and (b) it gives them a window onto the normal mean of continuing his personal education (Mirhassani & Toosi, 1996).

Reading according to Rivers (1981), is not only as a source of information and pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. In. Rivers (1981) believes that reading texts provide 3 levels of meaning: lexical meaning, grammatical meaning and social-cultural meaning. Reading comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from a text, it becomes more complicated when reader cannot grasp meaning from that piece of text. One reason refers to lexical in the text that hinder comprehension when learners are not mastered on lexical items in the text. Lexical knowledge has been defined as a crucial underlying construct for EFL reading comprehension. For grasping and understanding meaning of a text readers need to connect their background knowledge of lexical words to the new knowledge to comprehend the new one. Vocabulary knowledge is very crucial in reading comprehension and plays the role of background knowledge (Coady, 1979). Thus, deficiency of vocabulary competence would cause reading comprehension difficulties. If learners' knowledge of vocabulary is not enough, it is probable that their reading comprehension will be negatively influenced by lack of lexical knowledge, so we need to consider the effect of lexical awareness on learners' reading comprehension and how students can improve their reading comprehension by receiving LDA and background knowledge of lexical items.

Reading seems to be mainly used by English as foreign language (EFL) learners than the other skills thus, knowing vocabulary is one important feature of comprehending reading. According to Celce-Murcia (2001) learning a second or foreign language involves the acquisition of thousands of words. Traditionally, nouns, verbs, and adverbs are four classes belonging to lexical items since they have autonomous meaning even in isolation and new members can be added to these categories (Yule, 1996). Lexical words are known as content or information words that carry information in a text. Halliday (1975) defines lexical density as” a measure of the density of information in any passage of text, according to how tightly the lexical items have been packed into the grammatical structure. It can be measured, in English, as the number of lexical words per clauses”. One significant way to improve reading comprehension seems to be the use of lexical density awareness in teaching this skill and discovering its effect on reading comprehension among EFL learners. The present study addresses the use of lexical density awareness (LDA) on
developing reading comprehension in terms of high versus low achievers among high school EFL learners in Iran. This study also tries to compare reading comprehension skill of two groups of students who are different in terms of proficiency level of lexical density consciousness and discover their differences in achieving meaning of English texts.

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills of a language specifically for EFL students. Richards and Renandya (2002) believe that in many second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a special focus. There are a number of reasons for this. First, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purposes. In fact, in most EFL situations, the ability to read in a foreign language those students ever want to acquire information. Second, written texts serve pedagogical purposes. Extensive exposure to linguistically comprehensible written texts can enhance the process of language acquisition. In Iran, reading comprehension is believed to be one of the most important skills for educated people in general and for university and high school students in particular (Farhady & Mirhassani, 2001). A great deal of attempt has been made to help students improve their reading ability. Nearly half of each lesson in high school English text books is devoted to reading comprehension. Students start their lesson with a list of words in different contexts, then immediately go to a passage followed by a number of explanatory questions. The researcher believes that in spite of the attempts which have been made by the text book writers to encourage the students to read passages and answer the questions many students are not willing to read the passages. The lack of background knowledge and lexical knowledge would be one important reason of students' poor performance. One of the concerns of the researcher (as an English teacher in high school) has been to search more effective ways of teaching reading comprehension at high school level. It seems to the researcher that shifting from traditional ways of teaching reading comprehension toward more communicative ones would help the learners to comprehend better.

In many EFL classes, teachers have made lots of attempt to help students learn vocabularies in order to comprehend EFL texts (Akbari & Mirhassani, 2000). Many students always ask their teachers to give them new techniques for learning lexical words. The problem seems to be whether EFL learners can improve their reading comprehension in a text by having more LDA in a text or not. Many researchers have been done on reading comprehension in foreign language but less is done on the role of lexical density on reading comprehension of lexical density on reading comprehension. So, shedding more light on the effectiveness of LDA on developing reading comprehension of EFL learners seems to be necessary.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Reading comprehension is one of the main objectives of teaching English in EFL contexts and it is the most tested construct in language teaching. Reading can be defined as the translation of graphic symbols into sounds and words coupled with the ability to gain meaning from individual words and word sequences. Goodman (1973) described reading as "interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and reader decodes language to
thought” (p. 160). He also described the factors involved in the mind of the reader for decoding the language: In written language a message has been encoded by the writer in graphic symbols spatially distributed on the page. The reader does not merely pass his eyes over written language and receives and records a stream of visual perceptual images. Goodman (1973) believes the reader “must actively bring to bear his knowledge of language, his past experience, his conceptual attainment on the processing of language information encoded in the form of graphic symbols in order to decode the written language, through the reader attempts to reconstruct a message from the written” (p. 261). In fact, reading is a receptive skill through which the reader is receiving a message from the writer for decoding the messages that activate the reader’s background knowledge. Most recent researchers in reading describe the reading process in a way that it implies active reader intent upon using background knowledge and skills to recreate the writer’s intended meaning. Chastian (1988) asserted that “reading is a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. Reading requires that the reader focus attention on the reading materials and integrate previously required knowledge and skills to comprehend what someone else has written” (p. 216). Widdowson (1975) described reading as a " discourse between interlocutors and believes:

Reading is regarded not as reaction to a text but as interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text. Reading is an act of participation in a discourse between interlocutors. It seems to follow from this that reading efficiently cannot be measured against the amount of information contained in a text. This is incalculable since it depends on how much he wishes to extract from it. Rather, reading efficiently is a matter of how effective a discourse the reader can create from the text either in terms of rapport with the writer or in terms of his purpose in engaging in the discourse in first place. (p. 174)

Therefore, reading in a complex communication process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. It can be claimed that reading as one of main skills in language never lost its importance and dominance in language learning. Reading is a basic and complementary skill in language. Second language students need to learn to read for communication and to read greater and greater quantities of authentic materials. Students can probably learn to read more easily than they can acquire any other skill and they can use reading materials as a primary source of comprehension input as they learn the language (Chastain, 1988).

Rivers (1981) points out" in many countries foreign languages are learned by numbers of students who will never have the opportunity of conversing with native speakers, but who will have access to the literature and periodicals, or scientific and technical journals, written in the language they are learning. Many will need these publications to assist them further studies or their work; others will wish to enjoy reading in another language in their leisure time to keep them in touch with the wider world" (p. 260). Celce-Murcia (2001) points out that:

Reading is more important than speaking. She says that: students are not just concerned with speaking; they want to be able to read and write English as well as
speak it. Even in audio-lingual programs which stress listening and speaking, the student needs to know how to read, for many university foreign students reading skills are perhaps even more important for academic success than speaking ability. Reading is a skill that everyone needs whether she is a student in elementary, secondary, university or adult school. Yet it is a skill that gets slighted in most ESL teacher-training programs (pp.129-130).

Goodman (1973) looks on reading as information processing: The reader, a user of language, interacts with the graphic input as he seeks to reconstruct a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experience and learning on the task, drawing on his experiences and concepts he has attained as well as the language competence he has achieved (p. 162). According to Fries (1963), the student is "developing a considerable range of habitual response to a specific set of patterns of graphic shapes" (p. 121). He also argues that there are three levels of meaning: "lexical meaning (the semantic content of the words and expressions), structural or grammatical meaning (derived from interrelationships among words), and social-cultural meaning (the evaluation that people of our culture attach to the words and groups of words we are reading" (pp. 104-12).

Procedures used for measuring readability mostly, emphasize the role of word length (number of syllables of a word) and sentence length (number of words in a sentence) as determining factors in text difficulty formulas (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). It is, however, believed by some authorities (e.g., that there are so many other factors in determining text difficulty. They criticized these formulas for considering only the average length of words and sentences, ignoring other factors, such as syntactic complexity, textual cohesion, propositional density, and background knowledge of the students. Also they have criticized word and sentence length as determining factor of the difficulty of the texts and mentioned that there are so many texts with so many short sentences and one syllable words that are very difficult to comprehend (Carrell, 1991).

RESEARCH QUESTION
The study attempts to examine the effectiveness of LDA on reading comprehension of EFL learners. Therefore, the following research question is presented.
Is there any significant difference between the students with high and low proficiency levels exposed to LDA on developing their reading comprehension?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
This study was done at one high school in Khuzestan province. A number of 80 high school students with forty first grade students and forty third grade students took part in this investigation. They were selected among 160 Iranian EFL students at that high school. With respect to the year of study half participants were in first grade and half ones in third grade of high school. The reason why these students were chosen as participants was that they were in two different levels so, according to their grades third grade students naturally have more English
knowledge and this distinction seems reasonable, although some students have self-study or attend English institutes but the selected school was in down town where most students were not rich to access to private teachers or English institutes. Low achievers randomly divided in two groups of experimental and control groups and high achievers randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control groups. Each group included 20 participants. They were just females with the age range between 15 and 16 for low achievers and from 17 to 18 for high achievers.

**Instrumentation**
Six different instruments were implemented in this research. The first instrument was a reading comprehension which was designed based on their high school textbooks as pre-test. A series of tests were given in the classroom to the experimental and control groups weekly. The last test was a post-test and was administered at the end of the treatment period.

**Materials**
The participants in the control and experimental groups were taught English high school Text books. Each lesson was taught every other week. The experimental participants were given awareness on lexical density, they were taught vocabularies of each passage by giving definition, pictures, examples and so on but for control groups there is no LDA before teaching reading comprehension and they were taught reading in usual way.

**Procedure**
A group of 80 students in one of high schools in the Khuzestan province was selected. The first grade students were considered as low achievers due to their less lexical and back ground knowledge of English language according to what they had acquired in their previous English text books and two third grade were chosen a high achievers of English in comparison with first grade due to more lexical and grammatical materials that they had covered in first and second grades of high school text books. This distinction is normal in high school because as students cover one book the next high school book has new words and new materials that are more difficult than previous books although we cannot ignore students who have self- study and attends English institutes to increase their English lexical knowledge in order not to have this interference a high school in the middle of city was selected whose students were average and most of them just learned English at school and their knowledge was based on their text books.

As the school, the researcher did her experiment in a natural class of high school as school teacher, so first she administered a lexical pretest of half of English book one for low achievers and another test of half of English book three to high achievers to check their lexical background knowledge. All the students in each group participated in the exam. The papers were collected and scored. Mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. The mean of 9.8 for pretest scores of experimental low group and the mean 10.7 for control low group was achieved and the mean of 10.75For the pretest scores of experimental high achiever group and the mean of 10.40 for control high group were proved.

After dividing the participants into four groups and determining the pretest scores, the students in the control group were given four passages followed by a set of explanatory, true/false, and
multiple-choice questions. After teaching and practicing each reading passage a treatment test was administered to them, for control groups there was no LDA. It took the researcher four sessions of forty-five minutes to do the activities. On the other hand the students in the experimental groups of both high and low achievers received the same four passages, the teacher introduced them the topic of their English text books and then gave them some background knowledge on vocabulary and tried to increase their lexical knowledge related that specific text and the teacher focused on working on lexical items and reviewed previously acquired vocabularies and the passage was read and comprehended by students and teachers. This kind of activity seemed more motivating for students and they had more willing to learn and review most of the lexical items in their textbook reading passage. The students were not allowed to use their English-Persian dictionaries for translation because they were supposed to learn and practice lexical in the classroom, after giving LDA by teacher they worked on the passage and their comprehension problems were solved by teacher or advanced students, so students had interaction with each other in experimental groups and advanced students helped others in some cases. Then a treatment test based on the reading comprehension administered to students and after that the papers were selected and corrected by the teacher.

After four sessions of instruction, the students in all groups participated in a post- test exactly the same as the pre-tests. Each test composed of 40 multiple-choice questions. The exam lasted for 40 minutes and all the students were present. The papers were gathered and scored objectively. Again, the means, and standard deviations of all sets of scores were calculated indicating that any change in the means of scores was due to the influence of the type of instruction in each group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pretest

The participants in both experimental and control groups were given a pretest. The test had 40 multiple choice reading comprehension questions based on the materials to be taught to the participants in both groups. The aim was to make sure that the participants were homogeneous. The results of the tests are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test, High and Low Achievers)

<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>Experimental(H)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (H)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental(L)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (L)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the experimental group and control group of each set in this research have almost equal mean value. However, the descriptive table cannot prove this homogeneity between
two groups of each set is significant. Thus Independent Samples t-test was used to show the homogeneity between the experimental and control groups in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test, High vs. Low Achievers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental(H) vs. Control (H)</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.779</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>.779</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.770</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.770</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.770</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table shows the observed t (to=0.282) is less than the critical t (tc= 2.021) with d df=38, the difference between high and low achievers in both group are not significance. In other words, the two groups are homogeneous in each set.

Post-test

After the sessions of treatment the same test (the pre-test) was given to both groups. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics(Post-test, High and Low Achievers)

<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>Experimental(H) Control (H)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.4500</td>
<td>3.47131</td>
<td>.77621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (L) Control (L)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.2000</td>
<td>3.18880</td>
<td>.71304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.9000</td>
<td>2.91818</td>
<td>.65253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.3000</td>
<td>3.72898</td>
<td>.83382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the mean value of the low control group improved 3.60 points after the treatment, it was 10.7 improved to14.30 in post-test and the mean value of high control group improved 4 points after treatment, it was 10.40 improved to 14.20 As it was mentioned before, the control groups were taught in the usual way of teaching reading comprehension in the high school of
The mean value of the experimental groups improved more than the control groups after treatment. The mean value for low experimental group was 9.8 points at the pretest, but it turned to 17. The mean value for high experimental group improved 5.7 as it was 10.75 improved to 16.45. As this descriptive table cannot show the significant difference between each set of groups, an Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the two means of the high and low groups on the pre-tests and post-tests.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test, High vs. Low Achievers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>Lower 95% CI</th>
<th>Upper 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental(H) vs.</td>
<td>2.135</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.050</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (H)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental(L) vs.</td>
<td>3.400</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>5.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (L)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not</td>
<td>3.400</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>5.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the mean value of the experimental groups were higher than the mean value of the control groups on post-test. However, a quantitative superiority of the experimental group mean value over the control group mean value was not regarded as a proof for the rejection of null hypothesis. Therefore, the researcher moved to the next step to calculate the t-test which is probably the most widely used test for the comparison of the two means. Again, the researcher used a t-test for the pretest and post-test of the experimental groups to make sure that the differences in the means was statistically meaningful.

The null hypothesis stated that the two samples were from the same population in each set and the difference between the two sample means represented the population means was insignificant. To see whether the observed t-value was statistically significant or not, the researcher checked the t-distribution table. He had 40 participants in each group. This gave her total of 80 and as a result a df=78. The t-observed for group low was 3.40 and for the high group was 2.135 and they were greater than tc=2.021, so the two groups in each set are not homogenous after treatment. In other words the null-hypothesis was rejected. Statistically speaking, as the above table showed, the t-observed exceeded the t-critical. It means that the instruction worked well in the experimental group and the LDA really improved the reading comprehension performance of
Iranian high school students. Thus, it can be said that there existed a statistically meaningful difference between the average performance of two groups of low and high achievers on the post-test which could be attributed to the treatment they received rather than sampling error.

**Descriptive statistics of High vs. Low Achievers**

In the Table 5, the means of all groups in pre and post-tests were analyzed through Paired Samples t-test to see the differences between pre and post-tests means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>EX-Pre-test (High) vs. EX-Post-test (High)</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>13.65</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>EX-Pre-test (Low) vs. EX-Post-test (Low)</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
<td>Con-Pre-test (High) vs. Con-Post-test (High)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>11.02</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
<td>Con-Pre-test (Low) vs. Con-Post-test (Low)</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 compares all groups in terms of the effect of LDA on reading comprehension. Among four groups of students, low achievers who have received LDA performed better on the post-test. As it is shown in the table experimental high group the mean value improved 5.30 after the treatment while control group improved 4.20, also the mean value for experimental low group improved 8 points and control low groups improved 3.60 points in this research. The most progress devoted to experimental low group.

**Discussion**

The main research question in the present study was whether lexical density awareness has any impact on the reading comprehension of Iranian high school students. The sample included the students who studied English in the high school-grades 1 and 3. The answer to the research question was very important because they had experienced that lack of lexical knowledge caused to demotivate students to read their textbook passages. They needed to search for new ways of teaching reading comprehension to improve students' understanding of the passages. It was found that lexical awareness as the probable answer to the question. Lexical awareness seemed more motivating than Persian translation of the passages. One reason might be that students in low levels might have more motivation in learning lexical items and they are more active than high achievers.
Groups who were given LDA improved better in their reading comprehension than learners in the control group who haven’t been given LDA. It is proposed that other teachers and researchers to give LDA in teaching English texts in order to help students to have a better comprehension. This idea is in line with the Anderson’s (2001) findings of the present research. Sometimes students cannot comprehend the texts and lose their motivation in learning and comprehending because of lack of background knowledge so they prefer to use guide books and memorize Persian translation of the texts, this is a very important problem that English teachers have in high schools of Iran. Thus, one solution to this problem can be giving LDA to enhance students' lexical knowledge to encourage them focus on comprehending the texts not memorizing Persian translation. Furthermore, the learners in the experimental groups participated more actively in the learning process than the ones in the control groups, because they found out that by knowing lexical and enough background knowledge understanding of the high school textbooks is not that kind of difficult job that they always thought. For the Experimental groups, the participants were taught reading but there was great focus on LDA, the teacher taught each lesson every other week during school first term, the teacher focused on reviewing previous lexical item to the students and also new vocabularies were practiced by using pictures, definitions, synonyms and antonyms and so on. Then they read the text to find any unfamiliar vocabulary. Thus, they were provided with the meaning if there was any forgotten or new vocabulary which they did not know their meaning then after comprehending the text a treatment test was administered to them. Comparing the two means in the post-tests clearly show that the treatment in the experimental group worked much. On the other side, for both control groups, there was no focus on LDA in the classroom by the teacher and passages were taught as a usual way, the teacher introduced the topic gave explanation on the topic and the text was read and comprehended by students, She did not remind them the vocabularies in the text then at the end a test based on the lexical of the passage was administered to them.

CONCLUSION
The results shows that LDA has positive effect on reading comprehension among Iranian high school students as the average of scores for students who have received LDA on reading comprehension was more than students who did not receive LDA. The result showed that LDA has a direct relationship with reading comprehension the more vocabulary a person knows the better she/he can comprehend the text. Laufer (1998) confirms this idea and believes that most important part of learning a language is learning its vocabulary because according to his idea lexical errors makes disruption in communication than grammar errors: Is there any significant difference between the students with high and low proficiency levels exposed to LDA in developing their reading comprehension? By comparing the result of experimental groups we can conclude LDA is more effective for low achievers as they their mean average after treatment improve eight points in comparison with high group which improved six points. It seems that low achievers have more motivation to learn lexical items than high achievers in this study (Koda, 1999). The learners in the experimental groups participated more actively in the learning process than the ones in the control groups, because they found out that comprehending textbooks is not that kind of difficult job that they always thought. By knowing lexical and enough background
knowledge understanding of the high school texts becomes easier. It is worth mentioning that this research was done in real situation of school class; however, the small size of the research sample and the limits of class hours could be the limitations of this research.

REFERENCES
THE EFFECTS OF WORD SORTING TECHNIQUES ON DEVELOPING VOCABULARY RETENTION AMONG PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
This study was an attempt to investigate whether using word sorting techniques had any significant effect on pre-intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners’ vocabulary retention. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 60 female students among 90 learners within the age range of 19 to 32 years were selected. They were studying English at Narcissus and Talk language school in Dezful, Iran. They were at the pre-intermediate level. The participants were divided into two equal experimental and control groups. Both groups took a vocabulary pre-test designed based on the materials were taught in both groups’ classrooms. The same content was taught to both groups throughout the 19-session treatment with the only difference that the experimental group was taught word sorting techniques while in the control group the common approach to teach vocabulary such as definition and explanations were applied. At the end of the instruction, the vocabulary post-test parallel to the vocabulary pre-test was administered to the participants of both groups after an interval of two weeks. Finally, the mean scores of both groups on the post-test were compared through an Independent Samples t-test which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results of this study may be used in teaching word sorting techniques effectively to improve the intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary retention.

KEYWORDS: Word sorting; Vocabulary retention; EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION
Word sort is a strategy that helps students learn and better remember new vocabulary. Students work in small groups, with each group given an envelope containing key terms on separate slips of paper. Students are instructed to discuss what they think the relationships among the words might be (Weimer, 2010). Exploring how the words relate to each other means that the students
are building a framework that puts the words in context, also making the words easier to remember in both the short and long terms (Weimer, 2010).

Besides, word sorts (Bear, Invernizzi, Johnston & Templeton, 1996) help students recognize the semantic relationship among key concepts. They are also an excellent method of teaching the complex reasoning skills of classification and deduction. As a method of word study (Scraper, 2002) word sorting deals with a wide developmental range and a variety of needs. Picture sorts are useful tools for phonological awareness in children who are just learning to or have not yet learned to read. Students are asked to perform tasks that construct awareness of phonemes, the very small part of language, by categorizing or matching initial, middle or final sounds. Sorts can help build understanding of graphemes as well, the small parts of written language, by asking students to match particular sounds to their written representations. Research continues to show that this ability to recognize that written words are made up of letters that represents sounds—the alphabetical principles—is one of the strongest predictors of successful reading (Scraper, 2002). Research also suggests that word study and word sorting are effective way of teaching these essential elements. Word study and word sorting are not only for emergent readers. When students have mastered basic sound symbols, correspondences and patterns, they may experience difficulty with morpheme, or unity of meaning such as affixes and base works.

Word sorting activities that want students to compare words by their roots or base words or manipulate words with prefixes and suffixes teach these elements in meaningful way. Research suggests that word sorting is an excellent way to increase vocabulary and reading comprehension skills for an older student. Word sorting works particularly well for students with special needs. Studies indicate that word sorting boost word knowledge, reading and comprehension of children with learning differences and disabilities (Scraper, 2002). Students learning English as a second language can also benefit a lot in reading and word knowledge with word sorting exercises (Strickland, Ganske, & Monroe, 2000).

Vocabulary is so important for EFL learners that Wilkins (1972) claimed that, “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 111). Wallace (1984) added that knowledge of vocabulary spelling, its meaning and application are crucial to learn vocabularies of foreign languages. Though some teachers may assume that vocabulary learning is easy, learning new vocabulary items has always been difficult for the learners. Different ways of learning vocabularies are usually utilized by the learners such as using flash cards, notebook, referring to bilingual and monolingual dictionaries to comprehend the meaning, or giving some synonyms and antonyms to name but a few. In spite of these efforts and invariably experiencing so many difficulties, vocabulary is undoubtedly the most sizable and unmanageable component (Nemati, 2009). In many EFL classes, even where teachers have allocated much time to vocabulary teaching, the results have been disappointing, especially where English is not the main medium of communication.

Therefore, it seems that EFL learners need appropriate and efficient strategies to retain the new words and EFL teachers also need to find efficient approaches and practices to equip learners
with those strategies. Based what is mentioned above, the present study investigated whether using word sorting techniques could improve EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies throughout the 1980s and 1990s revealed that vocabulary skills and knowledge are the precondition for most other language abilities and, besides, the main source of variance in the final state of such abilities (Nemati, 2009). It is now clear that vocabulary acquisition does not happen by itself to a satisfactory degree particularly as needed for first language literacy or in second language learning.

Lexical growth must therefore be provided for in language instruction. To reach this goal the best technique of presenting and teaching vocabulary should be used especially in EFL environments. Since instruction can affect lexical growth, and since there are different ways of teaching and learning, those exercises which address deeper engagement of words should be considered and used by the teachers in the classroom. Because learning of the vocabulary of a foreign language is far from initial learning or basic recognition, the aim of teaching and learning is rather long term development of vocabulary. To this aim, exercises must be congruent with the depth of processing hypothesis (Nemati, 2009).

For over a century, researchers and scholars have been writing about the importance of actively engaging students in their own learning process. Dewey (1963) believed in active engagement of the learning process, or “experientialism,” because it is through this active involvement in what one is learning that knowledge is constructed and therefore owned by that person. Lindeman (1926) wrote about the importance of discussions as a method of instruction. He advocated that all students should be taught a set of analytical skills that could be applied to a range of situations, beyond curriculum, and he believed the best way to teach and hone these skills was through small-group discussions. One of the key features of the word-sort strategy is the discussion that occurs among students as they work their way through the terms, discussing the relationships of the words to each other and deciding how to categorize and organize the terms and concepts.

The concept of a word is rather difficult to explain and there are several different views concerning what a word really is. Singleton (1999, p. 9) emphasizes that words have a rather privileged status in the popular understanding of what a language is since they are vital to linguistic communication. Indeed, without vocabulary there is no tool to communicate and everybody realizes it. However, different people see words and vocabulary differently and therefore defining a word has its problems.

On the other hand, according to Singleton (1999), there can be some logical phenomenon in the language which helps to describe the concept of a word. Singleton (1999) mentions the vowel harmony in Finno-Ugric languages to be an example of a logical phenomenon. Carter (1998) offers a slightly different view for the definition of a word in comparison to Singleton (1999). Carter (1998) points out that in some sense, everyone knows what a word is. He argues that the
The grammatical properties of a word include the grammatical category of it, possible and impossible structures associated with the word and idiosyncratic grammatical information. Lexical properties of a word include the word combinations and appropriateness. Also the meaning of a word has its problems since it includes both, a general meaning as well as a specific meaning (Cook, 2001). Whereas a grammar of a language describes the principles or rules of the form and meaning of words, phrases, clauses and sentences and interacts with other components of language (e.g. phonology, graphology, semantics and the dictionary or lexicon), the lexicon for a language deals with the vocabulary. It includes the information about pronunciation, spelling, meaning and grammatical properties of the lexical item. Singleton (1999) accentuates that the traditional distinction between lexicon and grammar is proving increasingly difficult to maintain since the two are closely connected due to, for instance, multi-word items and patterns. However, a distinction between grammatical and lexical words can also be made. Grammatical words work as functional words whereas lexical words (nouns, verbs, adverbs) are seen as content words (Carter, 1998).

To sum up, there are several different views on how to describe a word and it is impossible to create one, absolutely accurate description of a words. Nevertheless, as Carter (1998) mentions, everyone knows what a word is and it can be seen as the minimum meaningful unit in a language and it can operate on its own. This view is adopted in the present study and the different approaches are not discussed in more detail.

**Vocabulary Retention**

Vocabulary retention has been defined as “the ability to recall or of what has been taught (e.g. grammar rules and vocabulary) may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). As it is obvious in the domain of vocabulary learning, the problem is not just in learning second language words; rather in remembering them. Bahrick (1984) states that how well people remember something depends on how deeply they process it. Therefore, various procedures have been recommended to facilitate vocabulary retention.

Concentration on features of the new word and its textual environment is supposed to facilitate retention. Learning in context depends on repeating, re-cycling, and re-presenting vocabularies as well as re-noticing them by the learner. It has been suggested (e.g. Hedge, 2000) that retention is related to the condition in which the meaning is yet another aspect to the condition of inferring meaning of the word which enhances vocabulary retention. That is, retention depends in some way on the amount of mental and emotional energy used in processing a word and readers have developed certain strategies that could assist emotional and mental processing such as meta-cognitive strategies.
Vocabulary is now a current focus in ESL pedagogy and research and has been increasingly recognized as essential to language use because inadequate vocabulary can lead to the learners' difficulty in language reception and production (Jenpattarakul, 2012). Vocabulary knowledge is important because it encompasses all the words we must know to access our background knowledge, express our ideas, communicate effectively, and learn about new concepts. Vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and context together, making comprehension accessible for the readers. However, it is useless if the students learn a lot of words or possess a large number of vocabularies but they can't remember or retain in their long-term memories (Jenpattarakul, 2012).

Khabiri and Pakzad (2012) stated that as it is obvious in the domain of vocabulary learning, the problem is not just in learning second language words; rather in remembering them. Bahrick (1984) stated that how well people remember something depends on how deeply they process it. Craik and Lockhart (1972) mentioned that according to "Depth of Processing Hypothesis", the more cognitive energy a person exerts when manipulating and thinking about a word, the more likely it is that they will be able to recall and use it later. This hypothesis implies that it is not important how recently learners have learnt something. What is of more importance in learning is, in fact, the depth of processing; in other words, students must be taught on how to process information deeply. Such implications extend to pedagogy as well, suggesting that exercise and learning strategies which involve a deeper engagement with words should lead to higher retention compared to shallow activities. Marefat and Ahmadi Shirazi (2003) stated that "Language learning strategies are any set of actions, plans, tactics, thoughts or behaviors that the learners employ to facilitate the comprehension, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (p. 47).

**Word Sorting**

Using appropriate presentation methods enables learners to obtain a deeper impression of and richer information about the target words to make them enter the long-term memory (Zhang, 2008). Cognitive psychologists and language acquisition scholars working within the framework of cognitive psychology believe that retention and recall of information is determined by the way in which the information is processed (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001).

Carlisle (1993, pp. 97-105) also writes “effective vocabulary instruction include such practices as building semantic relationships, providing ways to remember basic word meaning, integrating information with prior knowledge, and facilitating multiple exposures to words”.

According to Lauritzen (2010), word sorting is defined as “an instructional technique in which students organize words printed on cards into columns on the basis of particular shared conceptual, phonological, orthographic and meaning related-features”(para, 5). Gehsmann (2008) described word study in the following paragraph:

Word study is an approach to teaching phonics, vocabulary and spelling and is supported by nearly four decades of research, beginning with the work of Charles Read and Edmund Henderson in the 1970s and continues through the work of many today (Gehsmann,
Underlying this approach is an understanding that English orthography, or spelling, has three layers: alphabet (sound), pattern, and meaning. (p. 1)

Gehsmann continues:

Students uncover the layers of orthography with each new word they learn to read and spell. For instance, when a beginning reader matches the letters of “cat” to the sounds she hears (/c/-/a/-/t/), she is demonstrating knowledge of the alphabetic layer by establishing 1:1 correspondence between letters and sounds. Later, as the reader discovers sound and spelling contrasts between words such as “fit” and “fight,” or “cap” and “cape,” she moves into the pattern layer of orthography. Over time and with considerable practice and instruction, the student will eventually discover that groupings of particular letters represent meaning units – prefixes, suffixes, base words, and roots, thus uncovering the meaning layer. The mature reader carefully orchestrates his or her understanding of the three layers of English orthography when reading, writing, listening, and speaking (p. 1).

Word sort is a strategy that helps students learn and better remember new vocabulary. Students work in small groups, with each group given an envelope containing key terms on separate slips of paper. Students are instructed to discuss what they think the relationships among the words might be. The strategy was developed for use in science courses, where terms have more precise meanings and fit more readily into categories. Students do this initial sort before reading about the terms or hearing them defined and discussed in lecture. After exposure to the words in the text or lecture, students get back into their groups and re-sort the words; comparing their new arrangements with the ones they first constructed (Weimer, 2010).

Word sorting activities provide instructors with a framework for more individualized instruction at students’ developmental spelling levels. In word sorting activities, students organize word cards into columns on the basis of a shared conceptual, phonological, or orthographic feature (Zutell, 1996, 1998). Word sorting is based on four principles outlined by Zutell (1996). First, the English language is not arbitrary. There are extensive sound, visual, and meaning patterns. Second, more than rote a memorization, learning to spell includes a strong conceptual component. Children learn how words work. Third, spelling development follows a set of stages in which children produce more accurate spellings and more sophisticated misspellings. Fourth, relationships are first recognized in familiar words, and then extended to less familiar words, which become more memorable as the child fits the new words into the scheme of the old words (Zutell, 1996). While word study is supported by all four of the principles, the fourth principle outlines the rationale for word sorting activities (Fresch, Wheaton, & Zutell, 1998).

Recent research indicates strong evidence that students in grades first through fifth show an increase in word knowledge after participating in word sorting activities. Additionally, children with learning and cognitive disabilities participating in word sorting activities also show an increase in spelling ability (Fresch et al. 1998). In 1998, Fresch et al. asked children to “think aloud” while they sorted words into categories. This allowed researchers to analyze the thought process of students as they sorted words. The results of the study implied that less sophisticated spellers placed words into categories based on either auditory or visual features of words. As
spellers became more sophisticated, they chose the categories for the words based on both auditory and visual features of words, thereby suggesting that they were realizing the connection between the two. The think aloud process also gave students a reason to talk about words and use the “language of language” (long and short vowels, prefixes, suffixes, syllables, etc.). Fresch et al. suggested that think aloud sorting can guide teachers to a better understanding of children’s misconceptions about words, which in turn drives future instruction. The developmental spelling level suggests the type of words the student needs to sort. Word sorting takes place at a less difficult level than a student’s reading or writing level. Just because a student can read and write a word does not mean that he or she can accurately analyze the word in relation to spelling patterns. Finally, when word sorts are designed to teach toward strengths, students are able to build on prior knowledge and develop new approaches for spelling words (Fresch et al., 1998).

RESEARCH QUESTION
In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research question was formulated:

Does using word sorting techniques have any significant effect on EFL learners' vocabulary retention?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of the present study were adult EFL learners aged within the range of 19 to 32 years. They were at the pre-intermediate level of English language proficiency studying at Talk and Narcissus language schools in Dezful, Iran. In the present study, the sample selection was done at two stages. At the first stage, a larger sample of 90 pre-intermediate EFL learners was selected non-randomly and a piloted language proficiency test, sample Preliminary English Test was administered to them. Following the administration of PET, 60 EFL learners, whose scores fall within the range of one standard deviation above and below the sample mean, were chosen as the participants to take part in the second stage.

At the second stage, in order to have a homogeneous sample in terms of vocabulary knowledge and to make sure that the target sample did not know the target vocabularies, which were supposed to be covered during the study, the 60 selected participants took part in a piloted teacher-made vocabulary test. Those participants who answered less than 25% of the questions were assumed not to know the majority of the target vocabularies and were thus selected as the target sample (N=60). The selected participants were thus randomly divided into two groups, one experimental and one control with 30 learners in each. Since 30 is too large a number for the students in one English class, all the participants were seated in a collection of two classes of 15 for each group. That is, two classes of 15 and 15 for the control group and two classes of 15 and 15 for the experimental group. It should be noted that, 30 pre-intermediate students formed the pilot group participants who were studying English at the same language schools where the main study was conducted and had the same characteristics and language proficiency level as those of the target sample.
Instrumentation

Vocabulary pre-test

An 83-item vocabulary test, which was designed and piloted by the researcher based on the materials of the treatment were used at the onset of the study to test the participants’ degree of familiarity with the target vocabularies. This test consists of multiple-choice items, each of which tests one single vocabulary. It is worth mentioning that for these multiple-choice items, the students had to find the most appropriate word from among the alternatives to complete the stem. The pretest was used to homogenize the participants in terms of their vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary post-test

The post-test included two sections: a) A 65-word list and b) A piloted 65-item teacher-made vocabulary test which was a parallel form of the 83-item vocabulary pre-test which used at the onset of the study for homogenizing the participants, with the only difference that the vocabularies which the participants answer correctly at the homogenization stage were omitted from this test (18). The purpose of the word list which contained the same vocabularies as the test was to make sure that the students did not mark the correct answer in the test by chance. The post-test was administered two weeks after the termination of treatment. The procedure of designing the tests is fully described in the procedure section.

Materials

One of the textbooks used in this research was Top Notch 2A by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher (2011). This textbook is used in Talk and Narcissuss language schools for pre-intermediate learners and it consists of 5 units. It is usually taught in a semester of 19 sessions. The goal of Top Notch course is to make English unforgettable through multiple exposures to language, numerous opportunities to practice it, and systematic and intensive recycling. Top Notch emphasizes the cultural fluency which enables students to navigate the social, travel, and business situations that they will encounter in their lives.

Procedure

In experimental group, in the first session, word sorting techniques were presented and described explicitly by the teacher. Then, it was explained to language learners why, when, how these techniques could be used. Teacher asked students to sort new words based on their conceptual and phonological, orthographic and meaning related features. To do this, the teacher used two basic ways to conduct the sorts: close and open sort. In close sorting (teacher-directed), the students sorted words based on categories (and the specific features of each) provided by the teacher, usually shown by keywords that head columns. The students then matched the words with the features to create the word collections. In open sorting (student-centered), the students decided how to categorize the words and the teacher provided only the list of words. Students could work together to discern the common features and to describe the categories for collecting the word groups. Steps to a Word Sort were:

First the teacher listed between 10 and 20 key vocabulary words from the target material on the board or on index cards in every session. Then she divided the class into small groups of 3 or 4 students and distributed the index cards.
For a Closed Word Sort, she provided students with the categories into which they could sort the vocabulary words. For an Open Word Sort, she instructed the student teams to suggest categories for organizing the words. Next she allowed 10 to 15 minutes for the student teams to assign the words to the appropriate categories.

And finally she conducted a class discussion with each group presenting their word list for one of the categories requires the students to defend their sorting of terms by asking about the common features of the categories and how each specific word meets these criteria. Every session before the new instruction the teacher reviewed the previous categories.

On the other hand, the control group was taught through the traditional techniques of teaching vocabulary which is the typical method of teaching vocabulary in the mentioned language schools. According to Gairns and Redman (1986), traditional techniques of teaching vocabulary are classified in to three categories: visual, verbal and translation. Visual techniques concern with visual memory such as photographs, blackboard drawings, wall charts, realia, mime and gesture. Verbal techniques include illustrative situations, synonym and definition, contrasts and opposites, scales and examples.

Two weeks after the termination of the treatment, the post-test was administered to both groups. Interval of two weeks was chosen because less than this time the students might use their short-term memory to answer the questions and in more than two weeks further learning may occur (Pishghadam, Khodadady, & Khoshsabk, 2010). The posttest included two sections. The same 65 target vocabularies which none of the participants knew at the onset of the study were presented in two forms, one a vocabulary checklist in which the participants were required to write a synonym or a definition in L1 or L2, and the other in the form of a vocabulary test with multiple choice which was a parallel form of the vocabulary pre-test. The reason for having the two forms for the post-test was to make sure that the students did not mark the correct answer in the test by chance. It took 30 minutes to administer the vocabulary list and 65 minutes was allotted to administer the vocabulary post-test. Every individual was awarded a score of one for each vocabulary in the post-test provided that he/she had both selected the correct response from among the alternatives on the vocabulary post-test and provided the correct synonym or definition in Persian or English on the post-test checklist indicating retention of that vocabulary. If only one of these were correct, the candidate could have guessed the answer on the multiple choice test and would receive a score of zero on that vocabulary indicating lack of retention. At the end, the obtained data were analyzed to test the null hypothesis of the study.

**Data Analysis**

Various descriptive and inferential statistics were employed throughout the study. First, descriptive statistics were used for the homogenization process, pre and post-test. The reliability of pre and post-test were estimated. To address the null hypothesis, an Independent Sample T-test was run to study the effect of word sorting techniques on improving EFL learners' vocabulary retention. The result of the analysis will appear in the next chapter.
The data gathered from the pretest and post-test of both groups was analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Cronbach α was employed for calculating the reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the PET. An Independent Sample T-test was run to compare the two groups' means on the pretest of vocabulary in order to prove that they were homogenous in terms of the vocabulary knowledge prior to the main study. An Independent Sample T-test was run to compare the two groups' means on the posttest of vocabulary in order to investigate the effects of word sorting techniques on EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of vocabulary pre-test is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Pre-test of Experimental and Control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>6.600</td>
<td>2.40115</td>
<td>5.766</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows the 60 descriptive statistics of vocabulary pre-test among the participants who were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control. Table 2 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the scores.

Table 2: T-Test of the Vocabulary Test Pre-test of Experimental and Control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>(2-tailed) Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference of Means</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.748</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>-.09 to 1.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>1.748</td>
<td>57.92</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>-.09 to 1.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the results of the t-test with the assumption of the homogeneity of the variances ($t = 1.748$, $df = 58$, $p = 0.650 > 0.05$) indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups’ mean scores on the vocabulary pre-test prior to conducting the main study. As a result, the researcher being confident with the required conditions of the research continued the study by conducting word sorting techniques in the experimental group and employing the typical method of teaching vocabulary in the control group.
Descriptive Statistics of the Vocabulary Post-Test Administration

When the treatment was over and after a two-week interval, the post-test including the 65-item checklist along with the 65-item vocabulary posttest was administered to both experimental and control groups. Prior to running an independent-samples t-test, the normality of the distribution of post-test scores in both experimental and control groups had to be checked. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups’ post-test scores.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Vocabulary Post-test of Experimental and Control Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30.80</td>
<td>8.29</td>
<td>68.71</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>41.60</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>65.07</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the mean score of the experimental group came out to be 41.60 and higher than 30.80, which was the mean score of the control group; moreover, the skewness ratios fell within the acceptable range of ±1.96 signifying that the score distributions in both groups represented normality. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups’ post-test scores.

Table 4: T-Test of the Vocabulary Test Post-test of Experimental and Control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equal variances assumed</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Confidence of the Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>5.114</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>10.80</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>15.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 displays the results of the Independent Samples t-test run on the post-test mean scores of the two groups. Results show a significant difference between the two groups.

Discussion

As reported in the results section, the data strongly suggested that using word sorting techniques can increase the pre-intermediate learners’ vocabulary retention. It is worth mentioning that the results were obtained under the condition that the same amount of vocabularies had been taught to both groups the only difference was the application of word sort techniques in the experimental group. As it was shown in the result section the experimental group outperformed
the control group. One reason for obtaining a better result in the word sorting group might have been that sorting activities are active, thoughtful; problem solving tasks (Fresch, 2000). Word sorting gives hands-on opportunities for students to work through the complexities of language. It also promotes word analysis, which can benefit students in other reading and writing activities (Fresch, 2000). They can be beneficial for helping students to spell words, recognize words, make word connections, become aware of the phonemic structure of words, and gain meaning of words (Joseph & Orlins, 2005).

A word sort is an active-learning, critical-thinking strategy that involves students in small groups of three or four actively discussing words that have been provided for them by the instructor (Vacca & Vacca, 2002). So grouping students is one of the most important elements of word sorting instruction that promotes literacy success, especially for at-risk students. These groups should always remain flexible and dynamic. Teachers should regroup when necessary to best meet the changing needs of students (Invernizzi & Hayes, 2004).

It is worth mentioning that prior knowledge also plays a significant role in active learning. Freire (1970) maintained that students don’t come to school “blank slates” or “empty vessels” waiting to be filled with information from their instructors’ lectures. Instead, all students come to class with prior knowledge and life experiences. In addition, there is a need to find ways to tap into that prior knowledge so are able to help students make connections between their prior knowledge and what they are learning in classes. During the word sort, students use their individual and collective prior knowledge to make meaning of the terms and to understand the relationships between and among the words and to make decisions regarding their initial categorizations; consequently, the content and depth of their discussions within their small groups directly reflect this as well.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, this research presents the following implications for EFL teachers, learners, syllabus designers while dealing with language learning, teaching, and developing EFL materials. Many language teachers in EFL contexts treat the vocabulary teaching in a traditional way. In addition to, in teacher-centered classes where the students have a passive role in learning, teachers are considerably remiss in teaching this paramount component of language, overlooking the insight that they can give language learners by using language learning strategies in general and cognitive strategies in particular. As teachers, they should endeavor to abandon taking the full responsibility of teaching and engage the learners in the process of learning and bring up independent and autonomous language learners.

Teachers should try to familiarize their students with innovative vocabulary teaching strategies such as the one explored in this study, that is, word sorting techniques. However, before teaching students how to use strategies effectively, teachers should be trained in strategy instruction and assessment. They should be equipped with appropriate strategies to be able to propose to students the appropriate ones and can deal with difficult academic tasks. If, for instance, one strategy does not work they should be able to suggest another alternative. What is more, teachers should design
activities that will require them to make use of a variety of strategies and after the completion of the task they should hold a discussion session with students talking about the strategies they use, whether these strategies proved to be useful or not. In this way, while the teachers will have the opportunity to see to what extent each of the students is successful in the orchestration of the strategies, the students will be able to hear or see what strategies their peers use. Thus, they will be given the opportunity to make self-evaluation, decide which is better for them, or learn an alternative way of doing a particular task.

The findings of this study suggest that EFL learners need to take more responsibility for their learning and rely less on teachers and adopt cooperative learning. Learners’ autonomy is the ultimate goal of language teaching. Language teaching learners’ autonomy implies that in the absence of language teachers and classes, language learners continue their learning. If learners are solely and completely depend on their teachers and classes to be involved in language learning activities, as soon as they will be left by themselves, they easily quit their learning. Strategy training is a useful way to eliminate this problem. Language learning strategy training is the path through which learner autonomy can appropriately be achieved. As a result, learners are also recommended to get familiar with innovative vocabulary teaching strategies, especially concept sort and its underlying principles in order to benefit from its advantages. Language learners are recommended to gain some knowledge concerning concepts such as mental map, schematic knowledge and conceptual mapping.

Curriculum and material developers should infuse strategy training into materials in teacher training courses. Also, EFL practitioners should arrange some in service courses for EFL teachers to familiarize them with strategies and their benefits and advantages in teaching. Through these courses EFL teachers can properly exploit strategies and in improving their teaching success. Consequently, curriculum developers and material producers should collect feedback from teachers and students in order to identify the weaknesses and strengths of their products. This will enable them to produce better and developed materials. All in all, curriculum developers and material producers should work cooperatively with teachers and students so that they can design a better program with appropriate materials and tasks that will promote a more efficient and a more effective language learning atmosphere. According to the findings of this study, it is suggested that material designers develop teaching materials based on strategy-instruction, especially on word sorting techniques.

