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Scaffolding a Presentation: Comments from Spanish and German

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Abstract—This paper considers implementation of a ‘scaffolding’ method as a means towards successful ‘presentations’ and acquisition of presentational language in the classroom and beyond. Setting-up a concrete, well articulated and culturally nuanced yet personalized scaffolding for acquiring upper-level language in working towards and performing presentations will be explored. Specific experiences from Second-Year language classes in both Spanish and then German are considered. Setting clear objectives in a personalized atmosphere and issues of development of transferable professional skills will be further contemplated.

Index Terms—presentations, presentational language, transferable skills, scaffolding, German, Spanish

I. INTRODUCTION

Giving a good presentation, whether in a foreign or one’s native language, involves preparation and practice. Presentations, in the dominant PowerPoint (or prezi) format, tend to be performed within traditional academic, political-diplomatic and broad professional, especially marketing events/forums. This continues to evolve and change since the advent of the internet and hybrid-spaces and institutional and social evolutions. With this background, I would like to engage with the already established discussion of the ‘presentation’ and its role in language learning. Precisely, I consider the presentation (and the broader “presentational language” as defined by ACTFL) incrementally more important as language learners aspire to progress to ever higher levels of second-language proficiency. This ‘higher registry’ of language often required in giving an ‘academic’ or ‘business’ presentation can be acquired in foreign language classes, within an integrated implementation. Here I have found scaffolding a particularly useful strategy.

What does ‘scaffolding’ mean within the framework of developing ‘presentational’ language and preparing for a presentation? Scaffolding, in its most common understanding is that of constructing, often makeshift structure around the development of a foundation and the permanent structure built upon this; as in construction and constructing a new or sanitizing or repairing/renovating an existing building. Relating scaffolding in traditional construction to scaffolding of a presentation offers an interesting and arguably very useful metaphor and reference for foreign language teachers and learners. One obviously needs blueprints and a plan in construction, as in developing a successful presentation. In ‘setting’ up the ‘scaffolding’, one is enabled to build. Within the scaffolding, above ground-level, perhaps even high above the ground, one is or develops a certain confidence in their task/activity. Once the activity/task is done, the scaffolding can come down, and the renovated or new building, structure, or in ‘presentation’, a finished product, stands alone, independently. ‘Scaffolding’ helped in this particular case, but becomes a ‘strategy’ then in future ‘production’. It is a means of enabling. Here this can be concretely used in language learning classes, as well as then acquired by students to apply to situations outside of their language classrooms, both pertaining to language as well as beyond. This then contributes to the broader development of the much talked about ‘transferable’ skills (Berman).

II. METHODOLOGY

At this point I would like to concretize the idea of scaffolding and presentational language with some examples from beginning second-year German and Spanish language classroom experiences at the university. In the following paper my particular focus will be to look, first individually and then comparatively, at multiple week preparations for presentations in these classes. Here using “presentational language” in trying to get the students actively using language typical of presentations, as well as invoking structure and confidence typical of presentations structured/outlined in a sort of “scaffolding”, in first-quarter second-year classes. Before proceeding, the entering proficiency of the students would be useful to orientate ourselves here: according to our institution’s proficiency goals, these students should be solid IM speakers (according to ACTFL standards), IH writers, orally pushing into an IM+ level, some even IH-, and writing at a baseline AL by the end of the quarter. Actual results though vary from quarter to quarter, and year to year of course. And although I will be focusing on beginning second-year courses, ‘presentations’ and ‘presentational language’ play an incrementally important role from first-year through advanced language courses (evidenced in fruitful discussion with and work by Ali Miano in Spanish, Ana Cellinese in Italian and Heather Howard in French).

Here I would like considering how scaffolding is integrated and realized by first looking concretely at Spanish, and then the German class. As in all of the language courses at our institution, we work within a broader framework the whole 10-week quarter on developing proficiency and working towards particular curricular objectives. This is multi-

faceted and all the classical competencies (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) are intermixed and overlap, accordingly, towards these goals. Within this dynamic, the presentation and “presentational language” plays an increasingly important role, not isolated, but integrated, in the second-year and beyond. This means integrating amidst the dynamic of working through parts of a textbook with readings, videos clips, and new thematic vocabularies along with customized authentic video and reading links within the in-class in-person and out-of-class online communication/exchanges, interactions and activities. Scaffolding a presentation involves preparation. “Fang nie mit dem Anfang an, sondern immer drei Meilen vor dem Anfang!” [*Never start at the beginning, but rather three miles before that*] writes the German author, satirist, journalist Kurt Tucholsky (1930) in his short essay „Ratschläge für einen schlechten Redner” [*Advise for a bad speaker*]. Scaffolding starts well before - I am not sure what it would be in miles - a presentation; I think Tucholsky would agree.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS IN SPANISH