This study can be replicable to male learners and the results can be compared with the females to see whether using word sorting techniques are more effective for males or females. More comprehensive research on different variables such as participants’ cultural background and different proficiency levels of English is necessary. In addition, learners with different language proficiencies could be studied to investigate the effect of word sorting strategies. Future studies can investigate the comparative effect of different word sort techniques such as picture sort, sound sort and digital word sort on vocabulary retention and recall.
REFERENCES


USING DISCOURSE STRUCTURE-BASED GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS IN DEVELOPING EFL LEARNERS’ READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the effectiveness of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on pre-intermediate students’ reading comprehension. The purpose of the study was to determine whether students who used discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity would perform better on post-test compared to those who were involved in conventional method of reading comprehension activities including question and answer, true/false, cloze tests, etc. This study also explored the differences between using graphic organizers and the conventional comprehension method in developing English as foreign language (EFL) learners’ reading comprehension. Two pre-intermediate-level EFL classes were randomly selected at Oxford foreign language school and were assigned to experimental and control groups. Data were collected through the administration of a pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension on the materials covered in 10 sessions. The reliability coefficients of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula. The experimental group structured their own graphic organizers for reading texts studied in the class hour and presented them to their classmates in groups while the control group received conventional reading comprehension activities as a reading aloud, explaining the new words and answering the questions of the items. The statistical analysis included Paired and Independent Sample t-tests. Results revealed that the students who completed discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity performed significantly better in the post-test than the students who participated in the conventional method. The implications of this study could be used in reading comprehension classroom to familiar the learners with graphical structures of the reading passages.

KEYWORDS: Discourse structure; Graphic organizers; Reading comprehension
INTRODUCTION

In both first and second language (L1 and L2) contexts, reading is an essential skill to master for students. In formal educational settings, critical importance is attached to reading skill because students’ success mostly depends on their reading comprehension skills (Jiang, 2007). Most of the input students are exposed to be in written form and this necessitates that they develop effective reading strategies. In an L2 situation, students should be provided with special attention because reading in L2 is naturally more challenging and demanding than reading in L1 (Jiang, 2007).

In order to scaffold EFL learners in their approach to reading tasks, the discourse structures of reading passages might be exploited. Since focusing on discourse structures facilitates following the flow of ideas in a text in an effective manner, teachers might guide their students to be alert to text structures and text organization.

While comprehending a passage, most students mentally translate the content into their first language. Students may even respond to the comprehension questions through the time-consuming process of thinking in their first language and then translate it into English. Students cannot verify the accuracy of their translation of the meaning of the passage into their mother tongue (Lin & Chen, 2006). Using graphic organizers gives students alternatives to these inefficient methods of reading or comprehending a passage. In contrast to their usual approach to reading or comprehending a passage, they classify the content of the passage and then try to decode it (Lee & Schallert, 1997).

This study explores how classifying a reading passage using graphic organizers has shown better results compared with reading a passage without using these organizers.

Learning through visuals helps students in comprehending passages more effectively than other reading strategies like skimming, scanning, note making, etc. According to Slavin (2011), research in pedagogy and psychology demonstrates that visual learning is among the most effective methods for teaching comprehension skills to students of all ages. Helping students organize the content helps them to comprehend texts for information such as main ideas, supporting details, facts, opinions, comparisons and contradictions. According to Keene and Zimmerman (1997), students must be encouraged to make connections with the text they read to increase the effectiveness of reading. Graphic organizers can play a vital role establishing the connections. The text will be very clear to students when a graphic organizer is incorporated depicting the theme or content of a text they read. Moreover, graphic organizers using diagrams illustrate concepts and relationships between concepts discussed in a text.

Graphic Organizers

A graphic organizer is a diagram that represents a relationship directed by a thinking-skill verb. The verb “sequence” calls for a diagram of a series of boxes connected by arrows that shows the “event” of one box leading to the “event” of another box (Hibbard & Wagner, 2003). In 1992, Jay McTighe in his book, Graphic Organizers: Collaborative Links to Better Thinking, outlined three main ways teachers may use graphic organizers in their teaching and a number of ways that students can use them to aid their learning process. In the reading process, graphic organizers can be used at three levels: Before instruction, during instruction and after instruction. Before instruction, graphic organizers are used to understand the level of the students in terms of the
content. During instruction, graphic organizers allow students to approach the content cognitively because they assist thinking. It also allows students to construct maps that are appropriate to their learning styles. After instruction, they help students as a summarization tool or technique and they help the students to understand their improvement in terms of understanding passage. If a student can connect prior knowledge with what was learned and identify relationships between those ideas, it means graphic organizers have successfully assisted them in the course of their learning process.

The strategy that has received the most attention from the research community is the graphic organizer (Barron, 1969). Graphic organizers are representations, pictures or models used for processing textual information. They facilitate understanding of knowledge when there is a large amount of information to work with, in a given limited time (Lee and Schallert, 1997). There are various functions of graphic organizers. In reading comprehension, they assist learners to clarify and organize information into categories (main idea, supporting details, topic sentence, facts opinion, etc), organize information in a paragraph for better understanding, construct meaning of difficult words and sentence dividing into lexis, understand the context by associating with prior knowledge and identify conceptual and perceptual errors that may occur in the course of reading a passage.

Graphic organizers have been classified into five major categories according to their structures: star web, chart matrix, tree map, chain, and sketch. Graphic organizers have also been classified into eight categories according to their purposes for learning. The eight categories of graphic organizer are KWL chart, history frames, word map, zooming in and zooming out – concepts, zooming in and zooming out-people, Inquiry chart, venn diagram, column notes. KWL charts can be used as a teacher-led activity to introduce a new topic at any grade level. A history frame allows students to look at historical events and break the information down to understand its significance, the people and places involved and any other pertinent information. A word map helps students analyze a new or complex vocabulary word from many different angles. Zooming in and out-concept graphic organizer allows students to delve deeper into a more complex concept. There is a box in the middle of the page for the concept; then there are five other boxes branching out from the middle, and zooming in and out organizer is similar to the one for concepts, but focuses on people instead. The center box is for the name of a person and the surrounding boxes include spaces for the most and least important information, similar people, related events, surprising facts and a summary statement. An inquiry chart or I-chart is a way to organize information obtained during research. It contains four columns across the top, each for a different question. A Venn diagram is used to compare two ideas, events or people. It contains two overlapping circles. A column notes organizer is simple to set up and versatile in its applications. To organize notes, all a student needs to do is divide a piece of paper into two sections, each with its own heading (Jiang, 2007).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
It is a well-accepted fact that reading is of utmost importance. In our modern world, where we are inundated by print, being a good reader is a prerequisite to deal with large amounts of
information that is made available to us. In short, possessing reading skills is a means of survival. However, being a skilled L1 reader is not enough to be an active and successful participant of society. If one is to pursue a career and achieve advancement, L2 reading skills constitute a significant challenge. Therefore, a very large percentage of people around the world are encouraged to learn to read a second language as students in formal academic settings. Most school systems around the world demand that their students learn English because it is a global language that could guarantee the capacity for economical and professional competition (Grabe, 2009).

Reading has varying definitions and interpretations in the literature. Aebersold and Field (1997) define reading as “what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text” (p. 15). Grabe and Stoller (2002) add one more component into this definition. In their interpretation, reading comes forward as “the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret the information appropriately” (p. 9). However, these definitions fail to reflect the complex nature of reading. A more comprehensive viewpoint is necessary if we are to fully define what reading is. Grabe (2009) claims that in order to appropriately define what reading is, one needs to clarify the characteristics of reading by fluent readers. Under the umbrella of his interpretation, the true definition of reading comprises some salient characteristics which could be observed in the act of reading performed by fluent readers. Firstly, reading is a rapid and efficient process which aims at comprehending; that is, understanding what the writer has intended to convey in writing. Reading is also interactive in the sense that it is an interaction between the writer and the reader. Another feature of reading is its strategic nature because a reader has to employ a number of skills and processes to anticipate text information, select key information, and organize and mentally summarize information. Reading is at the same time a flexible process. A fluent reader adjusts his or her reading processes and goals to the shifting purposes and interests in reading. The evaluative quality of reading stems from the fact that it is combined with readers’ attitudes and emotional responses to the text as well as a strong set of inferencing processes and the use of background knowledge. Apart from the aforementioned qualities, reading is inherently a linguistic process because the processing of linguistic information is central to reading comprehension. Finally, all reading activity is a learning process in one sense or another.

According Grabe and Stoller (2002), in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of reading, it is important to dwell on the nature of reading. When people read, they read for a purpose and this purpose is usually determined by the genre of what they are reading. To exemplify, people do not read newspapers in the same way they read research articles. They highlight seven purposes for reading, which include reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, reading to write, reading to critique texts and reading for general comprehension. Good readers of a language activate two kinds of processes while reading. These are lower-level and higher-level processes. While the lower-level processes are more automatic linguistic processes and are typically seen as skills-directed, the higher-level processes generally require comprehension processes that make use of the reader’s background knowledge and inferencing skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).
Lower-level processes include lexical access, syntactic parsing, semantic proposition formation and memory activation. In lexical access, the reader focuses on a word and recognizes its meaning in an automatic way. If the ultimate aim in reading is to achieve comprehension, then the importance of word recognition cannot be underestimated. Grabe and Stoller (2002) use a metaphor to explain the relation between word recognition and reading comprehension. Word recognition is “like the gasoline of the car which is made up of reading comprehension skills” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 22). Syntactic parsing makes it possible for the readers of a language to clarify the meanings of words that have different meanings in different contexts. Readers combine words in order to derive basic grammatical information and support clause-level meaning. Semantic proposition is the task of putting together word meanings and structural information in order to form basic clause-level meanings (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). When the aforementioned processes are operating well, they work together effortlessly in working memory, which is best understood as “the network of information and related processes that are being used at a given moment” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 24). Grabe and Stoller (2002) liken the working memory to the “engine of the car which is called reading comprehension” (p. 25).

Higher-level processes related to reading include the text model of comprehension, the situation model of reader interpretation, background knowledge use, and inferencing and executive control processes. One of the salient higher-level processes is the text model of reading comprehension. During the processing of text information, the reader starts to see the ideas that are repeatedly used and that facilitate useful linkages to other information as the main ideas of the text. In short, the text model amounts to an internal summary of the ideas present in a text. In this model of comprehension, attempts are made by the reader to link the main idea from the first sentence to the one emerging in the second one, while the less important ideas get “pruned off” in the process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 26). However, in the situation model of reading comprehension, the reader interprets the information from the text in terms of his or her own goals, feelings and background expectations. Both the background knowledge and inferring skills of the reader have important functions in this interpretation process. Readers are likely to be misguided in cases where they interpret the text wrongly, have insufficient background knowledge or draw wrong inferences. Executive control processing represents the way in which the readers of a language assess their understanding of a text and evaluate their success, so it can be argued that, as readers, how well we comprehend a text depends on an executive control processor (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

**Models of the Reading Process**

The literature suggests that three reading comprehension models have been influential in reading research: bottom-up, top-down and interactive (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2004; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Nunan, 1999; Nuttall, 1996). Different cognitive processes are emphasized in these models. In the bottom-up model, the reader deals with letters, words and then sentences in an orderly fashion. If the idea is taken to an extreme, the reader can be thought of as processing “each word letter-by-letter, each sentence word-by-word and each text sentence-by-sentence” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002 p. 32). In this model, there is little influence from the reader’s background knowledge. Overreliance on text-based or bottom-up processing is referred to as “text-based processing” or “text-boundedness” (Carrell, 1996, p. 102). As a result of this text-boundedness,
readers may remember only isolated facts without integrating them into a cohesive understanding, which in turn brings the drawback of focusing on trees rather than paying attention to the whole forest (Nunan, 1999; Nuttall, 1996). This model has been criticized from the perspective that it underestimates readers” ability to think and the effects of background knowledge on the reading process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Whereas the bottom-up model emphasizes lower-level processing at the textual level, the top-down model of reading is concerned with higher-level processing. In this model, the reader relies on his intelligence and experience while using the text data to confirm or deny the hypotheses he or she brings to the text (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2004). According to Nuttall (1996), a reader using top-down processing assumes an eagle’s eye view of the text so it can be claimed that it is useful in order to understand the overall meaning of the text. Not only does the reader’s background knowledge about the content area of the text play a significant role in this top-down view of reading but also the rhetorical structures of the text are to be considered as important. It can be argued that there is a clear distinction between the bottom-up and top-down models of reading. In the former, the reader processes the text word for word, accepting the author as the authority, while in the latter the reader puts a previously formed plan into practice and has the option of omitting parts of the text which seem to be irrelevant to his or her purpose in the reading process. The top-down view of reading, also known as Goodman’s model or the reader-driven model, has also been criticized by some researchers on the grounds that what a reader can learn from a text is questionable if the reader must first have expectations about all the information in the text. As a result, few reading researchers support strong top-down views.

The literature review showed that graphic organizers used across several content areas (science, social studies, mathematics, Spanish as a second language, vocabulary, reading, and writing), multiple grade levels (first through senior high school), and different student populations (regular education students and students with learning disabilities). Thus in the 29 experimental and quasi-experimental SBR studies cited throughout this chapter. All of the studies included in this review have shown that using graphic organizers led to improved student performance as measured by various forms of assessments (classroom-based, observation, textbook, and standardized).

Graphic organizers also have been found to result in superior student performance when compared with more traditional forms of instruction (e.g., lecture, linear note taking, question/answering). SBR supports the use of graphic organizers at the upper elementary and middle level grades (sixth through eighth) (Alvermann & Boothby, 1986). Some SBR (Brookbank, Grover, Kullberg & Strawser, 1999) also exists to support the use of graphic organizers in the lower elementary grades (kindergarten through third). Positive results have been shown with secondary grade level (ninth through twelfth) students as well (Doyle, 1999). For the special population of students with learning disabilities, graphic organizers have been used with success (Boyle & Weishaar, 1997). Students with learning disabilities typically have difficulty comprehending content area texts and lack reading comprehension skills (Scanlon et al., 1992). Graphic organizers have been found to be effective tools for helping these students organize information and make connections with existing schemas. As a result, for the students with learning disabilities studied, comprehension and recall of information was enhanced.
RESEARCH QUESTION
This study will investigate the following research questions:
Do discourse structure-based graphic organizers affect students’ reading comprehension?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The study was conducted in Oxford Language Institute in Ahwaz. The participants of the study were 50 learners at pre-intermediate level and with age ranging from 13 to 16 years old. They were selected out of the research population (n=90) after administering a teacher-made homogeneity test. Fifty learners who got the scores within one standard deviation (SD) below and one (SD) above the mean were selected as the participants of the study. Then they were randomly divided into two experimental and control groups through systematic random sampling.

Instrumentation
In this study, two tests were used including the homogeneity test was used as the pre-test to determine the learners’ level of reading comprehension of selected texts at the beginning of research period and a post-test to determine the effect of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students reading comprehension of selected texts. The reliability of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula as (r=.720, and r=.798 respectively).

Materials
The materials used in this study were four reading texts (School on Water, Marital Art, Pet Heros, and Old San Juan) that were chosen from a reading text book, Connect (Jack C. Richards, 2009). While selecting the reading passages, the researcher made an effort to create a combination of texts that had different discourse structures as the aim was to expose the students to as many discourse patterns as possible during the course of the study. The text structures of the four reading passages that were used in the study included description, definition, sequence, procedure, cause-effect, classification, and various graphic organizers that reflected the discourse structures of these texts, a homogeneity test, that was used as the pre-test and a post-test were administered.

Procedure
As mentioned previously, the text structures of the four reading passages that were used in the study included description, definition, sequence, procedure, cause-effect, classification. In each text, two or three of these structures were nested within one another. The researcher developed graphic organizers that directly reflected the discourse structures of the selected texts. In order to understand whether these graphic organizers were appropriately designed, the opinions of five teachers were sought. They all agreed on the appropriateness of the graphic organizers developed by the researcher. In order to test the practicality of the graphic organizers, four reading teachers from the pre- intermediate level were asked to sit down and complete the graphic organizers with the texts; they all successfully completed the graphic organizers.
Before the experiment started, the participant teacher had tried to make the students familiar with the procedure of the study by using several samples of text structure-based graphic organizers for some texts in their course books and by asking the students to fill them in. Both the selection of the texts and the development of the related graphic organizers were done by the researcher. The participants of the study participated in both the graphic organizers and the conventional treatments, so it can be claimed that they acted as their own experimental and control groups. After the preparation sessions, in the first week of the experiment, a homogeneity test, that was used as pre-test was administered. The test included 20 open-ended questions extracted from the reading texts, the test material was designed based on the scope of the study. It was made up of 4 passages, totaling 20 questions which can be classified into four types of reading questions: (1) Identifying the main idea, (2) finding the supporting details, (3) understanding vocabulary and (4) making inferences. Out of 20 questions, there were 8 main idea questions, 4 supporting detail questions, 4 vocabulary questions and 4 inference questions. Each question was worth 1 mark and the sum total of the test was 20, students answered these questions during 90 minutes. The learners who got the scores within one standard deviation below and above the mean were accepted as the participants of the study. Then two experimental and control groups were selected through systematic random sampling. During 10 sessions of instruction, 90 minutes each, the texts were worked.

In the experimental group at the beginning of the instruction, the researcher familiarized the students with what graphic organizers are and how to use them effectively while reading a text. The students were also trained to use different organizers for different types of passages. The students learned a variety of existing graphic organizers and they also started creating their own organizers. In the following 10 sessions the participants in the experimental group structured their own graphic organizers for reading texts studied in the class hour and presented them to their classmates in groups. Some of the graphic organizers were also presented by the students to the whole class by drawing on the board. Then, reading comprehension questions were answered by the participants and checked by the instructor. The instruction material and content provided for both the experimental and control groups were the same but the control group was not exposed to the use of graphic organizers and implementing the same in reading process. The control group adopted conventional methods where students were made to read the passage again and again to understand the content and answer the comprehension questions. They were able to understand the meaning conveyed in the paragraph or passage but they could not classify a paragraph into main idea, topic sentence, supporting details, etc. In the final session, after 10 sessions of treatment, a post-test was administered, pre-test was modified for the post-test. It was 20 open-ended questions from reading texts for each group. They replied those questions during 90 minutes. The reliability of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula Then the data was statistically analyzed.

**Data Analysis**

In this study, data were collected through the administration of post-tests. In the analysis of this quantitative data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used. In order to examine the effects of the discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students’ reading comprehension, parametric statistical methods were used for the analysis as the data were
normally distributed. Independent and Paired Samples t-test were conducted in order to explore how the discourse structure-based graphic organizer treatment affected the participant students’ comprehension of each text as well as the students’ overall reading performance in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study discusses the effect of using graphic organizers on the EFL learners’ scores derived from different types of comprehension questions. Paired and Independent Sample t-tests were performed to evaluate the impact of the two instructional approaches – using graphic organizer and the conventional comprehension method on all participants’ answers to comprehension questions. Before administering the pre-test, it was important for the researcher to examine whether the proficiency level of the students in both the experimental and controlled groups were the same or different. In the first session of the experiment, a pre-test was given to all the participants in the two groups. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics in the pre-test.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>2.606</td>
<td>.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.84</td>
<td>2.478</td>
<td>.496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The means presented in Table 1 showed that the mean of experimental (M=14.28) and control (M=13.84) groups were same. The results of the pre-test also proved that the comprehension skills of both the groups were at the same level. The results of the pre-test were illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean scores of the experimental and control groups were compared by using an Independent Samples t-test. Since the observed $t$ (.612) was less than the critical $t$ (2.064) with df =48, the differences between the groups’ pre-tests were not significant. Table 3 shows the results on the post-test.
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.7600</td>
<td>2.61852</td>
<td>.52370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.7200</td>
<td>2.20832</td>
<td>.44166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The means presented in Table 4.3 showed that the experimental group received higher scores on the post-test than the control group. The graphic organizer group performed significantly better than the control group. Thus, it could be claimed that the graphic organizer group outperformed the control group. The mean scores of the experimental and control groups were compared the difference by using an Independent Samples t-test in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the observed t (2.978) was greater than the critical t (2.021) with df 48, the differences between the groups’ post-tests were significant at the level of (p<0.05) and the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on the post-test. It was thought that it would be appropriate to make one single comparison by comparing pre and post-test scores of experimental group with pre and post-test scores obtained by the control group. The aim was to arrive at a final conclusion about the effectiveness of the graphic organizer treatment.

Discussion

The findings of the current study regarding the effects of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students’ reading comprehension of selected texts will be presented and discussed with reference to the literature. Then, the findings related to the differences between using graphic organizer and the conventional comprehension method will be presented and discussed. Suzuki (2006) supports the findings of the study and noted that graphic organizers might work well when students are required to find key points and note information in the text. Graphic organizers improve active processing and reorganization of information so it is recommended...
that they should be exploited as a support or an alternative to note-taking and summarizing. The success of the experimental group could be explained from two perspectives on the basis of this information. While completing the graphic organizers, the students felt an urgent need to find the key points in the text so they had an opportunity to reorganize the information in the reading passage. The graphic organizer treatment caused the participant students in this study to perform significantly better on the post-tests.

The findings of the current study are also in line with the propositions of the Paivio (1991) Dual Coding Theory. The theory posits that enhanced processing of information can take place if linguistic input is presented with congruent visual input because this facilitates dual coding of information. Since the graphic organizers used in the present study included lines, arrows and spatial arrangement, the students had an opportunity to store the contents of the texts in the form of both verbal information and visual images. This might be one of the reasons that led to the higher scores in the post-tests given after the students had been involved in graphic organizer activities. A study carried out by Suzuki, Sato and Awazu (2008) found that the spatial graphic display enhanced EFL readers’ comprehension of sentences more than the sentential display did. The results of the current study appear to support their finding.

The present study confirms the findings of Grabe and Jiang (2010) study; they propose a set of guidelines that teachers should pay utmost attention to while developing graphic organizers. According to Grabe and Jiang (2010), well-developed graphic organizers should highlight the most salient information in the text. One of the aims should be to reflect the macro level structure of the text as well as the local structure. Moreover, the teacher should be sensitive about making the interrelationships and patterns of organization in the text clear to the students. Apart from these, it is a necessity to present the content of the text in a way that is closest to the original while developing discourse structure-based graphic organizers. If the graphic organizers in question are partially completed, the teacher should make sure that they have effective clues for the blanks. If the texts and the related graphic organizers used in this study are scrutinized, it could be observed that the graphic organizers meet the criteria proposed by Grabe and Jiang (2010). This might have been one of the reasons that caused the experimental group to perform significantly better than the control group.

CONCLUSION
The quantitative data gathered from the students’ performance which were administered at the end of each procedure during the ten sessions of treatment shed some light on the use of the discourse structure-based graphic organizers in reading comprehension. The post-test scores of the two groups for both the graphic organizer and the conventional performances were calculated and compared with each other to see the effects of the graphic organizer treatment. This comparison indicated that the learners performed better on post-tests when they completed discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity in comparison to those that took part in a conventional method. The success of the graphic organizer treatment was consistent across the four texts used in the study. This finding supports what the literature indicates about the use of graphic organizers in reading comprehension.
The present study also confirms the findings of previous studies (Carrell, 1984, 1985; Martinez, 2002; Wang & Cao, 2009) that have highlighted the link between drawing students’ attention to discourse structures in texts and facilitating improved reading comprehension. Thus the use of text structure, as a tool, can facilitate EFL students’ reading comprehension of a text written in English. It is concluded that when EFL readers were made to consciously focus on the discourse structure of a text, their performance in reading comprehension was positively affected and they were able to reproduce more ideas from the text in question. Similarly, in the current study, the experimental students were able to reproduce more macro and micro level ideas from the texts in the summaries they wrote after completing the discourse structure-oriented graphic organizers.

There is a need to conduct a study that explores whether the inclusion of discourse-structure based graphic organizers has any effect on students’ reading comprehension skills would be enlightening. Finally, it would be interesting and informative to learn the results of experimental studies that explore the effectiveness of the graphic organizer treatment in improving language skills other than reading.

REFERENCES


THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF TURN-TAKING AND WAIT TIME ON IRANIAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM INTERACTION ENHANCEMENT

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ABSTRACT
This paper aimed to examine how signals of verbal turn-takings and wait-time strategies enhance the quality of speeches and conversations regarding the choice of various turn-takings. Movie clips from the New Interchange course book 1 (Richards, 2011) were chosen and considered as the materials of the study. Sixty participants were selected based on the homogeneity test at the pre-intermediate level and then they were non-randomly divided into two control and experimental groups. The participants took a conversation exam as a pre-test and talk in pairs on various subjects. The pre-test scores were recorded at the beginning of treatment. During the treatment period, the experimental group received treatment of turn-taking and wait-time strategies through explaining theses conversation strategies in the classrooms. The control group received traditional method of teaching conversations including role playing, class activities on different topics and the New Interchange Students’ book 1. Both groups received the same time and materials. The treatment lasted 10 sessions each 60 minutes to observe and collect data through recording the participants’ conversations in the classrooms considering their uses of turn-taking and wait-time strategies. Finally, they took a post-test on the same subjects they had in the pre-test. The scoring of participants’ utterances in turn-taking and wait-time was rated by two raters to arrive at inter-rater reliability indexes. The reliability of scoring was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis. Independent and Paired Samples t-test were used to determine the differences between the two group oral performances in the pre and post-tests. Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in terms of using more turn-taking and wait-time strategies. Thus, this study suggests the explicit method of teaching turn-taking and wait-time strategies in teaching conversations and oral performances.

KEYWORDS: Turn-Taking, Wait time, English language classroom, Oral performances

INTRODUCTION
The concept of turn-taking covers a wide range of concern which it is not just a theoretical construction in the linguistic field of discourse analysis, but an important pattern in
communicative events, governing speech-acts and defining social roles as it establishes and maintains social relationships. One cue associated with turn-taking is that of wait time. Within turn-taking, wait time may cue the hearer to know that they have a turn to speak or make an utterance. Turn-taking is considered to play an essential role in structuring people’s social interactions in terms of control and regulation of conversations. Therefore, the system of turn-taking has become object of analyses both for linguists and for sociologists. As a matter of fact, turn-taking refers to the process by which people in a conversation decide who is to speak next. It depends on both cultural factors and smart cues. Turn-taking is one of the basic mechanisms in conversation, and the convention of turn-taking varies between cultures and languages (Bakeman & Gnisci, 2005).

Rich turn-taking is an available feature of human-spoken dialogue. A turn is the essential factor within turn taking, which is attached to a speaker. Each speaker takes turns within conversation. A speaker is someone creating some sort of utterance or speech act directed towards an audience of one or more people. Very generally, turn-taking in linguistics can be defined as “the process through which the party doing the talk at the moment is changed” (Walsh, 2011). Thus, turn-taking has to do with the allocation and acquisition of turns i.e. how turns are exchanged in a talk or conversation (Brock & Hopson, 2008). Turn allocation is about giving turns to the next speaker(s), while turn acquisition describes how turns are received. In other words, turn acquisition determines the kind of action(s) the next speaker(s) can or should take when it is his/her turn.

Turn-taking is one of the basic mechanisms in conversation and the nature of turn taking is to promote and maintain talk. For smooth turn-taking, the knowledge of both the linguistic rules and the conversational rules of the target language is required. According to Bailey, Plunkett and Scarpa (1999), during a conversation, turn-taking may involve a cued gaze that prompts the listener that it is their turn or that the speaker is finished talking. There are two gazes that have been identified and associated with turn-taking. The two patterns associated with turn-taking are mutual-break and mutual-hold. Mutual-break is when there is a pause in the conversation and both participants use a momentary break with mutual gaze toward each other and then breaking the gaze, then continuing conversation again. This type is correlated with a perceived smoothness due to a decrease in the taking of turns. Mutual-hold is when the speaker also takes a pause in the conversation with mutual gaze, but then still holds the gaze as he/she starts to speak again (Brown, 1994).

Turn-taking as a pedagogical approach is at the core of teaching and learning in any subject. It comprises instructional and regulative components as it takes into account what kind of knowledge is to be exchanged and how it should be transmitted (Brockne, Desai & Oorro, 2001). Since common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way language is used Conversational rules vary in different cultures and different languages. One of the essential observations of conversational analysis is that, when conversing, participants obviously change their roles of speaker and hearer, i.e., they take turns (Walsh, 2011).
In the second language class, interactions between teachers and students serve as the main point for learning how to use the language. After the teacher asks a question, students mentally process their answers (Auer, 1996). They hear the question, determine the sounds and recognize its meaning and begin to form an answer. How long does it take to answer a question? How long should a teacher wait for an answer? Does it take longer to answer a question in the target language than in English? These are some of the questions that this study investigates.

Wait-time—the pause for thinking after questions and answers refers to the process by which people in a conversation decide who is going to speak next. It depends on both cultural factors and smart cues. In fact, the participant as Ellis (1997) states, look at language learning as an outcome of participating in discourse, particularly face-to-face interaction. This interpersonal interaction is thought of as a fundamental requirement of second language acquisition (SLA) (Bangerter, Clark & Katz, 2004).

A more important nonverbal behavior is wait-time, which is considered as the pause between conversational turns. In reality, wait time marks when a conversational turn begins or ends. If a teacher asks a question, the wait time both allows and prompts students to formulate an appropriate response. Studies (e.g. Good & Broughty, 2002), of on classroom interaction generally show that wait times in most classes are remarkably short—less than one second. Unfortunately, wait times this short can actually interfere with most students’ thinking; in one second, most students either cannot decide what to say or can only recall a simple, automatic fact (Tobin, 1987). Increasing wait times to several seconds has several desirable effects: students give longer, more elaborate responses, they express more complex ideas, and a wider range of students participate in discussion (Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober & Brennan, 2001).

As with eye contact, preferred wait times vary both among individuals and among groups of students, and the differences in expected wait times can sometimes lead to ashamed and difficult conversations (Luu, 2010). Though there are many exceptions, girls tend to prefer longer wait times than boys—perhaps contributing to an opinion that girls are unnecessarily shy or that boys are self-centered or without thinking. Students from some ethnic and cultural groups tend to prefer a much longer wait time than is typically available in a classroom, especially when English is the student’s second language (Toth, 2004). When a teacher converses with a member of such a groups therefore what feel to the student like a respectful pause may seem like hesitation or resistance to the teacher. Yet other cultural groups actually prefer overlapping comments—a sort of negative wait time.

In these situations, one conversational partner will begin at exactly the same example as the previous speaker, or even before the speaker has finished (Chami-Sather & Kretschmer, 2005). The negative wait time is meant to signal lively interest in the conversation. A teacher who is used to a one-second gap between comments, however, may regard overlapping comments as rude interruptions, and may also have trouble getting chances to speak. Even though longer wait times are often preferable, therefore, they do not always work well with certain individuals or groups (Donato, 2000).
For teachers, the most widely useful advice is to match wait time to the students’ preferences as closely as possible, regardless of whether these are slower or faster than what the teacher normally prefers. To the extent that a teacher and students can match each other’s pace, they will communicate more comfortably and fully, and a larger proportion of students will participate in discussions and activities. As with eye contact, observing students’ preferred wait-time is easier in situations that give students some degree of freedom about when and how to participate, such as open-ended discussions or informal conversations throughout the day (Ansarey, 2012).

In order to begin a conversation, participants must form a relationship, and to do this they must in some sense be of the same order. Any relationship must necessarily be based on partial equivalence. There is a need to establish a temporarily-shared reality among participants. Participants, to some degree, must agree upon a worldview, a cosmology. Common ground—a set of propositions which make up the contextual background for the utterances to follow—must be established.

Conversation is a type of discourse: it is spoken dialogic discourse. Thus, conversation analysis may be seen as a subfield of discourse analysis. Conversation analysis involves close examination of internal evidence within the (spoken) text. One type of conversation analysis is conversational ethno-methodology: Ethno-methodologists are primarily concerned with the tacit rules which regulate the taking-up by speakers of the running topic, and hence the change-over from speaker to speaker (Walsh, 2011).

The importance of conversation to our normative life is increasingly evident. Everything you do, say and present is a conversation or the opportunity for a conversation: what you say at a networking event, your website, your business card, your use (or misuse of social media), what you say at a meeting or event. All of these things are an opportunity to engage. Conversation is a form of interactive, spontaneous communication between two or more people who are following rules of politeness and ceremonies. It is polite give and take of subjects thought of by people talking with each other for company. A conversation works unpredictably for particular purposes since it is of a spontaneous nature (Walsh, 2011).

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Turn-taking skills and learning how to wait are critical skills needed to develop cooperative play skills. Waiting is a required in life including waiting in line, waiting to get someone’s attention, waiting while someone else is talking, waiting for a turn during play (Goodwin, 1981). As boring as it is, taking turns and knowing how to wait goes a long way. Turn taking for language refers to the back and forth interaction whether it is with gestures, signs, sounds, or words. Because conversations need to be organized, there are rules or principles for establishing who talks and then who talks next. This process is called turn-taking. Turn taking skills and learning how to wait are critical skills needed to develop cooperative play skills.

Turn-taking is usually considered to follow a simple set of rules, enacted through a perhaps more complicated system of signals. The most significant aspect of the turn-taking process is that, in
most cases, it proceeds in a very smooth fashion (Auer, 1996). Speakers signal to each other that they wish to either yield or take the turn through syntactic, pragmatic, and prosodic means. The organization of turn-taking provides "an intrinsic motivation for listening." As any given listener might be selected to speak next, s/he must cope with responding to the previous utterances. Bickmore and Cassell (2005) observed a number of characteristics in conversation, among them: Variable turn order and size; variable distribution of turns; overlapping is common, but brief; and overlapping is promptly repaired (when two parties find themselves speaking at the same time, one of them will stop). Given these characteristics, it is obvious, according to Sacks et al., that turn-allocation techniques are being used. The current speaker may select a different next speaker, or either party may self-select (Luu, 2010).

This paper is concerned with those turn-allocation techniques that are “obviously” present. In summary, turn-taking consists of a set of rules, which are enacted through the use of signals (Duncan, 1972, 1973). Goffman (1981) refers to a turn at talk as an opportunity to hold the floor, not what is said while holding it. Though most researchers use the terms turn and floor interchangeably, Edelsky (1981) maintains that the concept of floor correlates with "the acknowledged what's-going-on within a psychological time/space" (p. 209). A floor may therefore consist of several turns, just as it is possible to take a turn without having the floor. A person may even continue to control the floor while s/he is not talking. Although turn-taking mechanisms seem to be universal, they are subject to cultural variation. Fox, Jean and Schrock(2002) also consider turn-taking as a complex process, possible through the interaction of both phonological and syntactic cues.

Turn-taking is usually considered to follow a simple set of rules, designed through a perhaps more complicated system of signals. The most significant aspect of the turn-taking process is that, in most cases, it proceeds in a very smooth fashion. Speakers signal to each other that they wish to either yield or take the turn through syntactic, pragmatic, and prosodic means. Goodwin (1981), reporting on a comparison by Good and Brophy (2002), proposes that everyday conversation is resembled to short-wave radio as to how the turn-taking is performed. The speaker provides an end-of-message signal, after which the hearer holds the channel, bringing about a change in the speaker/hearer roles.

The difference between the two types of interaction is that, in a normal conversation, speakers benefit themselves of other means or mechanisms to provide that end-of-message signal. Bickmore and Cassell (2005) observed a number of characteristics in conversation, among them: Variable turn order and size; variable distribution of turns; overlapping is common, but brief; and overlapping is promptly repaired (i.e., when two parties find themselves speaking at the same time, one of them will stop). Given these characteristics, it is obvious, according to Sacks et al., that turn-allocation techniques are being used. The current speaker may select a different next speaker, or either party may self-select. 

Bikmore et al. (2005) propose a set of rules that apply at each transition-relevance place, that is, at the point where a next turn can be expected. In each transition relevance place, choices are presented to both speaker and hearer(s) as to who is to utter the next turn-
constructional unit. However, Sacks and his colleagues did not explain the signals employed in communicating such choices. Their rules only specify that, at any given transition-relevance place, the turn-so-far might be “so constructed” as to involve, or not to involve, the use of speaker self-selection. In summary, turn-taking consists of a set of rules, which are enacted through the use of signals.

What is a Turn?
A turn is different from the situation where a speaker produces backchannel signals (Walsh, 2011). Backchannel signals, such as uh-huh, right, yeah, etc., are signals that the channel is still open, and they indicate at the same time that the listener does not want to take the floor. Duncan (1972) also establishes a distinction between simultaneous turn and simultaneous talking. Instances of the first involve true overlapping, whereas instances of simultaneous talking do not always imply that the current hearer intends to take the turn; they might just be the result of backchannel signals overlapping with the current speaker’s turn. According to Edelsky (1981), turn definitions can be grouped in two main camps: Mechanical and interactional (Fouche, 2005). Goffman (1981) says that a turn is the opportunity to hold the floor, not necessarily what is said while holding it. On the other hand, interactional definitions are concerned with what happens during the interaction, and take into consideration the intention of the turn taker. Edelsky (1981) points out that speakers are more concerned with completing topics than structural units. Therefore, she defines turn as instances of on-record speaking, with the intention of conveying a message.

Speaking Skill
"Speaking" is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips (Groepe, 2009). When we learn our own (native) language, learning to speak comes before learning to write. In fact, we learn to speak almost automatically. It is natural. But somebody must teach us to write. It is not natural. In one sense, speaking is the "real" language and writing is only a representation of speaking. However, for centuries, people have regarded writing as superior to speaking. It has a higher "status". This is perhaps because in the past almost everybody could speak but only a few people could write.

Modern influences are changing the relative status of speaking and writing. Speaking is a communication skill that enables a person to verbalize thoughts and ideas (Donato, 2000). There are two instances when such a skill is required and these are: interactive and semi-interactive. In the first instance (interactive), this would involve conversations with another person or group of persons whether face-to-face or over the phone, wherein there is an exchange of communication between two or more people. In the second instance, semi-interactive happens when there is a speaker and an audience such as in the case of delivering a speech, wherein the speaker usually does all the talking, while the audience listens and analyzes the message, expressions, and body language of the speaker. Every single day, we are given opportunities to speak (Ansarey, 2012).

At home, the interaction with family members and neighbors and ask driving directions from passersby. We converse with the waitress at the local pub. At work, talk to colleagues and...
superiors and in addition discuss business issues and concerns during business meetings (Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober&Brennan, 2001). People with less average communication skills, particularly speaking skills, may have difficulty in gatherings, including social, personal, or business-related. The speaker does not know how to put his thoughts and ideas into words or he simply does not have enough confidence to speak in the presence of other people. Regardless of what may be the reason for this, it leads to one thing: ineffective communication. And a person who cannot communicate effectively would find it difficult to strike a good impression on others, especially on their superiors (Ansarey, 2012).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
With regard to the intended contents of the ongoing research the following research questions are raised:

RQ1. Can wait-time strategies improve Iranian pre-intermediate learners’ speaking skills in conversations?

RQ2. Do turn-taking strategies affect Iranian pre-intermediate learners’ speaking skills in conversations?

METHOD

Participants
In the present study, the population was 90 male students who studied English as a foreign language in Danesh institution in Dezful, Iran. Non-random sampling method was used for the selection of these participants. They took part in a homogeneity test based on Oxford Placement test at the pre-intermediate level to homogenize the participants. Then sixty students whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were chosen as the participants of the present study. The level of the placement test was designed for pre-intermediate learners. They were non-randomly divided into two groups, one experimental and one control. Each group included thirty participants. Experimental group has benefited from turn-taking and wait-time in conversation while the control group used the traditional way of talking in the conversation sessions or role playing and they were exposed to turn-taking and wait-time strategies implicitly. The participants were within the age range of 15 to 17.

Instrumentation
In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study, the following instruments were employed:

The Oxford placement test for the pre-intermediate learners was used to determine the homogeneity of the participants. This test featured 50 multiple choice-items covering vocabulary and grammar. The allocated time was sixty minutes to answer. Pre-test and post-test were designed by giving the learners the topics used in the course book and their conversation were recorded to test their wait-time and turn-taking strategies. Their presentations were rated by two raters to assess the inter-rater reliability index. The main sources of data collection for this
study were direct classroom observation and recording conversation between 2 or 3 minutes in each small group conversing related topics.

**Materials**
Interchange Book 1, fourth edition (Jack, C. Richards, 2011): It consists of ten units. The materials used in this study included reading and topics concerned with turn-taking and wait-time while students are interact together and proposed the topics and managed the conversations.

**Procedure**
To accomplish the purpose of the study, first 90 male were selected from Danesh institution in Dezful in district one, then a homogeneity test based on Oxford Placement Test: The pre-intermediate level was administered to the participants under study to determine their homogeneity and to divide the sample population into two groups. The two groups, 30 learners each, were selected non-randomly: one experimental and one control group. They met for one hour and a half, once a week.

In the first session of the course, a pre-test containing working on the given topics was administered to the participants before treatment in order to determine how well the participants know the wait-time and turn-taking strategies in performing oral performances before treatment. Then the conversations in pairs or peers were recorded and scored by two raters to estimate their inter-rater reliability of the scores. The Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to calculate the reliability index as \( r = 0.685 \). The treatment was based on the actual lesson instructions and technical terms on the topics regarding turn-taking and wait-time in the sessions. In each session, the first hour was allotted to lesson instruction and the rest to explain and teaching the turn-taking and wait-time in the experimental group. The same procedure was used in the control group but the turn-taking and wait-time strategies were taught implicitly. The whole research took place in language institution classroom circumstance. To motivate and encourage the participants to pay enough attention and to play more active role in the research program, they were told that the purpose of the extra instruction was to improve their quality in conversation and how got the meaning of the partner intention through wait time while their conversation.

The entire research project took place in ten sessions. In the experimental group, 10 topics were chosen regarding to conversation with change of the roles between teacher and participants or between the participants. During four sessions of instruction, 90 minutes each, 60 minutes were allocated to main performances and the 30 minutes of the time dealt with discussion on the turn-taking and wait-time through showing some clips within the book. The experimental groups were considering turn-taking and wait time and while the other one were in a traditional way and ordinary conversation in which the above strategies were taught without awareness in an implicit method. In order to teach and investigate on the effect of the turn-taking and wait-time in the experimental classes, the following phases were carried out:

In the first session, first of all, it was supposed to teach main lesson and then describe and explain about turn-taking and wait-time as clarification the point and get the student familiar to turn-taking and wait time and how they should get turn to answer the questions and in their
conversations through showing some clips within the book and clarify some signals and cues which showed as turn-taking and wait-time signals.

In each session, after reading the passage, the teacher presented the students with the challenging turn-taking and wait time to ask questions and answers of the students and also in their conversation together. When the teacher is the current speaker, then firstly the teacher can nominate a student to be the next speaker. If the teacher does not nominate the next speaker, then the teacher must continue the turn. If a student is the current speaker then they select the next speaker and the teacher takes the turn. If the student does not select the next speaker then anyone can self-select as next speaker, with the teacher taking the turn if they self-select. If the teacher or another learner does not self-select then the student continues the turn.

The students were asked individually to come the board and interact with teacher based on considering the turn-taking and wait time and also in pairs between students as show the point and clarify the turn-taking and wait time by changing the role speaker and hearer directly and tangible as sample to other students until the time let us. After during forth session and continue that way, it was tried to record some conversation actually some clips with high quality by using camera and video-tape from forth session to last session and finally were tried to transcribe them on paper. After recording some clips as sources to assess the performances, the topics were discussed.

The control group receives the same strategies implicitly and was taught in traditional and ordinary conversation. The participants in the control group conversed with no turn taking or wait time strategy in the classroom interactions and conversation, whereas the experimental group got benefit of turn-taking and wait time while talking to each other in the form of conversation. In reality, the basic aim behind the study was exploring the impact of turn taking and wait time upon conversation enhancement and satisfaction from what has been spoken as a concluding remark. These conversations on the post-test were recorded in each group and rated by two raters to estimate the inter-rater correlation (i.e. Pearson correlation analysis). The pre-test reliability index for the post-test was (r = 808) which showed appropriate scoring. Both the pre-test and the post-test were performed as part of the classroom evaluation activities under the supervision of the instructor. Having data collected, the researcher processed the data using the statistical package for social sciences (version 17). Independent Samples t-test was used to determine the differences between the two groups’ pre and post-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Pre-test
At the beginning of the study, two groups were given a pre-test which their statistical data is presented in Table 1.
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>51.266</td>
<td>24.586</td>
<td>4.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48.900</td>
<td>13.717</td>
<td>2.504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of the students in the two groups is 30. Initially, each student’s pre-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each group, were calculated. Results indicated that the average means for two groups was near to each other. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out that the SD of the experimental group was 24.586 to compare the SD of control group that was 13.717. In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups was statistically significant, Independent Sample t-test for the two groups was applied.

Table 2: Independent Samples Test (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Experimental vs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.460</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>2.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.460</td>
<td>45.45</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>2.366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the observed t (.460) is less than the critical t (2.000) with df=58 the difference between the Pre-test of the groups is not significant. Thus the groups are homogeneous at the beginning of the study.

Results of the Post-test

Descriptive statistics of the post-tests’ oral performance in the pre-test was calculated in the Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-test Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70.000</td>
<td>13.838</td>
<td>2.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58.366</td>
<td>23.388</td>
<td>4.270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the number of the students in two groups is 30. Initially, each student’s post-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each group were calculated. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out
that the SD of experimental group was 13.838, and SD of the control group was 23.38. To estimate the exact difference between the post-tests of the two groups, Independent Sample t-test was run in Table 4.

### Table 4: Independent Samples Test (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>Post-test Experimental vs. Post-test Control</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.345</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.345</td>
<td>47.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that the average means for two groups was not near to each other and the difference among the two groups is significant. Since the observed t (2.345) is greater than the critical t (2.000) with df=58 the difference between the Pre-test of the groups is significant. Thus the groups are homogeneous at the beginning of the study.

**Discussion**

Results of the study showed that the control and experimental groups were almost homogeneous based on the pre-test scores. To answer the research question, an Independent Sample t-test was conducted to find if there were any meaningful differences between the results of the experimental and control groups in the post-test. The analysis of covariance rejected the null hypothesis revealing a significant difference between turn taking and wait time users and nonusers. The main aim of learning a language is to use it in communication in its spoken or written forms. Classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. It is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to a mutual effect on each other. Through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can use all they possess of the language—all they have learned or casually absorbed—in real life exchanges (Gass & Sellinker, 1994).

Therefore, in line with the above mentioned statements and the present study, it could be strongly argued that Turn taking and wait time activities strategy instruction can significantly influence EFL language learners’ developing conversation. Simply, this study represents a preliminary effort to empirically examine the effect of Turn taking and wait time upon Iranian institution in Dezful city. Further researches are needed for a thorough understanding of this issue and for the confirmation of its findings. This is especially true when conducting research with more variables than those in the present study. It is also recommended that this study be replicated with a larger
number of participants and over the whole semester or the whole year. In addition, it would be interesting to compare results across levels of proficiency as well as gender.

The results of this study are matched with Brown (1994) who emphasize the importance of interaction among human beings and using language in various contexts to “negotiate” meaning, or simply stated, to get one idea out of your head and into the head of another person and vice versa.

The results showed that there was not a significance difference among students’ performance in pre-test, but in contrast there was a significant difference among the performances of the two groups in the post-test. Thus, it could be observed that students who received turn-taking and wait-time strategy instruction got better marks and their performance was better than another group. By looking at the groups’ means the results of post-test by Independent Sample t-test revealed that experimental group had the greatest improvement in their scores based on their conversations. The learners of experimental group after ten sessions outperformed the other groups. Therefore, the second research null hypothesis was rejected. The reasons behind this result could be discussed in terms of the effectiveness of turn-taking and wait-time on the quality of conversation in classroom interaction. Results showed a significant difference with between the experimental and control group. The above mentioned reasons might be the explanation of why the experimental group did better than the control group. The fact that experimental group outperformed the control group indicates that use of turn-taking and wait-time strategy in conversation let the students to think more and more about utterances and lead to mutual understanding and also give and ask opinion to be qualified the conversation.

The present study raised a number of questions requiring further research in the area of wait-time and turn-taking and its influence on conversation development. First of all, it is of importance to confirm more normative data with typically developing learners for wait time and turn taking. Similar research in respect of this trend might be valuable, especially with respect to interference programs in conversation classes. Turn-taking as pedagogical strategy which has shown turn-taking is a complex process which is influenced by various factors including classroom power relation and enhances the quality of conversation between students. The similar research which confirms this study is Turn-taking in the classroom which was conducted by Bakeman and Gnisci (2005) at University of Rome, Italy which has shown turn-taking could identify interactive patterns characterizing teachers’ strategies which could contribute to a mutual and better understanding of the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, it is important to determine whether similar results in terms of wait time and turn taking trends would be found when studying a larger plenty of participants. It would also be beneficial to study samples outside of Iran to determine if the same outcome applies not only for non native English speaking learners but also to children speaking British, Australian and American English or languages other than English. Moreover, wait time and turn taking trends regarding conversation require further investigations. Although a positive correlation with conversation was observed in the current study. Future findings might contribute to a better
understanding of the fact that some students benefit more from interference programs and, therefore, show better treatment outcomes than others.

CONCLUSION
The results showed that turn-taking and wait-time had a significant impact on experimental group performance in conversation aspect. In simple terms, conversation improvement of Iranian EFL learners could be attributed to turn taking and wait time instruction. The results of the study also indicated that the members of the experimental group achieved better results in the conversation than their counterparts in the control group did.

In the course of this study many questions have risen some of which are included here with the hope that they will be pursued and investigated. It is strongly suggested that a research with the same characteristics of this study including more participants to be conducted in an attempt to find the obtained results. Similar studies can be done on other proficiency levels, namely intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. Variables other than the ones used in this study can help the investigation of the same issue. For instance, the same experiment with male or female learners within the same age range is necessary to confirm the result of this study. This study lasted for ten sessions. Successful studies can allocate more time to the instruction of turn-taking and wait time to improve conversation and understanding better.

This study like any other research has its own limitations. The sample size was slightly limiting. Although it was moderate, more participants from different socioeconomic backgrounds may have reflected more natural results and a larger plenty of participants would have provided greater validity to the findings of the study and in addition to take part male and female. For finding out more investigation with considering both male and female, due to distribution of participants was not possible and lead to working on just one gender.

REFERENCES


EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING TEST-STRATEGIES ON READING COMPREHENSION TESTS

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ABSTRACT
The current English language teaching (ELT) is based on the communicative principle whose aim is not only the acquisition of language knowledge but mainly the acquisition of the reading comprehending and answering the standard tests easily and correctly. However, the present method through the article should not be overestimated because there should be always a balance between the acquisition and learning of foreign language knowledge and skills so that pupils could achieve corresponding communicative competences. Of course, it is necessary to mention that the present study compared the use of distinct test taking strategies by Iranian Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In addition, the reading language skill should be integrated in ELT classes, so that pupils could focus more on functional use of language. Therefore, the purpose of this article is firstly to evaluate the role of using strategies through the standard tests; secondly, to explain the importance of strategies for learning the language very well through the test and exam; and finally, to propose methodological approaches to the successful development of the reading comprehension and taking test like MCRT test. Finally, the present research determined that all participants have a tendency towards the use of test-taking strategies and both male and female participants act similarly in terms of the use of test-taking strategies while performing MCRTs.

KEYWORDS: Language Learner, Testing, Test-Strategies, Reading

INTRODUCTION
There are a number of limitations and delimitations which are imposed on this study. This research requires the use of limited number of items in MCRTs. The reason for this limitation is to give enough opportunity for the test takers to take the test and think about the processes used by them while taking the test. Generalizability of the findings is limited to upper-intermediate level since such findings have been achieved on the basis of upper-intermediate male and female test takers’ participation. This study is also limited to and mostly applicable with the adult test takers owing to the fact that test takers should have intellectual growth for thinking about the thinking process.
For the sake of manageability of research, the researcher used a single dependent variable, i.e. gender variation, to test the types of strategies used by test takers in performing MCRTs. As it is discussed in the introduction, MCRTs can be used to assess learners’ reading comprehension, writing skill, knowledge of grammar and knowledge of vocabulary. However, the researcher delimited this research to the use of multiple choice test of reading comprehension. The reason for choosing only one type of MCRTs lies in the nature of manageability of research at this level.

One of the fruitful ways of measuring learners’ reading comprehension is to ask them to carefully and deeply read the text and then answer a number of multiple choice questions. Weir (1990) defines a multiple choice test item as the selection of a correct answer from a number of options. This process requires the individual test takers to opt for the best answer from among other options. However, it is not a direct and precise issue to talk about reading the text and selecting the best choice. In the process of test taking, the test takers are always fully involved to choose the best answer. This participation not only necessitates the use of specific language knowledge but also active and conscious operation on the process of answering the items. These processes are assumed as test-taking strategies which are closely related to language use strategies. According to Cohen (1998), language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. The prominent objective of the present study is to investigate the types of strategies used by the two different genders while taking MCRTs. In fact, this study seeks an opportunity to study the strategies and processes in Iranian EFL test-taking context. Taking language tests must not be viewed as a product; rather, it is a process in which test takers undertake a number of mental operations. Gaining an understanding of the underlying operations and strategies will help the teacher (in the classroom assessment) and the test administration experts (in large-scale testing) to design proper MCIs with reference to the various genders.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Accuracy**

There are a number of researches carried out on accuracy. One important research which has an important effect on language teaching is EFL learners’ oral accuracy which has been studied by Farrokhi and Cherazad (2012). According to Farrokhi and Chehrazad (2012), historical background for focus on form is so important; that is, the researcher should have information about that to make a new and acceptable study. As explained above, Farrokhi and Chehrazad believed that the popular position in language teaching has been that the teachers or syllabus designers’ first task is to analyze the target language. Eventually, it is the learner's job to synthesize the parts for use in communication, which is why Wilkins (1976) called this the synthetic approach to syllabus design. Depending on the analyst’s linguistic preferences, the L2 is broken down into words and grammar rules, and etc. and presented to the learners in a linear and additive fashion according to such criteria as frequency, or difficulty. According to Long and Robinson (1998), synthetic syllabi, together with the corresponding materials, methodology, and classroom pedagogy, leads to lessons with a focus on forms. Moreover, as it is mentioned in Long and Robinson (1998), —synthetic syllabi, methods, and classroom practices either ignore language learning processes or tacitly assume a discredited behaviorist model in a way that the
learner's role is to synthesize the pieces for use in communication (p. 17). In addition to these problems, there is no needs analysis to identify a particular learner's or group of learners' communicative needs.

Recognition that the traditional synthetic syllabi and teaching procedures were not working as they were supposed to, led teachers, syllabus designers, and SLA theorists, to advocate the abandonment of a focus on forms in the classroom in favor of an equally single-minded focus on meaning. To this end, Communicative language teaching (CLT) was initiated in an effort to shift away from a sole focus on forms evident in the earlier structural approaches towards a focus on meaning and language use. Inspired by a theory of communicative competence (Hymes, 1971), its primary concern was to develop the ability of learners to use the second language meaningfully and appropriately in real life communication. CLT is not a uniform approach, however. One can distinguish between a strong and a weak form of CLT (Howatt, 1984). According to Wilkins (1976), therefore, a weak form of CLT is synthetic in its approach, as it advocates the teaching of linguistic units in isolation without allowing learners to infer rules during the holistic use of language. Conversely, a strong form of CLT argues that ―language is acquired through communication‖ (Howatt, 1984, p. 279). The strong version, thus, reflects what Wilkins refers to as an analytic approach to teaching, i.e. an approach in which it is the learner's task to analyze and discover the language. For language educators (Ellis, 2003), Task-based language teaching represents a strong form of CLT. It views —tasks as a means of enabling learners to learn a language by experiencing how it is used in communication (Ellis, 2003, p. 28)

Focus on Form
As mentioned above, different ideas and hypotheses have been described and explained about focus on form. Some researchers who have presented different ideas and explanations about focus of form are Hymes (1971), Wilkins (1976), Long and Robinson (1998), Ellis (2003) and so on.

Hymes' idea about focus on form
Understanding that the traditional synthetic syllabi and teaching methods were not working as they were supposed to, led teachers, syllabus designers, and SLA theorists, to advocate the abandonment of a focus on forms in the classroom in favor of an equally single-minded focus on meaning. To this end, CLT was initiated in an effort to change from a sole focus on forms evident in the earlier structural approaches towards a focus on meaning and language use.

Wilkins' idea about focus on form
One of the important and necessary duties of language teachers and syllabus designers is to analyze the goal, second or foreign language (Wilkins, 1976). As Wilkins explained the L2 or foreign language should be broken down into words, grammar rules and so on. Then the broken parts should be presented to the language learners in a liner additive fashion according to such criteria as frequency, or difficulty (1976). Of course it is important to know that according to Wilkins (1976), a weak form of CLT is synthetic in its approach, as it advocates the teaching of linguistic units in isolation without allowing learners to infer rules during the holistic use of language.
Long and Robinson’s about focus on form
Although a purely analytic, a meaning-based form of task based teaching was an important step forward from synthetic approaches, SLA research believes that, if native-like proficiency is the goal of training, such an approach will not suffice either. There is an ever-growing consensus among L2 researchers, investigators and second language trainers that, in order to be effective, task based syllabuses, and analytical approaches in general, need to be augmented, at least at times by some type of grammar instruction (Long & Robinson, 1998). This study was based on researches that describing those learners are to get native-like grammatical competence, despite even extensive contact with the target language (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Ellis’s idea about focus on form
But it is important to have some information about Ellis’s idea about focus on form. According to Ellis (2003), the great version, therefore, describes what Wilkins refers to as an analytic approach to teaching, i.e. an approach in which it is the learner’s task to analyze and discover the language. For language educators (Ellis, 2003 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrzad, 2012), task-based language teaching represents a strong form of CLT. It views tasks as a means of enabling learners to learn a language by experiencing how it is used in communication (Ellis, 2003, p. 28 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrzad, 2012).

Schmidt’s idea about focus on form
As Long (2000) explains, focus on form is largely motivated by, albeit not exclusively, by Schmidt’s Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 2001). This described hypothesis holds that noticing, a cognitive process that involves attending to the input learners receive, is inevitably a conscious process and is a necessary condition for second language learning. Schmidt (1990, 2001) has believed that attention and its subjective correlates noticing, i.e. registering formal features in the input, and noticing the gap, i.e. identifying how the input to which the learner is exposed differs from the output the learner is able to generate, are essential processes in L2 acquisition. Attention is generally considered a necessary condition for converting input into intake in the field of SLA (Schmidt, 1990, 2001 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrzad, 2012; Smith, 1993). Gass (1990), for example, explains that nothing in the target language is available for intake into a learner’s existing system unless it is consciously noticed (p.136).

According to Skehan and Foster (1999), these studies found no impact of task structure on the accuracy of performance. Although many researchers (Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005, Tavakoli, 2009) explained that task structure facilitates accuracy by devoting more important resources to it, Skehan and Foster (1999) found out that accuracy of the performance is affected by task structure when learners have the chance to engage in some kind of pre-task activity prior to task performance. So according to these studies, it can be concluded that task structure had no effect on the accuracy of the performance in the current study because the participants were not involved in any kind of pre-task activities before they performed the tasks. Accuracy was operationalized in terms of number of errors per a hundred words (Mehnert, 1998; Skehan, 1996; Sangarum 2005). It was gotten by dividing participants’ total number of errors by the total number of words produced and multiplying the result by 100. All errors in syntax, morphology or
lexical choice were counted, including repetitions. Errors which were immediately self-corrected were not counted and errors in pronunciation were not included in the analysis.

**Task-based language Teaching**

As early as 1970s, (CLT) method became popular among second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and second language teachers (Skehan, 1996). According to Skehan (1996), Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a realization of communicative language teaching. It is indeed the strong version of CLT, as tasks provide the foundation for an entire language program. Of course it is important to mention that Foster and Skehan (1999) found that there were some pre-mid- and post task activities that could be utilized to help language learners pay a balanced attention to both form and meaning simultaneously and improved the quality of learner language. As Ellis (2005) explained, planning is one of the task condition factors that affects second language production and has been of both theoretical importance to second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and of practical importance to language teachers. According to the importance of task planning factor in learners’ task performance, there have been plenty of researches which have concentrated on the interaction of planning and task performance of language learners (Ellis, 1987; Foster & Skehan, 1996; Ortega, 1999; Robinson, 1995; Skehan & Foster, 1997, 1999; Yuan & Ellis, 2003; Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008).

**Test Taking Strategies**

In an informative article, titled *Strategies and Processes in Test Taking and SLA*, Cohen (1999) is concerned with how test-takers make use of strategies and processes while taking a test. In order to describe such processes, Cohen (1999) gives a definition of test-taking strategies and also introduces devices and methods of data collection. Finally, Cohen elaborates on the strategies for taking tests of reading and writing.

According to Cohen (1999), during the late 1970s, researchers felt a need to study the strategies students use in order to derive correct answer to class of items. This interest even increased in 1990s and language testing researchers related such studies to reliability and validity. It has been always assumed that a wrong answer to a question may not be traced to the participant's lack of proficiency, item inappropriateness but rather it may be the result of participant's inappropriate selection of test-taking strategies. Thus, strategy investigation attracted the attention of those working in the realm of SLA research tasks and instructional achievement testing approaches. Test-taking strategy is subservient to and an element of language use strategy. Thus, in order to explain test-taking strategies, one needs to have an understanding of language use strategies. Language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. This definition highlights some degree of consciousness and a matter of selection. Language use strategies constitute test-taking strategies when they are applied to tasks in language tests (Cohen, 1999). An important feature of test-taking strategies, as mentioned by Cohen (1999) is that strategies are context dependent; thus, different situations may require the use of various types of strategies. Besides, the frequency of strategy use varies from context to context. Frequent use of test-taking strategies may be valued in some context. However, it may be inappropriate to use strategies in other contexts.
According to Cohen (1999), test-taking strategies can be identified and scrutinized using three different methods of data collection:

- **Observation**: observing what respondents do during the test.
- **Designing items**: designing specific items which elicit specific strategy use.
- **Verbal reports**: use of verbal reports while the items are being answered, immediately afterward, or sometime later.

The author of this article, Cohen (1999) provides detailed information on verbal reports. Cohen reports that verbal reports were used in first language research for the first time and were extended to SLA research afterwards. In fact, such reports help determine how respondents actually take tests of various kinds. Also, Cohen discussed two general testing formats, i.e. direct and indirect, in relation to strategy use. Indirect tests are tests that do not reflect real-world tasks. Such test types may encourage the use of strategies solely for the purpose of coping with the test format. Several researchers have studied the use of test-taking strategies while taking Multiple Choice Tests (MCT) as one type of indirect testing format (Mackay, 1974; Haney & Scott, 1987; Larson, 1981; Gordon, 1987 and Anderson et. al. 1991, all cited in Cohen, 1999). The general comment of the researchers working in this field was that participants may use different test taking strategies to arrive at answers; however, the efficiency is based on when the strategies are used and how effectively they are applied.

The aim of research in the case of Cloze Test is to see whether such a tests measure global reading skills as they are devised to do so. The research results suggest that Cloze Tests would suggest that such tests assess local-level reading more than they measure global reading ability. Furthermore, Cloze Tests are more likely to test for local-level reading when they are used in a foreign language test.

Direct tests resemble tasks of non-test condition or target language use. Three types of direct tests have been studied in relation to the test-taking strategies used. In the case of summarizing, respondents usually react to a set of perceived and real expectations on the part of the reader Cohen (1994), for example, claims that one strategy that test-takers use is to summarize by lifting material directly from the passage rather than restating it at higher level of abstraction. Like summarization, open-ended questions allow respondents to copy material directly from a text in their response. One strategy is to lift one material from immediate stimulus and use it as the answer. Another strategy is to introduce prepackaged, unanalyzed material and combine it with analyzed forms. Finally, Cohen (1999) studied composition as the third type of direct tests. The interpretation of essay topic is crucial and for this reason it is provided in a mini text. One strategy to succeed in writing compositions is to evaluate the nature of the task and its topic fully. Generally, an important consideration of the studies concerning test-taking strategies is to discuss the methods of elicitation. That is, tools which can be properly used to elicit the processes and operations selected by the test takers. Verbal report (Cohen, 1984, cited in Cohen 2006) is the primary research tool for this endeavor. He claims that verbal reports include data that reflect self-report, self-observation, and self-revelation. There are also two other ways of identifying test-taking strategies. The first one which is called observation is the process of observing what respondents do during the test. The second method is designing specific items which are
specialized in eliciting specific test-taking strategies. The researcher of the present study makes use of the test taking strategies to elicit proper answers from the Experimental group and Control group's test takers while taking MCRTs.

**Multiple Choice Tests as a Kind of Test Method**

"Test methods or test facets are aspects of the test method that may have an impact upon test scores (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007, p. 376)". As implemented in this definition, every test has specific aspects which can influence test score. What are those aspects which may change learners' performance? There have been distinct views on what constitutes a test. Researchers such as Carroll (1968), Clark (1972), Weir (1990) and Bachman (1990) have provided different frameworks of test method facets.

Carroll (1968) discussed test methods in terms of the stimulus and response characteristics. Later on, Clark (1972) added details to the stimulus and considered stimulus modalities as taking written, spoken, or pictorial form. Weir's (1990) framework is more informative while compared with the previous frameworks proposed for test method facets. The framework given by this researcher included general descriptive parameters of communication, dynamic communicative characteristics, and task dimensions. During the history of development of test method facets, every researcher added more details to the previous framework. However, Bachman's (1990) framework seems to be more elaborated than the previous frameworks. Bachman (1990) classifies five major characteristics of test method facets including testing environment, test rubrics, input, response, and interaction between input and response.

What is of great concern is the fact that all these frameworks will lead to specific types of test based on the selection feature of underlying components. That is, distinct matching of elements will result in various kinds of tests which are used for measuring four major language skills. For testing reading comprehension, Weir (1990) introduced multiple-choice questions as a method of testing that requires the candidate to select the answer from a number of given options, only one of which is correct. According to Fulcher and Davidson (2007), multiple choice items contain two elements: stem and choices. In contrast to the stem which is a question or statement, the choices are correct and incorrect answers which the test taker needs to decide on as the response to the statement or question. The second method for testing reading comprehension, as stated by Weir (1990), is short answer questions. These are in fact questions that require the candidate to write down specific answers in spaces provided on the question paper. One more type of testing reading comprehension is the cloze test where words are deleted from a text after following a few sentences of introduction (Weir, 1990). Selective deletion gap filling and information transfer are the two other testing methods which were given by Weir (1990) for testing reading comprehension of learners.

There are a number of advantages for multiple choice tests. The widely known nature of multiple choice test exhibits its usefulness and acceptability in many context of language testing. The uses are not blind. Hence, they bear some advantages. Weir (1990) explains the following advantages:

- Multiple choice tests have marker reliability.
- It is possible to estimate in advance the difficulty level of each item and the test as a whole in the pre-test phase.
- The format of multiple choice tests makes it easy for the candidates to understand what they are required to do.
- The completion of other test types require the use some other skills which are not the subject for testing, but the completion of multiple choice tests do not.

The main objective of this study is to examine the types of strategies used by Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking MCRTs. In fact, the researcher seeks an opportunity to study the strategies and processes in Iranian EFL test-taking context.

**Test taking Strategies and MCRT**

Cohen (1998) studied the strategies for taking reading and writing. He distinguished between indirect and direct testing formats. By indirect testing formats, Cohen (1998) referred to MCRTs and cloze tests. He also described direct tests as summarization, open-ended questions, and composition. Regarding the relationship between test-taking strategies and MCRTs, Cohen (1998) introduced a series of strategies respondents may utilize in order to arrive at answers to multiple choice questions. Strategies for taking multiple choice reading comprehension test are present in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for taking a multiple choice reading comprehension test (Cohen, 1998)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Read the text passage first and make a mental note of where different kinds of information are located.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read the question for a second time for clarification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Return to the text passage to look for the answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Find the portion of the text that the question refers to and look for clues to the answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Look for answers to questions in chronological order in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Read the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Try to produce your own answer to the question before you look at the options that are provided in the test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Use the process of elimination- i.e., select a choice not because you are sure that it is the correct answer, but because the other choices do not seem reasonable, because they seem similar or overlapping, or because their meaning in not clear to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Choose an option that seems to deviate from the others is special, is different, or conspicuous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Select a choice that is longer/shorter than the others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Take advantage of clues appearing in other items in order to answer the item under consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Take into consideration the position of the option among the choices(first, second, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Select the option because it appears to have a word or phrase from the passage in it- possibly a key word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Select the option because it has a word or phrase that also appears in the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Postpone dealing with an item or selecting a given option until later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Make an educated guess- e.g., use background knowledge or extra-textual knowledge in making the guess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Budget your time wisely on this test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Change your responses as appropriate-e.g., you may discover new clues in another item.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is assumed by Cohen (1998) the effectiveness and value of such strategies depend on two issues. The first issue relates to when such strategies are used. Secondly, the effectiveness of such strategies depends on how effectively test-taking strategies are used.
RESEARCH QUESTION
For the purpose of investigating and comparing the Experimental and Control group's test-takers’ preferences in using different test-taking strategy-types in MCRTs, the following research questions are developed:

There is difference among Experimental group and Control group in performing MCRT test?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The general classification of this study included two subordinates; that is, the participants were divided into pilot group and project group. According to Dornyei (2007), a skilled researcher should always pilot his research instruments and procedures before launching his project. Also piloting is an important procedure in quantitative studies which possess psychometric properties. It is specially recommended in questionnaire surveys to achieve acceptable results (Dornyei, 2007). For this reason the researcher of this study explains the characteristics of each group separately under the following subheadings:

Participants through the present research
The main participants of this study were 40 EFL learners learning English at Alef Language Institute in Tabriz, Iran. As the purpose of this study was based on the comparison of Experimental and Control groups, two intact classes were chosen so that one class included 20 language learners and the other class had also 20 ones. The age range of participants in Experimental group was 20 to 38 (mean= 27 years old) and its counterpart in Control group was 18 to 26 (mean= 26 years old). The initial homogeneity of the two groups was examined through the use of the same standardized language proficiency test which was used by pilot group; that is the researcher used Preliminary English Test (2004) to estimate the homogeneity of the participants. In fact, the researcher used Reading section of PET which consisted of 35 questions to investigate the homogeneity of participants in terms of reading comprehension skill. The data from PET was analyzed using independent samples t-test (see Table 3.1). The results showed that there was not a significant difference between the groups, $t (38) = 0.33, p =0.842$. The participants in both groups were mature enough to provide insightful information on what mental processes they would select while taking MCRTs. The Experimental group was given the strategies which were considered and the Control group was not given any quid.

Instruments
The researcher used three types of instruments in the present study. The instruments included a Preliminary English Test (PET), Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension Test (MCRT), verbal report, and finally list of strategies for taking a MCRT.

Procedure
The researcher of the present study compared the use of distinct test taking strategies by Iranian Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking multiple choice reading comprehension tests. He also assumed and hypothesized that Iranian Experimental group and
Control group's EFL learners undertake various test taking processes and perform differently while trying to answer multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In this chapter, the researcher will give the details of the research design, participants, instrumentation, procedure, and data analysis. One of the fruitful ways of measuring learners’ reading comprehension is to ask them to carefully and deeply read the text and then answer a number of multiple choice items. Weir (1990) defines a multiple choice item as the selection of a correct answer from a number of options. This process requires the individual tests takers to opt for the best answer from among other options. However, it is not a direct and precise issue to talk about reading the text and selecting the best choice. In the process of test taking, the test takers are always fully involved to choose the best answer. This participation not only necessitates the use of specific language knowledge but also active and conscious operation on the process of answering the items. These processes are assumed as test-taking strategies. Test-taking strategies are closely related to language use strategies. According to Cohen (1998) language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. It is assumed that Control group’s test takers use more distinct mental operations than Experimental group's test takers while performing on a MCRT.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This study was an attempt to scrutinize the type of test-taking strategies used in MCRTs by Experimental EFL learners. It also investigated Iranian Control EFL learners' use of test-taking strategies while taking MCRTs. The three research questions of the present study all focused on the use of test-taking strategies by Iranian EFL learners. After collecting data from both groups of Iranian EFL learners through the use of standardized English proficiency test and Cohen's list of test-taking strategy use, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 11.5 to analyze the data. Furthermore, the same test, i.e. Independent-samples t-test was used for estimating the relationship between independent categorical variable, i.e. gender variation and the use of test taking strategies. The results of the data analyses are presented in the following sections.

The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group
Data Analysis of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group
One of the main issues concerned in this study was investigating the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental EFL learners who are taking part in multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In this part the researcher will present the type of strategies used by Experimental participants based on Cohen's (1998) list of test-taking strategies.
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q = Question  
F = Frequency  
P= Percentage

Discussion of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

To test the Experimental group's use of test-taking strategies, the researcher estimated the frequency and percentage of participants' replies to the questions which were presented by Cohen (1998). The first question which presented the first reading strategy was learners' ability to read the text passage first and to make a mental note of where different kinds of information are located. The results of Table 1.1 indicates that 40% of the participants in the Experimental group always use this strategy. In the case of second strategy which was elicited using the second question, the researcher tested partisans' willingness to the read the question for a second time for clarification. It is evident that about 45% of the Experimental participants always make use of this strategy. Furthermore, the researcher tested a type of test-taking strategy which is concerned with learners' ability to return to the text passage to look for the answer. The results indicate that 50% of the participants always utilize the available strategy and around 45% of the participants in this group sometimes use this strategy.

Finding the portion of the text that the question refers to and looking for clues to the answer were the two elements in the next test taking strategy which were examined by the researcher. The results indicate that 45% of the participants always undertake this strategy. Also 40% of the Experimental group often finds the portion of the text that question refers to and look for clues to the answer. Moreover, the rest of the participants sometimes use this strategy. The fifth question of Cohen's (1998) list deals with looking for answers to questions in chronological order in the text. 60%, 25% and 15% of the participants in Experimental group often, sometimes and never
use the next strategy, respectively. This strategy, in fact, is concerned with reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.

Cohen (1998) presented another test-taking strategy which is reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions. Actually, the participants in this group were different in their use of this test-taking strategy. In fact, 20% of them always use this strategy while undertaking MCRTs. Besides, 35% of Experimental test-takers often use this strategy. It is important to note that 10% of participants sometimes utilize this strategy mentioned by Cohen (1998); the same percentage of participants never use this strategy. Moreover, the rest of the participants, i.e. 25%, seldom use this strategy. Trying to produce their answers to questions chronological before they look at the options that are provided in the test can be considered as the 7th type of strategy used for taking MCRTs. The results of Table 2 indicated that this strategy is a rather rare strategy among participants. In fact, except for 5 and 10 percent of the participants who always and often use this strategy other sometimes, seldom and never use it. The participants' reflection to the process of elimination, as another type of test-taking strategy, was mainly focused in center. That is, 455 of the participants sometimes use selected a choice not because they were sure that it was the correct answer but because the other choices did not seem reasonable.

“Choose an option that seems to deviate from the others is special, is different, or conspicuous”. This was the topic of 9th test-taking strategy which the participants thought about. Generally, most of the participants in this group often use this strategy. In other words, 40% of test-takers often use this strategy while taking reading comprehension tests. What is interesting in this study is the findings of the research to the next question, i.e. question No. 10 which deals with test-takers opt for choosing longer or shorter options. In fact, the results of the above mentioned table shows that 40% of the participants never use this strategy. Respectively, 25% of the participants seldom use this strategy and only 15% of them often use it.

Question No 11, which relates to taking advantage of clues appearing in other items in order to answer the item into consideration, presents some other information. 50% of the participants in this group often take advantage of clues in other items to find the correct answer. The next test taking strategy which is identified as question No.12 focuses on the central scale that is, often. Also 30% of test-takers in this group often take into consideration the position of the option among the choices. The next question which presented the 13th reading strategy was learners' ability to select the option just because it appears to have a word or phrase from the passage in it—possibly a key word. The results show that 45% of them often use this strategy. Besides, 30% of them always use it. 15% and 10% of the test-takers sometimes and seldom use this strategy. Selecting an option because it has a word or phrase that also appears in the question is the title of the next test-taking strategy which has been studied in this research. It is evident that 45% of the participants often use this strategy. In his list of test-taking strategies, Cohen (1998) discussed test-takers' preferences in postponing dealing with an item or selecting a give item until later. Test-takers' answers to this question has been also investigated and the results are presented in Table 4.3. As it is clear 45% of them sometimes postpone dealing with and answering item until later. Meanwhile, 20% of the test-takers in this group seldom postpone answering the item. This
The next three strategies reveal diverse results. In fact, question No. 16 which is concerned with making an educated guess has been investigated in this research. The results show that 15%, 20%, 45%, and 20% of the test-takers always, often, sometimes and seldom use this strategy, respectively. The results show that 25% of participants always and often budget their time. Also 20% of them sometimes and seldom manage their time. And only 10% of such participants never attend to budgeting their time. Finally, the last strategy which was related to changing test-takers' responses as appropriate has attracted the attention of the researcher. The results show that 45% of the participants often change their responses and only 35% of them sometimes do the same.

Studying test taking strategies have been a significant issue while test-takers' mental processes came to take a role. The major motive for this study was to complement the findings of previous researches. In a fruitful research, Powers (1995) studied the effect of gender variation on answering reading comprehension questions without the passage. The purpose of this study was on analyzing the gender differences in performance on a task requiring examinees to answer reading comprehension questions without reading the passages on which questions were based. In fact, the results obtained from his study indicated a very few and inconsistent differences between the two genders. Presumably, the present research was in line with the findings of Powers' (1995) paper. In a study which was related to test-takers' differences with regard to their cognitive style, Blanton (2004) focused on standardized reading test administered in three different formats. The prime goal of this paper was to investigate the means of scores on three forms of a standardized reading comprehension test taken by college students in developmental reading classes. The three forms of the test were administered in three different ways. The first way was a timed multiple-choice test; in contrast, the second format was a constructed response test. Finally, the last was an un-timed multiple-choice test. The results of this study showed that cognitive style had more impact on students’ performance on a standardized test of reading comprehension than ethnicity or gender. Generally, learners' gender and ethnicity were critical factors considering this format. Thus, as opposed to style, strategies seem to have not a significant relationship with the test-takers' gender.

**The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group**

*Data Analysis of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group*

In the previous section, the researcher analyzed the data generated from the Experimental group. In this section, the researcher will examine the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Control group's EFL learners who are taking part in multiple choice reading comprehension tests. Table 3 shows frequency and percentage of scales which were accompanied by every test-taking strategy. In fact, using this table, the researcher presents the type of strategies used by Control group based on Cohen's (1998) list of test-taking strategies.
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Q18  | 7      | 35%   | 2         | 10%    | 5     | 15%  

Q = Question  
F = Frequency  
P= Percentage

Discussion of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

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Finding the portion of the text that the question refers to and looking for clues to the answer were the two elements in the next test taking strategy which were examined by the researcher. The results indicate that 45% of the participants always undertake this strategy. Also 40% of the Experimental participants often find the portion of the text that question refers to and look for clues to the answer. Moreover, the rest of the participants sometimes use this strategy. The fifth question of Cohen's (1998) list deals with looking for answers to questions in chronological order in the text. 60%, 25% and 15% of the participants in Experimental group often, sometimes and
never use the next strategy, respectively. This strategy, in fact, is concerned with reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.

Teaching and testing have always been considered as two sides of the language learning coin. Recently, the appeal in the realm of language teaching was toward explorations in the underlying processes and strategies which are involved in language learning context; the same interest is inevitable in the testing context as well. This interest even becomes tangible when we are keen to increase our understanding of the use of test-taking strategies employed by distinct genders. Thus, a research which compares the use of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental and Control group's EFL test-takers was essential. The main concern of the present study was based on this issue. The first research question was concerned with the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental EFL learners. This research question required the researcher to request the participants to complete a questionnaire prepared by Cohen (1998). For doing so, the participants had enough time to choose the best answer for every question in an 18-item questionnaire. Based on the available data, the researcher estimated the use and frequency of the test-taking strategies. The results showed that all types of test-taking strategies were used by Iranian Experimental EFL participants. What was significant was the difference in the frequency of the use of MCRT strategies which were undertaken by the participants while taking MCRTs.

**CONCLUSION**

The present research would achieve better results if he could apply these tests to a large number of test-takers. Moreover, if this study was conducted on learners at different proficiency levels, different results could be achieved. In conclusion, the results of this study show that all participants have a tendency towards the use of test-taking strategies and both male and female participants act similarly in terms of the use of test-taking strategies while performing MCRTs.

**Implications for Language Instructors and Experts**

Testing has changed concept over the last few couple of decades. Testing has become an integral part of the classroom context and all the participants involved in teaching will necessarily been affect it. One such participant in the teaching system is the language instructor who is equipped with the knowledge of language and complementary knowledge base to scaffold the learners' progress and help them to increase their language proficiency. Testing which has been considered as an inseparable part of language teaching context will also be affected by the instructors' ideas. If the language instructor is aware of the mental processes which act as the learning strategies in the process of leaning and also attends to them while being implemented to the testing context, he will motivate learners to considers such important factors. That is the instructor's awareness will bring along some relevant knowledge to the learners as well. Besides, the language instructor can match the learning strategies which are of great advantages to the learners to the testing context.

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THE EFFECTS OF CONFORMITY AND TEACHER’S CONTROL ON PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS’ ORAL ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT
This research investigated the effects of conformity and teacher’s control on pre-intermediate EFL learners’ oral achievement at Mehr English Institute in Mahshahr, Iran. The participants included 24 students who were selected out of 60 participants and divided into two experimental and control groups. The participants took the pre-test of speaking skill. During the treatment period, the control group received conventional activities in speaking skills such as class interaction and discussion. The experimental group received control, conformity and corrective feedback. Students’ mistakes were corrected by the teacher immediately in the experimental group while these mistakes were corrected in the control group implicitly. After 16 sessions of treatment, a post-test of speaking skill was given to the participants of both groups to assess their oral achievement. Independent Samples t-test was used to analyze the data to compare the scores of both groups. The results showed that the experimental group had less progress compared to the participants in the control group in terms of conformity and teacher’s control; however, they outperformed the control group in using structure and accent components. Moreover, the control group showed more progress in fluency, speaking confidence and communication components of speaking. The implications of this study may be useful for teaching speaking and pronunciation.

KEYWORDS: Conformity; Teacher’s control; EFL learners; Oral achievement

INTRODUCTION
Many variables such as family life, community and school environment can affect students’ achievement. These variables can be related to each other and to students’ failures or successes in academic settings. It should be noted that we cannot ignore the effects of all these variables in education. Many researchers (e.g., Aaroson & Barrow, 2007) believe that, teachers are the most significant school-based factors in education and teachers’ characteristics play major roles to shape students’ achievement. Focusing on the effects of teachers’ characteristics that can affect students’ achievement is very helpful for administrators and teachers to increase students’ achievement and involvement in the classroom activities. Regarding teachers’ characteristics, two terms are very significant in this study: conformity and teachers’ control.
The first term, conformity, refers to one’s agreement to the majority position. There are many reasons that support the agreement to the majority position. People match their ideas and behaviors with the group members because of the desire to be fit, in order to be accepted or matched with the social rulers and norms. These three reasons are called normative, informational and identification conformity (Kelman, 1958).

Conformity is regarded as a powerful force that can have overt social pressure or subtler unconscious influence. It refers to the tendency of people to match and change their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors concerned with the people or group members in the classroom. Conformity shows its effects on peoples’ ideas in the case of subtle unconscious influence, and behavior in the form of overt social effects (Arats & Dijksterhuis, 2003). Bond and Smith (1998) believe that conformity is directly related to the education and educational systems all over the world by considering the role of cultural values and it plays a major role in academic settings.

Educational systems all over the world can be classified into two main categories, the individualistic and the collectivistic systems. The individualistic system has been the educational ideal of many western countries. It helps to foster analytical skills and critical thinking in students and to liberate students in education. On the other hand, a collectivistic system believes that education needs to be fit into the needs of society as a whole. It more often emphasizes the obligations of the individuals for the benefit of the group in the focus. Skillman (2000) believes that cohesion, cooperation and conformity are very important in collectivistic societies. He maintains that people in these societies try to make more references to others and follow the norms, regulations and expectations of the groups and societies. Desai (2007) refers to individualistic societies and characteristics that involve diversity that distinguish one person from others. He believes that teachers will encourage creativity by showing more tolerance for the diverse ideas of their students and allowing them more freedom to follow up their ideas.

Different cultural values play major roles in individualistic-collectivistic distinction. Such cultural differences mean that people in different cultures have different ideas of the self and others. For collectivistic societies, interdependence is the accepted norm: the self and community are related to each other. Autonomy becomes secondary in this relationship (Mark & Kitayama, 1999). For more individualistic systems, autonomy, independence and uniqueness are important and they are the main characteristics of individualistic societies (Mark & Kitayama, 1999). Cross-cultural studies have shown that collectivistic societies are more concerned about conforming to social norms than individualistic ones (Bond & Smith, 1998). Conformity can be regarded as an informal means of control. There are some strategies in the classroom to control students in the classrooms. It is important to note that the demand for control is necessary in schools; because teachers cannot teach if the class is out of control. However, it is a problem if we define control as conformity and obedience.

One type of teacher control is corrective feedback that consists of several forms (Ellis, 2009). The main point is that we cannot ignore the advantages of corrective feedback in the teaching and learning process and it is essential especially when the errors cannot be self-corrected by students themselves (Chu, 2011). However, using a lot of corrective feedback in the process of
speaking may affect learner’s motivation, and eagerness to take part in discussion or to take risk in the process of teaching and learning (Trusscot, 2007).

The present study intends to investigate the effects of conformity and teachers’ control on pre-intermediate EFL learners’ oral achievement. The focus of this study was the role of conformity and control in academic settings for speaking purposes.

Nowadays, speaking is the most demanding skill for learners to learn English for different purposes and speaking fluency is one of the main targets for both teachers and students (Gardner, 2009). Although many students spend a lot of time, energy and money in English institutes, schools and universities, some of them are not fluent in English and cannot communicate with others properly. Some of them may have a good command of English but have low confidence for speaking and taking part in the classroom oral activities and discussions (Ahangari & Amirzade, 2011).

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Conformity**

Conformity is the most general concept in the psychology science which refers to any changes in behavior caused by another person or group effects (Breckler, Olson & Wiggins, 2006). It refers to any social influence involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group. This change is in relation to real or unreal group pressure. Real group pressure refers to the real physical presence of people and the unreal group pressure refers to the rules, norms and expectations (Crutchfield, 1955). Conformity can be defined as yelling to group pressure that can take different forms, for example persuasion, teasing, criticism, etc. Conformity is also known as majority influence or group pressure. The term conformity is often used to indicate an agreement to the majority position, brought about either by a desire to fit in or be liked or because of a desire to be correct, or simply to conform to a social role (Arats & Dijksterhuis, 2003).

Turner (2005), states that conformity acts as a powerful force that can take the form of overt social pressure or subtler unconscious influence. It is the act of matching and changing ones’ ideas and behaviors in response to others in the societies or classroom groups at schools. He states some reasons such as the desire to be liked. Reber and Allen (2004) state that we are experiencing conformity in every situation if we have to change our ideas or behaviors based on the accepted regulations and rules and follow the rules without considering our beliefs.

**Classroom Management**

Classroom management refers to the process of creating and maintaining the best opportunities for the students to learn (Mendler, 2001). Mendler believes that an effective classroom management should be the main responsibility of teachers. He maintains that classroom management does not mean providing set of rules and procedures for the students in the classroom, but it should refer to the sensitivity and caring of teachers to students.
Classroom management focuses on three major components: content management, conduct management and covenant management (Froyen & Iverson, 1999). Content management refers to the management of the materials, space, equipment and lessons. Conduct management deals with set of procedural skills that teachers employ in their attempt to address and resolve discipline problems in the classroom. It is important to note that the procedural skills that teachers use in conduct management, may vary from teacher to teacher. These different skills refer to teachers’ knowledge and their personal experiences. Covenant management focuses on the classroom group as a social system that has its own features that teachers have to take into account when managing interpersonal relationship in the classroom. In this system, teachers and students’ roles and expectations shape the classroom and their relationships are very essential to ensuring a positive school atmosphere. The last component has an important role in the classroom management because it takes the classroom interpersonal relationships into consideration (Froyen & Iverson, 1999).

**Teachers’ Control and Feedback**

An important means of control in academic settings is providing feedback or corrective feedback by teachers, in this exchange, the teacher provides feedback on a students’ utterance that contains an error (Flyn & Chatman, 2001). Corrective feedbacks can be defined as information provided by an agent, a teacher in the classroom. In this case, there is a chain of performance and feedback. Thus feedback can be defined as a response to a learner’s erroneous utterance (Ellis, 2009). It has no effect in vacuum and it could be powerful in its effects, if there is a context to which the feedback is addressed (Timperley & Parr, 2005). It refers to any indication to the learners that their use of target language is incorrect (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Ellis (2009) states that the feedback can consist of several forms: (a) to indicate the errors, (b) to provide the correct forms of errors committed and (c) extended (meta-linguistic)information about the error. It is necessary to note that errors are natural and common characteristics of learning process. They show learners’ development in the process of language acquisition and learning (Tornberg, 2005). When learning to speak a second or foreign language, any learner makes errors and they are natural part of mastering a new language. The errors can be of various kinds, for example, pronunciation, syntax and word choice errors. As errors cannot be self-corrected by learners, teachers’ reaction toward errors in the form of corrective feedback is essential (Ahangari & Amirzadeh, 2011).

One of the major issues of language teaching is the effect of teachers’ control on students’ outcomes in different skills, especially speaking because it is one of the most important skills to be developed as a means of effective communication (Gardner, 2009).