Turning our attention to the beginning of the class; one of the first steps in preparing in the Spanish course was already in the first week to explain to students the guidelines of the presentation (e.g. length, format – with beginning, connected main parts and conclusion with follow-up discussion, dates, aspects of audience interaction, required hand-out). They were also given a quite extended vocabulary list – with examples of how to introduce, connect, conclude a topic as well as how to acknowledge someone else’s opinion, state your own, compare and contrast, amongst many further tasks.¹ The presentations were to be well-outlined ahead of time, with mini-practice sessions well before the actual presentations. Here, the ‘form’ and even ‘space’ of a traditional presentation was/is continually questioned, challenged, reflected upon and even re-defined. The presentations were to be given in a panel-type structure, with 3-4 presenters presenting for an allotted time (10+ minutes for the first, then 15+ minutes for the final presentation), then the whole panel was to field questions from their audience. Each audience member would be given a handout with pertinent information, in outline form, to the presentation and then was also required to ask questions. We also/or particularly (considering the level of the students speech and the upper-level of the presentation topics) worked on how to ask a question at the advanced/superior level – i.e. here situating the question contextually, making reference to something said in the presentation, then including perhaps a personal, i.e. student’s take on the topic and then leaving it in the presenter’s arena. From the moment of the list’s introduction into class, the students were to pick out at least 3 sayings (sentences starters, connectors, etc...) to use in each class (or part thereof) during class-time partner/group/plenum discussions and activities. We continued with this into the second week (and thereafter).

Although scaffolding in general may seem standardized and even quite technical (although it can be adjusted and manipulated to conform to any structure, perhaps better the process of setting it up is more standardized than the scaffolding’s structural aspect), thinking and the art of expressing this is less so; it is very personal, subjective and even artistic. Here recognizing each individual’s, each student’s (hence also each class as a unique body of unique individuals) way of thinking and expression of this, within the larger structure of a class with proficiency goals and curricular objectives, I asked students to reflect on how they think and how they speak. However first, I modeled this for them – I shared with them how I think I think and how I think I express myself in my native language about this, translating this accordingly into the target language Spanish, in a sort of handwritten flow chart, or as I termed it in Spanish, *organigrama*. I felt that superimposing a way of thinking and a way of expressing this onto them (i.e. showing them exactly what to say and how to order this) would only further alienate them from owning their second language production. Understanding that producing this upper-registry language (working towards the more formal setting/structure of an academic presentation) if disconnected from themselves in their understanding of their own language production, would become even further alien and artificial, superficial, if not understood of an interlinked, overlapping self in time and space.

¹ This list has been used and is continually edited and added to by numerous Spanish lecturers at Stanford, initiated by my colleagues Citlalli del Carpio and Spanish Language Coordinator Ali Miano, and partially based off of work by Professor Guadalupe Valdes.