**Oral Proficiency**

Richards and Renandya (2004) believe that most learners all over the world study English to develop proficiency in speaking. Many foreign language learners study a foreign language and tryto learn English in order to become fluent and accurate to master the English sophisticated structures and vocabularies. However, second language acquisition (SLA) specialists are still unsure of what makes up the myriad factors that contribute to second language (L2) proficiency. To establish a baseline view of the complex interactions among traits, the researchers (Iwashita,
2008) focused on four key dimensions and components: fluency, lexical diversity, grammatical accuracy and complexity. These four components of oral proficiency may vary from study to study because of the use of diverse definitions of these components and dimensions of oral proficiency by many researchers in different studies. Dastjerdi (2012) focused on the effects of corrective feedback on students’ speaking. 20 female intermediate EFL learners aged from 15 to 20 participated in his study. The participants were divided into 2 groups of 10. For one group, the errors were corrected immediately and for other group, the errors were corrected with some delay, i.e. after finishing speech. At the end of the term, each student was asked to discuss one of the topics that they had discussed during the term while their voices were recorded. Measures of accuracy, fluency and complexity were developed and the results showed that the delayed error correction had positive effect on fluency and accuracy but not on complexity. For the second aim, a Foreign Language Anxiety questionnaire was given to all the participants at the end of the term and the results indicated that the second group with delayed correction experienced less anxiety in class. This study focused on the effect of teacher control on students’ anxiety.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

This thesis specifically attempted to reflect on the following research question:

Do conformity and teacher’s control affect pre-intermediate EFL learners’ oral achievement?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

The present study conducted with the help of 24 students who were selected out of 60 EFL students from Mehr English institute in Mahshahr, Iran. They were all females and ranged in age from 16 to 20 years old. Standard Speaking Test (SST, 2006) was used to measure the oral proficiency of participants. Based on the students’ scores, the students who achieved the levels 4, 5 and 6 were selected as the participants of this study since they achieve the average level of speaking proficiency. Then, they were randomly divided into two groups of 12: one experimental group and one control group.

**Instrumentation**

Four different testing instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially, a Standard Speaking Test (SST, 2006) developed by ALC Press was used to determine the students’ proficiency level it consists of 5 stages. This test was used to determine the students’ oral achievement in English at the pre-intermediate level. Accordingly, the scores 4, 5 and 6 were assumed as pre-intermediate level. SST contained five steps and each student was supposed to answer them in ten to fifteen minutes. The students’ performances were scored by two raters at the same time. Before administration of homogeneity test, it was piloted by the researcher in the group of 20 of the same proficiency level in the same institute. The inter-rater reliability of this test was computed through *Pearson Correlation* analysis as (r =0.80) to calculate the reliability of the test scores.
The second instrument of this study was a pre-test. It was based on the topics and activities of the Touch Stone Series Book 2 in both experimental and control groups to do the related activities to assess the participants’ initial levels in speaking English before treatment. The inter-rater reliability of this test was computed through Pearson Correlation analysis as \((r=.83)\) to calculate the reliability of the test scores. The third instrument of this study was a post-test. It was done to determine the effects of treatment: teacher’s control and conformity on participants’ oral achievement. Moreover, the post-test included the same topics and passages used in the pre-test. The inter-rater reliability values of the post-tests was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as \((r=.76)\) to calculate the reliability of the test. Finally, a modified checklist of speaking (Hughes, 2003; Chalhoub-Devil, 1997) was used in both pre-test and post-test to measure oral abilities of participants. This checklist had 7 components. 6 components of the checklist were developed by Hughes (2003) and the last one was added based on the Chalhoub-Devil’s (1997) speaking checklist.

Materials
Considering 16 sessions for both classes at the English institute, the researcher was able to select 4 lessons of Touch Stone, book two that were related to participants’ proficiency level. Time of each class was 60 minutes. Students’ speaking was checked based on Hutches (2003) and Chalhoub-Devil (1997) checklist of speaking for both pre-test and post-test. During 16 sessions of instruction, students were prepared for being successful for speaking purposes. Each student’s oral production on the specific topics in both groups for both pre-test and post-test was recorded by an MP3 player to be analyzed and scored carefully by the researcher herself and another English teacher of the English institute based on the checklist of speaking.

Procedure
This study was conducted at Merhr English Institution in Mahshahr. The first step was to make sure of the students’ homogeneity. Before administration of homogeneity test, the researcher piloted it in the group of 20 at the same proficiency level of both groups in the study. Then a week before the instruction, the researcher administered the SST homogeneity test (2006) to 60 participants in order to select 24 participants. Those participants who achieved the levels of five and six were selected and divided into two groups randomly: one experimental group and one control. Both groups included 12 participants. Before starting instruction a pre-test was administered to discover the students’ levels of speaking at the beginning of research period. It was related to speaking purpose by focusing on teaching techniques such as question and answer, description, telling related memories and discussion and role play). Each production was recorded by an MP3 player and then scored according to the checklist developed by Hughes (2003) and Chalhoub-Devil (1997) by two raters. After selecting and dividing the participants on the bases of random judgment sampling, the instruction phase started. In the experimental group, the researcher focused on teacher’s control, giving corrective feedback as a means of teacher’s control and conformity. Each mistake was corrected by the teacher immediately while students were speaking. The participants had to follow the norms provided by the teacher during the instruction session; such as the kinds of activities, the topics discussed in the classroom and the correct answers. In this case, only the exact answers were rewarded and accepted. There was no chance for partial answers or incomplete answers of participants in the experimental group. The
same activities were conducted in control group which were done in experimental group. The only difference was related to the role of teacher’s control, feedback and conformity. In the control group the incorrect forms were shown and practiced by teachers or in the group when the students finished their speech. The norms were not defined only by the teacher. The participants had active roles even in deciding on the activities and topics. They had a chance for partial knowledge, for expressing themselves even wrongly. The treatment lasted 16 sessions, 60 minutes a session, twice a week. During the treatment, in each session, the researcher devoted times to listening to the CD, practicing new words, and talking about related parts. As it was mentioned before, during each session, four types of techniques including suggesting new topic for each passage, question and answers, description and role play were used for speaking purpose. After listening to the CD some questions were asked to discover students' comprehension. In addition, the students discussed the passages and topics and gave their opinions about them. The same activities that were done in the experimental group were used in the control group. Finally, after the treatment period, a post-test of speaking achievement that covered all the materials, was administered to two groups.Finally, the results of the post-tests were compared to each other to know the importance of teacher’s control and conformity in the speaking classes.

**Analysis**

In order to determine the effects of teachers’ control and conformity on pre-intermediate EFL learners oral achievement, once the scores of the pre-test and post-test are obtained, the mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. Then, analysis of Independent Samples t-test was run in order to find out whether the differences between the two groups were statistically significant.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To test the first research hypothesis, the researcher dealt with comparing the two groups based on the effects of conformity and teacher’s control on participants’ oral achievement. To do so, students' pre and post-tests were conducted at the beginning and the end of the term. The analysis went further to find out whether conformity and teacher’s control in the classroom affects students' oral performance. Independent Sample t-test was applied to study the differences between the preand post-tests in the experimental and control groups. It is important to note that the researcher employed all the analysis at (p<0.05). Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' speaking pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), mean(M), standard deviations (SD), and standard errors of mean (SE) for both groups.

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.2500</td>
<td>1.76455</td>
<td>.50938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.5833</td>
<td>1.67649</td>
<td>.48396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the Table 1, the mean score of the participants in the pre-test in the experimental group (Mean=15.25, Standard Deviation=1.76) was less than the mean score of participants (Mean=15.58, Standard Deviation=1.67) in the control group. Table 2 shows the results of Independent Samples t-test of pre-test in both experimental and control groups.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test(pre-test)

<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>Experimental Vs. Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that t-observed (0.474) was less than t-critical (2.066) with df of 22 in the experimental group. Furthermore, t-test analysis shows that the significance level as (0.640) which is greater than (0.05). This means that there was no statistically significant difference between mean performances of two mean scores in the experimental and control groups in the pre-test. More ever, the above table shows that the amount of t-observed is not statistically significant; therefore, it can be claimed that the two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of experiment regarding their prior knowledge. Descriptive statistics of students' oral performance in the post-tests is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics(post-test)

<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>Experimental</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.5800</td>
<td>2.10928</td>
<td>.609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.6767</td>
<td>2.27069</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3, shows the mean score of the post-test in the experimental group as(17.58) and the mean score of post-test in the group was (21.67). It indicates that the mean scores of both groups in the post-tests improved but the participants in the control group outperformed the participants in the experimental group. Table 4 shows the results of the Independent Samples t-test of post-test of both groups.
As presented in Table 4, the t-observed (4.566) of both groups is greater than t-critical (2.066). at the significance equals (0.00) which is smaller than the significance level (0.05). It shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. In other words, the control group outperformed the experimental group in the post-test and this means that the first null hypothesis of this study was accepted. In other words, teacher’s control and conformity did not have any effect on the participants of the experimental group.

Discussion

Based on the results of the Independent Samples t-test of pre-test and post-test, the mean scores of both groups improved and the mean scores between experimental and control groups were significantly different. The mean score of the control group in the post-test was greater than the mean score of the experimental group. It supports the idea that conformity and teacher’s control did not show a better effect on the participants’ performance compared to the focusing on students’ active roles and their creativity in the control group. As a whole, the study showed that the conformity and teacher’s control had a less effective role in enhancing EFL learners’ oral achievement in the experimental group at the pre-intermediate level of English compared to the control group.

The results can be more approved by this evidence that there were significance differences between the means of pre-tests and post-tests of both experimental and control groups. That is to say, the learners in the control group outperformed the learners in the experimental group with the focus on conformity in the classroom. This is very much compatible with the results of the research conducted by Milgram (2010). His experiment discovered that more than half of the participants in the study showed conformity. More ever, the results of this study are in line with the study conducted by Berns (2005) who noted that the participants of the study that experienced conformity did not want to stand against the majority position or to be rejected by group members. In his study, the participants showed levels of conformity similar to those in the Arats
and Dijkstra’s (2003) studies. It showed that participants in two different situations conformed to the defined norms. The results indicated that focusing on conformity in different situations such as schools leads to lack of creativity among the students, because following the norms is very important in these situations. One possible explanation of such results is that defining different norms by teachers in the classroom and making the students follow them will affect students’ motivation and consequently students’ behavior in oral achievement. This may decrease students’ self-confidence and make them disappointed when they are regularly interrupted by the teacher.

One possible explanation on these findings is that providing a lot of corrective feedbacks in the process of teaching and learning by teachers in the classrooms especially while the students are participating in the activities and discussions may act as a negative factor on participants’ self-confidence and finally on their participations in the classroom. When the students are afraid of speaking and taking part in the classroom activities, it will affect their communication strategies and fluency negatively. However, it may enhance their accuracy and accent. One of the main reasons may refer to the students’ hesitations and pauses to monitor their performances. Thus they may show better progress in accuracy and accent rather than flow of speech, communication and speaking confidence.

CONCLUSION
This research aimed to investigate the differences between the two experimental and control groups with the focus of conformity and teacher’s control in experimental group. The null hypotheses of the study were accepted since there were significant differences between both groups performance (p<0.05) in the post-test; however, the control group out-perform the experimental group. Although the mean scores of the participants in the post-test increased compared to the mean scores of participants in the pre-test in experimental group, the mean score of participants in the control group was significantly greater than the experimental group. It showed the effects of teacher’s characteristics such as conformity and control on students’ motivations and consequently students’ outcomes.

The participants of control group with the focus on the students’ creativity and activity based on the main goals of the speaking classes such as creativity, students’ active roles and the use of feedback in necessary cases, may benefit more than students in the experimental group that the researcher focused on conformity and control in all activities in the classroom during the instruction period. Some of administrators and teachers believe that highly controlling behaviors and defining a lot of norms and rules for students for taking part in the classroom activities and answering the questions play a major role in students’ performance. Perhaps it is the main reason of some EFL students’ reticence and lack of motivation to take part in the classroom activities and discussions inside or outside the classrooms. It should be noted that the main responsibility of teachers is enhancing the students’ self-confidence to take part in the related activities and establishing rapport and less stressful atmosphere for the learners. This atmosphere is supposed to increase learning much more than where learners receive instruction based on conformity and control in the classroom.
To sum up, the findings of this study may be effective if the teachers try to focus on students’ creativity, critical thinking and learners’ involvement in the classrooms for teaching speaking skill. The teachers should be tolerant with the students mistakes or unwillingness to take part in the classroom and try to build up their speaking confidence.

It is suggested to teachers to consider the effects of conformity and control in the learning and teaching processes in the academic settings and involvement in the classroom activities and try to provide enough opportunities for students in classroom to enhance their level of motivation and effort to participate in the classroom discussions. The teachers should give the students time and opportunities to take the active roles, especially in a non-threatening environment. The teachers should incorporate the new findings of psychological and experimental studies related to teachers’ characteristics and behaviors on students’ motivation and achievements and try to enhance learners’ motivational desire and speaking confidence especially in lower levels of teaching English in institutes and schools. If teachers focus only on teaching effectively by focusing on transferring the information to the students without providing a non-threatening teaching environment for learner to participate in the classroom activities and tasks, the teaching will be less effective for providing students to take part in classroom discussions, tasks and activities and to improve students’ confidence for speaking and to enhance their fluency alongside their accuracy.

By taking insights from the present study and materials designers might include oral tasks that focused on fostering learners’ creativity not conformity in the classrooms and help the learners to be creative in carrying up the activities in the text books. Moreover, they should add some open ended activities and provide some opportunities for the learners to support and enhance the learners’ creativity in the classrooms. These materials encourage the students to take active roles in the classroom and fight the issue of students’ reticence in the classroom and society. This study was conducted at Mehr institute in Mahshahr, Iran. Other contexts could be used to conduct a similar research to support the findings and to find more about the role of conformity and teacher’s control on speaking skills. Also, only 16 sessions were run to see the effects of the treatment. Moreover, this study was fixed on females enrolled in the program and it should be investigated on male students. Females just took part in this study but the researcher can have both males and females in their future studies and compare them. Learners who studied English as a foreign language took part in this study. More ever, the same study can be replicated in other situations such as ESL situations and even among native speakers’ contexts. Furthermore, this research was conducted on the pre-intermediate EFL learners at Meher institute in Mahshahr. Other levels of language skills can also be studied if the researchers like to make generalizations about language learners at different proficiency levels. Eventually, this study lasted for two months. Succeeding studies can allocate more time to study the effects of teacher’s control and conformity on EFL learners’ speaking skill.

REFERENCES


MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES OF EFL STUDENTS OF TABRIZ TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT
The role of motivation in language learning, especially in research articles, is so important that language teachers can transfer their ideas and views through emotional perspectives. Large number of different factors affects the success of students in learning foreign languages. Two of these factors can be motivation and attitudes of students toward learning a target language. Positive attitudes of students and different kinds of motivation can have a great influence on the success or failure of students in learning languages. Researchers also can get more information from articles through evaluating these issues and can specify their views about the articles. The function of emotional perspectives in interpersonal relationship, texts and articles is as a vital role that helps both readers and writers. The present paper investigates the kind of motivation and the attitudes of the students in the province of Tabriz in Iran towards learning English. 100 students from three well-known language learning centers of this city by the names of Chitsazan, Farhang and Albourz were surveyed using the AMTB (Attitude, Motivation Test Battery) questionnaire. Different domains were surveyed to get the goal of this paper such as interest in English, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, desire to learn English, parental encouragement and attitudes towards learning English. The result of this survey shows that University of Tabriz have both integrative and instrumental motivation but their attitudes towards English are not strongly positive. Of course, it is important to state that the findings of the present study revealed that motivation and attitude were similar considered among the students.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Extrinsic, Intrinsic, Attitudes, Instrumental, Integrative.

INTRODUCTION
According to different investigations and researches motivation is one of the most important factors that cause success or failure in learning a foreign language. The kind of motivation and the amount of it in students are very important too. Winne and Perry (1962) define motivation as: “an internal state that arouses directs and maintains behavior” (p.354). By his definition motivation is an internal factor of learning and if one person has this inner desire, learning can be important for him. And by knowing the importance of learning he tries to allot more time and
energy to learn it. Therefore he learns better and speeds up learning. Motivation is a very strong
desire that by the help of it one person doesn’t give up trying to achieve his goal.

Brown (2007) gives different definitions according to different schools of thought.

a) From a behaviorist perspective: motivation is seen in very matter of fact terms. He
believes that they base their idea on external factors. Giving rewards and having positive
reinforcement are the key points in this school of thought.

b) From cognitive perspective: motivation places much more emphasis on individual’s
decisions. People have choices to what they should experience as their goals and what
they should avoid.

c) From constructivist perspective: motivation places even more emphasis on social context
as well as individual personal choices. Each person is unique and can be motivated
differently.

Motivation cannot be seen but we can understand it from the behavior of the learners such as
their participation in the class, being active in answering to the questions and etc. On the other
hand the amount of the motivation in the class among the students of the same class can be
completely different. For example some people go to different language centers by their own
interests and they are very eager to learn one new language but in contrast some people go to
different language centers because of their parents’ force or maybe because of their parents’
satisfaction or because of large number of different reasons. These people have different
motivations towards learning a foreign language.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation means that internal or external factors affect learning. Some
motivations are based on the internal factors such as needs, interests and enjoinments. On the
other hand some motivations are based on external factors such as rewarding and punishing and
etc. Motivation that refers to intrinsic factors is called intrinsic motivation and the motivation that
refers to external factors is called external factors.

Some researchers such as Maslow (1970) believe that intrinsic motivation is much more
important than extrinsic motivation because we are motivated to get “self-actualization”. But on
the other hand Winne and Perry (1962) believe that both of these two motivations are necessary
in EFL classes. Some activities in the classes are interesting and attract the interests of students
and these activities create intrinsic motivation. But sometimes external factors such as taking
exam can be very helpful because it gives students enough motivation to study.
Instrumental and Integrative Motivation

When a person learns a language in order to be a member of one community, he has an integrative motivation. The people who want to migrate from one country to the other one have this motivation. One of the most important aspects of this kind of learning is using language for social interactions. It seems this kind of motivation leads to much more success than the instrumental one.

Instrumental motivation refers to using language to get instrumental goals such as getting a job, reading technical texts, translation and etc. the people that have this motivation don’t have any desire to be the member of the target society. They are just studying language to meet their needs.

Some linguists believe that mixture of these two motivations can lead to success. But on the other hand we know that every person is unique and has different characteristics and we cannot say that which way is the best way. Everybody has different ways of learning.

Sometimes some situations are inevitable. That means one person gets use these two features unconsciously. For example one person studies academic texts in target language setting. This person benefits from both instrumental use of language in one hand and on the other hand lives and becomes the member of that country(integrative motivation).

Attitude

Oxford Advance Dictionary (2010) defines attitude as: “the way that you think and feel about somebody or something. And, the way that you behave toward somebody or something shows how you think and feel”. As we see from this definition attitude is a collection of beliefs towards language, people or things that have been formed gradually in passing of time. Ellis (2000) says that having positive motivation enhances learning a foreign language while negative attitude stops learning or makes it difficult. But on the other hand the teacher himself should have positive attitude towards a foreign language too. In new approaches of teaching the mistakes of students are tolerated and they are asked to use language in their everyday lives and they have a close relation with their teachers, so if teachers don’t have positive attitudes they can transfer these attitudes to the students too.

Most of our attitudes towards the target language and its users are from unreliable sources. Mostly we get negative attitude just by watching movies or reading the stories or other resources that are not reliable. It is the duty of the teachers to explain, clarify and bring concrete examples to change this negative view of students and enhance learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Different researches and explorations have been conducted on the importance of motivation and attitudes in second language learning; that is, Chalak (2010) investigated motivation and attitudes of Iranian undergraduate EFL students towards learning English. The result of the study showed that the students of English translation were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Moreover, the answers revealed that the students did not always try very much; they reproved
themselves for their failure in learning English. Therefore, as another motivating factor, more efforts by students could guarantee their success in learning English. Another factor is the attitude that they have toward English. Their responses in the questionnaire items reported that they believed that English was very important and they needed to learn it for both instrumental and integrative reasons (Chalak, 2010).

Al-Haj (2011) concluded that enhancing motivation in the EFL classrooms is the solution. The finding of the study showed that: First, teachers in secondary schools of the Gezira State do not give motivation to their students in EFL classes; second, these teachers are not professional enough to use motivation while teaching, this claim combines with the fact that these teachers do not use learning activities-like games, debates, etc.-which motivate the students while they are learning English as a foreign language. The role of using modals in writing, especially in research articles is so important that by them writers can convey their ideas and views in their writings, thesis or articles. Researchers also can get more information from articles through evaluating these markers and can specify their views about the articles. The function of meta-discourse in interpersonal relationship, texts and articles is as an appointment role that helps both readers and writers (Aboulaalaei, 2013).

Fernandez (2001) investigated exploring the student’s motivation in the EFL class. The finding of the study revealed that the female students exhibit a higher degree of motivation than their male ones. Furthermore, the scores assigned by the girls to all the items in the battery of questionnaires were somewhat more and, in some cases, much more than those assigned by the boys. The greater motivational level of female students in comparison with that of the male ones in the L2 classroom has been evinced by previous studies.

According to Poursalehi et al., (2014), "investigations done by some researchers conclude that language learners who study L2/FL for educational benefit or personal profit accrue no advantage outside of the classroom. Undoubtedly, the chances and opportunities to utilize the L2/FL in the classrooms are always limited since language is taught as a subject only, and is not commonly used as communication outside the language classrooms. As Ellis (1994, p. 214) states, “formal learning takes place through conscious attention to rules and principles and greater emphasis is placed on mastery of the subject matter that was treated as a de-contextualized body of knowledge” (Ppoursalehi et al., 2014).

Lightbown and Spada (2002, p. 92) found that the “teacher’s goal is to see to it that students learn the vocabulary and grammatical rules of the target language” and “the goal of learners in such courses is often to pass an examination rather than to use the language for daily communicative interaction.” Against the above-mentioned statements, Lightbown and Spada (2002, p. 91) believe that through natural context “the language learner is mentioned to the language at work” or “in social interaction or where the instruction is directed toward native speakers rather than toward learners of the language.” Therefore, the social significance is emphasized more than mastery of the subject matter (Lightbown & Spada, 2002, p. 92).
However, the important issue which determines and specifies the good language learners is their ability to utilize their class learning to raise their speaking skills. Macaro (2001, p. 38) studied the characteristic of effective speakers and mentions that these learners do not quit or hesitate for too long when they cannot consider how to say something. Often they find solution to solve the problem or ask the person they are speaking with to help them. In this way, they are involved in much more exposure and interaction with the L2. When they are not directly involved in the interaction, successful learners seem to use strategies to help them stay focused in the classroom."

According to Macro (2001), the more active ones will use strategies to attract the teacher’s attention to them. It is believed that being aware of certain strategies in enhancing L2/FL speaking skills would help learners to acquire good speaking skills." This assumption is based on several theories in language learning strategies which postulate that learners’ success in language learning or lack of it is attributable to the various strategies which different learners bring to tasks and not solely relying on environment per se. Therefore the role of classroom learning should not be underestimated (Macaro, 2001).

According to Lewis (1999, as cited in Poursalehi et al., 2014) language learners could take part in language classes through some questions. That is, they were asked by the teacher’s explanation on how to translate a passage, sharing their ideas with their classmates and teachers, for example, by commenting briefly on the topic of discussion, making a connection between the current lesson and the previous ones, reporting the reading predictions, making inferences, making generalizations and determining their perspectives. According to Lewis (1999, p. 159), “learners took part in the language classes by adding data and information to someone else’s perspective, agreeing or disagreeing, asking for clarification, giving examples from other readings, own experience or of other people’s, presenting both sides of an argument and suggesting an untested hypothesis.” According to Essberger (2000) and Rubin and Thompson (1982), the language learners take the opportunity to answer the questions asked by the teacher and do all classroom activities. Besides paired or group activities, communicative participation could also be accomplished by means of presentations which were presented by Essberger (1998).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
The aims of this study will be investigated through the following research questions:

1- Are the students of Tabriz highly motivated towards learning English?
2- How does attitude of students of Tabriz increase towards learning English?

**METHODOLOGY**
The main purpose of this study was to explore and describe the motivation and attitudes of EFL students of Tabriz toward learning English. To achieve this purpose, a mixed method research with greater emphasis on qualitative approach was employed. This section is divided into different sections. The first section discusses the research question. The students’ data were also gathered and described in the chapter. In order to address the questions about the various uses relevant to L1 and TL use in the classroom, the second section of the chapter defines the different
instruments that were employed. The data used for the transcriptions and subsequent data analysis were gathered using a teaching in order to capture the details involved in student interactions over a visit to the mentioned class. Then, the design of the study, materials along with procedures, and testing procedures was demonstrated. Also, the participants and the context of the study was introduced; that is, the present research explored and investigated the language attitudes and motivation of the students of the Tabriz in Iran where they are studying English as a foreign language in different institutes of this city. The study tried to find motivation orientations of the students of Tabriz towards English language and their attitudes towards learning English, and their cultures. Of course, the researcher checked the students' averages in last semester and according to them found the students' proficiency and level of studying.

Participants
The subject were 100 students who are from intermediate to advanced English speakers. 70 of them were female and 30 of them were male. They were from 15 to 35 years old. All of them had different course of study at school and university but since they had been studying there at least three years, they could use and understand English acceptably.

Context of the study
The sites for carrying out the field work for this observation was three private English language centers in Tabriz by the name of Farhang, Albourz and Chitsazan. English is taught in different levels in these institutes from elementary to IELTS and TOEFL levels. Classes are three sessions a week and each session is 90 minutes. The main instruction materials which are used in these institutions are the series of Interchange books.

Instrument
Questionnaire which was adopted from Gardner’s AMTB (1985) was used in this research. He classified the answers into 6 parts which include: strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree. This questionnaire has 104 items. Since all of the students know English, the questions were in English without their translations to their native language. Students answered the questions in the class in a whole session and didn’t take them home. They were asked to read carefully and understand the questions and answer them precisely. They were told that if they had any problem in understanding the text they could ask them in their own language or in English. Students didn’t have any stress to finish them on time because they were given enough time to answer to all of the questions.

Procedure
It was explained and clarified to the students that these questions were just used in the research and they are not used for identifying any specific students. The sample of these questions was given in the appendix. Different data were extracted from the questionnaire such as: interest in English, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, desire to learn English, parental encouragement and attitudes towards learning English. Different number of other data could be extracted from this questionnaire but because it is unrelated to the research question we ignore it.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students' responses to the questionnaire were analyzed in descriptive form. The range of questions are: 1) Strongly disagree, 2) Moderately disagree, 3) Slightly disagree, 4) Slightly agree, 5) Moderately agree, 6) Strongly agree. Raw data was given to Microsoft Excel program and its mean (average) was calculated according to each of the research question. Seven factors were analyzed as follows.

Different questions in the questionnaire are about the interest of students in learning a foreign language.

Table 1: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Question 65</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Question 85</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 95</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3.763. That means students answered to the questions of interest in learning a foreign language, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz are not strongly interested in learning a foreign language. Some other questions (items) in this questionnaire reveal the motivation intensity of the students of Tabriz. These questions are as follows:
The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,804. That means students answered to the questions of motivation intensity, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz are not strongly motivated in learning a foreign language. The following set of questions is about the attitudes of students towards learning English language. Students of Tabriz answered these questions to show that they have positive or negative attitude towards learning English.

Table 2: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 13</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Question 23</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Question 44</td>
<td>2.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 56</td>
<td>4.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 67</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 77</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 87</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 96</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: The average of the questions one by one

Table 3: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 18</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 26</td>
<td>5.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 38</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 47</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 62</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 70</td>
<td>5.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 82</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 90</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 100</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3.526. That means students answered to the questions of attitudes towards learning English, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz don’t have strong attitudes that means positive attitude towards learning English.

The other domain for investigating is integrative motivation. The items that we consider to get the answer are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>5.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 28</td>
<td>5.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 50</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 72</td>
<td>5.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: The average of the questions one by one

Figure 4: The average of the questions one by one
The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 5.377. That means students answered to the questions of integrative orientation, between moderately agree and strongly agree. That means the people of Tabriz have strong desire towards integrative orientation. This data shows that for the people of Tabriz integrative motivation that means having interaction and communication with native people are very important and they appreciate the way of living and the culture of native speakers.

The other feature that this paper investigated is the feature of instrumental motivation. As it was mentioned before this motivation deals with using language instrumentally in the situations such as getting a job, having exam and so on. The following items deal with this motivation.

Table 5: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 15</td>
<td>5.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 35</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 59</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 79</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 5.03. That means students answered to the questions of instrumental motivation, between moderately agree and strongly agree. That means the people of Tabriz have strong desire and motivation towards learning English instrumentally.

The following set of questions is about attitudes of the students of Tabriz towards learning English. It shows that they want to learn English as a foreign language or not. The questions are:
The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,743. That means, students answered to the questions of desire to learn English, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz don’t have strong desire to learn English as a foreign language. The last domain of investigation is about parental encouragement. These items helped us to know how much parents are interested in English and encourage their children to learn it as a foreign language. The questions are as follows:

Table 6: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question9</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question17</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 29</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 37</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 51</td>
<td>5.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 61</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 73</td>
<td>5.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 81</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 92</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 99</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: The average of the questions one by one

Table 7: The average of the questions one by one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question2</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question22</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 43</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 48</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 57</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 66</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 86</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 103</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question2</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question22</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 4, 4. That means, students answered to the questions of parental encouragement, between slightly agree and moderately agree. It means that the parents of students in Tabriz encourage a lot their children to learn English as a foreign language. The general table for above mentioned domains is as follows. Number one to seven is different domains and 0 to 6 are mean or average of agreement.

According to above mentioned table and figures and numbers which were accessed by the researcher 7 items were analyzed and the accessed figure was demonstrated as below:

In this table:
1: Interest in learning a foreign language
2: Motivation intensity
CONCLUSION
At the end, it is essential to point out that research is typically conducted with some limitations. Among the limitations of this study, we can refer to the reluctance or unwillingness or perhaps fear that most English as a Foreign Language EFL learners had before volunteering to participate in the study. Therefore, it is suggested to interpret results with some caution. The findings of the present investigation revealed that most EFL learners participating in this study held similar ideas toward the motivation and attitude. While the present investigation focused on English learners in Iran, the same issue can also be taken up in many other parts of the world. If the language researchers and teachers have information about students' attitude and motivation, they will be able to teach them in correct way and time.

REFERENCES
Appendix A

Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)

Student’s level: -----------------------------

The following questions ask about your motivation in and attitude toward learning the English language. Remember there is no right or wrong answers; just answer as accurately as possible. Use the scale below to answer the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1= Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 = Moderately disagree</th>
<th>3= Slightly disagree</th>
<th>4 = Slightly agree</th>
<th>5= Moderately agree</th>
<th>6= Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I wish I could speak many foreign languages perfectly.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My parents try to help me to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I don’t pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I don’t get anxious when I have to answer a question in my English class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I look forward to going to class because my English teacher is so good.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Learning English is really great.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If Iran had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Studying English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My English class is really a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I would get nervous if I had to speak English to a tourist.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Studying foreign languages is not enjoyable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I don’t think my English teacher is very good.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Studying English is important because I will need it for my career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in our English classes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Knowing English isn’t really an important goal in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I feel very much at ease when I have to speak English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I would rather spend more time in my English class and less in other classes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I wish I could read newspapers and magazines in many foreign languages.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. My parents feel that it is very important for me to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I don’t bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I feel confident when asked to speak in my English class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. My English teacher is better than any of my other teachers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28. Studying English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. If it were up to me, I would spend all of my time learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I think my English class is boring.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Speaking English anywhere makes me feel worried.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32. I really have no interest in foreign languages.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33. I keep up to date with English by working on it almost every day.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. The less I see of my English teacher, the better.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Studying English is important because it will make me more educated.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>36. I enjoy the activities of our English class much more than those of my other classes.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37. I sometimes daydream about dropping English.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>38. I'd rather spend my time on subjects other than English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. It doesn’t bother me at all to speak English.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>40. I wish I could have many native English speaking friends.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41. I enjoy the activities of our English class much more than those of my other classes.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I would really like to learn many foreign languages.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. My parents feel that I should continue studying English all through my life.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I put off my English homework as much as possible.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. I am calm whenever I have to speak in my English class.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. My English teacher has a dynamic and interesting teaching style.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. English is a very important part of the school program.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. My parents have stressed the importance English will have for me when I leave university.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>49. Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Studying English is important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the English way of life.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. I want to learn English so well that it will become natural to me.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. To be honest, I really have little interest in my English class.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. It would bother me if I had to speak English on the telephone.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. It is not important for us to learn foreign languages.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always have my teacher for help.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am having problems with my English.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. My English teacher is one of the least pleasant people I know.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Studying English is important because it will be useful in getting a good job.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. It worries me that other students in my class seem to speak English better than I do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. I’m losing any desire I ever had to know English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. I would feel quite relaxed if I had to give street directions in English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. I like my English class so much; I look forward to studying more English in the future.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. If I planned to stay in another country, I would try to learn their language.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. My parents are very interested in everything I do in my English class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. I want to learn English so well that it will become natural to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. I don’t understand why other students feel nervous about speaking English in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. My English teacher is a great source of inspiration to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. I plan to learn as much English as possible.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. I would like to know more native English speakers.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Studying English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. I would like to learn as much English as possible.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. To be honest, I don’t like my English class.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. I would feel uncomfortable speaking English anywhere outside the classroom.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. Most foreign languages sound crude and harsh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. I really work hard to learn English.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. I would prefer to have a different English teacher.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Studying English is important because other people will respect me more if I know English.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>80. I get nervous when I am speaking in my English class.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81. To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. I think that learning English is dull.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>83. I would feel comfortable speaking English where both Iranian and English speakers were present.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. I look forward to the time I spend in English class.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>85. I enjoy meeting people who speak foreign languages.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>86. My parents encourage me to practice my English as much as possible.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>87. I can’t be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88. Students who claim they get nervous in English classes are just making excuses.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89. I really like my English teacher.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>90. I love learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>91. The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92. I wish I were fluent in English.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93. I have a hard time thinking of anything positive about my English class.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>94. I feel anxious if someone asks me something in English.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>95. I would rather see a TV program dubbed into our language than in its own language with subtitles.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96. When I am studying English, I ignore distractions and pay attention to my task.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97. My English teacher doesn’t present materials in an interesting way.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>98. I am sometimes anxious that the other students in class will laugh at me when I speak English.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99. I haven’t any great wish to learn more than the basics of English.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100. When I leave university, I will give up the study of English because I am not interested in it.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101. I would feel calm and sure of myself if I had to order a meal in English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102. English is one of my favorite courses.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103. My parents think I should devote more time to studying English.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104. You can always trust native English speakers.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
THE EFFECT OF CONTEXTUALIZED SPELLING ACTIVITIES ON IMPROVING HIGH SCHOOL EFL LEARNERS’ SOUND-SYMBOL INTERACTIVE WRITING ERRORS

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ABSTRACT
The present study investigated the effect of contextualized spelling activities on improving learners’ sound/symbol interactive writing errors among high school students. To achieve this purpose, a dictation test was administered to seventy-five female language learners of Alzahra third grade high school in Ahvaz, Iran. Forty-five third grade learners were selected and non-randomly assigned to three experimental groups of contextualized, decontextualized and sentence level, each with fifteen participants. The participants in the decontextualized group received direct instruction in spelling rules at a time. The participants in the contextualized group learned spelling through reading passages. The participants in the sentence group produced spelling through writing sentences. In each group, every session was allocated to dictation and allowed students to correct their own misspelling words. Three groups used self-correcting technique, explicit spelling instruction, and multiple intelligence techniques for improving spelling through two months in the Fall semester, 2014. Statistical analyses were conducted through One-way ANOVA and Post-hoc Scheffe tests. Descriptive analyses of the post-tests showed that contextualized group improved effectively compared to the decontextualized and the sentence level groups. The study suggests that contextualized spelling rules may enhance learners’ sound/symbol interactive writing and help them to develop their spelling in English language.

KEYWORDS: Contextualized spelling activities, Spelling, Writing errors

INTRODUCTION
Writing is the process of conveying thoughts and ideas into written messages. Writing is a contemplated and cognitive process which requires sustained intellectual effort over a considerable period of time. Good writing requires the writer to state himself/herself in a more effective way to concern spelling and dictation. Many writing components are including in writing thus, to accomplish a composition task, writers go through different stages of writing. Jenks (2003) stated that "the writing process is categorized in a five stages sequential pattern (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing)” (p. 1). In second language (L2) instruction, writing ability is also a difficult skill and basic learning element for English as
foreign language learners. Unfortunately, writing is a difficult skill to be improved in a short period of time. The gravity of writing skill and its outstanding role in demonstrating students learning extent is obvious in the first or the second language.

Academics (e.g., teachers and professors) most favorably evaluate students through their writings. Thus, poor writing ability of students may endanger their academic success to a deliberate ability (Tan, 2011). Poor spelling also confines the writer's choice of words, which negatively affects creativity and guides to short and sometimes incoherent pieces of writing. However, it is more important for non-natives especially EFL learners in Iran provided with only restricted exposure to write in English. In order to transfer messages effectively, accurate spelling is strongly required. Spelling includes the connection of several skills, involving semantic and grammatical knowledge, knowledge of phonological representations, formulation of analogies with words in visual memory, knowledge of orthographic rule and conventions (Bradley & Bryant, 1985). Fagerberg (2006) suggested that, spelling is essential since one misspelling may change the meaning which the writer wanted to convey in the text. Teaching sound/letter corresponding to Iranian learners could be very complicated and that makes dictation as a time consuming task.

Spelling errors can be classified into phonological and orthographic errors. Al-Jarf (2009) indicated that phonological problems refer to errors in which the misspelled word does not sound like the target word because the whole word, a consonant, a vowel, a syllable, a prefix, a suffix, a grapheme or grapheme cluster is misheard. On the other hand, "orthographic problems refer to errors in which the misspelled word sounds like the written target word, but grapheme used for the misspelled part does not correspond with the target grapheme "(p. 9). Accordingly, there is no one-to-one match between letters of spelling and the sounds they present. Thus the mismatch between sound and spelling makes the problem of realizing the appropriate spelling for the sound which is heard by the learners.

Treiman and Bourassa (2000) indicated that although the English sound/spelling correspondence is inconsistent or not completely regular, knowledge of these with visual memorization can help spelling development. There are two different mechanism by which spelling of a word can be produced that affirm by dual-route model of spelling. First is a lexical route that words are processed orthographically through visual whole word recognition using the top-down approach. Second is a non-lexical route where by words are processed phonologically that is the transfer of letter-sound associations using the bottom-up approach (Brown & Ellis, 1991). It is commonly accepted that the connection of orthographical and phonological is essential for good spelling.

Kamhi and Hinton (2000) indicated that all assumption of spelling are involved a dominant role for phonological knowledge. Phonological knowledge is very important in the development of spelling and from the beginning stage of learning to spell. Learners without sound realization and phonological knowledge face problems in acquiring orthographic knowledge and will be embarrassed. Phonological knowledge is the most important in the development of spelling, reading and writing. However, language development has been closely related to the concept of phonological knowledge.
Multiple-intelligence is a technique that improves transfer of correct spelling into written. The International Dyslexia Association (2000) indicated that multiple-intelligence technique connects listening, saying, looking and writing in different associations. Thus, this technique helps visual and auditory of the learners to be successful in spelling. All learning intelligences and style could be involved in spelling instruction. The multiple intelligence technique can be connected to many different learning areas. It includes several subcategories including visual intelligence which commits to the ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind. Interpersonal intelligence which is an understanding of other people which is a technique that asks of the learners work with a partner to spell words. Naturalist intelligence discriminates the human ability to distinguish among living things (animal, plants) and the researcher emphasizes the development of the verbal and writing. Self-correcting is a technique that students reread their own writing and make corrections.

Rana and Perveen (2013) indicated that utilize of self-correction increase the learners linguistic competence. In addition, learners would be able to define specific difficulties with their written work and this motivated those to review their work until they would be capable generate better quality work. This indicates that it is suitable and valuable for learners to correct their own work frequently. Hall (2014) argued that because spelling learning is so significant to young learners reading and writing development, it is important that explicit instruction and differentiated strategies be utilized to expand the favors of spelling teaching since the beginning years. She added that instructors can utilize formal and informal strategies along with data about their students in order to continually develop their instruction and improve students' outcome.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Spelling has always been of paramount important in Iranian educational system, and writing of both general and academic text has been the aim of many educational enters for years (Cook, 1999). This precisely can be due to the fact that there have been many people wishing to write the text of both academic and non-academics want to say in the target language, so that they can follow their aims regarding their profession and/or any other motivation they have. There for, in many language centers and institutions much attempt has to make by teachers to teach students the appropriate technique for writing accurate texts of target language they learn.

Kenuing and Verhoeven (2007) indicated that student's ability to spell is affected by diversity of skills, such as orthographic knowledge, phonological knowledge, knowledge of spelling rules and morphological awareness. Spelling instruction has been in the English curriculum since 1783, when Noad Webster prefaced the first Blue-Baced speller (Bloodgood, 1991, p. 11). Schlagal (2003) suggested that this book through teachers can teach grammar, spelling and pronunciation. Includes "series of words for all of students, and they are to be read as a rote memorization task" (p. 23). Rote memorization was utilized as the study technique. Templeton and Morris (2001) indicated that this technique conducted to the attention of instruct pupils to expand spellings of words (p. 18). In the beginning of the 20th century, a question was heightened by Schlagal (2003) whether "spelling must be taught in the context or to go on utilizing a series of words" (p. 27).
They admitted that words in series were persisted over teaching words in context, thus for teaching spelling memorization persisted to be a way.

There were two basic systems for teaching spelling in the 1930s, test-study-test system (i.e., take a pre-test at the center of the week, read misspelled words during the week, and take a re-test of all the words at the end of the week), and study-test system (i.e., read words during the week and take the test at the end of the week). Templeton and Morris (2001) equaled the two systems and indicated that test-study-test system was over the study-test system. Teachers indicated this approach frequently utilized in the students’ daily writing that as way of read series of words.

Teachers carried much criticism about the words utilized in spelling guide books Basal spellers in the 1950s. They indicated that the words may have been considered for difficulty, but were not developing orthographic knowledge. Because of research results in this field and this criticism, Schlagal (2003) indicated that "authors began to plan a more functioning spelling system that included popular in the series words for instance common letter-sound patterns" (p. 43). The utilizing of series words in spelling texts was still persisted more the utilizing of spelling in context, during that period of time.

**Spelling Instruction in the Classroom**

Across the past thirty years, there has been deliberately argument between researchers and teachers relating suitable spelling instruction (Schlagal, 2003). The debate of spelling instruction has been existed among researchers and teachers with a reformist view and those with traditional view. Marten and Graves (2003) indicated that "Traditional spelling is more a rote routine and an engaging craft; the focus is on memorization, the lessons, the word series, and the spelling tests" (p. 22). Schlagal (2003) added that "the words themselves should be memorized as separated items but the words that are given to students may have an overall common character (i.e., homophones). By memorizing those words, many learners will have lost the spelling of the words by next day but may aid some learners proposed on the spelling test" (p. 35). Scott (2000) suggested that a teacher with traditional view delivers her/his learners a series of words at the starting of the week, accomplish drill during the week, and gives a test at the end of the week. Learners will not be able to spell or utilize the words correctly when putting the words to actual utilize or when writing, if they cannot remember spelling of some words by next day of the test.

In accession, as well instructors with traditional view depend weightily on the utilizing of a spelling textbook. Scott (2000) indicated that the "activities or methods in a workbook or text book furnish little or no instructions for students to usage what they learned in tangible writing tasks" (p. 18). Schlagal (2003) indicated that these spelling books are utilized regardless of the different needs of the learners in the class and invented for a specific grade of instruction. Larson, Hammill and Moats (1999) added that "it can make obscure for some learners to accomplish the activities from a workbook or textbook because all learners are not at the same level developmentally" (p. 37).
Spelling and Writing

Moats (2006) stated that, there is a strong connection between spelling and writing. He added that, writing is a mental manipulating task that depends on automatic utilize of fundamental skills, such as grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling, so that the writer can hold follow of such matters like word choice, authentic needs, topic and organization. Writers who should think too hard about how to spell utilize expensive able cognitive resources required for higher level of composition (Singer & Bashir, 2004).

Moat (2006) added that, poor spellers may limit what they write to words that they can spell, with unavoidable loss of verbal power, or they may lose follow of their thinks when they spell a word. It is required for learners to have endured with verbal and written language, containing phonemic knowledge, to certain that learners are victorious in their own written work.

Baiely, Borczak, and Stankiewicz (2002) concluded that, "the first factor affecting the success of writers was a lack of experience with language". They added that, "in order for children to be successful in written language, they must have a strong verbal language developed, which is often based in phonemic awareness" (p. 22). The basic problem among most learners is to spell words accurately and this shows the limit of useful spelling knowledge and these learners can inhibit their ability to write (Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2011).

On the basis of the argument of the El Koumy (2002) argued that there were two chief approaches for pretend the teaching learning process and foreign language instruction and learning area for over the last two decades: (1)" the skill-based approach, sometimes appeared as the “formal” or “intentional”, “direct” instructional approach and (2) the whole-language approach, sometimes appeared as the “informal”, or “indirect”, “incidental” learning approach"(p. 11). Each approach will be described in the following section.

The Skill-Based Approach

The skill-based approach takes its theoretical feathers from structural linguistics and behavioral psychology. Supporters of the skill-based approach believed language as a set of disunited skills. Each skill is distributed into pieces and bits of sub skills. These sub-skills are progressively trained in a predetermined following through modeling, exception and direct explanation. El Koumy (2002) indicated that the skill-building instructor permanently utilize discrete point test (e.g. true or false, fill in the blanked, and multiple-choice) to evaluate the principle of each sub-skill before go to the next. The skill-based approach believes in spelling as one of the sub skills included in reading and writing. It also considers that spelling includes many micro-skills like as word structure, phonetic, and letter-naming. Spelling rules may be learned through mechanical drills (Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2011).

Studies Related to Developing Spelling

In order to see the effect of self-correction and strategy-instruction, or no-correction technique in improving spelling performance and spelling consciousness program, a research was designed by Cordewener, Bosman, and Verhoeven (2014). In this study, the population of the research included 73 third grade students between 7 and 9 years old. Students were divided based
on a median split, into low-skilled and high-skilled spellers. Assignment to the three conditions was based on the scores on the standardized spelling pre-test, consciousness score on the pre-test, their age and their sex. Instruments of the study were pre-post test and, retention test. The matching procedure resulted in a distribution of the students in the three conditions did not differ on standardized word spelling. After gathering of the data, the results showed that students in all three conditions made develop between pre-test and post-test. This study explained how spelling performance and spelling consciousness can be improved by a spelling training. This study also indicated that instruct students as a structured way to spell words lead to positive outcome for their spelling performance. It study indicated that strategy instruction was effective for low-and high-skilled spellers. Self-correction may lead to self-confidence. Self-confidence may have had an influence on the development on spelling consciousness. Direct self-correction appeared to be more effective to improve spelling consciousness, self-correcting directly after dictation to stimulate their thinking about spelling and, self-correcting directly after dictation is also effective to improve both spelling performance and spelling consciousness.

In a program of explicit and implicit instruction, Cordewener, Bosman and Verhoeven (2014) aimed to help good and poor spellers for the acquisition of morphological and phonological of spelling rule. In this program 193 students (94 girls, 99 boys) between the age of 5 and 9 years old take parted. The learners were assigned into low-and high skilled speller based on their scores on word-spelling test. The learners were specified to the implicit, explicit, and control conditions were matched based on their scores on reading and spelling test. Prior to the training, the pre-test was performed, two week after the pre-test, the morphological spelling training started. The training involved of six sessions, the week after the training, the post-test was administered. In implicit training sessions, visual dictation was utilized and for explicit training the morphological rule for words was taught. And explicit training started with an explanation of the purpose of training to explain the differences in development between pre-test and post-test for learners in the explicit instruction, implicit, and control condition and for control condition there was no training. Subsequent post-hoc tests cleared that learners in explicit condition made more progress than learners in control condition, the learners in explicit instruction made progress between pre-test and post-test consciousness. Explicit- rule instruction and explicit spelling instruction of a structured approach to spell words are effective ways to teach learners how to spell. Moreover, applying a metacognitive aspect to explicitly stimulate learners to think about their spelling was also effective. Explicit instruction of spelling rules or a structured approach to spell words appeared to be effective for both poor and good spellers. However, in their studies explicit instruction approach to most effective for both high- and- low skilled spellers and explicit instruction most likely lead to explicit learning.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
The main research questions of the study are as follows:
RQ1: Is there any difference between the learners who learn contextualized, de contextualized, and sentence level spelling rules?
RQ2: Do contextualized spelling rules develop learners' sound/symbol writing?
RQ3: Do de contextualized spelling rules develop learners' sound/symbol writing?
METHODOLOGY

Participants
To select the homogeneous participants, a dictation test was administered following Kibble and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) to ten students to pilot the reliability of the pre-test in Alzahra high school, Ahvaz, Iran. Meeting the reliability, forty-five students out of 75 students were selected based on their performance on the pre-test. The selected participants were female and they were non-randomly divided into three experimental groups, fifteen participants each. They were decontextualized, contextualized, and sentence level groups. The research took two months in Fall semester, 2014.

Instrumentations
Three instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially, the pilot test was made to make the pre-test reliable and practical based on the Kible and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) dictation test, who suggested the use of already familiar words in the dictation tests. The test consisted of words which will be chosen from the passages of their course book. The reliability of the test was (r=.691) based on KR-21 formula. The second instrument was a pre-test that functioned as a homogeneity which test included 80 words. The third instrument was a post-test (i.e., a modified pre-test) which was administered to determine the effectiveness of experimental groups spelling techniques. At the end of the treatment 80 words were used in the post-test of the experimental groups. Regarding the treatment, word and sentences as well as the passages were prepared and taught in the three experimental groups. The reliability of the piloted post-test was calculated through KR-21 formula as (r=.736).

Materials
The third grade English text book which was used as the materials. The book contain six lessons, each lesson contains a list of vocabulary, reading comprehension, speaking, listening, writing and grammar with exercises such as complete the sentences, and answer the questions. The learners were encouraged to study target words of each lesson. In each session, words from the list were chosen and used in the dictation tasks.

Procedure
This study was conducted at Alzahra high school of Ahvaz, Iran. The first step was to accomplish this study, to do so, a week before the instruction the researcher administered a pilot test as a dictation test (Kibble & Milles, 1994; Feez, 2001) to 10 learners in order to make pre-test practicality and reliability that contained 80 words. In the next step, the researcher administered pre-test of spelling developed based on Kibble and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) to 75 learners that function as homogeneous test 45 female EFL learners out of 75 third grade high school will be chosen through a pre-test which is used in order to determine how well the subjects know the content and to compare the results of test to see the effect of treatment. Based on the results of this test, 45 EFL learners non-randomly divided into three experimental groups, decontextualized group, contextualized group and sentence level group. The participants in the decontextualized group received direct and explicit instruction in spelling rules at a time. Example, add (s, es, ies) to form plural from singular nouns. In this group, the researcher takes a board dictation circle the misspelled words, spell it and write the correct form in every session. The participants in the
contextualized group learned spelling through reading. In this group, students observed how the spelling rules were applied in reading passages. They also developed visual image of the words in this passage. Also, teacher give papers to students that they should underline the misspelled words and teacher said them look the correct form of the word-say-write-check it again.

The participants in sentence group produced spelling through writing. In this group, the students applied the spelling rule explained to actual writing task such as short sentences, answers for written question. Additionally, the teacher gave papers to students to select the misspelled words underline and work with a friend to say/spell words. In each group, the emphasis in the classroom was on the development of verbal ability of the learners. Practices like, add-ending-prefix-suffixes, draw the words- illustrate the meaning, draw the words as they sound-arrange your words into-chains-letters, and form peer-coaching teams to help learn words were performed in the three groups. Generally, the spelling techniques such as self-correcting, explicit instruction, and multiple intelligence techniques were selected on the basis of exercises which were mainly used in English books for general purposes and for improving spelling and writing achievement for third grade high school students. The treatments introduced to the learners for six weeks including one session each week with each session in each session one lesson will be taught lasting 45 minutes, having provided the three groups with different type of treatment. Throughout the 2 months of the Fall semester, the participants in the experimental groups made their endeavor to practice and apply the spelling techniques of the explicit instruction, self-correcting and multiple-intelligence to promote their spelling skill. The participants in the experimental groups were constantly reminded to use comprehensive spelling techniques during the whole treatment course when they were engaged in spelling tasks. Finally, two weeks after the end of the treatment period, the post-test of dictation given to the participants to test improving spelling proficiency and to see the real effect of the treatment. Some items were modified or changed to remove the learners reminding of the pre-test. The present study consists of the two variables, the dependent variable is considered to be the performance of students on spelling and the independent variables are the comprehensive techniques of explicit instruction technique, self-correcting technique, and multiple-intelligence technique.

Data Analysis
In order to determine the effect of using spelling techniques on Iranian high school EFL learners, the data were collected through spelling the pre-test and post-test. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations and variances of the scores were calculated. Data were analyzed by One-way ANOVA to find out whether the differences between the three groups’ pre and post-tests were statistically significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This section deals with the results obtained throughout the research and analytically scrutinizes the groups' performance in the study in the tree experimental groups. Descriptive statistics of the pre-test in the three groups is presented in the Table 1.
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (pre-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualized</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>13.26</td>
<td>15.40</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>14.48</td>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence level</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.28</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>13.63</td>
<td>16.93</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14.97</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>15.63</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that in the present study, there were 15 students in each of the three groups who were females. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that mean of score in contextualized group was 14.33. The mean of score in decontextualized group was 15.30. The mean of score in sentence level was 16.2. The total mean of three groups was 15.28. In order to understand the degree of proximity among the pre-tests, One-way ANOVA was administered and after the statistical analysis.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA (pre-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></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>9.186</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.593</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>206.592</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4.919</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215.778</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that that since the observed F (1.775) is less than the critical F (3.22) with df=42/2, the difference between the pre-test in the three groups is not significant (p<.05). Descriptive statistics on the post-test is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualized</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>16.57</td>
<td>18.98</td>
<td>11.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.78</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>14.27</td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence level</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.80</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>16.64</td>
<td>18.95</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>16.37</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>11.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

204
Table 3 shows that the mean of the score in the contextualized group was 17.78. The mean of score in the sentence level group was 17.80 and the mean in the decontextualized group was 15. Of mean of the scores among three groups' significance differences was observed.

Thus there was a significant difference between the experimental groups. Since the present study investigate the effect of decontextualized, contextualized, and sentence level rules on the EFL spelling learner's proficiency, the performance of the participants of each group was taken into consideration. Therefore, One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the observed F was significant at .05 level. The results of the One-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>40.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.168</td>
<td>3.651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>231.99</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.524</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>272.32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing the observed F (4.678) with the critical F (3.22) with df=42/2, the difference between the post-tests in the three groups is significant (p <0.035). It means that the three groups are different due to the treatment of the present research. Results of the post-hoc Scheffe test which determine the exact difference between the groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Tests</th>
<th>(J) Tests</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Confidence Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextualized</td>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>2.000*</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>Sentence level</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-2.19</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contextualized</td>
<td>-2.000*</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>-4.17</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence level</td>
<td>Contextualized</td>
<td>-2.016*</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>-4.19</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-2.16</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.
Table 5 shows that the Post-hoc Scheffe test which analysis, it made clear that there is a significant difference among the three groups in the post-test. Post-hoc Scheffe test was performed to show the multiple-comparison of the three groups. It shows that, difference between contextualized and decontextualized was significant. Consequently, the result showed that participants who worked in sentence level group outperformed the participants who worked in decontextualized. It was concluded that the participants who worked in the sentence level group did better than the participants who worked in the decontextualized group. Difference between sentence level and contextualized was also significant. In short, the participants in the contextualized group had better performance than the participants of sentence level group.

Discussion
The results showed that, the spelling of three groups improved and there was a significant difference between the contextualized group and the other groups. As a whole, the study showed that the spelling techniques were effective in improving EFL learners’ development of the spelling proficiency at the third grade high school level of English. This result can approve that, the learners who learned spelling rules in the contextualized group outperform the learners who learned spelling the rules in the sentence level and the decontextualized groups. According to the results of this study, the most effective group among the three groups was contextualized group who were outperformed the other groups in achieving the higher mean in spelling proficiency post-test since they have been more successful in using the spelling rules. Results revealed better results among contextualized than decontextualized and sentence level group in sound/symbol interactive writing development. The reason might be due to the fact that the contextualized group pays more attention to this rule and those three techniques while writing in the context which support the meaning of the word and its spelling /sound relation to other words in association.

Generally, contextualized group used the self-correcting, explicit instruction, and multiple intelligence technique and this might be due to their potential attention of those factors in the text. However, this does not mean that the decontextualized and the sentence level group have ignored the role of those three techniques in developing sound/symbol interactive writing. In other words, the decontextualized and the sentence level group used those three techniques but they had the spelling/sound relations out of the context and this made them confused due to the lack of contextualized support. The context may help them the contextualized groups monitor their own writing based on their phonological knowledge, develop their fluency, made meaningful context, and develop their visual image of the word in the text. This lacked among the decontextualized and the sentence level groups. Thus using context or sentence structures for teaching spelling may promote sound/symbol interactive writing of female learners. One possible explanation on these findings is that providing a lot of corrective writing and spelling activities and techniques in the process of teaching and learning by teachers in the classrooms especially while the students are participating in the writing activities may act as an affective role on participants’ writing and on their participations in the classroom. When the students do not have motivation for writing and taking part in the classroom activities, it will affect on their accuracy negatively. Thus they may show better progress in accuracy and spelling proficiency by
providing appropriate spelling techniques such as, explicit instruction, self-correcting, and multiple intelligence technique.

The results showed a significant improvement in the participants' sound/symbol interactive writing. Compared to the result of their performance in pre-test, the mean score of their pre-test was less than the mean score of their post-test. It was observed that the difference between the post-test was significant \((p<.05)\). However, it was less than the contextualized group. Sentence level group turned out to have improved better than the decontextualized group sound/symbol interactive writing. Based on these findings, The reason for the development of performance of students in sentence level group might be due to the fact that utilizes of writing activities and writing exercise of their course book may help learners to develop spelling at the sentence level. The findings of this study are against Scott (2000) who suggested that, activities in a text book divided little or no management for learners to exercise what they learned in actual writing task. Moreover, the results of this study are opposite with the study that Johnstone (2001) did. Book exercises and sentence activities are not satisfactory to develop spelling proficiency. In the present study context was reduced to sentence level to evaluate the effect of sentence as a mini text on learners spelling proficiency.

The results also showed that its effect was less than the effect of contextualizes level. The development of learners in spelling proficiency might be due to the fact that, learner's motivation in learning and spelling target word increase through sentence practice. It showed that pedagogical activities might provide strong motivation for students to learn English and to practice language and writing activities might stimulate thinking. Most importantly by using self-correcting technique in sentence level group as a means of correcting misspelling word learners might encourage and this help them to monitoring their writing at the sentence level develop their accuracy. One possible explanation of these finding is that providing writing exercises in the process of teaching and learning by teacher in the class especially while students have purpose may be very interesting for them because these drills help them to be reflective and responsible and give them a chance to produce something.

**CONCLUSION**

This study began with the assumption that contextualized, decontextualized, and sentence level spelling rules could enhance the third grade high school language learners' spelling proficiency. The instruction lasted for the two-month semester. During this time, the teacher (researcher) employed the spelling rules and self-correcting techniques, explicit instruction techniques, and multiple intelligence techniques to teach spelling. The null hypothesis of the study in the contextualized group was rejected since there was a significant difference between the pre-and post-tests. The null hypothesis in the sentence level group was rejected since there was a significant difference between the pre-and post-tests. The null hypothesis of the study in decontextualised group was accepted since there was not a significant difference between the pre-and post-test. The results of the post-test indicated that the instruction of spelling rules of the contextualized group did affect the third grade high school female language learners spelling proficiency. That is, the spelling proficiency of the contextualized group who had made the use
of contextualized spelling rules and activities such as self-correcting, explicit instruction, multiple intelligence techniques to outperform the decontextualized and the sentence level groups.

The application of contextualized spelling rules for writing and spelling proficiency resulted in successful learning among females. Language learners who are successful in their writing and spelling proficiency might draw on this strategy more frequently than do those who are poor in their writing and spelling proficiency. Of course, poor spellers may utilize other contextualized spelling activity but they are less frequent users of this activity. The value of contextualized spelling activities use of contextualized spelling rules should be discussed by teachers who teach at the high school level. Therefore, the use contextualized spelling activities use of contextualized spelling rules of should be more brought to notice among students of writing classes in particular based on what results of the study suggested.

The results of this research can lead the future researchers to investigate other language skills. Other skills such as listening comprehension or reading skills are recommended to be investigated in future. Females just took part in this study but both males and females may participate in future studies as well. Learners who studied English as a foreign language took part in this study. Moreover, the same study can be replicated in other situations such as ESL situations and even among native speakers’ contexts. Furthermore, this research was conducted on the high school EFL learners at Alzahra high school in Ahvaz. Other levels of language skills can also be studied if the researchers like to make generalizations about language learners at different proficiency levels. Eventually, this study lasted for two months. Succeeding studies can allocate more time to study the effects contextualized spelling activities on EFL learners’ writing and spelling proficiency.

REFERENCES


DEVELOPING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING: BRAINSTORMING VS. ROLE-PLAY

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ABSTRACT
Due to the lack of preparation for the speaking activities, some of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students face serious problems in speaking skill. The present study aims at investigating the relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two widespread pre-speaking activities which was carried out between the two class groups –students undertaking a full-course of study in Lang. Lab. 2 in Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch, Iran and through a standard proficiency test derived from NTC’s TOEFL Test, it was observed that the students were homogeneous. Each class group was given necessary treatment separately to implement each of the mentioned pre-speaking activities as a warm up before the speaking phase in five sessions. Then, based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview ranging from 1 to 6, where 1 means memorized proficiency and 6 stands for native proficiency, was utilized for each class group to assess EFL students' speaking proficiency, and the obtained scores were applied in one independent sample t-test. Since the t-observed was more than the t-critical, the first hypothesis was verified. That is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity. The pedagogical implications of the present study are 1) recognizing the EFL students’ tendency to brainstorming as the most provoking pre-speaking activity 2) providing the students with an atmosphere wherein brainstorming can be implemented before the speaking phase.

KEYWORDS: Brainstorming, Role-play, Pre-speaking, speaking phase

INTRODUCTION
Most of the EFL students face serious problems in speaking skill because of inadequate preparation for the speaking activities. They should be taught how to prepare for the speaking phase when they arrive in language classes. The purpose of pre-speaking is to activate language, motivate speakers, prepare ideas, and help students bring their background knowledge (schemata) to the specific context of the lesson. As stated by Rezaei (2013), in pre-speaking activities, four features need to be determined, i.e., the topic of speaking lesson, the purpose of speaking lesson, the audience to which speakers speak, and the format of speaking, or whether it is a conversation, discussion, monologue, presentation, formal speech and so forth. Likewise, based on Vilimec
(2006), this stage includes two focus areas: engage-instruct-initiate sequence, and grouping students. The first area concerns engagement of students, techniques for drawing attention or involving students, providing students with instructions and initiating students to start the activity. The second area deals with setting students into groups, providing this is required by the nature of the activity. Kayi (2006) introduced some of these activities including discussion, simulation, role-play, simulation, story-telling, information gap, brainstorming, story completion, reporting and so on among which brainstorming and role-play seem more influential than others. Brainstorming as a pre-speaking activity motivates students to produce ideas in a limited time. Depending on the context, either individual or group brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely. The good characteristic of brainstorming is that the students are not criticized for their ideas so students will be open to sharing new ideas. Another pre-speaking activity is role-play in which students pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles, and the teacher gives information to the learners such as who they are and what they think or feel (Harmer, 1984).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Speaking Theories

According to Gower et al. (1995), speaking as a productive skill has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practiced through controlled and guided activities and, fluency, considered to be ‘the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously’. Bygate (1987) states that in order to achieve a communicative goal through speaking , there are two aspects to be considered – knowledge of the language, and skill in using this knowledge. It is not enough to possess a certain amount of knowledge, but a speaker of the language should be able to use this knowledge in different situations. Based on Bygate (1987) , speaking skill is viewed as comprising two components: production skills and interaction skills, both of which can be affected by two conditions: firstly, processing conditions, taking into consideration the fact that ‘a speech takes place under the pressure of time’; secondly, reciprocity conditions connected with a mutual relationship between the interlocutors. Production skills involve two aspects – facilitation and compensation, brought about by processing conditions. Both devices help students, besides making the oral production easier or possible, sound more naturally. Interaction skills, on the other hand, involve routines and negotiation skills. Routines present the typical patterns of conversation including interaction and information routines. Negotiation skills serve as a means for enabling the speaker and listener to make themselves clearly understood. This is achieved by two aspects: management of interaction and turn-taking. With regard to the elements of speaking that are crucial for fluent oral production, Harmer (2001) distinguishes between two aspects – knowledge of ‘language features’, and the ability to process information on the spot or mental/social processing. According to Harmer (2001), to wage oral communication, participant should possess knowledge of language features, and the ability to process information and language on the spot. Language features involve four areas – connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. If the speaker possesses these language features, processing skills, ‘mental/social processing’, will help him or her to achieve successful
communication goal. Processing skills include language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing.

**Speaking with Regard to Communicative Competence**

As Revell (1991) stipulates, beginning with Noam Chomsky (1965) and his distinction between competence as the speaker’s intuitive knowledge of the rules of his native language’, and performance as ‘what he actually produces by applying these rules’, the theory of communicative competence has gone through a serious development so far. Brown (1994) discusses several theories of communicative competence as they developed through periods of time, of which the most notable ones include the studies by Hymes (1967), Savignon (1983), Cummins (1979) or Canale and Swain (1980). In accordance with Brown (1994), the newest views are probably best captured by Lyle F. Bachman (1990) in his schematization of what Bachman calls ‘Communicative Language Ability’ (CLA) which comprises two basic features – firstly, knowledge, competence in the language, and, secondly, the capacity for implementing or using the competence. Bachman proposes three components that in his view ‘communicative language ability’ framework includes language competence, strategic competence, and psychological mechanisms. While language competence is a set of specific knowledge components that are utilized in communication via language, strategic competence is the term that Bachman uses to characterize the mental capacity for implementing the components of language competence in contextualized communicative language use; the third component, psychophysiological mechanisms present the neurological and psychological processes involved in the actual execution of language as a physical phenomenon.

**Speaking Activities in Relation to Communicative Language Teaching**

As Brown (1994) describes, it has been the philosophy of communicative language teaching (CLT) for many years to teach foreign languages through communicative approach which focuses ‘on speaking and listening skills, on writing for specific communicative purposes, and on authentic reading texts’. Brown (1994) defines the most important features of CLT:

1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learners to accomplish those purposes.
3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed context.

Harmer (2001) when suggesting features of CLT implies that ‘the language learning will take care of itself’ and agrees with Brown that the accuracy of the language is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task. In relation to communicative language teaching, Revell (1991) reminds that ‘theories of communicative competence imply that teachers
must do more than just supply learners with a number of language structures to manipulate’ and suggests that it is necessary to make a link between ‘linguistic competence’ and ‘communicative competence’. Accordingly, Littlewood (1991) raised a solution for bridging the gap by categorizing activities into two groups: pre-communicative activities, and Communicative activities. The aim of the pre-communicative activities is to ‘help the learners develop links with meanings that will later enable them to use this language for communicative purposes’. Pre-communicative activities are therefore divided into two subcategories: ‘structural activities’, such as mechanical drills or verb paradigms, for producing accurate and appropriate language forms; and, ‘quasi-communicative activities’, such as question-and-answer activities, giving directions to a stranger basing learner’s replies on, for example, a town plan, or questionnaires, which bear a potential functional meanings of the language (Littlewood 1991). Correspondingly, Millrood (2001) believes that Speaking lessons are normally offered in three main phases, namely pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking phases and classroom activities are accordingly divided into three main categories, i.e., pre-speaking, while/during-speaking, and post-speaking activities. Pre-speaking activities are considered as a warm-up and prepare the learners for the main speaking activity. In order to activate language, motivate speakers, prepare ideas, and helps students bring their background knowledge (schemata) to the specific context of the lesson. Students are asked to encourage ideas about the topic by means of fruitful pre-speaking activities such as brainstorming. In pre-speaking activities, four features need to be determined, i.e., the topic of speaking lesson, the purpose of speaking lesson, the audience to which speakers speak, and the format of speaking, or whether it is a conversation, discussion, monologue, presentation, formal speech and so forth. While-speaking activities compose the body of speaking lessons. Students are encouraged to engage in some sort of interactive exchange of information or communication. They may be asked to play a role given to them in as in role-playing activities, to find a solution to a problem posed for them as in problem-solving activities, or to play in an interesting game that teacher introduces, and all these activities aim to provide them with suitable opportunities to express their feelings, describe things, explain them clearly, ask questions and ask for what they need, discuss things in small or larger groups, and so on. And in post-speaking activities a rethinking process is at work. The learners are encouraged to reflect on the activities which were just done and on their own performance, bring language they have acquired into more focus, further focus on the ideas they have just come up with, and produce spoken language integrated with the other skills, that is not merely oral production, but a combination of two or more skills simultaneously. They aim to promote critical thinking in learners which paves the more language development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The aim of this study was to answer the following questions:
1. Is there a significant relationship between brainstorming and role-play in pre-speaking phase?
2. Is brainstorming more effective than role-play in pre-speaking phase?
Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1: It is believed that those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.
Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between brainstorming and role-play.

METHODOLOGY
The study aims at investigating the relationship between brainstorming as one of the most applicable pre-speaking activities through which students can produce ideas freely in a limited time and role-play as another widespread pre-speaking activity in which students are assigned different roles which they may have outside the classroom environment, in real life. It is to be noted that the students in both two classes were involved in a context in which they were incapable of speaking fluently due to the lack of any preparatory steps which could help foster their speaking ability.

Setting
The setting for this study included the language laboratory in the Humanities faculty of Islamic Azad university, Dezful branch, Dezful, Iran.

Participants
The investigation of pre-speaking activities was intended for 60 typical second–semester college students of Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch, Dezul, Iran who were studying "Lang Lab 2" as their main course in two homogenous classes. The criterion for focusing on this selected population was a proficiency test in grammar, reading comprehension and vocabulary in English. There were 30 students in each class. Each class group whose teacher was the same was taught separately to speak based on one specific pre-speaking activity, in one class Brainstorming and in another one Role-play.

Instrumentation
To use necessary items for proficiency test, 20 vocabulary questions 20 grammatical items and regarding reading comprehension, 10 questions were raised from NTC'S TOEFL test. All together, the proficiency test included 50 questions and each question had a two-point mark with the total of 100 points. Based on the statistical description of the proficiency test, it was observed that the Mean of the first group was equal to 84.59, the Minimum score was 68 and the Maximum score was 98. The Mean of the second group was equal to 84.00. The minimum score was 70 and the Maximum score was 96. Regarding the results of the proficiency test, the mean difference of the proficiency tests was equal to 0.59 that showed a reasonable difference level to compare the two classes for this research. Having taught each class group how to initiate their speaking activities via one of the two pre-speaking activities, brainstorming and role-play, and having extended the same trend within five sessions, the researcher who was also the instructor of the two "Lang Lab 2" classes utilized an interview based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview was utilized for each class group to assess the EFL students' speaking ability in terms of the following components:
1. Accent
2. Structure
3. Vocabulary
4. Fluency
5. Comprehension

The scale used by the teacher and the researcher both as the raters of the students' spoken performance made it essential to give careful attention to the following points suggested by Farhady et al. (1994) in order to make the scoring as reliable as possible:

1. Each interview must be carefully structured.
2. The number of raters will not be less than 20 for each case.
3. The candidates should be put at ease in order to make the results both more valid and reliable.
4. Each interview will be recorded for scoring and future reference.
5. Scoring will be discrete rather than holistic.

Procedure
Scores were given on a 6 point scale ranging from the least appropriate (1) to the most (6). However, since native and native-like proficiency do not usually occur, levels (5) and (6) were ignored. Then, each student's voice was recorded so that their speaking ability could be rated deliberately based on the above discrete factors.

The interview session was held separately for each class group and each student was given a specific score on the basis of the mentioned speaking components. In order to see which one of the two pre-speaking activities was more effective on the EFL learners' speaking, the researcher applied an independent sample t-test based on the scores obtained from the students' interview results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
Having collected the data based on the above mentioned data collection instruments and procedures, the researcher conducted the analysis of data and tested the hypothesis formulated for the present study. Accordingly, an independent sample t-test was utilized so that it could be shown which one of the two pre-speaking activities, brainstorming and role-play was more effective on the EFL learners' speaking.

Table 1: Group Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prespeaking</th>
<th>N</th>
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<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.67</td>
<td>1.807</td>
<td>.330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roleplay</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>1.583</td>
<td>.289</td>
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</table>
Table 2: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.925</td>
<td>.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3&4: Independent Sample T-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>12.692</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>5.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>12.692</td>
<td>57.018</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>5.567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the results given in table one, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores obtained from the students implementing brainstorming were 15.67 and 1.80. The mean and the standard deviation for the second group of students who utilized role-play group were 10.10 and 1.58 respectively. At the 95% confidence interval of difference one can conclude that as P is less than 5% (P<5) p=0, the difference between the means obtained from the t – test is statically different. That is to say, the means of the first and second group were 15.67 and 10.10 respectively. There is a difference value of 5.57 of the mean of the two groups on the same test. According to Levene's test for equality of variances, since F= 925, p > 0.05, the equal variances assumption is accepted. Likewise, t (58) = 12.69; p < 0.05 and as the first hypothesis is one-tailed, P value, which is obtained by dividing Sig.(2-tailed) by two, equals 0.000, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is verified; that is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

In order to assure whether the result was acceptable, the researcher got another teacher who taught the same course to interview the same groups separately based on the same scale. Then, on the basis of the obtained score, an independent sample t-test was applied. The following tables provide the results obtained from the independent sample t-test conducted by the second rater.

Table 5: Group Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prespeaking</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.60</td>
<td>1.354</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roleplay</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.43</td>
<td>1.813</td>
<td>.331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding the results given in table one, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores obtained from the students implementing brainstorming were 16.60 and 1.354. The mean and the standard deviation for the second group of students who utilized role-play group were 10.43 and 1.813 respectively. At the 95% confidence interval of difference one can conclude that as P is less than 5% (P<5) p=0, the difference between the means obtained from the t-test is statically different. That is to say, the means of the first and second group were 16.60 and 10.43 respectively. There is a difference value of 6.17 of the mean of the two groups on the same test. According to Levene's test for equality of variances, since F = 0.729, p > 0.05, the equal variances assumption is accepted. Likewise, t (58) = 14.92; p < 0.05. In addition, because the first hypothesis is one-tailed, P value, which is obtained by dividing Sig.(2-tailed) by two, equals 0.000, so it can be realized that the first hypothesis is verified; that is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

To sum up concerning the main question raised in this study, one can be safe to conclude that there is a significant relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two most applicable pre-speaking activities. According to the second question, as the first hypothesis was verified, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

**Discussion**

It goes without saying that this study profited by a mixed method design which included qualitative and quantitative aspects of research; that is, interviewing the students and utilizing a
range from 1 to 6 based on the Likert test which is considered as a non-parametric and ordinal test has to do with the qualitative aspect of the research and applying an independent sample t-test which is interval and parametric refers to the quantitative or experimental aspect of research. Similarly, as the use of qualitative and quantitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the research process, it is regarded as a fixed mixed method on one hand, and since the use of such a mix method arises due to issues that develop during the process of conducting the research, it is referred to as an emergent mixed method on the other hand. Hence, this type of mixed method design falls somewhere in the middle of the continuum with both fixed and emergent aspects of the design. Likewise, this research benefits from a true experimental design since each group was given the necessary treatment and afterward they were evaluated with regard to the mentioned treatment.

CONCLUSION
This study aimed at investigating the relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two most applicable pre-speaking activities and realizing which one of these two can affect students' speaking more than the other one. For these purposes, two groups of second-semester college students of Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch who were studying "Lang Lab 2" as their main course in two homogeneous classes were selected. The criterion for focusing on this selected population was a proficiency test in grammar, reading comprehension and vocabulary in English. There were 30 students in each class. Each class group whose teacher was the same was given necessary treatment separately to implement each of the mentioned pre-speaking activities as a warm up before the speaking phase in five sessions. Then, based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview ranging from 1 to 6, where 1 means memorized proficiency and 6 stands for native proficiency, was utilized for each class group to assess the EFL students' speaking proficiency, and the obtained scores were applied in one independent sample t-test. Since the t-observed was more than the t-critical, the null hypothesis which stated "there is no relationship between brainstorming and role-play" was rejected and the first hypothesis was verified. In other words, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

Needless to say that the students’ interest to brainstorming or role-play will be determined by providing each class students with a specific treatment on either of the two activities. In accordance with brainstorming, it should be considered as the most widespread pre-speaking technique through which EFL students share their ideas freely without hesitation. In fact, it will help them boost their fluency and since there is no limitation to seize them, they try to talk automatically and nonstop. Furthermore, as they are taught how to brainstorm during five consecutive sessions, they will adapt to implementing such an intensive process before speaking. Conversely, role-play as another pre-speaking activity seems quite useful for native or native-like speakers due to the fact that it is based on the sociocultural factors which exist in authentic native or native-like contexts. So EFL students refrain from going through role-plays thanks to the lack of the necessary sociocultural aspects background knowledge which have to be utilized in their conversations. According to brainstorming as the most adequate activity for EFL students before
speaking, Lang Lab teachers are recommended to prepare a situation in which students feel free in order to participate in class discussions and answer the teacher's questions enthusiastically away from affective filters. Similarly, the topics are suggested to be selected based on the students' interest, and teachers should provide the students with general background knowledge. Likewise, speaking activities are expected to be selected in such a way that they fit the previous brainstorming activity. It is to be noted that since there is no chance for EFL students to extend their English-speaking situations outside the classrooms, teachers are recommended to make fruitful, nontreating and provoking situations inside the classrooms and assign some tasks for the students to do it outside the classroom.

Limitations of the Study
Although the above objectives were met and the priority of brainstorming to role-play in EFL classrooms were illustrated, the researcher faced some limitations while getting along with the current study. First, based on Farhadi et. al. (1994), in an interview, the number of raters are not expected to be less than 20 for each case, while it will be so time-consuming for the researcher to employ the mentioned number of raters for each case. Furthermore, the way the interviewers recorded the participants' voices was based on the existing facilities in the laboratory, whereas interviewers need to get their recordings via the most modern instruments so that they can have a more exact judgment on the students' performance.

REFERENCES


ON THE EFFECT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH TENSES

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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed at investigating the effect of dynamic assessment on Iranian pre-intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ acquisition of English tenses. To fulfill the purpose of the study, the placement test was administered to 120 pre-intermediate EFL learners. Those learners with scores of one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected for the purpose of the study. There were 58 students who were then divided randomly into experimental and control groups. Next, the pre-test was administered to the subjects of each group. The participants in the experimental group received mediation in dynamic assessment model. The control group received deductive grammatical rules during twelve sessions. Moreover, to observe any development in the learners’ attitude towards dynamic assessment a researcher-made questionnaire was filled out by the learners in the experimental group both before and after the treatment. The results indicated that the learners in the dynamic group not only could outperform the other group in terms of learning English tenses but also they had positive attitudes toward learning through dynamic assessment. The results obtained from this study can definitely be valuable for the EFL learners to improve their learning. They need to be informed that instruction through assessing helps them to become aware of their weaknesses and strengths; therefore they have opportunities to decrease their deficiencies in their subsequent assessments.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic Assessment, Deductive grammar teaching, EFL, English tenses.

INTRODUCTION
During the first decade of the twenty first century many L2 researchers have tried to envisage a monistic view of language instruction and assessment which is termed as Dynamic Assessment (DA) (Ableeva, 2008; Anton, 2009; Birjandi & Ebadi, 2010, 2009; Jacobs, 2001; Kozulin & Garb, 2002; Lantolf, 2009; Poehner, 2008, 2007; Summers, 2008). As Pishghadam, Barabadi & Mehri Kamrood, (2011) state this post-psychometric view of assessment is a direct attack on the traditional psychometric views that support a dualistic view of instruction and assessment. They
add that based on the Socio-Cultural Theory of mind (SCT) originated from the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky’s ideas, DA researchers claim that dialectical integration of instruction and assessment into a dynamic activity will bring about successful education. This requires sensitivity to the learners’ Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) during the assessment procedures which is achieved through the mediators’ intervention in terms of providing hints, prompts, and feedbacks.

DA, as a new approach to assessment is mostly grounded in both Vygotsky’s SCT, on the one hand, and in his concept of ZPD on the other hand. Saeidi and Hosseinipour (2013) add that based on SCT, process of learners’ development is a key to analyze their cognitive abilities. DA intervention refers to mediation, which helps students develop their abilities to apply appropriate L2 knowledge in an EFL setting. Assessment and instruction through DA are inseparable (Saeidi and Hosseinipour, 2013). Accordingly, this study aims at seeking the effect of presenting five English tenses including simple present, present continuous, simple past, past continuous and future through dynamic assessment, which is considered an instructional tool.

For decades, teaching English in Iran has been dominated by a teacher-centered, examination-oriented, grammar-based method (claimed by Zohrabi, Torabi and Baybourdiani, 2012; Molavi Vardanjani, 2013). Teachers explain grammar rules in detail, and students are busy taking notes and have few opportunities for meaningful practice. Memorization and rote learning are used as basic acquisition techniques. This method is greatly influenced by the Grammar-Translation Method, which emphasizes the teaching of the second language grammar; its principle "practice" technique is translation from and into the target language. As a result, though most students in Iran learn English for at least three years in junior high schools and four years in senior high schools, the outcome is not satisfying. Another problem is that a plenty of teachers feel that teaching through a test is an inappropriate and useless job while some teachers believe that teaching through testing can be completely communicative and enjoyable for learners even if achieving this can sometimes be quite demanding of our creativity as teachers.

Bachman (1990) has defined the effect of testing on teaching and learning as backwash, and believes that it can be harmful or beneficial. If the content of the test and testing techniques are inconsistent with the objectives of the course, the test may cause harmful backwash. The basis of traditional testing methods such as the translation method was considered subjective and the accuracy and fairness of such evaluations were considered at best questionable. On the other hand, in traditional assessment methods the relationship between examiner and the examinee is neutral and disinterested while in dynamic assessment the examiner is interested in the examinees’ development and assessment is performed in a very helpful atmosphere. The most distinguishing feature which differentiates the traditional assessment methods and dynamic assessment is the process of providing feedback. In the traditional methods there was usually no specific plan for giving feedback during the process of assessment meanwhile in dynamic assessment the process of assessment is mediated. Limited number of studies that will be mentioned in the review of related literature part implies that more studies are needed in the field of language learning in order to better understand the effects of dynamic assessment on language learning, and in order to provide more guidance to language teachers who wish to use dynamic
assessment in their language classrooms. The present study tries to develop a dynamic test of English tenses learning and provide answers for the research questions.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Poehner and Lantolf (2005) define DA as the interaction between assessor as intervener and learner as active participant with the aim of making cognitive changes in the learner during the process of learning and assessing. Unlike other sub-skills, grammatical knowledge has not received much attention as far as DA is concerned. They add that various studies have been conducted on reading and writing the results of which show the effectiveness of DA in comparison to the conventional forms of assessment.

**Dynamic Assessment and Non-dynamic Assessment Comparison**

Current and traditional approaches to curricula and assessment of learners’ abilities have been the subject of strong criticism, criticisms that draw on the nature of the relationship between instruction and assessment. DA grounded in Vygotsky’s notion of the ZPD, focuses on what a learner is able to do with the assistance of a more knowledgeable another and the type and amount of mediation needed for a learner to be able to do a task. DA indicates the learner’s learning potential. That is, the learner is able to overcome performance problems by working through his or her independent limitations as they engage and collaborate with the teacher who offers just the mediation(s) needed to assist the learner in moving themselves forward in the given activity. Thus, assessment and instructional activities are brought together in DA so that learner development is fostered. According to Caffrey, Fuchs, and Fuchs (2008), DA differs from NDA, i.e. non-dynamic, traditional, static assessment, in many respects such as relationships between an examiner and learners, nature of the feedback provided, and nature of learning. As for the relationships, they point out that while in NDA the atmosphere between an examiner and the examinees has been a threatening one, in DA it is a supportive one that focuses on a joint activity towards learners’ learning. With regard to feedback, whereas in NDA no or very little learning-friendly feedback may be provided, in DA feedback has to be fine-tuned to match person(s)-specific ZPDs. While in NDA the emphasis has been exclusively on the product of learning, in DA it is, over and above the product, on the process(s) of learning.

**Models of Dynamic Assessment**

There are different approaches and models to DA. Poehner, (2008) and Thouësny (2010) state that models generally differ in how they approach mediation. In Feuerstein’s interactionist model, assistance emerges from the interaction between the examiner and the learner, and is therefore highly sensitive to the learner’s ZPD. Interactionist DA focuses on the development of an individual learner or even a group of learners, regardless of the effort required and without concern for a predetermined endpoint. In Brown’s interventionist model, forms of assistance are standardized, therefore emphasizing the psychometric properties of the assessment procedure. Interventionist DA is concerned with quantifying, as an ‘index of speed of learning’ (Brown & Ferrara, 1985: 300), the amount of help required for a learner to quickly and efficiently reach a pre-specified end point. Brown’s Graduated Prompt (GP) model is grounded on the number of prompts needed to elicit a desired response. The learner’s learning potential which is defined as a
gain score (from the pretest to the posttest) is estimated by the number of prompts needed to get the goal and the level of transfer of learning to other tasks (Gutierrez, 2000). This model of DA is different from Feuerstein’s Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) in that the mediation in Brown’s GP model of DA is arranged from most implicit to most explicit and culminates with a correct answer (Poehner, 2008). The tests are also administered in an almost standardized manner and the examiner gradually provides the child with prompts if the child is not able to complete the task.

Grigorenko and Sternberg, (2002) claim that there are two formats within interventionist DA models. The cake format is more integrated, offering mediation throughout the administration of the assessment. In the cake format, the examinee is provided with mediation drawn from a standardized menu of hints, ranging from implicit to explicit, during the administration of the assessment itself. Thus, the ‘cake’ metaphor alludes to the layering of test items and hints in such a way that a menu of hints can be accessed, as required, for each question or problem before moving on to the next item on the test. The sandwich format primarily relies on a pretest-intervention/training-posttest format administered in either an individual or group setting, and reminiscent of traditional experimental research designs. This is also the more widespread dynamic assessment format (Cited in Duvall and Naeini, 2012).

**Approaches to teaching English tenses**

 Teaching English Tenses can be done through deductive and inductive approach. Both of the approaches have their own strengths and weaknesses. Chalipa, (2013) states that deductive approach starts with the presentation and explanation of the rules, and then it is followed by the examples of the sentences using the rules. She adds that in deductive approach the teachers directly explain the rules of the English tense. The explanation is completed with discrete sentences, and it is followed with samples of sentences by the learners to confirm their understanding. An inductive approach starts with examples from which a rule is inferred (Chalipa, 2013). If the teachers apply inductive approach, they do not give the rule directly to the learners, they just give list of sentences and from the sentences they ask the learners to discover the rule by analyzing the provided sentences in a discourse level. It is just like acquiring the first language, in which parents do not introduce the rules of the first language but because it is practiced everyday and continuously with many exposure then the grammatical rules of the first language are acquired naturally and effortlessly. In regard to the strengths and weaknesses of both deductive and inductive approaches to teaching grammar, the researcher tried to apply deductive approach for teaching English tenses to the participants in control group.

**Previous researches on DA in language education**

 Although DA is a newcomer in second language acquisition (SLA), it is by no means the case in other disciplines. As Haywood and Lidz (2007) contend, DA is no longer a new approach to psychological and educational assessment as some of its current applications have been around for more than a half century.
Tajeddin and Tayebipour (2012), pointed that the following studies fall within L2 DA studies: Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), Nassaji and Swain (2000), Kozulin and Garb (2001), Poehner (2005), and Ableeva (2010).

In Iranian context the following researchers have conducted their studies to investigate the effect of DA on Iranian EFL learners' abilities. Pishghadam, Barabadi and MehriKamrood (2011), investigated the effectiveness of using a computerized dynamic reading comprehension test (CDRT) on Iranian EFL students. The results revealed that providing mediation in the form of hints contributed significantly to the increase of students’ scores, and consequently to the improvement of their text comprehension. Jafary, Nordin and Mohajeri (2012) investigated the effect of dynamic assessment on learners’ syntactic knowledge. The results showed that at a 0.05 level of significance the mean of experimental group was more than the mean of control group for different scores. The findings of a study by Tajeddin and Tayebipour (2012) in order to investigate the effect of DA on inter-language pragmatics (ILP) revealed that DA groups outperformed NDA groups and that DA groups of both high and low proficiency levels differed significantly from pretest to posttest to delayed posttest. Naeini, and Duvall (2012), reported the results of a research project aimed at studying improvements in English Language Training (ELT) university students’ reading comprehension performance by applying the mediations of a dynamic assessment approach to instruction and assessment. In their study, DA procedures were conducted with 10 ELT university students. The descriptive and analytic analyses of the results revealed dramatic, measurable progress in participants’ reading comprehension performance. In another study by Ghahremani (2013), the researcher investigated the effects of implementing three forms of assessment namely, summative, formative and dynamic assessment on Iranian freshmen's listening ability and listening strategy use. The results indicated that the learners in dynamic group not only could outperform the other groups in terms of listening ability, but they also used more listening strategies. Khodamoradi, Iravani and Jafarigohar, (2013) in their study investigated the extent to which teacher’s scaffolding and peers’ collaborative dialogue could contribute to the acquisition of English tenses in Iranian EFL learners with different levels of grammatical knowledge. It was found that those low achievers who received assistance from the teacher and those who collaborated with high achievers had significantly better performances than those low achievers who collaborated with low achievers. In another study by Zoghi and Malmeer (2013), the researchers tried to explore the effect of an interactionist model of DA on Iranian EFL adult learners’ intrinsic motivation. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their amount of intrinsic motivation. At last the findings of a study by Saeidi and Hosseinpour (2013) aiming at investigating the effect of DA as an instructional tool on Iranian EFL learners’ vocabulary learning indicated that vocabulary learning rate of learners can be enhanced using DA.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
To achieve the study goals, the researcher sets the following main research questions as a guide throughout this study:
Q1. Does dynamic assessment have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ acquisition of English tenses?
Q2. Does dynamic assessment have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ attitude?

METHODOLOGY

Participants
To accomplish the task, fifty-eight male students participated in this study. The subjects who contributed in this research were selected out of 120 Iranian EFL learners studying in grade three at junior high schools in Mashhad, Iran. After administering the placement test, in order to homogenize the participants and make sure about their general proficiency level, the researcher chose the subjects who scored one standard deviation below and above the mean (34 to 45) and then he randomly divided them to control and experimental group with 29 students in each one. The learners in the third grade of junior high school were chosen by the researcher, because upper levels were not accessible for the researcher. All the subjects were between the ages of 12 to 15 years old and their first language was Farsi.

Instrumentation
For achieving the required data the following instruments were employed in this study:
First, the participants' general proficiency was assessed using a pre-intermediate English placement test to ensure the homogeneity of the groups at the very beginning of the course. This test is available at: http://www.macmillanstraightforward.com/resources/tests and accessed on 6 February 2014. Since the reliability of this test was unknown to the researcher and in order to make sure about the appropriateness of the test for the subjects under investigation, the test was piloted with parallel group (pre-intermediate EFL learners). The reliability of pre-intermediate placement test was estimated through KR-21 formula which is 0.76. This test consisted of two sections: grammar and vocabulary. It consisted of 50 items in the form of multiple choice questions, the 40 first items of which were grammar and the last 10 items were vocabulary items and the time allotted was 50 minutes.

Second, a researcher-made diagnostic test which aimed at evaluating the participants’ entry behavior in the domain of English tenses including was administered as pretest. The purpose of the pre-test was that the result of the pre-test was an indicator of the participants’ level of grammatical knowledge before the treatment. To make sure about the appropriateness of the pre-test (a teacher-made test) for the subjects under investigation, the test was piloted with parallel group (pre-intermediate EFL learners). The reliability of pre-test (or post-test) was estimated through KR-21 formula as 0.61.

Third, two quizzes in the form of multiple-choice and completion items were administered to the participants in both control and experimental groups on the sixth and tenth sessions of the treatment. Each test consisted of eight multiple choice and four completion items and the time allotted for each test was twelve minutes. These two tests were piloted by the researcher on the parallel group of the learners. The reliability of both quizzes was estimated through KR-21 formula which was 0.56 and 0.58 respectively.
Fourth, the final post-test which was the pre-test, was administered to the participants in both control and experimental groups. In terms of the test layout, the pre-test/post-test included two sections of multiple choice items and completion items. In the first section, the participants were required to answer 25 multiple choice items while in the second section they were provided with 15 test items to fill in the blanks with appropriate forms of the given verbs in parentheses.

Finally, an attitude questionnaire was designed by the researcher and used in this study. Since the participants were pre-intermediate, the items were written in Farsi so that the students were able to answer the questions. This questionnaire consisted of twelve items in the form of 5-point Likert scale. Each question was used to represent whether or not there is a positive response to the use of dynamic assessment as an instructional tools in learning English tenses. It should be mentioned that items 11 and 12 were prepared to find out the participants knowledge of dynamic and static assessment. The reliability of this questionnaire was estimated through Cronbachs’ Alpha as 0.90.

**Procedures**

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following procedures were applied:

At first the placement test was administered to 120 lower intermediate learners who were studying in grade three at a junior high school in Mashhad, Iran. After analyzing the data, fifty eight students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean (the learners who scored 34 to 45 from their test) were chosen for this study. They were numbered from one to fifty eight. Then, they were randomly assigned into experimental and control group with 29 students in each group.

Participants in both groups took pretest. In order to make sure that all the test items were new and unfamiliar to both groups; the researcher analyzed the students' responses on the pretest. As mentioned in Motallebzadeh, BehAfarin and Daliry Rad, (2011) when 80 percentages of students (23 students in each group) answered one question correctly, we should omit that question because almost all the students could recognize the grammatical structure. As a result in this test, there were no items that twenty three students or more in each group could response correctly. After estimating reliability of the pretest, 40 acceptable items of this test were given to the subjects under the investigation, both subjects of the control and experimental groups.

After that, participants in experimental group were asked to fill out the attitude questionnaire to collect their attitudes towards dynamic assessment before participating in the treatment. It should be mentioned that since the participants in the experimental group were not familiar with dynamic assessment treatment at first the instructor explained about the dynamic assessment treatment and after that they took part in a sample of dynamic assessment session. When the instructor was sure that the participants in experimental group knew what dynamic assessment is he emphasized to avoid writing their names at top of the page, and coded the attitude questionnaire by numbers so that the students could honestly respond the questions with no limitation.

At the heart of the process, during 12 sessions of treatment, five weekly post tests were administered to students. The participants in the experimental group received mediation in dynamic assessment model which involved some strategies like looking for clues, eliminating the
answers that do not fit and comparison strategies. In the experimental group five English tenses were taught to the participants through dynamic assessment in the following method: Five English tenses including simple present, present continuous, simple past, past continuous and simple future were put in five short tests. The tests were distributed among the participants. After allocating one minute for the participants to be prepared for the treatment, dynamic assessment was applied by the instructor in the following way to help the participants learn and get the right answer through these stages: A) Asking the participants to read the question silently; B) Asking the participants to look for clues in the stem of the question; C) Asking the participants to eliminate the answers that do not fit; D) Providing the participants with more examples and asking them to compare the question with these examples; E) Providing the correct response if the previous stages could not lead the participants to the correct response.

In view of the fact that dynamic assessment has been shaped based on "step by step" learning and "ZPD", the course had been devised in a way that it could fulfill this purpose. The instructor first started with the first step and moved thoroughly to the other stages by the time the participants had been able to get the correct answer. The mediation processes were designed to enable the instructor to mediate each of the items in an interactive way. In the experimental group, dynamic assessment was conducted in a scheduled pattern, two times a week on Saturdays and Tuesdays. These five weekly post-tests were delivered to the participants in control group, too. In control group, the participants received deductive grammatical rules during twelve sessions. A sample of deductive grammar teaching session will be appeared in appendices, too.

Moreover, participants in both groups took two quizzes without knowing the date of administration. On the sixth session when the participants in experimental group had taken part in five dynamic assessment sessions, the first quiz was administered. After that, the participants took the second quiz on the tenth session when they had taken part in ten dynamic assessment sessions. These two tests were administered to the participants in control group on the sixth and tenth sessions, too. Both groups were assessed statically and had only twelve minutes to answer the questions.

Having finished the treatment (6 weeks, 12 sessions), students in both groups participated in the post-test. The researcher administered the pretest as posttest to see the effects of the treatment during the study. At the end, the participants in experimental group were asked to fill out the attitude questionnaire once more in order to find out whether their attitudes for the applying dynamic assessment to learn English tenses have changed or not. After that the data analysis stage was carried out. Next, through the application of the t-test, the mean scores of the subjects in the experimental group were compared with the mean scores of the subjects in the control group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In order to answer the research questions regarding the difference between the two different instruction methods i.e., dynamic assessment and deductive grammar teaching, this study carried out four independent sample t-tests and three paired sampled t-tests. Each t-test compared the difference of means between the two conditions.
As shown in Table 1, participants in experimental group ($M = 9.17$, $SD = 5.1$) did not outperform [$t (58) = -0.051$, $P = 0.959$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 9.10$, $SD = 3.95$). It means that there is no significant difference between two groups at the beginning of the treatment and they are nearly homogenized.

Table 2: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Quiz 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>-0.354</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2 reveals, participant in experimental group ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 2.41$) did not significantly outperform [$t (58) = -0.354$, $P = 0.726$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.64$) in Quiz 1.

Table 3: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Quiz 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.209</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>2.26</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, the participant in experimental group ($M = 5.93$, $SD = 2.26$) did not significantly outperform [$t (58) = -1.28$, $P = 0.209$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 5.06$, $SD = 2.71$) in Quiz 2.

Table 4: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.79</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>-2.77</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17.58</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 reveals, the participant in experimental group ($M = 17.58$, $SD = 8.33$) outperformed [$t (58) = -2.77$, $P = 0.010$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 12.79$, $SD = 5.14$) in posttest session but it is not much significant.
As Table 5 reveals after ten sessions of treatment the participant in control group (M = 12.79, SD = 5.14) significantly outperformed \([t(28) = -4.71, P = 0.00\) (two-tailed)] those participants in control group before the beginning of treatment (M = 9.10, SD = 3.95). It means that the participants in control group developed their learning of English tenses after receiving deductive grammatical teaching.

As shown in Table 6 after ten sessions of treatment the participant in experimental group (M = 17.58, SD = 8.33) significantly outperformed \([t(28) = -6.72, P = .000\) (two-tailed)] those participants in experimental group before the beginning of treatment (M = 5.06, SD = 2.71). It can be concluded that the participants in experimental group developed their learning of English tenses after receiving dynamic assessment during ten sessions of treatment.

Seemingly both control and experimental groups achieved grammatical knowledge of English tenses after they received different treatment based on the aims of this study. The results obtained from the T-tests revealed that the participants in experimental group outperformed the participants in control group but it was not much significant (Tables 2, 3 and 4). Moreover the results revealed the fact that the more the participants in experimental group took part in dynamic sessions, the much they significantly outperformed the participants in control group on English tenses test. These results showed that compared with deductive grammatical teaching, dynamic assessment does not improve pre-intermediate EFL learners’ knowledge more effectively.

A paired sample T-test was carried out to compare the means of two administration of attitude questionnaire both before and after the treatment. The result of this T-test is presented in Table 7.
Table 7: Result of T-Test for Paired samples of Attitude Questionnaire Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postq2 - PreQ2</td>
<td>0.96552</td>
<td>0.1857</td>
<td>0.03448</td>
<td>0.89488 - 1.03615</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq3 - PreQ3</td>
<td>1.03448</td>
<td>0.32544</td>
<td>0.06043</td>
<td>0.91069 - 1.15827</td>
<td>17.118</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq4 - PreQ4</td>
<td>1.27586</td>
<td>0.52757</td>
<td>0.09797</td>
<td>1.07519 - 1.47654</td>
<td>13.023</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq5 - PreQ5</td>
<td>1.06897</td>
<td>0.37139</td>
<td>0.06897</td>
<td>0.9277 - 1.21023</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq7 - PreQ7</td>
<td>0.26726</td>
<td>0.04963</td>
<td>0.08983</td>
<td>1.10166 - 20.149</td>
<td>21.708</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq8 - PreQ8</td>
<td>1.7931</td>
<td>0.41225</td>
<td>0.07655</td>
<td>1.63629 - 1.94992</td>
<td>23.423</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq9 - PreQ9</td>
<td>1.51724</td>
<td>0.50855</td>
<td>0.09443</td>
<td>1.3238 - 1.71068</td>
<td>16.067</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq10 - PreQ10</td>
<td>1.55172</td>
<td>0.57235</td>
<td>0.10628</td>
<td>1.33401 - 1.76943</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq11 - PreQ11</td>
<td>1.62069</td>
<td>0.4938</td>
<td>0.0917</td>
<td>1.43286 - 1.80852</td>
<td>17.674</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postq12 - PreQ12</td>
<td>1.24138</td>
<td>1.05746</td>
<td>0.19637</td>
<td>0.83914 - 1.64362</td>
<td>6.322</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postindex1 - Preindex1</td>
<td>3.55172</td>
<td>0.57235</td>
<td>0.10628</td>
<td>3.33401 - 3.76943</td>
<td>33.418</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postindex2 - Preindex2</td>
<td>4.7931</td>
<td>0.90156</td>
<td>0.16742</td>
<td>4.45017 - 5.13604</td>
<td>28.63</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postindex3 - Preindex3</td>
<td>6.72414</td>
<td>1.5788</td>
<td>0.29318</td>
<td>6.12359 - 7.32468</td>
<td>22.936</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post index - Pre-index</td>
<td>15.06897</td>
<td>2.47748</td>
<td>0.46006</td>
<td>14.12658 - 16.01135</td>
<td>32.755</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 7 reveals after twelve sessions of treatment the participants in experimental group had more positive attitudes than those before the beginning of treatment. This illustrates a positive perspective toward learning through DA.

As revealed in Tables 1 to 7, in the control group of this study the routine and deductive trend of teaching English tenses was proved to have been resulted in the improvement of their syntactic
knowledge. However, finally, the results of the comparison of the post-tests in control and experimental groups proved that DA had been more effective and helpful. In this study, DA made the subjects aware of their learning potentialities and facilitated the process of learning English tenses for them. Moreover according to collected information through questionnaire, most of the learners agreed that dynamic assessment prevented their mental agitation and through dynamic assessment they could show what they knew. They also agreed that dynamic assessment was motivating and could help them to prepare for their working tasks. The results reported through the tables confirm the previous discussions for the research questions. The results indicate weighty development of the syntactic knowledge in the dynamic group. It is worth mentioning that this development can be related to both the quality and quantity of feedback that the learners have received throughout the treatment.

In sum, the results of this study, confirms the results of other grammar related studies. The fact of the matter in all similar studies is that dynamic assessment proves to be very helpful for grammar learning. Learners who received DA related treatment ended up having good scores in their evaluation. The results showed that dynamic assessment can be used as an instructional tool for teaching English tenses and also it is necessary and enjoyable in improving learners’ ability.

CONCLUSION
Taking the results of this study into consideration, based on the statistical results of the paired sample t-test, there was a significant difference between the results of pre-test and post-test of English tenses learning in the control group. Also with regard to the results of paired sample t-test of experimental group, there was a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test of English tenses learning, which showed that DA had been proved to be successful. In the end, based on the results of independent sample t-test the experimental and control groups differ significantly in a way that experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test. It must be noted that the main characteristic of DA, the theory underlying this study, is not the assessment per se, rather instruction.

The present study gave credit to the usefulness of DA procedures in English tenses learning. It could be inferred that the success of DA might be due to two remarkable reasons at hand: firstly, its effectiveness in learning processes of language and secondly, its creating a different and innovative context of language learning in comparison with traditional ones, both for the learners and teachers. This in turn can bring about lots of benefits for ELT contexts. The outcome of this study analyzed through SPSS (version 20) software indicated that teaching through testing can be an appropriate and useful job and dynamic assessment is completely communicative and enjoyable for the learners. The results also showed that deductive grammatical teachings and teaching through dynamic assessment has meaningful effect on learning of English tenses among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. In addition the findings manifested that those learners who received dynamic assessment during twelve sessions of treatment outperformed the learners who received deductive grammar teaching. On the other hand they had positive attitudes toward learning English tenses through dynamic assessment. It was evidently shown in their posttest scores. The results obtained from this study can definitely be valuable for both EFL teachers and
learners. EFL teachers must have access to the finding of this study to be able to be provided with an appropriate and helpful way of integrating assessment with instruction and EFL learners need to be informed that instruction through assessing (dynamic assessment) helps them to become aware of their weaknesses and strengths; therefore they have opportunities to decrease their deficiencies in their subsequent assessments.

(De) Limitations of the study
The results of this study cannot be generated since like any other study some inevitable limitations were imposed on. First of all, the number of the participants in this study was relatively small for the findings to be generalized to the whole population of EFL students in Iran. Since the sample was small and may not be representative of the larger population of EFL students, and because of segregation rules in Iranian schools, this particular study might have been better studied for qualitative rather than quantitative analysis. Second, the reliability of pretest/posttest fell below 0.70 which is a low reliability and might have affected the results of the study. Third, variables such as gender, age and personal variables were not taken into account because the researcher was not able to take into account these variables for the purpose of this study.

REFERENCES
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Listening Strategy Use. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 3, Number 2(3), (pp.59-68), spring 2013


REPAIR STRATEGIES IN IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ ORAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT
This study examined how Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in the non-English speaking communities handled communication in story-retelling, and uncovered the repair strategies, which they deployed in order to overcome communication breakdowns and pass comprehensible messages to their interlocutors. In addition, the present study analyzed factors governing the EFL learners’ preferences for employing repair strategies. It examined two repair strategies used by male and female EFL learners; self-initiated repair and repetition. The participants were volunteer junior students enrolled in the English Department at Shahreza Azad University, Iran. The results of the analysis revealed that both male and female Iranian English learners resort to strategies of repair in order to compensate for their lack of linguistic items or to gain time to retrieve linguistic item(s) and maintain conversation. Moreover, results indicated that male subjects used strategies of repair more frequently, attributed to the fact that they produced more story events. Another finding was that repetition was used more frequently than self-initiated repair by both groups and that that female participants used less self-repair strategy compared with males. Results implied that, repetition and self-initiated repair can be reinforced for student-student or student-teacher in EFL classroom interaction. In addition, since repair is an element of natural conversation for both native and nonnative speakers, syllabus designers can include these repair strategies in English teaching textbooks.

KEYWORDS: Communication strategies, Self-initiated repair, Repetition, Discourse analysis, Repair strategies

INTRODUCTION
EFL learners try to transmit a comprehensible message to their interlocutors, and they sometimes fail to do so. Students’ limited competence can create miscommunication between the students and their teachers and the students themselves. In many situations, students try to solve these miscommunication problems between the teachers and other students to gain an appropriate understanding. Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2003) define conversational repairs as the persistent behaviors that are observed immediately subsequent to the occurrence of a communication breakdown, defined as a situation in which the goal or intent of the behavior is not understood or is misunderstood by the communication partner and, therefore, is not followed by a desired outcome within a reasonable length of time. Understanding how students treat these
communication breakdowns will provide teachers with more insights into how to develop lessons to assist students in the development of their language proficiency. It is proposed that "if educators are aware of the types of conversation breakdowns and the employed repair strategies, they can utilize the necessary instructional strategies to assist students in the development of more sophisticated repair strategies." (Cho & Larke, 2010, p. 2).

Schegloff et al. (1977, p. 361) defined repair as dealing with “recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding.” In addition to linguistic problems (pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, etc.), it may also relate to acceptability problems, such as saying something wrong in a broad sense, that is untrue, inappropriate or irrelevant (Schegloff, 2007). The particular segment of talk to which the repair is addressed, is called the trouble source or the repairable. Drew (1997) suggests that "self-repair is also a mechanism of remedying mistakes in conversation." Research on repair has identified a variety of repair strategies, namely self-initiation self-repair, other-initiation self-repair, other initiation other repair, repetition, paraphrase, confirmation checks, clarification requests and comprehension checks (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 2000; Nagano, 1997; Drew, 1997). Research has also shown that repair, which is a language phenomenon, is necessary for keeping communication smooth and accurate, and it has been evident in the literature that language learners are able to employ many repair strategies in second language interaction (Schegloff et al., 1977, 2000, 2007).

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), self-initiated self-repair takes the form of initiation with a non-lexical initiator, followed by the repairing segment. These non-lexical initiators include cut-offs, lengthening of sounds, and quasi-lexical fillers such as uh and um. In order to repair their errors in problematic talk, language users repeat words and use fillers to gain time and achieve their communicative goal. Schegloff et al. (1977) state that self-initiated and self-completed repair (self-initiated self-repair) occurs when the interlocutor who is responsible for the trouble source both initiates and completes the repair. Research on the repair of second language learners (e.g., Krahne & Christison, 1983; Schegloff, 2000) shows preference for self-initiated repair, although variations can be seen in the amount of initiation (cf. Krahne & Christison, 1983). Repetition is also a common strategy whose role in communication could be one of the "most effective strategies for promoting comprehension that a speaker can use" (Hoekje, 1984). Rieger (2003) states that repetition, which is a type of self-repair is the most common type of repair consisting of a particular set of repair strategies where the repairable and repairing segments occur in the same turn and the repair is performed by the initiator of the repairable.

One way of modifying, organizing and maintaining conversation is using repair as a communication strategy. Researchers suggest that using communication strategies to prevent communication breakdowns, and to get a message across to the listener lead to second/foreign language learning (Rababah & Bulut, 2007). Therefore, the present study tried to investigate whether there was any significant difference in using strategies of repair (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task. Moreover, this research sought to examine if gender has any significant effect on the usage of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present research will only investigate repetition and self-initiated repair since based on the findings of previous studies these two strategies seem to be the more prominent features of daily communication, and that knowing why and how these strategies are used could help Iranian EFL learners become aware of these strategies, which would help them maintain conversation with their interlocutors. The following questions were addressed in the present study.

 Is there any significant difference in using repair strategies (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task?
 Does gender have any significant effect on the use of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners?

Based on the questions of the study the following hypotheses were formulated:

 There is no significant difference in using repair strategies (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task.
 Gender has no significant effect on the use of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The course of students was the same. The participants who took part in this study were 30 male and female, in two mixed-sex classes. Since this study is aimed at identifying the repair strategies of discourse that are used by Iranian EFL learners therefore, EFL learners educating in Shahreza Azad university, Iran were considered as the participants. Among them, intermediate level students were chosen based on their English score in the Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT).

Instruments and materials

Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT)

The QOPTs offer an extremely reliable basis for the initial assessment of students of English. This test is a highly economical and easy-to-administer objectively scoreable test, which provides consistently meaningful scores from CEF level A1 upwards. The objective of conducting QOPT was to find intermediate level participants.

Short stories

Another instruments that were used to obtain the required information for the present study comprised five short stories which were selected from the book of "Steps To Understanding" by Hills. All participants were given a print copy of the stories to read 2 days before the performance session. They were then asked to perform a story-retelling task based on these five short stories.

Oral test

At the end of the term, the participants completed an oral English test, which was a way to evaluate their performance in story retelling. Each participant took the test individually. To put it another way, they were asked to perform a story-retelling task based on the five short stories. With the subjects’ consent, the oral tests were recorded.
Procedure
The oral test was taken after the QOPT to identify repair strategies which EFL learners use when they speak. Using a digital recorder, the participants were individually audio-recorded while retelling the stories to the researcher. The researcher used gestures, such as nodding, to show that he was following, and interested, and to encourage the participants to continue their retelling. Since real-life conversations require more interaction between speakers, the researcher also tried to interrupt the participants, using words and expressions, such as then, aha, oh my God!, did he do that? oh really! and what happened then? This had a positive impact on the participants' performance, and their motivation to complete the task. The participants' production was carefully transcribed. All pauses and sound lengthening were included in the transcript.

The researcher detected repair strategies in the transcripts of the spoken discourse of the Iranian EFL learners and classified them into two categories of repetition and self-initiated repair based on markers of repair. Markee (2000) identified markers of repair stating that "From a CA perspective, all repairs are likely to be signaled by various markers of incipient repair (pauses, silences, sound stretches, cut-offs and phrases like ‘you know’ and ‘I mean’)."

Example of self-initiation self-repair:
Harry Marsh that Emm…in a polite way said why I am Emm… doing…. Emm…the thing like this and driving

Example of repetition:
On the way, the driver said to Harry politely: "could you, could you telling me why we are doing all these things?"

In order to maximize the reliability of the researcher's classification, it was passed to three raters, who were MA English instructors. In order to make the raters' task easier, the strategies were highlighted and classified in context. The raters were asked to verify whether that the researcher's classification was accurate based on the definition of each strategy and their comments were taken into consideration in arriving at the final categories and frequencies.

Data Analysis
In order to investigate the hypotheses of the study, frequencies and percentages of self-initiation, self-repair, and repetition strategies were calculated. The transcription of the short stories were taken into consideration in arriving at the final categories which showed the frequencies and percentages of repair strategies. In order to investigate differences between the strategies of repair employed by EFL learners a Chi-square test was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Difference between self-initiated repair and repetition strategies
As can be seen in Table 1, male participants recorded 179 instances of repair strategies while retelling the story. It was observed that they did their best to report as many events as they could; this was evident in the average number of words used in their oral production, which by means of MS Office word count, was found to be 118 words per story on average. It was also observed that
all the male participants used some instances of repair, either repetition or self-initiated repair. They resorted to the two strategies under investigation at the rate of 124 and 55 instances, respectively.

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Strategy Use among the male Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>69.273743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self - Initiated Repair</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30.726257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, Table 2 shows that the female participants used fewer strategies than the males; they employed a total number of 144 strategies of repair, representing both types. Contrary to the male participants, it was noted that the female subjects described only the key events; very specific details were not reported. It was also observed that the female learners were more generic in their story-retelling. This was manifested in the average number of words they produced, which was 70 contrary to the male participants. It was observed that all the participants used instances of repair, repetition and self-initiated repair. But females group used fewer self-initiated repair strategy compared with the male group. They resorted to the two strategies under investigation at the rate of 10 and 55 instances, respectively.

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Strategy Use among Female Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>93.0555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self - Initiated Repair</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.94444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to find out whether these differences were significant or not, a Chi-square test was used. The results of this statistical analysis procedure are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test Analysis Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self - initiation</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

x² = 26.619

df = 1

The results of Chi-Square, reported in Table 3, reveals that there are significant differences between the two groups, males and females on each strategy (self-initiated repair and repetition).
at $x^2 = 26.619$, $P < 0.1$. This implies that the male participants used more strategies because they encountered more problems while retelling the two stories.

**Repetition**

Repetition was recorded when the subjects repeated some language items in order to delay the production of following lexical item or to gain time to retrieve the required difficult item(s). A closer look at the repetition cases in the present study revealed that the most frequently employed repetition subcategories were repetitions of nouns, personal pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, definite and indefinite articles and demonstrative pronouns.

It was noticed that the repairing segment and the repaired segment were lexically identical (repetition). The use of pauses and fillers, such as *er* and *em* indicated that the subjects encountered some difficulties in retrieving the following lexical item(s) they needed. The male participants performed 124 instances of repetition and female participants performed 134 instances of this. The following excerpts were taken from the performance of the male participants. The repeated words and phrases are italicized, and every three dots mean a second's pause.

1) … … … it *it* took a long time.
2) After the lecturer finished *er* … … *…* the writer thanked the translate translat*er* *er* … … … for his good work.

Similarly, the female participants employed repetition as a strategy of repair (134 cases) in order to gain time, retrieve the following lexical item(s), and maintain conversation. The following excerpts (4-6), which are self-explanatory, are taken from the oral performance of the female group, with the repeated words and phrases presented in italics.

3) Many years ago *er* … … … a woman from Africa was invited to *er*… … *… a* *beth*, *to bath*, *bath* *house*.
4) I am looking *you* because *I want to I want to* know which *er* … … *…* taps you're turning on.
5) One day *er* … … … *he* came out *er* … … … *his* office and saw a car.

The most prominent feature of the above excerpts is that the participants stumbled during their speech although there were errors corrected. Levelt (1983) called this a covert error or a potential error which has been discovered before articulation. The editing expressions (*er...*) and (*em...*) signal that the participants thought for some time that an error might be committed in the following lexical item, or they used them because they needed more time to produce the next lexical item(s).

**Self-Initiated Repair**

In the present study, the male participants resorted to self-initiated repair on 55 occasions. In the following excerpts taken from their oral discourse, the repairing segment and the repaired segments are italicized. In excerpt 7, the speaker might have been planning to produce "how did you translate this long story to a short one?", but, due to her limited linguistic resources he stopped after 'did you', and started a new plan. After hesitation and some pauses, which indicate
the presence of a problem, he produced "how did you er… … made my long story in a short one?"

6) How did you er … … made my long story in a short story?

The speaker, in excerpt 7, produced "singing" (repairable segment), but she immediately discovered that she was making a mistake in verb tense. Therefore, she corrected it as "is singing" (repaired segment). In the speech event "the man who has (sorry) who had er … … two patrols", the repairing segment "has", was repaired by telling (sorry). It appears that the speaker was confused by the tense of the verb and fortunately, she could retrieve it, as clearly manifested in her excuse.

7) The man who has er … … sorry who had two petrol.

In excerpt 8, the size of the problem is big for this speaker, and this is evident in this short utterance, which includes two instances of self-initiated repair. First, the speaker corrected the repairing segment "was told" by the repaired segment "he was" and finally by "he told". In the speech event "All her grades have been tense of the verbs", the speaker paraphrased it, but while paraphrasing, she initiated the repair and corrected it. She produced a passive verb then to be verb and at last past verb.

8) He wanted to have an interpreter, but during his lecture … … he was told, he was, he told an amusing story.

The female participants in the present study, on the other hand, resorted to self-initiated repair strategy in 10 cases. For example, the speakers in the following excerpts (9 -10) had a plan they wanted to execute, but due to some difficulties in retrieving the required lexical items, they repeated the repairing segment and corrected the error.

9) I have had just a throat operation my ear er… … my hearing is good, but I can't speak.

10) On the way the driver said to Harry politely would you er … … could you telling me why are we doing their things?

Overall, results revealed that repetition was used by both groups as an attempt made by the speaker to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item. In self-initiated repair, the male and female participants' aim was to monitor and modify an utterance when s/he felt that s/he made an error. The males used fewer repetition strategies, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story-retelling. The females used less self-repair in compare with males. There are high significant differences between males and groups in the use of strategies.

Discussion
Based on the results, it can clearly be understood that repetition was used by Iranian EFL learners and both male and female speakers, as an attempt made by them to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item. In self-initiated repair, the male and female participants' aim was to monitor and modify an utterance when s/he felt that s/he made an error. Self-initiated repair was used when the speakers encountered problems with retrieving the target language
item. It was also noticed that self-initiated repair was not always successful; that is, the speakers tried to correct what they thought to be a mistake, but they did not do that successfully. This finding is thus a verification of the view that self-initiated repair is a well-organized, orderly, and rule-governed phenomenon and not a chaotic aspect of spoken discourse (Schegloff et al., 1977; Rieger, 2000).

The findings with regard to the second hypothesis of the study shed light on the impact of gender on the usage of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners. Based on the results of the Chi-square test it was also found that both groups were keen on taking the risk to transmit comprehensible messages to their interlocutor, who was the researcher in the present study. They repeated to retrieve ideas and lexical items and maintain conversation, and they repaired to produce correct forms or ideas. The participants' use of such strategies made their oral production comprehensible, despite the presence of hesitations and pauses. Although the man used fewer repetition strategies, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story retelling, i.e., they reported only the major events in the stories. The study also revealed that although self-initiated repair was used by all the participants, the male EFL learners used it more frequently.

All in all, the results of the present study confirm the use of two types of repair: repetition and self-initiated repair by male and female EFL learners. These findings are in line with the results of previous research on strategies of repair (Rieger, 2000; Rieger, 2003; Rababah, 2001). However, it was found that there were significant differences between the male and female groups in terms of the frequency of strategy use. The statistical analysis revealed that the female learners utilized significantly more repetition but less self-initiated repair strategies in the story retelling task, when compared to the male learners' performance. This may have been due to the number of words they produced, which almost doubled that of the females, which could be attributed to fact that influences, since males tried to say all of the events which happened.

CONCLUSION
As mentioned earlier, the present research sought to investigate the usage of repetition and self-initiated repair strategies among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task. Moreover, the second aim of the study was to examine if gender had any significant effect on the implementation of these two strategies by Iranian EFL learners. The findings revealed that were significant differences between the male and female participants in terms of the frequency of strategy use. Additionally, it was found that male learners used fewer repetition strategies while female students used less self-repair strategies.

With respect to the implications, this study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on providing some useful insights into syllabus design and language teaching. Analyzing the language teaching books, the researcher has noticed that the repair strategies and initiation techniques used by native speakers of the target language are excluded. Syllabus designers should include these repair strategies in English teaching textbooks because the use of repair is an element of natural conversation used by both native and non-native speakers. As non-native speakers of the target
language do not sometimes know how to repair, if they do, they might rely heavily on transfer from their native languages (Cokal-Karadas, 2010).

In the language classroom, repetition and self-initiated repair should be reinforced for student-student or student-teacher classroom interaction. The realization that these two strategies are natural in everyday conversation, that repetition performs a wide range of functions (Brody, 1986), that self-initiated repair plays a major role in producing comprehensible input (Shehadeh, 1999), and that comprehensible input leads to language learning makes it important for language teachers to implement and encourage their students to resort to these two strategies. Language teachers should encourage students to be risk-takers, and use these strategies, which were classified as communication strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

This study also has some limitations which include the relative lack of control over the characteristics of the individual accent and the tone of voices whose specific features such as their potential intonation, stress may not have been fully controlled. It should be noted that this study was limited in terms of its context: only a relatively small number of participants at a single proficiency level from one Iranian university took part. Further, due to time limitations, the reliability of the data collection instrument was not calculated. In addition, there were only 5 short stories, the results with other more complicated stories may be different. Another limitation of the present research had something to with the participants; the study was restricted to Intermediate level EFL students of just one university in Iran. Due to aforementioned facts, a word of caution should be taken in to account in generalizing the results.

Therefore, as a suggestion for future research, it is recommended to study other discourse communication strategies such as paraphrasing, substitution, coining new words, language switch, asking for clarification, non-verbal strategies, avoidance, among Iranian EFL learner. In addition, it is suggested to carry out more characterization study on repair strategy usage by hearing-impaired adults and how they use discourse strategies. Finally, it is worth to investigate repair strategies in aphasic discourse.

REFERENCES


INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF BARRON’S IELTS PREPARATION TEXTBOOK

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ABSTRACT

In the English for academic world, the advent of international standardized tests has started a new array of textbook generations for exam preparation. IELTS or TOEFL teachers have a variety of materials available which potentially makes it difficult to choose the right one. In the present paper, Barron's IELTS textbook (Lougheed, 2006) is evaluated using Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework of internal and external evaluation. Evaluating exam preparation textbooks based on the related exam criteria will help teachers select a textbook matching to their students' needs. The results of the evaluation is hoped to benefit English teachers in many of language institutes in that it might give them insight into the course book they use and how they can exploit it better. The result of the external evaluation showed that Barron's IELTS preparation textbook is useful and applicable for candidates who start to prepare for IELTS; the organization of the book is clear and easy to follow for candidates as each module with its related skills is separated from the other. Although the author claims that Barron's IELTS textbook is designed to be used as the ‘core’ course, candidates need to take as many tests and extra sources and materials as possible. Also the result of the internal evaluation shows that the book is generally valid and is in line with the IELTS standards except that its degree of difficulty is insignificantly lower than the real IELTS test.

KEYWORDS: Internal and external evaluation, textbook, standard tests, IELTS

INTRODUCTION

With the variety of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks available in the market, each following a different methodology, it can be difficult to choose the best for a particular teaching situation. In the English for Academic world, the advent of International Standardized Tests has started a new array of textbook generation, i.e., textbooks for exam preparation. IELTS or TOEFL teachers have a variety of materials available which potentially makes it difficult to
choose the right one. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1984), most ESP or EAP courses, and subsequently textbooks, are based on the needs of such sponsors as universities, companies, and agencies. However, this view overlooks the views of other parties involved such as the teachers, the learners, and the teaching institutes. That's why prior to any textbook evaluation, conducting needs analysis is necessary. With the myriad of available exam preparation course books, it is important that teachers make informed choices when selecting course books which is detrimental to students’ success in the exams. Meanwhile, teacher-made materials with a specific group of students and their needs in mind will always assist professional, published materials (Stern, 1992).

Harwood (2005) believe that teachers and learners need the independence and autonomy to take responsibility for their own teaching and learning, and materials writers should modify their textbooks accordingly. He suggests two views towards the material development in EAP: The anti-textbook view which asserts the deficiency of the EAP textbook syllabus. Many teachers may believe that a textbook is the product of a careful collaboration between theoreticians and practitioners. But, there seems to be a lack of fit between how academic writers write and what the textbooks teach about writing. Textbooks are found to understate the variation in style and language which corpora reveal. It is felt that EAP textbook writers rely on intuition or folk beliefs. The second view is the pro-textbook view which considers textbooks as developers. There is plenty of research evidence that many teachers adapt commercial materials, using them to stimulate their thinking and as the basis for providing the most appropriate classes in their context.

Cunningsworth (1995) provides some interrelated disadvantages to the use of a single course book: There can be a lack of variety in teaching procedures; individual student’s needs may be overlooked; and creativity and flexibility are underestimated. Although teachers adapt and adopt materials; still the core material for an exam preparation course is the textbook. Textbooks can be relatively suitable for student's needs, even if not specifically designed for them and allow students to review the previous lessons and look ahead to the future topics (O’Neill, 1982).

Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991) that ESP teachers find themselves in a situation where they are expected to produce a course that exactly matches the needs of a group of learners, but are expected to do so with no, or very limited, preparation time. Nunan (1991) states that the selection process can be greatly facilitated by the use of systematic "materials evaluation procedures" (p. 209) which help ensure that materials are consistent with the needs and interests of the learners they are intended to serve, as well as being in harmony with institutional ideologies on the nature of language and learning. According to Garinger (2001), due to the recent growth of materials in the ESL publishing industry, guidelines are necessary to raise teachers’ awareness to various course book designs. Relevant evaluation criteria should instruct teachers how to best select course books that fit their certain needs.
The Barron's IELTS textbook (Lougeed, 2006) is going to be evaluated in this paper to provide a framework for more IELTS textbook evaluation in the future. Evaluating exam preparation textbooks based on the related exam criteria will help teachers select a textbook matching to their students' needs. In the following, an explanation of the different types of textbook evaluation and the full description of the IELTS exam will be given. In the second part of the present paper, result of the evaluation based on Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework of the internal and external evaluation will be reported. The model’s procedural format and flexibility will allow researchers to fully assess the strengths and weaknesses of the materials being evaluated. In the following, an explanation of the different types of textbook evaluation and the full description of the IELTS exam will be given then the result of the evaluation based on Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework textbook evaluation will be reported.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Course book evaluation methods

According to one classification, there are three types of textbook evaluation: pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluations (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997). The pre-use or predictive evaluation of textbooks helps teachers to select the most appropriate textbook for a given language classroom by considering its prospective performance. In-use evaluation aids teachers in the exploration of the weaknesses or strengths of textbooks while they are being used. Finally, post-use, or retrospective evaluation helps teachers reflect on the quality of the textbook after it has been used in a particular learning-teaching situation.

Although requiring adaptation before being submitted to the personal requirements of individual teachers, checklists are effective tools for course book evaluation (Breen & Candlin, 1987; Skierso, 1991; AbdelWahab, 2013). The creation of extensive evaluation checklists by leading experts provides criteria for detailed course book analysis (Cunningsworth 1995). There are a number of valid textbook evaluation checklists, e.g., Cunningsworth’s checklist for evaluation and selection contains 45 questions, covering criteria such as aims, design, language content, skills, and methodology, as well as practical considerations such as cost and obtainability. Sheldon (1988) provides an expansive checklist of 53 questions classified under 17 major criteria, which appraises content factors such as accessibility, content, layout and authenticity. Evaluation is made easier, more objective and valid when it is based on a reliable instrument. Most checklists available in the literature lack the expected validity or reliability. This necessitates the need for developing a checklist that is of high validity in terms of the construct domain of its evaluative criteria that accounts for the consistency of the scores resulting from its items. Evaluation checklists must cover the following areas (Sheldon, 1988): Characteristics of textbooks such as layout, organization, methodology, aims; The degree to which a set of materials is not only teachable, but also fits to the needs of the teachers’ approaches as well as the
organization’s general curriculum; Criteria related to gender and cultural components; The extent to which the linguistic items, subjects, content, and topics match up to students’ personalities, backgrounds, needs, and interests as well as those of the teacher and/or institution.

McDonough and Shaw (1993) provide a flexible two-stage model for the comprehensive evaluation of course books. Textbooks can be evaluated internally or externally (McDonough & Shaw, 1993): An external analysis of textbooks initiates the examination of the information given about the textbook on the cover of students’ or teachers’ book and what is indicated in the introduction and table of contents. The main purpose behind the external evaluation of textbooks is to determine the real function of a specific textbook. The physical appearance of the textbook can be evaluated regarding the cover durability and the attractiveness of textbook elements such as the cover, page appearance and the binding. From the blurb or the introduction part of textbooks, the intended audience, proficiency level, the context in which the materials are to be used, the presentation of language items, and the author's views on language and methodology (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). On the other hand, internal evaluation of textbooks entails an in-depth investigation into the materials. The internal evaluation shows how much the factors analyzed in the external evaluation stage have internal consistency and relevance. It deals with the presentation of the skills in the book and the grading and sequencing of the materials. For example, where listening skills are involved, are recordings authentic or artificial? Or in the case of speaking, do the exercises reflect real life skills or not? Unique in their coverage of criteria, their 22-point framework is designed both for teachers looking to select a course book, a predictive evaluation, as well as for those teachers looking to identify strengths and weaknesses in course books already used in their working context, a retrospective evaluation.

The IELTS exam
The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an international standardized test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers. It is jointly managed by Cambridge English Language Assessment, the British Council and IDP Education Ltd, and was established in 1989. IELTS is one of the two major English-language tests in the world, the other is the TOEFL. There are two versions of the IELTS: the Academic Version and the General Training Version. The former is intended for those who want to enrol in universities and other institutions of higher education and for professionals such as medical doctors and nurses who want to study or practice in an English-speaking country. The latter is intended for those planning to undertake non-academic training or to gain work experience, or for immigration purposes. No minimum score is required to pass the test. An IELTS result or test report form is issued to all candidates with a score from "band 1" (non-user) to "band 9" (expert user) and each institution sets a different threshold. There is also a "band 0" score for those who did not attempt the test. Institutions are advised not to consider a report older than two years to be valid, unless the user proves that he has worked to maintain his level. Candidates receive scores on a band scale from 1
IELTS is based on the integration of the four skills and it includes all types of questions from multiple choices to written tests. The skills are as follows, respectively:

**Listening**
Candidates will have to listen to four recorded texts, monologues and conversations by a range of native speakers, and write answers to series of questions. These include questions which test the ability to understand main ideas and detailed factual information, ability to understand the opinions and attitudes of speakers, ability to understand the purpose of what is said and ability to follow the development of ideas. A variety of voices and native-speaker accents is used and each section will be played only once. The Listening component is the same for both Academic and General Training modules.

**Reading**
The Reading module consists of 40 questions. A variety of question types is used in order to test a wide range of reading skills. These include reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical argument, recognizing writers’ opinions, and attitudes and purposes. The Academic version includes three long texts which range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. The texts are authentic and are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. These have been selected for a non-specialist audience but are recognizably appropriate for anyone entering undergraduate or postgraduate courses or seeking professional registration.

**Writing**
The Writing component of the Academic version includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for anyone entering undergraduate or postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

**Task 1**: In the academic version, candidates will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and are asked to describe, summarize or explain the information in their own words. They may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event. In the general module, candidates are to write a letter based on a topic for task 1.

**Task 2**: Candidates will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be written in a formal style.

**Speaking**
The Speaking component assesses candidates' use of spoken English, and takes between 11 and 14 minutes to complete. It includes three parts: the personal information dialogue, the monologue, and the discussion part. Every test is recorded. The Speaking component is also the same for both Academic and General Training versions.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
The present study aims at exploring and evaluating the Barron's IELTS preparation textbook to find out to what extent this book helps IELTS candidates prepare for IELTS exam. Based on McDonough and Shaw's (1993) framework for textbook evaluation, the research questions to be answered in this paper are:

- Does the internal evaluation of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook show that it is in line with the objectives of IELTS test?
- Does the external evaluation of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook show that it is in line with the objectives of IELTS test?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook based on its internal and external evaluation?

METHODOLOGY

Materials

Barron's IELTS preparation textbook is the main material used in this study. McDonough and Shaw's (1993) book with the chapter related to textbook evaluation is the main framework to evaluate the Barron's IELTS book.

Procedure

Since the external evaluation precedes the internal one, the evaluation starts with the investigation of the following characteristics of Barron's IELTS book by simply looking at the preface, blurb, and the table of content part of the book. In the first phase of evaluation, the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context in which the materials are to be used, how the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons, the author’s views on language and methodology, the availability of the book in the market, etc. are investigated. The second phase of the evaluation is the internal evaluation in which the following characteristics of the Barron's IELTS book will be explained:

- The grading and sequencing of the materials where reading/discourse skills are involved.
- The presentation of the skills in the materials.
- Where listening skills are involved, are recordings ‘authentic’ or artificial?
- Are the tests and exercises related to the learners' needs and the content of the course?
- Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles…and is it sufficiently transparent to motivate both students and teachers alike?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
External evaluation

The external evaluation is done by looking at what has been stated explicitly in the "blurb" or claims made on the cover of the textbook, the introduction and table of contents (McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 67). The following questions are given in McDonough and Shaw's (1993) model:

The intended audience

Although there is no specific age range for taking part in the IELTS exam, the majority of candidates are over 15. Adults or elder teenagers who intend to continue their studies abroad or pursue their dreams by living overseas are the potential audience of this book. It covers both general and academic IELTS preparation skills. Based on the introduction part of the book, international students represent the highest percentage of candidates who take IELTS. An IELTS score is a standard measure of English language proficiency around the world. Government departments and businesses around the globe also require IELTS score or equivalent score for employment or immigration.

The proficiency level

Since Barron's IELTS textbook is a skill book to prepare candidates for an exam to measure their language proficiency, no specific level of proficiency is given by the author. Students at any level of proficiency can take part in the IELTS exam. However, experience shows that pre-intermediate candidates are more likely to benefit from preparation materials than the elementary ones. So at least the pre-intermediate level is needed to make the best of this book.

The context in which the materials are to be used

As stated earlier, Barron's IELTS' main purpose is to prepare candidates for the IELTS exam. Hence, this book is useful for people who need to demonstrate their English proficiency for a specific purpose, e.g., immigration or academic in an English speaking country or somewhere overseas.

How the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons

The content of the book is organized in modules for each skill. The order of the presentation of skills is the same as the test i.e. Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. The units are organized as follows,
- Unit 1, introduction
- Unit 2, questions and answers about IELTS
- Unit 3, preparing for IELTS (including the study plan, tips for success etc.)
- Unit 4, listening module
- Unit 5, reading module
- Unit 6, writing module
- Unit 7, speaking module
- Unit 8, model tests
Each module/unit includes small lessons which are called "target" in this book. Each target is a full explanation of an exam skill followed by a number of exercises to practice that specific skill. The answers are provided at the end of the book. The listening module (unit 4) includes 13 targets, reading module includes 5 targets, writing module has 8 targets, and speaking module consists of 8 modules. At the beginning of each module, different types of IELTS questions are given with samples before the targets.

The author’s views on language and methodology
The author claims that the English used in IELTS can be British, Australian, American, or New Zealand English. However, it is more British and Australian oriented. The author also asserts that the language tested will be comprehensible to any learner of English and that test-takers who studied another form of English will not be penalized. The common differences between American English and the English used in other parts of the world are pointed out in the book.

Are the materials to be used as the main ‘core’ course or to be supplementary to it?
Barron’s IELTS textbook is designed to be used as the ‘core’ course. However, due to the nature of IELTS test, the candidates need to take as many tests as possible and teachers need to make use of as many sources and materials as possible. Hence, this book can also be used as a supplementary material.

Is the teacher’s book in print and locally available?
Most, if not all, of the exam preparation courses have the answer key and the typescripts inside them. Even sample essays to the writing tasks are provided within the book. Consequently, no specific teacher's book is needed for these books.

Is a vocabulary list/index included?
There is no separate section for the teaching of vocabulary and structure; instead, they are integrated in the four modules, i.e., during listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

What visual material does the book contain and is it actually integrated into the text?
For some listening, writing (task1), and reading questions, there are maps, charts, graphs and tables. For process type essays some pictures are given. All of the maps and pictures are in black and white. The texture of the paper is of no good quality, the A3 papers with no color tend to be boring for students.

Is the layout and presentation clear or cluttered?
The layout is very professionally presented and this is a very important factor that must not be taken for granted especially in exam preparation textbooks because candidates challenge enough with the test skills and they need not confuse with the layout. As mentioned above, in this book,
each module/unit includes targets. Each target includes the explanation of an exam skill followed by a number of exercises.

Is the material too culturally biased or specific...[or]...represent minority groups and/or women in a negative way?
Barron's IELTS is not written for a certain nationality or cultural group; since IELTS exam claims to have an international and intercultural approach, the topics which divide each unit are universal in nature. Although it seems a certain attempt has been made by the authors to focus on British and Australian accent and culture. The topics of conversation in the listening sections are all about places in Australia, New Zealand, or Britain which is pretty biased. All paragraphs must be justified alignment. With justified alignment, both sides of the paragraph are straight.

Internal evaluation
In this stage of the analysis, as designed by McDonough and Shaw (1993), the "internal consistency and organization of the materials" (p.67) is examined, to discover the extent to which external claims made by the author/publisher correlate with the internal content. Internal evaluation is an in-depth investigation into a book and includes the following questions as proposed in McDonough and Shaw's (1993) model of textbook evaluation:

The presentation of the skills in the materials
Modern course book design entails the integration of the receptive and productive skills (Brown, 1994; White, 1988; Stern, 1992). In IELTS, each test module includes several skills, e.g., in order to answer the listening questions, candidates need to read the questions, and write the answers in essay type questions. The grammar and spelling will be penalized in listening questions. The reading questions also need essay type answers.

The grading and sequencing of the materials where reading/discourse skills are involved.
The sequence of unit presentation is based on the sequence of skills tested in IELTS, i.e., listening, reading, writing, and speaking respectively. With regards to the grading and the degree of difficulty, authenticity plays the key role. Candidates need to take as many real test samples as possible to prepare best for the exam. The exam administration and timing conditions must be practiced and met during the preparation courses. Since Barron's IELTS is a practice book, the skills and even sample exercises are too simple. The main purpose is to teach candidates the exact IELTS skill needed to answer a particular type of question and therefore the material is simplified and cut in small parts for pedagogical purposes. However, the students need to practice on authentic materials. This characteristic of Barron's IELTS is a flaw and necessitates the application of more authentic supplementary materials.
Where listening skills are involved, are recordings ‘authentic’ or artificial?
The CD provided with the book includes both authentic and artificial recordings for the listening module. The authentic recording in this book may entail two senses: authentic as related to the real world and authentic as used in a real IELTS test before. Some of the recordings are made slower and really shorter than the real IELTS listening so that the candidates can practice skills separately. However, real IELTS needs holistic amalgamation of all question types and skills. The model tests at the end of the book can provide good practice on the interaction of all the skills.

Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles…and is it sufficiently transparent to motivate both students and teachers alike?
Candidates who are willing to take the IELTS are strongly motivated either intrinsically or instrumentally. Easy exercises and clear examples and targets in Barron's IELTS help novice test-takers gain more self-confidence, hence, more motivation. Clear explanations are also useful for teachers especially the inexperienced ones. It is worth mentioning that only for a beginner course on IELTS this book can be very encouraging. For more advance practices supplementary sources are needed.

Are the tests and exercises related to the learners' needs and the content of the course?
The results of the initial needs analysis show that IELTS candidates have the following expectations from their IELTS preparation course and this book relatively meets their needs. Most candidates need
- To have their course as short as possible
- To have a clear vision of the whole exam and the course
- To face real tests and test situations
- To be motivated by the textbooks and the teachers
- To be exposed to the real writing and speaking samples of other candidates.
- To have a textbook which is organized and easy to work with
- To be able to follow some tasks through self-study.

CONCLUSION
The evaluation presented in this paper was based on a prior needs analysis of IELTS exam candidates and a valid model (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). Teachers can evaluate textbooks, make adaptations, and make the most of them. Textbooks are too inflexible and they reflect the pedagogic, psychological, and linguistic preferences and biases of their authors. Some proponents of authentic classroom language models have argued that the problems with many textbooks are not necessarily the fact that they are culturally or socially biased, but that they are artificial in their presentation of the target language. The scripted unauthentic language found in many textbooks does not lead to communicative practice, but instead can lead to an oversimplification
of language and unrealistic views of real-life situations. However, they actually help teaching and learning, one cannot deny the fact that textbooks still maintain enormous popularity and their evaluation and improvement is crucial.

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BIO DATA
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A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF ORAL QUESTIONING AND QUIZ ON EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY LEARNING AND RETENTION

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ABSTRACT
Considering the advantages of formative assessment over summative assessment on the one hand and the importance of vocabulary knowledge for EFL learners on the other hand and reviewing the results of previous empirical studies on success of formative assessment the present study aimed at completing the studies in the related literature by comparing the success of two commonly used formative assessment types namely quiz and oral questioning on learning vocabulary and retention of the learned items. To this end 41 pre-intermediate learners participated in this study and were randomly assigned into two experimental groups of oral questioning and quiz and underwent 36 hours of treatment. The results of this quasi-experimental study with pre-test, immediate and delayed post-tests revealed that there is not a significant difference between the success of these assessment types on neither vocabulary learning nor retention. The findings imply that language teachers can take the advantage of any or both of these formative assessment types based on their learners’ needs and teaching context.

KEYWORDS: Formative assessment, vocabulary learning, vocabulary retention, oral questioning, Quiz, summative assessment

INTRODUCTION
Learning vocabulary is considered as a drudgery for foreign language learners. The problem, however, is not just learning vocabulary, but forgetting the learned vocabulary items sometime after learning them. Vocabulary knowledge has been neglected or considered as a secondary emphasis in foreign language programs since it is felt that students need to master basic grammatical patterns and the ability to communicate in English. Some researchers (Twaddell, 1973; Wilkins, 1974; Richards, 1976; Carter & McCarthy, 1988) claim that little importance has been given to vocabulary and the teaching of vocabulary or learning new words and phrases is often seen as an unimportant value, and even it is neglected most of the time in foreign language teaching. It was found by Janjula et al. (2010) that EFL learners need good knowledge of vocabulary to be successful in language learning, and they must be able to use them fluently and appropriately to be efficient language users. This sufficient vocabulary knowledge will result in effective language learning and use (Al-Jarf, 2007). As Wilkins (1974, p. 111) states, "without
grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. So vocabulary knowledge is an important component for developing language skills. Consequently, limited vocabulary knowledge hinders both communication and language learning of EFL learners. In EFL contexts that most learners learn English only in classroom and their teachers rarely use fluent English language as the medium of instruction the importance of vocabulary learning increases even more.

Twaddell (1973) admits that learners get an ability to understand and use words in the foreign language, but claiming the reason why it is not really taught is that no single method has gained a general acceptance in teaching vocabulary. Hedge (2000) highlights the neglect of vocabulary learning and teaching research in literature and maintains that “this neglect sits uncomfortably with the significance placed on vocabulary learning by learners themselves” (p.110). Language learners need to master vocabulary to meet their communicative needs in the classroom.

Some researchers believe that effective vocabulary instruction provided through intervention instruction is essential for students struggling to acquire vocabulary (Qian, 2002; Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007). In order to provide effective vocabulary instruction, teachers need a vocabulary assessment that can identify students who are at-risk in vocabulary development. This assessment would show which students require extra vocabulary support through whole class instruction or vocabulary interventions. One approach to deal with learning issues is to use assessment tools for the sake of learning. Formative assessment serves the dual purpose of giving the teacher information on the effectiveness of the lesson and giving students information on the current state of their learning. Such information can guide future instruction decisions. Formative assessment is tightly linked with instructional practices. Teachers need to consider how their classroom activities, assignments, and tests support learning objectives and allow students to communicate what they know, then use this information to improve teaching and learning.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Vocabulary learning and retention has been the center of scholarly debates and empirical investigation (Kamuche, 2005; Kapricke & Roediger, 2007; Kwan, 2010; Mutai, 2012; Babaie & Nourdad, 2014). Many researchers have looked at the issue of the vocabulary learning and retention from different perspectives and they have adopted different methodologies to examine the effects of manipulations of vocabulary presentation on the nature of its learning and retention.

Mutai (2012) for instance investigated the extent to which oral questioning, as a teaching strategy, affected the performance of EFL students in Kenya. The study employed the mixed methods research design. To collect data, the study used questionnaires, interviews, documentary data and non-participant observation. Both qualitative and quantitative data analyses were employed. It emerged that oral questioning as a method of teaching was not being utilized as recommended in secondary schools. Teachers’ awareness of oral questioning was limited. Teachers were not guided enough to use oral questioning properly, for example they did not pause to give learners time to respond to the questions. Rendering formative assessment tools repeatedly is a vital part of effective learning (Kwan, 2010). Kwan (ibid.) investigated the effect
of two assessment tools of formative assessment: ‘one-minute paper’ and ‘daily quiz’. Comparing major characteristics of the one-minute paper and the daily quiz, he referred to the weaknesses of one-minute paper. He proposed that daily quiz should be used instead. Although both tools allowed useful feedback between teachers and students, the daily quiz facilitated the process of retrieval which assisted learning. He also conducted the end-of-term survey based on students’ opinions about the usefulness of the daily quiz and the results proved its’ usefulness.

Gholami and Moghadam (2013) also investigated the effect of weekly quizzes on Iranian high school students’ performance on final achievement test. They reviewed the literature in chronological order from the earliest study of testing on learning, grounded on washback effect theory. They mentioned that proponents of the idea claim that frequent quizzes motivate practice and review and provide feedback to students and teachers. They conducted a quasi-experimental study and the participants of their study were divided in two experimental and control groups. The former group received weekly quizzes and the latter just took midterm exam. T-test procedure compared two groups’ mean scores and the result showed outperformance of quiz group over no quiz group.

Babaie and Nourdad (2014) in their study on the effectiveness of commonly used formative assessment types on vocabulary learning and retention found out that both quiz and oral questioning during instruction helped learning the vocabulary items for pre-intermediate EFL learners and also caused better retention of the learned items. They recommended that EFL teachers to include these two types of formative assessment in their academic management to obviate the problem of vocabulary knowledge for their learners.

Reviewing the related literature, one can find the rarity of studies that examine the assessment impact on vocabulary learning and retention. The studies mentioned above each has looked at the effect of assessment on learning. They have not, however, made a clear comparison between the effect of various assessment types on learning and retention of learning. To close this fundamental gap in the literature of formative assessment and complete the previous studies this study attempted to compare the efficacy of two assessment types of oral questioning and quiz on vocabulary learning and retention.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
Since previous studies prove the positive effect of formative assessment specially quiz and oral questioning in EFL contexts this investigation just focused on a comparison between these positive effects. In line with this purpose the present study aimed at answering the following two research questions:
1. Do oral questioning and quiz differ in their effect on vocabulary learning?
2. Do oral questioning and quiz differ in their effect on vocabulary retention?
METHODOLOGY

Participants
The participants of the present study were 41 female pre-intermediate EFL learners within the age range of 16 to 25. Since it was important to have the same teacher for both of the experimental groups and due to some limitations in the number of pre-intermediate classes participants were selected based on convenient sampling.

Instruments
The following instruments were used for data collection in the present study:

Preliminary English Test (PET)
The standardized PET test was administered to participants in the two intact classes to ensure their homogeneity in terms of English proficiency. PET includes speaking, listening, reading and writing sections designed for the speakers of other languages by Cambridge University.

Vocabulary Pre-Test, Post-Test, and delayed post-test
The researchers developed a question bank consisting 100 vocabulary-items from which three parallel 30-item vocabulary-test sets were made. They were used as vocabulary pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test.

Procedures
The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental design because although it lacked random selection, it had benefited from random assignment. There were two experimental groups of oral questioning and quiz with 20 and 21 learner in each under investigation. Pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test approach was applied to estimate the impact of the independent variables, written quiz and oral questioning, on vocabulary learning and retention as the dependent variable.

At the first stage of the study participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups. The instructor of both groups were one of the researchers and the same teaching method and materials were used. The homogeneity of the groups was verified using PET. Three sets of teacher made parallel vocabulary tests each including 30 items were applied as pre-test, immediate post-test and delayed post-test.

After the pre-test participants in both groups underwent treatment for 36 hours during two months, during which they had the same test contents each session but different assessment methods (oral questioning vs. quiz). On the last session, both groups were given the immediate post-test. And after a time interval of seven weeks they were given their delayed post-test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
To answer the research questions of the study, the mean scores of four sets of tests for the two groups were compared by t-test formula. An independent t-test was used for each of the following between group comparisons: two mean scores of PET test; two mean scores of the pre-test; two mean scores of the immediate post-test; and two mean scores of the delayed post-test.
To make sure that the proficiency level of the participants was not intervening with the findings it was considered to be equal for the two experimental groups and somehow taken under control in the study design. Consequently, at the beginning to have a sound basis for the comparison of the two groups, PET test results of the both were compared. Table 1 reflects the results of this initial comparison.

**Table 1: Proficiency test mean score comparison for the two groups**

<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>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 1 shows there was no significant difference between the proficiency level of the two experimental groups at the beginning of the study ($t=.73, p\leq0.05$) so it was concluded that the two groups were almost at the same level of proficiency at the beginning of the study. The second independent samples t-test was applied for making a comparison between the vocabulary pre-test scores of the quiz and oral questioning groups. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Pre-test mean score comparison for the two groups**

<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>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in Table 2 the difference between the means of vocabulary pre-test for the quiz and oral questioning groups was not significant ($t=2.61, p\leq0.05$). In other words at the beginning of the research the participants in both groups were similar as far as their knowledge of the vocabulary was concerned.

After presenting the two experimental groups with their own specific formative assessment types (oral questioning and quiz) as the treatment of this research design their vocabulary learning were compared by comparing the mean scores of the immediate post-test for the two groups. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Immediate post-test mean score comparison for the two groups**

<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>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that there is not a significant difference between the mean scores of quiz and oral questioning groups’ immediate post-test. It could be inferred that these two formative assessment types were not different in their effect on vocabulary learning.
The second dependent variable of the present study was retention of the learned vocabulary items. To show the effect of the two above mentioned formative assessment types the last comparison was done between the delayed post-tests of the two groups, the results of which are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Delayed post-test mean score comparison for the two groups

<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>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>F = .39, Sig. = .53</td>
<td>t = 3.43, df = 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td>t = 3.43, df = 57.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that the mean scores of the two groups’ delayed post-test were not significantly different (t= 3.43, p≤0.05). It could be inferred that the two types of formative assessment investigated in this study namely quiz and oral questioning were equally helpful in retention of the learned vocabulary items.

As analysis of the data revealed, there was not a significant difference between the two types of formative assessments investigated in this study (quiz and oral questioning) in terms of vocabulary learning and retention. This study was a supplement to a previous research in the literature (Babaie & Nourdad, 2014) which had proved the positive effect of both quiz and oral questioning on EFL vocabulary learning and retention but had not made a comparison between the two assessment types.

From a practical point of view, many teachers in EFL classes ignore the importance of true formative assessment approach and they just devote their time to assess the learners’ achievement in a traditional summative way. Therefore, the present study suggests that English teachers considering the findings of the related literature as well as the findings of the present study can benefit from two appropriate assessment types, namely, oral questioning and written quiz, regarding their own context of teaching. Knowing that formative assessment is better, more complete, more modern, more precise and more useful than summative assessment. They can benefit from both types of oral questioning and written quiz and they can choose each on the basis of their context, affective and cognitive needs of the learners, the nature of subject matter and educational objectives, because the present study showed that in practice there is no difference between the two. The findings of this study can be used in the fields of syllabus design, language assessment, material development and teaching methodology.

CONCLUSION

Vocabulary learning and retention are among the major problems of EFL learners and are considered as drudgeries for most foreign language learners. A solution solely focusing on teaching manipulation, without considering other educational aspects such as assessment methods cannot be fully accomplishing for sure. This serious issue was taken into account in this study and two types of formative assessment namely oral questioning and quiz which are commonly applied in Iranian academic context including foreign language classes were
compared in terms of their efficiency in vocabulary learning and retention of EFL learners. Based on findings emerging from this study, it was concluded that there is not a significant difference between the positive results of these types of formative assessment, so based on the needs of their learners and their learning context language teachers can take the advantage of any of them in order to have a better vocabulary learning and retention. The findings can also have implications for curriculum developers in decisions on the nature and type of instruction/assessment to include in various educational systems.

**Limitations of the study**

Like many other studies, this study also suffers from some limitations. Firstly, the type of sampling which was employed in the present study was the convenient sampling and not the random sampling. The research was limited to available group selection, instead of individual subject selection through randomization. Secondly, the participants of the study were all female EFL learners.

**REFERENCES**


AN ANALYSIS OF HIGH-RATED DIFFICULTIES OF PNU STUDENTS INTERPRETING ENGLISH POLYSEMOUS WORDS

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ABSTRACT
Learning the vocabulary of the language to be learned is essential for its learning and an average learner needs to know at least 3600 English words in order to read an unsimplified text (Nation, 1975). The situation even gets worse when the reading material contains some polysemous words for which there is no idea to assign which meaning. This problem is accentuated among learners who have little contact with the L2 words and contexts and it seems to be a great problem for Payam Noor University students in Iran who are parts of distance education system with little access to authentic contexts and materials. So, they need to have a good understanding of the problematic vocabulary like polysemous words and their meaning in languages they want to learn. This paper investigates some of the high rated difficulties of 48 English translation major students of Payam Noor University (PNU) of Khalkhal Branch in learning and using English Polysemous words gathered based on the problems occurred during their class hour in courses of “Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose”. For gathering the required data which consisted of high-rated problematic English Polysemous words, the researchers used a record player which recorded the students’ voices answering the instructor’s questions directed at having them use the different vocabularies based on some of their textbooks and assuring whether their interpretations of the polysemous words were correct or not together with checking of their meaning and state of polysemy in Persian. Alongside it, based on an error prediction of Persian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, some of the areas contributing to the problems were investigated and some suggestions to solve the problems were suggested. It was found that the students had difficulties in learning and being able to use the underlying meanings of the words due to the problems like the poor kind of instruction they had undergone which may be resulted from factors like the insufficient class sessions for PNU students and also the students’ insufficient efforts in getting the underlying meanings of the words. It is suggested that more class sessions should be devoted to such students by the officials of PNU alongside specifying more talented instructors who teach based on the underlying meaning and making students familiar with the active vocabulary learning techniques.

KEYWORDS: Polysemous words, PNU (Payam Noor University), underdifferentiation, underlying meaning
INTRODUCTION
The history of language teaching has always seen the ongoing debates between the proponents of the either the theory of “vocabulary first” or “grammar primary” as the building block of language teaching and the shifts in recent decades towards teaching grammar inductively seems to emphasize the great significance Vocabulary knowledge considered by both first-language and second-language researchers in language competence (Grabe, 1991; Frederiksen, 1982). And so, language learners should have a long-term plan for learning and retention of vocabularies actively or passively using any strategies and techniques at their disposal and it seems that learning problematic word with two or more related meanings (known as polysemous words) should be given due importance in learning the language.

Polysemy is believed to be the central phenomenon of lexical semantics (Riceour, 1975) and it is a term used in semantic analysis to describe the situation in which a word has two or more related meanings (Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 1999). In spite of the simplicity of the definition, there seems not to be a clear-cut boundary for the definition and as for the importance of the term in our study, it is better to define this “somehow muddy field in linguistic research” (p.14). In order to understand polysemy better and based on the category given by Ibarretxe-Antuñano(1999), words should be analyzed in three layers in order to determine their state of polysemy: first, etymological information about the words should be gathered in order to show that those words which are of the same origin are polysemic. Another criterion for the analysis of words is based on unrelatedness vs. relatedness of their meaning based on the native speaker’s feeling about the connectedness or irrelevance of certain meanings. And finally, based on the central or core meaning of the word we can elaborate on its state of polysemy. The selection of the polysemous words and their state of polysemy in the current article will be based on this categorization.

Pustejovsky (1995, as cited in Krifka, 1998) believes that polysemy occurs in one of the following forms:
- count/mass alternations
- Animal/meat
- Object/Stuff an object is made up
- Stuff/Kind
- Stuff/Portions
- Plant/food alternation
- Containers and contained
- Figure/Ground reversal
- Product/producer alternation
- Process/result alternation
- Alternations involving location
- Place/people
- Capital/government

The reason why PNU students were selected as the participants of this study goes back to their improper exposure to English classes and subsequently their due problems in recognizing and learning active and passive vocabularies through limitations of exposure and contact with
different kinds of vocabularies –like polysemous ones--. For instance, in the courses under study
(Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose), the
students are partially present in the classes in less than 4 sessions for each course and in fact, the
officials have declared that these classes are held for the aim of just problem-solving on the part
of the students and if there are no problems mentioned and faced on their sides—as the nature of
such classes with most students studying at the final days before the exam—, then the instructor
has no obligation to start teaching units. So, such students seem to have numerous problems
regarding the main skills of language learning and areas like pronunciation and vocabulary
learning and retention.

An important point which is of crucial importance in discussing the findings of the study is that
the problems that students encounter in assigning meanings to polysemous words can be
categorized into different levels and the category which is mostly used in the current study is the
hierarchy of difficulty presented by Prator (1967) in which he categorizes the learner’s problems
into the following levels:

Hierarchy of difficulty:
1. Transfer - no difference
2. Coalescence - one item covering two in L1
3. Underdifferentiation - absence
4. Reinterpretation - different application of existing item
5. Overdifferentiation - new item

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
Teaching the students about the different senses and meanings of the polysemous words is not
that simple. Nagy (1997, cited in Parent, 2009) believes that language learners can deal with
related senses of polysemous words in two basic ways:

The first is sense selection through which the language learner is expected to select the
appropriate sense among those senses using his mental power.
The other is Reference specification which requires a core or underlying concept for all the
words, having the same senses for all contexts.

The model of vocabulary acquisition proposed by Meara (1997, cited in Schmitt and McCarthy)
seems to be of great importance to both language teachers and learners. Some of the key findings
of this model are as follows: the mental lexicon is a network; learning a word is a matter of
connecting the newly encountered word to one, or more, already known. This could be a first
language word or a second language one. Links may be one-way or, ideally, two-way. Words
connected with one-way links are those that exist in our passive vocabulary—words we know
when we hear them but not necessarily available for productive use. Both native speakers and L2
learners have such words. Further, the number of connections varies: the more connections, the
more well-known the word is.
It is the remarkable simplicity of the model that deflects significant criticism. The counterargument, that the lexicon does not resemble a network, is the more untenable position. The appeal Meara's model has for polysemy is the ease in which it can be developed to accommodate it.

Klepousniotou's (2001) in his study of learning polysemous words showed that there must be a single mental representation and a single basic sense for learning polysemous words. He believed that the process of sense creation is the building block of polysemy and during this process, based on a basic sense; extended senses are generated for polysemous words.

In his experimental study with seventy low English proficiency level Japanese high school students, Nakahara (2005) compared two approaches to teaching polysemy known as the widespread sense selection approach and core meaning one (the experimental group).

The group taught by core meaning gained better results than the control group. One of the main findings and conclusions of the study was that based on cognitive linguists' analyses of metaphoric and metonymic relations, it is the task of the teachers to improve the students’ understanding of the core and peripheral meanings of polysemous words and their relationships. Nakahara (2005) further concluded and declared that teachers having difficulty in teaching polysemous words will have two options left: either to present students with all of the meanings of the polysemous words, or presenting the overall underlying meaning.

This notion of underlying meaning comes from the work of Nation (1990, 2000) who introduces it reporting on the work of Visser (1989), based on a pedagogical procedure for teaching polysemes during which students are presented with two meanings of a polyseme in context and are given a simple task for each meaning followed by asking a state of what features are common to both senses. Srinivasan and Snedeker (2011) also asserted that the understanding of polysemous words primarily in the first stages of meaning development is based on a conceptual and meaningful base, different from those of homophones which seem to be represented at phonological level.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. What polysemous vocabularies are the high-rated problematic words for PNU students’?
2. What are the reasons for such words to be problematic and make students difficulties in understanding and interpretation?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The population of the present study consisted of 48 students in English translation major who were studying in Payam Noor University (PNU) of Khalkhal Branch during the fall semester of 2014-2015. The students had the proper and right command of English language based on the information elicited from their grades and scores in the previous semesters which were beyond
the mean score 15 out of 20 and they were in their third year of education, however, some of them showed difficulties in understanding the essential words in the reading materials.

**Instruments**

For gathering the required information which consisted of high-rated problematic English Polysemous words, these data were gathered using a record player which recorded the students voices answering the instructor’s questions directed towards having them use the different vocabularies and assuring whether their interpretation of the polysemous words was correct or not. This information was elicited from the reading materials during their class hour in courses of “Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose”--which are published by Payam Noor University publication and taught by the corresponding author of the study--together with the checking of their meaning and state of polysemy in Persian. Alongside it, based on an error prediction of Persian EFL learners, some of the areas contributing to the problems were investigated and some suggestions to solve the problems were suggested.

**Procedure**

Based on the findings, 20 high-rated problematic English polysemous nouns and verbs in English were chosen and after checking their meaning and state of polysemy in English and Persian, the researchers had an error prediction of Persian EFL learners. The researchers just accepted those vocabularies as polysemous words that all of the meanings of that word were found under one lexical entry in Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 5th Edition (2009).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Here, the results of the study of analyzing the PNU students’ high-rated problematic English polysemous words are presented and discussed using the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>English polysemous word (percentage of being problematic)</th>
<th>English state of polysemy</th>
<th>Persian meaning</th>
<th>Persian State of polysemy</th>
<th>Error prediction of Persian EFL learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Literature (68%)</td>
<td>1. Written works, especially those regarded as having artistic merits</td>
<td>ادب و هنر</td>
<td>نوشتات نوشتات</td>
<td>As you can see here, the three meanings mentioned for the word &quot;Literature&quot; have mental relationships with each other. They all refer to written works in some ways, so the language learner seems not to have much difficulty in learning and applying them in his own language, however, most of the students made mistakes to match the meaning when it referred to the second meaning and associated it with the first meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Books and writings on a particular subject</td>
<td>مطبوعات</td>
<td>مواد چاپی</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Promotional or advisory leaflets and other material</td>
<td>ادبیات</td>
<td>نوشتات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: the analysis of the PNU students’ high-rated problematic English polysemous words
| 2 | Protection (35%) | 1. The action of protecting<br>2. A person or thing that protects<br>3. The document guaranteeing safety<br>4. The payment of money to criminals to prevent from their attack | Here we have different alternations for the word "Protection". The relationship between them is much more abstract and so its meaning potential will be highly dependent upon its surrounding context. So, it can have the meaning of an action, a person, a document or a payment and that’s why language learners made mistakes in its meaning association as there is an "Underdifferentiation" in Persian meaning. |

| 3 | Tail (42%) | 1. The hindmost part of an animal<br>2. Something downwards or backwards<br>3. The final, more distant or weaker part<br>4. The lower or hanging part of a shirt or coat<br>5. The side of the coin without the image of the head<br>6. A person's buttocks<br>7. A person secretly following another one | This is the word which made some students make mistakes in the understanding the phrases like “head and tail of a coin” and a proverb like “not being able to make head and tail of sth” which seems to be culturally embedded in different languages and so, students with lower familiarity with the target language culture and its idiom and proverbs is exposed to errors. |

| 4 | Country (72%) | 1. A nation with its own government<br>2. Districts outside large urban areas<br>3. An area or region with regards to its physical features<br>4. relating to country or western music | Evaluating students’ understanding about this word, they only had the meaning “an area of land with its own government” in their minds even when the other meanings were sought. The students believed that it was their teacher’s problem to only give this meaning to the word country and they overlooked the other meanings of this word especially the one that refers to districts outside large urban areas. |

<p>| 5 | Pure (34%) | 1. Not mixed or adulterated with any other substance&lt;br&gt;2. Innocent or morally good&lt;br&gt;3. Perfectly in tune and with a clear tone&lt;br&gt;4. Theoretical rather than practical&lt;br&gt;5. Complete, nothing but. | In the 3rd and 4th meanings there seems to be a kind of &quot;Underdifferentiation&quot; in Persian meaning and the the Persian translation seems no to conform to it, however; the other meanings are the level one transfer which a meaning can easily be transferred to the target language, so the difficulties produced may be attributed to the teacher’s... |</p>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6 | Suit (38%) | 1. A set of outer cloths made of the same fabric aimed to be worn together | ست لباس جامه
2. Any of the sets into which a pack of playing card is divided | Look at the three meanings in English. There is a word in common in the three meanings: "SET" the understanding of which is the key to learn the meanings of the word "Suit". In Persian meaning this word is neglected and it is not transferred in the Persian translation. So this word is challenging for those learners who haven’t noticed the core concept SET.
3. A complete set of sails for a ship or for a set of spars |
| 7 | Stage (30%) | 1. A point, period or step in a process | مرحله منظوره سن نمايش
2. A section of a journey or race | In this example we can see another layer of meaning included called "Homonymy". So the first 2 meanings are totally different from the second 2 meanings and it is a source of difficulty, but wiser students may have minor problems regarding this word as for the word مرحله سن نمايش we have both meanings مرحله سن نمايش which are contributing to the English meanings mentioned.
3. A raised floor or platform for the act of actors or speakers
4. A floor of a building |
| 8 | Material (44%) | 1. The matter from which a thing is or can be made | جنس حجم مناسب مربوط مادي
2. Items needed for an activity
3. Cloth or fabric |
This example seems to be easily transferred and not problematic at first but it is not that simple. The word "MATERIAL" has a greater range of meaning and usage in English rather than in Persian. For example, the meaning which refers to a cloth can't be grasped so easily by Persian speaker and so in error prediction this meaning is a candidate for students’ mistakes.
| 9 | Coach (26%) | 1. A comfortably equipped single-decker bus used for longer journeys | واگن راه اهن کالسکه کودک
2. A railway carriage
3. Economy-class seating in an aircraft or train
4. A closed horse-drawn carriage |
You can have a look on the different ranges of meanings in the two languages and can infer that the Persian language leaner will have difficulty in transferring the meaning. It is obvious that the Persian meanings listed here can't be of equal meanings with the English counterpart and so, we can say that this example will produce difficulty for those who have not acquired the whole range of meanings of the word Coach.
| 10 | Trade (7%) | 1. The buying & selling of goods. | حرفه داد و ستد میانه نقل و انتقال
2. A transfer in sports
3. A job requiring manual |
In this example you can exactly see that the meanings mentioned for the word "Trade" actually have the same counterparts in Persian too. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>11 Principal (34%)</th>
<th>12 Forge (22%)</th>
<th>13 Rob (28%)</th>
<th>14 Encounter (64%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The transfer of meaning is rapid in this example. For instance, when we talk about &quot;نقل و انتقال&quot; in Persian, you can easily perceive that we are talking about a special field (sports) and the activation of new meaning is highly automatic. This can be related to the collocation which exists between one entity (here &quot;نقل و انتقال&quot;) and the other one (sports).</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>This word seems to be of middle difficulty for the language learner. The first two meanings are &quot;Coalesced&quot; into the Persian word &quot;نزین&quot; while the other 2 meanings (Overcharge &amp; Deprivation which show the effect of culture in constructing them) are examples of &quot;Underdifferentiation&quot; for the word Rob in Persian. So the learner will do have a problem in this word.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the word &quot;Principal&quot; there are four meanings, three of which can be inferred from one another and they have mental relationships with each other. The only meaning which is totally different from the other three is the third meaning which is the monetary shadow of meaning of the word Principal. So, neglecting this case this word also doesn’t seem challenging unless the learner would be mistaken between this word and the word &quot;Principle&quot;.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>This is a word which has 3 different meanings which are culturally embedded. Without having knowledge of English how a Persian speaker can know that the word has a meaning like &quot;راهگیری&quot; in Persian? So the Persian learner of English will have difficulty in transferring this word and it will be a point of difficulty.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Meaning in English</td>
<td>Meaning in Persian</td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border</td>
<td>15 (47%)</td>
<td>1. Form a border around or along 2. Be adjacent to 3. Come close to</td>
<td>مزرع کردن</td>
<td>The meanings provided here in English and Persian are only the same at the first meaning. The other two are totally different and the meanings in one language are absent in the other. So the language learner will have difficulty in assigning meaning to the word if the aim of vocabulary is not the first meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>16 (63%)</td>
<td>1. Move suddenly upwards or forwards 2. Cause to rise from cover 3. Originate or appear from 4. Move suddenly by the action of a spring</td>
<td>جهیدن</td>
<td>The internal relationship between the English meanings makes their go togetherness high even if they refer to different entities. The meanings are culturally interwoven with English so it is not surprising that because of cultural differences, the meanings provided by the Persian learner are different from that of English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compact</td>
<td>17 (26%)</td>
<td>1. Exert force on to make more dense 2. Form by pressing the component parts together 3. Compress</td>
<td>بهم فشردن</td>
<td>In this word we can see another key word which is the same in three meanings related to the meaning of the word &quot;Compact&quot; and it is revealed in the third meaning &quot;Compress&quot;. If we only have this specific meaning in our mind when we hear the word, depending on the context we can have a clear meaning of that word. Fortunately we have the Persian equivalents of the English form and so the Persian learner of English if trained well seems not to have any problem with this word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>18 (34%)</td>
<td>1. Control the operation of 2. Supervise 3. Tell or show the way 4. Give an order to</td>
<td>هدایت کردن</td>
<td>The word &quot;Direct&quot; is a word that can have a host of meanings depending on the context. For example in movies, the word has a meaning different from what we expect in Persian. Or we can say that as the Persian word is polysemous too, the polysemous meanings of the Persian word don’t sound like the original English word. As an example, the word &quot;&quot; doesn’t seem to mean direct in situations like observing the rules or observing as</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the findings of this study, some of the problems of the PNU students in interpreting the polysemous words can be related to the poor kind of instruction they have undergone and the fact that most of the English teachers and instructors do not seem to have a clear picture for teaching words and they just go with translating words from the L1 to L2 without referring to other underlying meanings. It is also generally believed that when the teachers come across with the polysemous words which they find problem with explaining it, they should have in mind that teaching a polysemous word which definitely is different from teaching an ordinary vocabulary and it has its own difficulty. One finding which is supported by the findings of the current study in teaching polysemous words comes from Yarowsky (1992) who uses Roget’s Thesaurus to disambiguate word senses of English words using statistical models of major categories. He believes that the most probable categories of words can be determined by searching the surrounding words for indicators of each category. These indicator words are obtained and weighted during training and by examining the hundred surrounding words for indicators of each meaning of the word. The process involves using a sliding window of surrounding words and weighting each word based on its frequency of co-occurrence with the target word. This allows for more context-dependent meaning resolution, ensuring that the teaching of polysemous words is more effective and accurate.
category. The system used by Yarowsky’s (1992) is a large training corpus and a thesaurus based one and he uses a list of indicator words along with their weights for each category subsuming the words are to their root forms in order to gain more useful statistics. One of the main benefits of association of vocabularies in the system is that the problems of disambiguation of concrete nouns are solved by the broad context.

Another method for teaching polysemous words supported by the findings of the current study is using the findings of corpus and corpus studies. A corpus is simply defined as a large collection of linguistic evidence mainly naturally occurring data either written texts or a transcription of recorded speech. Such data can easily be used for different purposes in different contexts and situations. A large variety of corpora in English and in other languages have been compiled in electronic format for various purposes over the past few decades. Mosavi Miyangah uses corpus to teach the vocabulary and especially polysemous words and she also emphasizes the importance of dictionaries by asserting that “a straightforward way to find translations of the given terms is to use a bilingual dictionary; however, this method alone faces some problems due to one-to-many correspondences in a bilingual dictionary” (p.5) and it paves the way to using the corpora for the aim of teaching vocabularies and polysemous words.

Another interesting method of vocabulary teaching with the aim of reducing the chance of getting mixed up comes from Nation (1990) in which he recommends using something like picture messages or pictogram alongside the polysemous vocabulary in order to make it better understood. It can be achieved by teaching the underlying concept by showing several uses. For example, the word fork has different meanings to refer to a utensil for eating, a part of a bicycle, a part of a road, and a part of a branch. Nation offers using a simple shape like this \( \subset \) to teach the word. This way, the learning process will be more meaningful and it won’t require a heavy mental burden for learning it.

Öztürk also talks about a sense called the core meaning sense or the basic sense which is the most concrete, frequent and literal of all the meanings of the word and therefore conceptually easier to understand and it is central to the understanding of other meanings because the latter are often figurative extensions from the core meaning (p.25) and it has shown that L2 learners have superior knowledge of these senses a polysemous word has when they want to refer to an entity.

**CONCLUSION**

The aim of the current study was to find and analyze the PNU students’ high-rated problematic English polysemous words. As the results of the study showed, one of the most important factors leading students to uncertainty in assigning meaning to words rises from the point that most of Iranian teachers and instructors do not have a broader picture in vocabulary teaching and as the students complained, most of them suffice to only translate a given word from the target language to the native one without referring to other areas of meaning, denying the underlying concept of how to teach a vocabulary suggested by most of the researchers like Nation (1990) and Laufer (1997). Nation (1990) believes that only when a student can talk about a learned vocabulary that he knows its written and spoken form, its meaning, its grammatical pattern, its collocation,
association, frequency, as well as its register. For this reason, he refers to two types of vocabulary knowledge: receptive knowledge—being able to recognize words while reading or listening—and productive knowledge—being able to produce words while reading or speaking. One of the main objectives of a teacher should be enhancing this ability in vocabulary usage and use in students. The result of the Laufer’s (1997) review of several researches about the definition of a word is summarized in a list of word features involved in the learning of a new word, including word form, word structure, and some other aspects of the word like its syntactic pattern, its relation with other words like its synonyms, antonyms, common collocations, and hyponyms, as well as its multiple meanings like metaphorical, cognitive, and affective meanings.

Another problem of these students was their insufficient talents and efforts in dealing with unknown vocabularies and assigning different meanings to words—especially those which were underdifferentiated in the target language—which can be resulted from their lack of familiarity with different techniques and strategies in reading comprehension and guessing the unknown words from the context. This problem can be referred to the system of education known as “Distance Education” supported by PNU which is aimed at adult students who are too busy to attend the classes, while most of the students in the conducted study were did not have such qualification.

The findings of the current research should be taken as an alarm by PNU officials who do not specify much class sessions for translation major students and for example, the sum of the sessions for the three courses investigated by the current researchers held by PNU was overall 8 sessions—three sessions of which should be devoted to midterm exams as specified by PNU system of education—and the word “Distance Education” which is the main ideology behind such instruction and classes, should not be any excuse and give way to raising students who are dependent to only inauthentic materials in print and only attend classes for the sake of taking the score of 6 out of classroom sessions and studying just for the exams.

**Limitations of the Study**

One of the main limitations of the study, as mentioned in previous sections, was the insufficient class sessions for PNU students. For example, the course “Simple English Poetry” was held only for two sessions (one of which was specified for mid-term exam). Another problem the researchers faced was the nature of distance education which supposes the students as rightful even when they are absent. So, even a student who does not attend any classes, can gain the highest score in such system. It was one of the main limitations of the study which caused most students to attend classes partially.

**REFERENCES**


THE EFFECT OF PRAGMATS-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION ON PROMOTING SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS INVOLVED IN WRITING

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ABSTRACT
This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of pragmatics-focused instruction on promoting sociolinguistic competence and language ability confidence of Iranian intermediate EFL learners involved in writing. It was carried out at Kanoon Zaban Institute in Semnan (Iran) among 60 intermediate female learners with the age range of 19 to 26 through a quasi-experimental research design. The researcher administered a Nelson test to determine the homogeneity of the participants regarding their general English language proficiency level. Participants were not randomly assigned into two groups. After coming up with the conclusion that the two groups were homogeneous, both groups completed written discourse completion tasks (WDCT) and self-assessment questionnaire (SQA) as pretests. During 8 weeks of treatment, in the experimental group, students received instruction in compliment that consisted of lessons about Persian compliment, English compliment, comparing Persian and English compliment and they were also provided with meta-pragmatic information. It should be mentioned that the control group was not provided with any meta-pragmatic information after the treatment was over. At the end of the treatment, the participants in both groups answered the same WDCT and SAQ as posttests. A t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups, the result showed that the learners’ mean score in the experimental group was significantly higher than the learners’ mean score in control group. In sum, the results of analyses are indicative of the fact that applying pragmatics-focused instruction has significant effect on both the sociolinguistic competence and language confidence of Iranian intermediate EFL learners in language ability.

KEYWORDS: Pragmatics, Pragmatics-focused Instruction, Sociolinguistic Competence

INTRODUCTION
Background
For many years, learning a second or foreign language was equated with linguistic or grammatical accuracy. But now, the communicative approach to language learning has put grammar – centered classes to one side and has fostered the use of communicative strategies...
Sociocultural factors such as differences between the first and target culture can mislead the learner in language production and interpretation. Whether we are speaking in our first or second language, we are influenced by sociocultural norms or constraints that affect the way we communicate (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.93).

Sociolinguistic competence as one of the aspects of communicative competence enables us to create and interpret language that is appropriate to a particular language use setting (Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990b, p.14). According to Levinson (1997), pragmatics and sociolinguistics share many areas of common interest. Sociolinguistics has contributed much to certain areas of pragmatics, especially the study of social deixis, speech acts and their use.

However, pragmatics in turn has much to contribute to sociolinguistics; for in trying to understand the social significance of patterns of language usage, it is essential to understand the underlying structural properties and processes that constrain verbal interaction. Although, there is a small body of data, based on research of pragmatics instruction in second or foreign language classrooms, there is no evidence of empirical research on the effects of pragmatics-focused instruction on sociolinguistic competence of EFL learners.

**Pragmatics**

Pragmatics can be defined as the study of linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their usage properties and processes. Inter language pragmatics mainly concerns with how native speakers differ from non-native speakers in interpreting and producing a speech act in the TL (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Leech (1993) and Thomas (1983) divided pragmatics in two components: pragma linguistics and socio-pragmatics. Pragma linguistics refers to the sources for conveying communicative acts and rational or interpersonal meanings. Such resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness routines and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts. Socio – pragmatics is considered as the social perceptions underlying participants’ interpretations and performance communicative actions.

**Pragmatics - Focused Instruction**

It is clear that various aspects of pragmatics can be developed through instruction. Similarly, studies in classroom research claim that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.29)

**Meta Pragmatic Information**

This concept concerns the explicit knowledge a learner has of the pragmatic weight of language and whether the learner can contribute to what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in the target culture (House and Kasper, 1981)
Sociolinguistic Competence
The concept of sociolinguistic competence is linked to Hymes’ notion of communicative competence. Hymes argued that language users need to be able to not only create and understand grammatical utterances, but also learn knowledge about cultural norms in order to judge the social situation correctly so as to produce appropriate speech. The sociolinguistics goal might be to show how specific differences in pronunciation or grammar lead members of a speech community to make judgments about the education or economic status of a speaker (Canal & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983).

Statement of the Problem
For many years, linguistic "grammatical competence" has been a major feature of second language acquisition. A learner was said to have acquired a new language, when he or she could produce sentences that were grammatically correct. However, that same person often had difficulties when establishing a conversation with a native speaker. Learning the form of a language does not necessarily mean that a speaker is able to use that language in a way that is socially and culturally appropriate (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.115).

Since even fairly advanced learners often lack communicative competence, the need to develop learner knowledge of different aspects of communicative abilities seems imperative. However, much less attention has been given to provide opportunities for learners to practice communicative ability in classroom research thus far.

Now in this study, by considering the instruction of pragmatics as the purpose of classroom research, we intend to know whether it helps learners produce and recognize socially appropriate language in context. For example, whether learners will be able to use social deixis according to social distance, social power, rights, obligations, and degree of imposition involved in a particular communication. Also, a self-assessment questionnaire will be used in this study, since that instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability. For that purpose, we suppose that SQA might serve as an interesting pretest /posttest indicator of self – confidence.

Significance of the Study
A learner in the process of acquiring a second language must be able to process linguistic input successfully; however, without the ability to understand the context in which an utterance is produced, the ways through which the context is affected, the discourse properties and sociolinguistic impact of the utterance, the learner cannot be said to have acquired the new language (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.88). Until recently, studies in second and foreign language acquisition have focused mostly on the phonological, morph - syntactic and lexical levels, investigating how learners come to acquire the form of the language. But now, it is emphasized that more attention should be paid to the cultural aspects of language learning with the recognition of language as an essential means of Human communication.

Since the main purpose of language learning is communication, a learner must develop in terms of not only linguistic competence, but also sociocultural awareness, attaining a useful
understanding of how language functions in social and cultural contexts. (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.89)

Due to the difficulty of teaching communicative knowledge, teachers of EFL especially in our country often overlook teaching it, and instead focus on the grammatical aspects of language. At institutions, only textbooks with conversation are designed to be models for learners. These textbooks cannot provide realistic input to the learners, cannot help learners in interpreting and producing a speech act in a particular context, and also cannot provide an opportunity for learner to recognize the appropriateness of an utterance within a given context. As a result, EFL students are extremely weak in this regard.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early in the twentieth century, language teaching focused primarily on grammar and translation of written text. The shift of focus to speaking competence in more recent years fostered the idea of communicative competence that is the ability to speak a language proficiently (Kasper & Rose 2001). Different notions of communicative competence, proposed by Hymes from the perspective of linguistic anthropology (1971) and by Habermas (1984) from the vantage point of social philosophy, served as guiding constructs for the design of communicative competence as the overall goal of language teaching and assessment. An influential and comprehensive review of communicative competence and related notions was offered by Canal and Swain (1980), who also proposed a widely cited frame work of communicative competence for language teaching and testing.

**Pragmatic competence**

The concept of pragmatic competence was originally identified by Canale and Swain (1980) under the term “sociolinguistic competence” and considered a component of the construct of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Even today pragmatic competence, although widely used, remains a fairly extensive and vaguely defined term (Vytalina, 2007).

The common idea of all the model of communicative competence is the fact that grammatical knowledge is not sufficient for successful communication and learners need to develop their pragmatic competence. Kasper and Roever (2005, p. 318) explain becoming pragmatically competent as the process of establishing sociopragmatic and pragma linguistic competence and the increasing ability to understand and produce sociopragmatic meanings with pragma linguistic conventions (Soler & Martinez -Flor, 2008, p.6).

**Speech act theory**

Speech act theory (SAT) describes how language can be used to do things instead of merely commenting on the state of the world. SAT describes sentences that make things happen. For example, a couple is not married until the pastor utters the word, “I pronounce you man and wife”. Another example is a worker becoming unemployed after his boss tells him, “you are fired”. This phrase once uttered, causes the employee to lose his job. In both of these situations, it is the act of saying the phrase that is important (Mwiyellee, 2005).
Goffman defines speech acts as frames with a conversational meaning or intent such as request, apologies, orders, and advice. This theory was originated from John L. Austin's work in the 1940s and 1950s. Which he published in 1962 as a book entitled How to Do Things with Words. John R. Searle (1969, 1979) developed and codified the speech act theory. The emergence of SAT theory is attributed a direct reaction to the philosophical tradition of logical positivism. The approach claims that if a sentence can be verified or objectively assessed as true or false, that sentence is said to be meaningful.

**Pragmatics in language teaching**

The findings of studies indicate that pragmatics is covered in a wide range of courses across programs (sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Introduction to linguistics, Teaching Method, SLA, etc.) and the time spent covering pragmatics varies from no time at all, to more than 8 weeks, depending on the program. A great deal of variation was also found in graduate program directors and faculty members beliefs about the role of pragmatic in the TESOL curriculum, another study was conducted by Riddiford and Joe (2010) about the tracking the development of socio pragmatic skills. Socio pragmatic skills have been identified as important aspects of communicative competence in the workplace (e. g. Clyne, 1994; Geluykens & Pelsmaekers, 1999; Candlin, 2002). Most earlier studies in the area of socio-pragmatic instruction focusing on requests have involved short interventions conducted in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts with little input beyond the classroom (e.g., Alcon-Soler et al.2005; Rose , 2005; Takahashi, 2001 & 2005). Moreover, research instruments used to analyze socio-pragmatic features have mostly yielded controlled elicitation data such as discourse completion tasks (DCT) and oral interviews rather a combination of both controlled and spontaneously occurring discourse data, which ensures greater reliability (Geluykens , 2007).

**Sociolinguistic competence**

Second language (L2) learner’s use of sociolinguistic features of discourse has attracted the attention of a number of scholars since the late 1980 (Bayley & Preston, 1996; Bauley & Regan, 2004; Dewaele & Mougeon, 2002, Preston 1989; Regan, Howard & Lemee, 2009). Several special issues in international journals have been devoted to the development of sociolinguistic competence in the L2 in the last two years (Baylay and Regan, 2004; Dewaele and Mougeon, 2002, 2004).

To be sure, several authors (Etienne & Sax 2006, Leister, 1994, Van Compernolle, 2009; Van Compernolle & Williams, 2009 a; among others) have advocated pedagogical models for teaching sociolinguistics and stylistic variation in classroom settings.

Previous studies have certainly shown that classroom learners typically have for opportunities to develop their sociolinguistic competence given the relatively formal level of teacher and textbook discourse to which they are exposed (see, e.g., Mougeon, Rehner, Nadasdi, 2004; Van Compernolle & Williams, 2009 b). Even when pedagogical models are proposed, they tend to ascribe great importance to the mechanistic process of input-output, whereby exposure, in the sense of input, to naturally occurring language is purported to be beneficial for learners, that is, their eventual output or performance. Consequently, the role of the teacher becomes secondary,
one in which he or she simply presents materials or presses the play button to start a film rather than engaging students in collaborative teaching learning activity (Van Compernolle, 2009; Van Compernolle & Williams, 2009a).

Within second and foreign language education context, recent assessment research, and policy have acknowledged the importance of incorporating sociolinguistic competence into the measurement of language ability. The national standard in foreign language education project (1996) emphasized that it is (the acquisition of the ability to communicate in meaningful and appropriate ways with users of other language that is the ultimate goal of today’s foreign language classroom (p.3; long & Norris in press). Common to such measures is the use of criteria for scoring, reporting, and interpreting examine performances according to degree of sociolinguistic appropriateness exhibited, in light of the particular contextual constraints represented with assessment tasks (Kasper & Rose, 2001).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES
To fulfill the purpose of this study, which is the effect of pragmatic – focused instruction on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in speaking, the following questions are investigated:
Q 1: Does pragmatic – focused instruction have effects on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL involved in writing?
Q 2: Does pragmatics – focused instruction have a facilitating effect on confidence in language ability?
The null hypotheses formulated for this study are as follows:
H_{01}: Applying pragmatics – focused instruction does not have any effect on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing?
H_{02}: Applying pragmatic – focused instruction does not have any effects on learner confidence.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
For the purpose of this study, two classes from Kanoon Zaban institute in Semnan (Iran) were chosen. Because of institutional constraints, it was not possible to assign students randomly, thus making it necessary to work with intact groups. They were 75 Persian speaking female learners and the age range of students varied between 19 and 26 years old.

A Nelson battery test (see Appendix A) was administred to find out the homogeneity of participants regarding their proficiency level. After analyzing the data, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study. Finally two groups of 30 students were the participants of this study. Since our groups were selected intact, one of them was considered as control group and the other one as an experimental group randomly. It must be mentioned that the other students, who did not have the necessary requirements for the purpose of this study, were not virtually excluded from.
the groups but received the treatment within the group, even though their scores were not taken into consideration in any stage of this study.

**Instrumentation**

Data were collected using three instruments: language proficiency test, self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse completion taken test (WDCT).

**Language proficiency test**

First a Nelson test was administrated to the students. After gathering the data regarding to the Nelson test and estimating the mean scores of both groups, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean score were selected as homogenous and took part in this study. (The reliability of the test was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha formula which was 0.845).

**Pre-test and post-test**

*Pre-test*

Self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse-completion task test (WDCT) were carried out as pre-tests. Both of these questionnaires incorporated the same eighteen compliment scenarios (see the Appendix B for the scenarios). The SAQ format, as used in this study, was developed by Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1992, 1995). This questionnaire presents a number of scenarios involving potential language use and requires participants to indicate what they believe to be the level of their ability to respond appropriately in those contexts. Essentially, then, the SAQ measures participant's level of self-confidence in their own sociolinguistic competence. Given that instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability (Rose & Kasper, 2001), we fell that the SAQ might serve as interesting pre-test/post-test indication of self-confidence. We also would like to note that Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1995) found that learner's self-rating on their SAQ correlated highly with Ns rating of their speech act performance, indicating that SAQ might reasonably serve as a useful rough estimate of sociolinguistic competence, although certainly not as the basis of any high-stakes decisions. The WDCT used in this study also incorporated the same scenarios that appeared on the SAQ, and was modelled essentially on the ubiquitous discourse-completion task (DCT) format (see, e.g., Blum-Kulka, Mouse & Kasper, 1989). This test requires the students to read a written description of a situation (including such factors as setting, participant roles, degree of imposition) and asks them to write what they would say in that situation. (For research on WDCT, readers are referred to Blum-Kulka, 1982, 1983; Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Rose, 1995; Johnston, Kasper & Rose, 1998). The fact that both of the instruments used in this study were written questionnaires merits some discussion. As with other classroom-based research in pragmatics, sociolinguistic ability as well as other areas of second language acquisition, it is often not feasible to measure instructional effects other than through the use of written questionnaires designed for that purpose (Rose & Kasper, 2001, P.156). Although in some cases it may be possible to observe learners interacting in the target language (as was the case with Billmyer, 1990a, 1990b) a foreign language context generally does not afford such possibilities. Use of written instruments, then, appears to be inevitable (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.156).
We would like to make clear, however, that we are fully aware of the limitation of questionnaire, particularly regarding the sort of information they yield (Rose & Kasper, 2001). It is crucial to understand that questionnaires are indirect measure - that is, the data resulting from responses to questionnaires are not the result of direct observation (Kasper & Rose, 2001). It is worth noting that the responses were scored by three raters on a 5-point Likert scale. (Ranging from 1 very bad to 5 very good), with the sum of the average ratings for each item as the score on the WDCT.

Post-test
The same post-tests were administrated as pre-test, then a T-Test was calculated to see whether there is a significant difference between two means or not.

Procedure
The data collection procedure went through various steps. At first, a Nelson test considered of 50 items was administrated to these two classes including only woman participants. This was an attempt to see whether they are eligible participants with respect to the purpose of the present study. In the second phase of the study, both control and experimental answered the same self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse completion task test (WDCT) as pre-tests. Then the treatment sessions were offered over 8 weeks (90 minutes, per week). Finally, the same (SAQ) and (WDCT) were administrated as post-tests to all two groups.

Treatment
Two intact groups took part in this study: one experimental group and the other as control group. The control group received no treatment, but completed both written discourse completion tasks (WDCT) and self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) during the same periods as the experimental group. Both control and experimental classes covered the same textbook as part of the regular course curriculum. In the experimental group, students received instruction in compliment over eight weeks that consisted of lessons about Persian compliment, English compliment, comparing Persian and English and they were also provided with meta-pragmatic information.

The treatment lasted approximately 30 minutes in every session. The rationale for beginning first with L1 in pragmatics-focused instruction is discussed in Rose (1994b), who argues that such an approach makes pragmatic concepts more accessible to learners. In the first session, compliment was introduced as a speech act which is the focus of instruction in the next following sessions. The experimental group received three types of materials in each session. One was handouts in which detailed metapragmatic information on the target compliment forms was provided. Of course, metapragmatic explanations were presented in both first language and target language, as suggested by Bardovi-Harlig (1996) in order to boost their self-confidence and enhance their motivation.

In addition, examples from Persian help students to examine how compliment function in their own language. Care was taken to refer to the actual use of the target compliment forms in the discourse (role-plays) and their function in the particular relationship (i.e., the status low to high, social distance). In other words, the teacher explained variables such as relative power and social distance that involved the power of the speaker respective to the hearer, distance between the
speaker and hearer, and degree of familiarity and solidarity respectively. For each session, the participants were required to compare their Persian compliment expressions and those applied by the native speaker in the corresponding situation and discover any differences in compliment realization patterns according to social context.

Second treatment was involving students in translation activities, which categorized under motivation phase of pragmatic awareness-raising tasks by Eslami-Rasekh (2005). One of the voluntarily performed role-plays was written on the board in Persian. Then, the students were asked to translate the compliment made in the conversation into English. All suggested alternatives were selected to be written on the board, followed by the teacher's explanation on paragmalinguistic and socio-pragmatic characteristics of compliments in English.

The last treatment included film segments containing compliment exchanges, as Rose (1997) suggested that film is capable of providing both the target language for detailed discussion and analysis, as well as the rich contextual detail useful for such analysis. It should be mentioned that the control group was not provide with any meta-pragmatic information after the treatment was over.

The participants in both groups participated in the post-tests. After that, the scores on the pre-test and post-test were used for the purpose of validation. Then, the correlation between the scores of pre-test and post-test was estimated through a T-test.

Design
Among the several research designs, the one which seems to best fit the purpose of the present study is quasi-experimental design. The participants in this study were selected intact. In order to compensate for the main problem of this design, lack of internal validity, the researcher took advantage of the Nelson Battery Test before the treatment got started. Through this, the researcher made sure that all learners were at the same level of English language proficiency. Therefore the suitable design for this research would be an intact group pre-test- post-test design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of pragmatics-focused instruction on promoting sociolinguistic competence and language ability confidence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing. As mentioned before, two classes from Kanoon Zaban institute were chosen for the purpose of this study. A Nelson battery test was administrated to find out the homogeneity of subjects regarding their proficiency level. After analyzing the data, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study. Finally, two groups of 30 students were the participants of this study. Since our groups were selected intact, one of them was considered as control group and the other one as an experimental group randomly. It must be mentioned that the other students who did not have the necessary requirements for the purpose of this study, were not virtually excluded from the groups but received the treatment within the group, even though their scores were not taken into consideration in any stage of this study.
Table 1 and figure 1 present the descriptive statistics of the initial participants of this study who took the NELSON test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score of Nelson-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since those students who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study, students with NELSON test scores within 47.38 and 37.03 were finally selected to collect the necessary data.

**Data analyses**

As mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, in the second phase of the study, both control and experimental groups’ participants answered the same self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) as a measure of confidence and written discourse completion task test (WDCT) as a measure of sociolinguistic competence on the pre-test. After that, the treatment sessions were offered over 8 weeks (90 minutes, per week). Finally, the same SAQ and WDCTs were administrated as post-tests to the two groups.
In order to carry out the data analyses of this study, first descriptive statics were calculated, and then the mean comparisons statistics such as t test and ANOVA were employed. Below, each research question is investigated separately.

Q 1: Does pragmatics – focused instruction have effects on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL involved in writing?

In order to answer this question, the students’ scores on WDCTs were used on the pretest and posttest. Since three raters rated the WDCTs, it was necessary to calculate the inter-rater reliability of the ratings. This was done by computing Intraclass correlation (ICC) coefficients among the three raters’ ratings on the two groups’ pretests and posttests. Table 2 presents all the ICC coefficients, which are evidently acceptable, that is above .90.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average of raters</th>
<th>Number of cases</th>
<th>Number of raters</th>
<th>ICC correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest-control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest-experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, the average of the three ratings was used as the final data for the investigation of this research question. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of these average ratings for the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest – control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>41.867</td>
<td>5.30319</td>
<td>-.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest – control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>49.67</td>
<td>41.8444</td>
<td>5.75680</td>
<td>-.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest - experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>51.67</td>
<td>42.8000</td>
<td>7.00204</td>
<td>-.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest - experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>58.33</td>
<td>51.1556</td>
<td>5.16992</td>
<td>-.728</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N (listwise) 15

In order to see whether each group had improved on the posttest after the treatment, the means of pretest and posttest of each group were compared via paired-samples t test the results of each are presented in Table 4. Evidently, all the skewness values (table 3) are within the acceptable range (between -1 and 1) to allow for running paired-samples t test as a parametric test which requires the data to be normally distributed.

Table 4 presents the results of paired-samples t tests, which is indicative of the fact that only the experimental group has shown significant improvement in terms of sociolinguistic competence on the posttest; experimental group $t (14) = -5.194, p < .05$, control group $t (14) = .020, p > .05$. 

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Although the above analysis shows significant improvement on the posttest for the experimental group, the posttests of both groups were compared with one another by employing ANOVA to take into account the pretest differences between the two groups. In other words, as the descriptive statistics show the pretest means of the groups are not equal, and in order to compare the posttest means of the two groups one needs to control the differences of the pretest means (covariate) of the two groups by means of employing ANOVA. In order to employ ANOVA, several assumptions need to be checked initially. The first of these is the assumption of normality, which was just found to have been observed since the descriptive statistics provided above showed that the skewness values are within the acceptable range (i.e. between 1 and -1). The next assumption is to do with the homogeneity of variances, which was found met based on Table 5 (p > .05).

Table 5: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances (a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.035</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 demonstrates the results of the check on the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes and the main ANOVA results. The first row in Table 6 indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes is met; Interaction $F(1,27) = 1.681$, p > .05. The second row shows that the groups were indeed different on the pretest; Pretest effect $F(1,27) = 13.668$, p < .05, and finally the next row shows that the groups are significantly different on the posttest; Group $F(1,27) = 28.231$, p < .05, eta squared = .51 large effect size.
Tables 7 and 8 provide the posttest means of the groups before and after being adjusted after taking into account the effect of pretest mean differences (i.e. covariate). Evidently, the experimental group is of higher mean both before and after ANOVA adjustments. In sum, the results above indicate that the null hypothesis of this study is rejected. In other words, applying pragmatics-focused instruction has significant effect on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing.

Table 7: Unadjusted means before controlling the covariate (Pretest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>51.1556</td>
<td>5.16992</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>41.8444</td>
<td>5.75680</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.5000</td>
<td>7.16406</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Adjusted means after controlling the covariate (Pretest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>50.917(a)</td>
<td>1.174</td>
<td>48.508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>42.083(a)</td>
<td>1.174</td>
<td>39.674</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q 2: Does pragmatics-focused instruction have a facilitating effect on confidence in language ability?

In order to answer this question, the students’ scores on SAQ were used on the pretest and posttest. Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics of SAQ scores for the two groups.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics on SAQ scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>25.6667</td>
<td>4.08248</td>
<td>-.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest-control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>26.8000</td>
<td>3.02844</td>
<td>-.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>27.6000</td>
<td>2.99523</td>
<td>-.437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest-experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>31.4667</td>
<td>2.32584</td>
<td>-.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to see whether each group had improved on the posttest after the treatment, the means of pretest and posttest of each group were compared via paired-samples t test, the results of each are presented in Table 10 below. Evidently, all the skewness values (Table 9) are within the acceptable range (between -1 and 1) to allow for running paired-samples t test as a parametric test which requires the data to be normally distributed.

Table 10 presents the results of paired-samples t tests, which is indicative of the fact that both groups have shown significant improvement in terms of confidence in language ability on the posttest; experimental group $t (14) = -4.549$, $p < .05$, control group $t (14) = -2.915$, $p < .05$. In order to see which group has shown more improvement in terms of confidence on the posttest, the effect sizes for the above t test analyses were calculated. The effect size for the experimental
group was 1.45 while the one for the control group was .32. This means that the experimental group has shown more improvement in terms of confidence in language ability.

### Table 10: Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Control-pretest/posttest</td>
<td>-1.1333</td>
<td>1.50555</td>
<td>.38873</td>
<td>-1.9671 - .2996</td>
<td>-2.915</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>Experimental-pretest/posttest</td>
<td>-3.8667</td>
<td>3.29213</td>
<td>.85002</td>
<td>-5.6898 - 2.0435</td>
<td>-4.549</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the fact that the above analysis shows a little more significant improvement on the posttest for the experimental group, the posttests of both groups were compared with one another by employing ANOVA to take into account the pretest differences between the two groups. In other words, as the descriptive statistics show, the pretest means of the groups are not equal, and in order to compare the posttest means of the two groups one needs to control the differences of the pretest means (covariate) of the two groups by means of employing ANOVA.

In order to employ ANOVA, several assumptions need to be checked initially. The first of these is the assumption of normality, which was just found to have been observed since the descriptive statistics provided above showed that the skewness values are within the acceptable range (i.e. between 1 and -1). The next assumption is to do with the homogeneity of variances, which was found not met based on Table 11 (p < .05); however, this could not cause any serious problem since the groups were of equal size.

### Table 11: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.414</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 demonstrates the results of the check on the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes and the main ANOVA results. The first row in Table 12 indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes is met; Interaction $F(1, 27) = 6.680$, $p > .05$.

The second row shows that the groups were indeed different on the pretest; Pretest effect $F(1, 27) = 26.114$, $p < .05$, and finally the next row shows that the groups are significantly different on the posttest; Group $F(1, 27) = 24.040$, $p < .05$, eta squared = .47 large effect size.
Tables 13 and 14 provide the posttest means of the groups before and after being adjusted after taking into account the effect of pretest mean differences (i.e. covariate). Evidently, the experimental group is of higher mean both before and after ANOVA adjustment.

In sum, the results above indicate that the null hypothesis of this study is rejected. In other words, applying pragmatics – focused instruction has significant effect on the language confidence of Iranian EFL learners in language ability.

### Table 13: Unadjusted means before controlling the covariate (Pretest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>26.8000</td>
<td>3.02844</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>31.4667</td>
<td>2.32584</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.1333</td>
<td>3.55967</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 14: Adjusted means after controlling the covariate (Pretest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>27.311(a)</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>26.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>30.956(a)</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>29.897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sum, the results of the above analyses are indicative of the fact that applying pragmatics – focused instruction has significant effect on both the sociolinguistic competence and language confidence of Iranian EFL learners in language ability.

### CONCLUSIONS

The findings are based on the research questions and the results of pre-test and post-tests of SAQ and WDCT at the beginning and ending of the study.

The mean score and differences mean of pre-test, post-test of self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) are presented in table 4.9 Table 4.9 displays the pretest and post test result of the SAQ for the control and experimental groups. Participants were asked to rate their ability to respond appropriately in a given scenario, with 1being very unsatisfactory and2 completely appropriate. As the table shows, the posttest scores indicate a rather high degree of confidence in the ability to
use English appropriately; it appears that instruction had a positive impact on the self-confidence of the experimental group. According to Rose and Kwain-fun (1999) instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability. The result of post-test in this study showed that the effect is facilitating. Of course the result of the present study reject finding of Rose and Kwain-fun that claimed the effect of instruction on learner’s self-reliance was negative.

The mean score and difference mean of pre-test and post test of written-discourse completion tasks (WDCT) are presented in table 4.3. The data obtained from the post-test showed some valuable findings to be considered. The table indicates that there were improvements in the experimental group. This group was able to demonstrate significantly better improvements than the control group. This finding is in line with major finding of (e.g., Billmyer, 1990a, 1990 b; Kubota, 1995) that showed a greater degree of effectiveness for meta pragmatic instruction over no instruction. The Written discourse completion task test were scored by three raters, then inter rater reliability (percentage of agreement) was calculated.

Limitations and Delimitations

The present study, like other studies, suffers from some limitations. Some factors and conditions are beyond the control of the researcher.

First, in the foreign language in which these data were collected, the students did not interact spontaneously in English outside the classroom. The context for the use of English, then, was pedagogical.

Second, as Babbie (1998, p. 274) points out, questionnaires cannot measure social action. Also, according to Rose and Kasper (2001), questionnaires are inherently artificial. But use of written instruments in classroom- based research appears to be inevitable (Rose & Kasper, 2001). In the present study, SAQ and WDCT were used for gathering data, however, we are fully aware of limitation of questionnaires, that is, and the data gathering from responses to questionnaire are not the result of direct observation.

There are also other limitations and delimitations were imposed upon the research design.
1. The students’ age, gender and personal variables were not controlled.
2. In EFL setting, natural native speaker data is not easily accessible.
3. The evaluation of learners’ sociolinguistic competence in terms of how much it approximates native speaker norms is a very difficult task.
4. This research was delimited to Iranian EFL learners; hence the result will be applicable only in the domain of Iranian EFL teaching.

Suggestions for further research

Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.254) stated that every research project opens new ways for further study (The nature of research is such that the more answers are obtained, the more questions arise). Researchers have indicated that gender is an important variable in every study with regard to the purpose of the study gender finds more importance, but because of the institutional constraints, it was impossible to take both male and female participants in the same class. So, it is
recommended to replicate the experiment with a representative sample of female and male participants. Learners who took part in the present study were intermediate learners in Kannon Zaban and their abilities were high. As indicated by their high scores on proficiency test (Nelson test). So, it is not clear whether similar results would be obtained with a less advanced students. Although limited, the work by Wildner-Bassett and Tateyama et al (1997) appears to indicate that pragmatics is teachable to beginning learners. This should be encouraging to language instructors particularly in foreign language settings where learners do not have as many opportunities to interact with NSs of the target language as in the second language (L2) setting and the role of instruction becomes more important. Future research could look at how pragmatic-focused instruction affects beginner learners in a foreign language context.

The advantage of oral discourse completion task (ODCT) over written discourse completion task (WDCT) is that ODCT encourage oral production (both listening and speaking). The researcher in the present study was eager to use ODCT for gathering data, but because of institutional constraints, it was difficult to administer, it requires two audio cassette recorders, so, it is recommended to replicate the experiment with using ODCT instead of (WDCT).

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF GESTURES ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND RETENTION

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ABSTRACT
The lexicon regarded as the building blocks of any language causes some difficulty in the course of language teaching and learning. Particularly, due to lack of language input, learners in foreign language contexts experience such trouble more than those in second language contexts. One way through which the teachers can help their beginner learners to tackle such a demanding job is to accompany the target words with the related gestures. That is because such attempt brings more modality into the scene leaving more traces in the memory along with better retention of the words. The present study investigates the possible effect of gestures in vocabulary acquisition and retention. To this end, 20 children as true beginners were selected and assigned into two groups of experimental and comparison. Then, 12 frequent words of English which were able to easily “pictured” or “gestured” were put forward. Producing and repeating the words, participants in the experimental group had to gesture. However, those in the comparison group were required to show the picture of the words posed to them. Then, their answers were tallied on an individual-based approach. The answers were compared applying an independent samples t-test. The results indicated that the gesture group had a better performance in the retention of the selected words compared to the picture counterpart. This study might have messages for both language teachers and learners as well as syllabus designers. In beginning level, it is believed that books with pictures can help the learners learn the vocabulary items. Moreover, teachers can use the gestures in the class to convey the meaning of the unknown words to the learners.

KEYWORDS: Gesture, mnemonic span, retention, vocabulary learning

INTRODUCTION
Language is at the center of human life. We utilize this powerful apparatus to express our love and hatred, to chat and gossip, to praise and insult, and so forth. Without it many of our daily activities are meaningless. Interestingly, some people are able to do all these things in more than one language. Nowadays, learning a foreign language is regarded as an essential component in the curricula at different educational levels. In particular, learning the English language due to its widespread use around the world has become a necessity in our society. Gass et al. (2013) put forward an idea that “learning vocabulary is not a one-time affair. It is unrealistic to believe that a learner hears a word or, in the case of some pedagogical methods, memorized a word, with the outcome being full knowledge of the word” (p. 212).
There is unanimous agreement among the experts in the field that lexical items are the building blocks of any language (Thornbury, 2002). By referring to the issue of vocabulary as a neglected area of research put forward by Meara (1980), Boers (2013) convincingly argues that building a broad and deep foundation in vocabulary is something inescapable in the process of learning any second or foreign language including English. Therefore, one of the first and foremost responsibilities of language learners is trying to develop a broad and deep knowledge of this language component. Accordingly, the most important duty for a teacher that can have a determinant role in his succeeding, is not only to provide the students with useful words in their education but also with more general words, rich vocabulary and the skills for learning and using those words in their life (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004). Cook and Singleton (2014) claimed that “in some languages the very term for word indeed also has the sense of “speech” or “talk”. We can refer in this context also to the English expression to have a word with someone, which obviously means having a talk with someone rather than just uttering a single word to someone” (p. 38).

Classifying vocabulary studying into two broad areas of intentional and incidental learning, Nation (2001) states that for the former, there are a lot of techniques and activities for doing so ranging from memorization to vocabulary learning strategies to guessing from context and so on. These techniques and tactics have to be suited to learners’ levels of language proficiency, their age, personal interest and their cognitive growth. For the latter, however, extensive reading and listening have been proposed by experts including Krashen (1989). Nonetheless, research has indicated that incidental learning in terms of vocabulary tends to be a very slow process (e.g. Laufer & Roitblat-Rozovski, 2011). Spolsky et al. (2015) supported a claim that “memory for vocabulary is, in part, innate –a key element in a person’s intelligence, since verbal skills play a significant role in determining how intelligent someone is” (p. 275).

Having scratched the surface of the above claims and counterclaims, it goes without saying that, intentional learning will pay the price at least in the short run. So, one way through which the teacher can approach the burden of vocabulary teaching, the focus of the present study, is to use gestures in vocabulary learning with beginners. Generally speaking, these learners have not formed an oral foundation of the language they are learning. Therefore, it would pay the price to equip them with other less demanding tools such as gestures.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

When we speak, we regularly gesture as an integral part of communicating. Broadly speaking, gesture is “a movement of the face or body which communicates meaning, such as nodding the head to mean agreement” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 246). Many spoken utterances are accompanied by gestures which support or add to their meaning. Sign language, for example, is a system of communication based entirely on gestures. Gestures can be described in terms of their formal, structural properties such as the configuration of the articulators (hands, arms, etc.), the place of articulation (gesture space), and the form of the movement (Yule, 2010).
In the second language classroom, especially when it comes to children, teachers behave in a specific way: the way they speak and the way they gesture are altered by the classroom situation and the type and level of learners (Gullberg, 2008). They slow down their speech, and they intensify the articulation of every word and of the prosodic parameters to make sure that the students will understand them better. For the same reason, they use gestures. In fact, gestures help the teacher give an odor of multimodality to the learning process, i.e. leaving a host of traces in the memory (Foster, 2009).

In addition, providing the young learners with the relevant gestures is a multidimensional process. First, it opens up the first requirement for learning vocabulary items, i.e. noticing (Schmidt, 1990). As Nation (2001) argues, in order to learning take place paying attention to linguistic items especially lexical items is necessary. In other words, learners need to consciously notice the words if the ultimate aim is to subsume those items into the system of mental lexicon (Schmitt, 2010). This noticing might be influenced by different factors including the importance of the word in the provided input, earlier encounters of linguistic items, learners conception of the efficiency of those items, and the instructor’s preoccupation with the selected items (Ellis, 1990).

Closely related to the issue of noticing in vocabulary learning, is the notion of involvement load put forward by Laufer and Hulstijn (2001). Put simply, this hypothesis states that the learning, recall, and retention of vocabulary items depends on the total amount of the mental effort invested on the learning experience. In other words, the more involved the learner in learning experience, the higher the chance of learning and retaining lexical items. They argue that involvement in a task consists of three factors of need, search, and evaluation (Hulstijn and Laufer, 2001). While teaching a new word, attempt must be made to include as many of these factors as possible. Moreover, in order to have a long-lasting learning experience especially in terms of young learners, language teachers must consider the usefulness of utilizing a myriad of modalities to increase the chance of learning and long-term retention of vocabulary items (Laufer, 2005).

Language teaching experts dealing with young learners advise teachers to use gestures to illustrate their speech and thus to improve the children’s understanding and memorization of the foreign language items, particularly words. As empirical findings indicate, the learning of vocabulary during second language acquisition appears to be facilitated by associating words with gestures (Kelly, McDevitt, & Esch, 2009). Specifically, learning emblematic gestures with vocabulary words (Allen, 1995), learning and producing a gesture while repeating the words (Tellier, 2007), and using gestures to provide redundant information relative to the meaning of the word by the teacher (Kelly et al., 2009), have all been demonstrated to produce significant learning and retention when compared to learning words without gestures.

It should be mentioned that the concept of gesture itself is not that much clean, neat and straightforward. Gesture can be functionally used for different purposes. For instance, Tellier (2007) argues that gestures can be employed in at least three ways: the first one is using them for classroom management purposes (e.g. initiating and ending the class hour), the second is for
evaluative aims (e.g. error correction), and the third is explanatory goals (e.g. giving explanation of new vocabulary items). It is this last category that the present study has been dedicated.

**Empirical Studies**

Before going to the main study some research endeavors of the previous studies are reviewed. The first relevant study that I could spot was a research by Cohen and Otterbein (1992). Working with three groups of adult subjects, their participants had to watch a video containing several different sentences in their L1 and then to write down as many sentences as they could remember in a free recall task. Each group received the same verbal input but the videos were slightly different: one just presented the sentences, the second showed somebody illustrating each sentence with pantomimic gestures, and in the last video, sentences were accompanied by non-pantomimic (i.e. meaningless) gestures. The results indicated that those subjects who were exposed to sentences illustrated by pantomimic gestures remembered significantly more sentences than subjects who did not see the gestures and subjects who saw non-pantomimic gestures.

Another related study by Allen (1995) is on the impact of gestures on memorization of L2 sentences. Allen (1995) worked with 112 American university students in French. A control group and a comparison group were shown 10 French sentences and their English equivalents on a screen and they also heard a teacher pronouncing them 3 times. The students were told to repeat them. The experimental group’s procedure differed only in that the students were also provided with an illustrative gesture for each sentence, which they saw three times (with the three repetitions of the sentence) and had to reproduce. However, they did not repeat the sentences, only the gestures. Then, immediately after all 10 sequences, a posttest was given in which the teacher produced the 10 French sentences in a different order and during the pause after each sentence the subjects had to write down the English equivalent. The comparison group and the experimental group were given the gestures as well. There were 5 sessions of this kind with different groups of 10 French expressions. The results showed that the students presented with illustrative gestures recalled more sentences than the others. The experimental group who reproduced the gestures did significantly better than the comparison group who only saw them during the posttest. Therefore, this study confirmed the effect of reproducing gestures on vocabulary recall in L2 by adult learners. However, it suffers from two limitations. First, the L2 sentences were always given to the subjects with the L1 translation, but the sentences to be memorized were French idiomatic expressions which are not always directly translatable. Second, subjects were asked during the post-test to give the L1 equivalent of the L2 sentences that were only used as stimuli. The study thus does not assess how many expressions in L2 subjects have remembered with gestures, but rather how many expressions they can translate. The experiment therefore dealt mainly with passive knowledge of the vocabulary, that is, the ability to recognize and translate but not to produce the L2 items. It is therefore not clear whether gestures affect active knowledge of L2 vocabulary. It is also not known whether gestures affect the memorization of lexical items in L2 in child learners.

The other relevant study comes from Tellier (2005, cited in Tellier, 2007). It involved 32 French children with the age range of 4 to 5 who were divided into two groups. They had to watch 3
videos (each contained a list of 10 words in the L1). The children watched the videos alone with the experimenter and had to do a free recall task immediately afterwards. The three videos watched by the control group only presented them with words pronounced by a person on the screen. The first video watched by the experimental group was the same as the control group, the second video was illustrated with gestures and the third with pictures. The experimental group had significantly better results with video 2 and 3. This suggests that the use of visual modalities (pictures and gestures) improves short-term memorization in a free recall task. However, there was no statistical difference between the effect of the picture and of the gesture on memorization. In this case, gestures acted as a mere visual modality since they were only looked at.

The last similar study was conducted by Tellier (2007). Employing 42 French speaking children, it examined whether reproducing gestures has a greater impact on children’s memory span than merely looking at them with the children ranging from five to six. Everything was similar to the study reviewed above except that images were not used and that children were asked to repeat the words out loud in their first language after listening to them. There were three groups for the study. A control group listened to the words and repeated them. A first experimental group (EG1) listened to the words and repeated them as well but also looked at illustrative gestures with each word. A second experimental (EG2) group was told to listen to the words, repeat them, look at the gestures and reproduce them. They were then given a free recall task. Results show that the second experimental group (EG2) did significantly better than the two other groups (control and EG1). This points to an effect of the reproduction of gestures on short-term memorization in the L1.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
In order to bridge the existing empirical gap i.e., whether pictures and gestures significantly influence the process of vocabulary learning and reproduction by children using their L2 meaning system as the point of departure, based on the studies reviewed above, the aim of the present study is to investigate the role of gestures in second language learning compared to pictures, particularly in the realm of vocabulary development, i.e. vocabulary acquisition and retention by children as true beginner learners of English. More specifically, this research attempt tries to answer the following research question:

RESEARCH QUESTION
RQ: Does gestures help the children remember the meaning of new words better than pictures?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
Twenty children were selected from among the starter learners aspiring to learn English as a foreign language in Rezvan Language Institute in Ardabil, Iran. They were all aged 5 years. As there is a strict policy in this institute to place their language learners at the same level as
accurately as possible, based on the interview, two classes which had not studied English and did not have any previous English background were picked up as the participants of the study. Then they were placed in the so-called two groups of “picture” and “gesture”. The participants in the former formed the comparison and the latter shaped the experimental group, hence, 10 children in each group. This grouping is done this way since there are two groups each of which uses a type of treatment (picture or gesture).

**Instrumentation**

In this study, there were twelve words at the lower level of cognitive demand on the part of the children. They were selected in a way that would be able to be “pictured” or “gestured”. The words were: ‘book’, ‘cold’, ‘cry’, ‘drive’, ‘heart’, ‘look’, ‘scissors’, ‘snake’, ‘swim’, ‘think’, ‘walk’, ‘write’. These words were cross-checked against Longman 3000 Common Words (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2009, 5th Edition) in order to make sure that they belonged to the first thousand frequent words of English. Then, after the treatment, an individual-based assessment session was held for the children as the subjects of the study and their scores were tallied. In gesture group, the teacher showed twelve pictures and the subjects were required to present the corresponding words. It accompanies with physical movement (gestures) on the part of the teacher. However, in picture group, the teacher provided the learners with twelve pictures and they made an attempt to produce the corresponding words. Each correct answer gets one positive point out of twelve. The tests were based on counting frequency.

**Data Collection**

The study lasted four weeks, one session per week. In each session, four words were presented to the subjects. And the last session was used for assessment purposes. The selection of the four items in each session was done according to the notion of mnemonic span. It refers to the number of items a subject can memorize from a list heard once (Baddeley, 1999). The average score is 7 items plus/minus 2 (Miller, 1956) for an adult. However, it is lower for children and increases with age and cognitive development (Baddeley, 1999). The mnemonic span is about 2 items at the age of 2, 4 items at the age of 5, 5 at the age of 7, 6 items at the age of 9 and 7 at the age of 12 (Foster, 2009).

The children in the experimental group were given the words with the accompanying gestures pantomimed by their teacher. At the same time, they were asked to repeat each word and “gesture” the word for five times. For the comparison group, the subjects were supposed to see the pictures and repeat the corresponding words. Since both experimental and control groups had their own specific treatment, namely “learning by gesture for experimental group and learning by picture for comparison group”, hence, the design of the research is comparison group design. After completing the treatment cycle, they were assessed on their ability to remember those words in the fourth session of the last week of the treatment phase. In other words, to see the strength of the associative learning in two modes (picture vs. gesture), the same subjects were tested on the same words; recording the results. Finally, the two pieces of the assessment were cross-checked against each other using a t-test to see any significant difference on the effect of gesture in vocabulary learning and retention. However, it needs to be mentioned that, in the
course of treatment during other sessions, the participants in both groups were busy learning the English alphabet.

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of this section is to determine if the variation observed among the mean scores of the two groups participating in the study was larger than would be expected by chance. The scores of the retention assessment were fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. Then using a t-test the two groups were compared to spot any possible statistically significant difference. What follows is first the descriptive statistics table then the table of t-test:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tr>
<td>Score: Experimental “Gesture”</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score: Comparison “Picture”</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.994</td>
<td>.314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the Table 1 shows, the total number of subjects is 20 (in fact two groups 10 each). The mean scores for experimental (gesture) and comparison group (picture) are 6.20 and 4.10 respectively with the standard deviations of 1.033 for the former and .994 for the latter group. At first glance, as the mean scores indicate, there is a perceptible difference between the participants in terms of their performance on the retention of the mentioned 12 words which were the basis of the assessment. But the question is: Does this difference reach statistical significance or not? To this end, an independent samples t-test is run in order to pinpoint any possible significant difference from a statistical point of view:

<table>
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<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Score: Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score: Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>4.632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

As it was mentioned earlier, the purpose of the assessment was to examine whether children were able to produce the English words by looking at the pictures or gestures in a different order than the one of the repetitions and had to name them. The picture group gave a mean of 4.10 correct
words (SD = .9941.17) and the gesture group 6.20 words (SD = 1.033). The difference between the means of answers of both groups was thus 2.10 words. As it can be observed from the Table 3.2, the F value is .151 which means that we have not violated t-test’s assumption in this regard (Dörnyei, 2007). Based on the results of Table 3.2, the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is .000 which is an indication of a significant difference between the experimental and comparison groups. Therefore, it should be determined which line in the table should be used in reporting the results. It is shown that the value of Sig. is .702 which is larger than .05. So the first line of the table is reported. Taking a look at the first line, it is obvious that Sig. (2-tailed) is .000 and less than .05. As a result, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and comparison groups. In other words, the results of the independent samples t-test confirmed that the observed difference was significant and revealed the effect of the reproduction of gestures on the retention of the mentioned words.

As it was inferred in our research question, the experimental (gesture) group did have a good performance compared to the comparison (picture) group in recalling the mentioned 12 words. It seems that when several modalities are combined in teaching and learning vocabulary items the ultimate achievement is accomplished by more efficiency and effectiveness. This findings is in line with the results of the studies reviewed above. Therefore, the take-home message of the present study for teachers is to involve the children in process of learning as wholly as possible. In other words, the teachers should involve children both physically and mentally to take advantage of the best of the both worlds.

It is necessary to mention that the findings of the present study and similar studies must be interpreted with caution. Even if the findings in the literature in this domain are somewhat contradictory, it would nevertheless be interesting to assess the impact of gestures on the memorization of different classes of words in second language acquisition. For instance, one may wonder whether or not action verbs are easier to memorize with gestures than nouns. This is because some research seems to suggest that some words are learned differently that others (Nation, 2001) based on their distinct characteristics.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS
The present study aimed to examine the effect of gestures on the acquisition and retention of the English vocabulary by the young children who were true beginners. As it turned out, the gesture group outperformed the picture group in recalling the twelve target lexical items. The superiority of gestures over pictures can be attributed to the number of modality that they include. Gestures involve the three modes of modality, i.e. auditory, motor, and visual (Tellier, 2007). The first one deals with the teacher repetition of the pronunciation of the words while providing the relevant gestures. The second one refers to body movement as the gesture is employed. And finally, the third one refers to being able to see gesture while producing the relevant word. This is in line with the trace theory of memory (Baddeley, 1999) which argues that if a phenomenon leaves more traces in the memory chances are that will be remembered with a high probability. However, when these traces are in different modes of modality they make the tracing process in memory richer and facilitate retention.
Therefore, involving the body in the learning process is relevant in the classroom which is the cornerstone of some language teaching methods such as Total Physical Response (Richards & Rogers, 2001). However, to make best of the gesture world, the language teacher should make sure that the children reproduce the gestures while repeating the words; otherwise, they will not have the desired and desirable effects. All this is done in order to have a mixed complementary effect on the process of tracing in the memory which helps the memorization of words be approached easily and much more efficiently. Of course, it should be born in mind that when it comes to vocabulary learning, all words are memorizable but some words are more memorizable than others. For example, in the experimental (gesture) group, the two items of ‘cry’ and ‘walk’ had the maximum frequency among other words (seven for the former and eight for the latter). Or in the comparison (picture) group, the highest frequency went to ‘book’ and ‘cry’ with six for the former and five for the latter (See the Appendix). All in all, as it we saw in the Results, those subjects in the “gesture” group remembered more words than the counterpart group. Therefore, we can conclude that gestures speak louder than pictures in vocabulary learning and retention for children.

Language teachers particularly those who are busy with teaching kids have to remember the findings of the present research endeavor. They must try as far as possible to make use of gesture in their classrooms. As it went earlier, this helps to have an active classroom in which their learners energetically spend their full potential on learning new stuff. Consequently, this investment of energy results in more learning and retention on the part of children. In addition, it leads to a favorable environment which is conductive to have a better and long-lasting learning. Furthermore, the materials developers and syllabus designers should attempt to include in the initial modules of their materials those words being capable of easily gestured or pictured in order to have an optimum learning rate.

Suggestions for further research
The results of the present study must be interpreted with caution. In other words, it suffers from some limitations which need to be addressed in other replication studies. One of those limitations is the number of participants. Examining 10 children in each group of experimental and comparison puts the findings of the study in danger when it comes to external validity. Also, as it went earlier, the mnemonic span is different for children at different age ranges. Therefore, trying to replicate the study with children of different ages is desirable. Another issue is the type of words. Some words are remembered better due to their length, a good denotation or connotation or their equivalents in the source language (Nation, 2001). Another issue is the number of repetition in each attempt. For example, the mean of remembered words in the picture group was 4.10 out of 12. One possible explanation for this small number is the number of repetition which was five in the present study.

REFERENCES


Appendix: The frequency count of the answers

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<tr>
<th>E(G) Group</th>
<th>book</th>
<th>cold</th>
<th>cry</th>
<th>drive</th>
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<th>look</th>
<th>scissors</th>
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<th>swim</th>
<th>think</th>
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