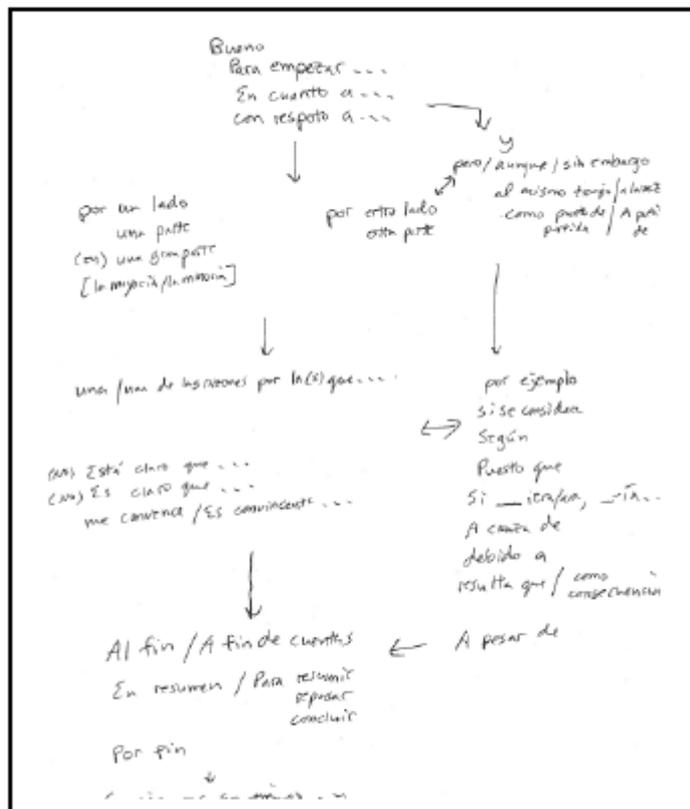


Figure 1. Organigrama

So, on the first day of week three I presented them with a visual result of my reflections of my thinking, my expression of this as a flow chart, or ‘organigrama’ (Figure 1) to model a personalized scaffolding of language and structure. Then, they were to present their own on the second day (encouraged to draw and write this out by hand) and test it out as well as add to it in the proceeding classes as well as for the rest of the quarter. The activities/tasks outlined thus far speak to scaffolding for the students’ first, then second presentations in the class (week 5, then week 10). However, the skills developed in these activities were practiced in a variety of contexts and a variety of further classroom activities/task, were not expressly focused on ‘presentations’, they overlap with aspects of the presentations, and together work towards overall proficiency. During this all, to note here: explanations were short/curt, to the point and interactive. Here they practiced in short mini-doses starting, connecting, and concluding ideas as well as narrating and describing (all important in the Advanced-level) - interweaving book, potential presentation and personal themes and always also keeping in mind our program objectives/class goals and levels (i.e. working into IM+). Here, for example, moments with narration, description and their linguistic introductions, connectors and conclusions in online interviews (J. Sabina and J. Serat) and documentaries (i.e. 1970s/80s critical theater group) were isolated and used in modeling activities. Examples were from Spain, overlapping with the geographical and cultural focus in the textbook in the first part of the quarter.

During the first round of presentations in the fourth and fifth weeks students gave their presentation and when not presenting, actively took part in the audience (i.e. listening, asking questions, and discussing afterwards). Here we had also explicitly worked on and practiced how to refer to a topic or part of presentation (e.g. en cuanto a./con respecto a... - which if unknown, can really damper a student’s initiative). Presentations averaged 8-12 minutes, a discussion thereafter brought the overall total to 15 minutes. Out of a class of around 15 students, each student was required to ask at least one question per panel (hence 4-5 questions per panelist). Presenters fielded audience member’s questions spontaneously. All students performed, linguistically and within broader proficiency, within (even excelling) the range of hoped target levels and performance.

In considering evaluating and improving; their presentations were filmed and then uploaded to a personal dropbox online – here they were to self-evaluate their presentations and hand in to me/instructor a self-critique – I then gave them feedback once having received their self-evaluation (based off of our curricular objectives and proficiency guidelines). In my comments to them individually, I especially focused on their openings (al principio/para empezar...) and closings, securing up basic vocabulary (for some) – such as gustar/haber/ser – and encouraging using variance/nuances here (instead of just repeating the same verb/adjective) and simple structures. Remembering Tucholsky, and the unfortunate many boring presentations I (we all) have listened to/experienced, and occasionally given, I wanted to raise the presenters’ consciousness of their audience when talking (i.e. not just read a paper before their audience) – here opening, connecting and closing with eye-contact and consideration of their audience.

Reflecting on overall transferable skills, especially here concerning communication, even the presentation – as artistically expressed by the likes of German theoreticians/thinkers Walter Benjamin, B. Brecht or later Hans Maganus Enzensberger (in writings on communication in literature, theater, radio and broader media), is not an *Einbahnstrasse* (one-way street). Within ACTFL's definition, this should be understood in the "real world of language" to take many forms, for example, a hybrid interpersonal-presentational or simply the interaction between the presentational-interpersonal-interpretive if whole of presentation-discussion is considered. In the complexities of 'real-world' language production and communication – with computers, tablets, cell phones, paper, and 'in-person' live that is projected, seen and heard, seen and read, heard but not seen, seen and heard delayed, seen and heard live, etc..., involves an engagement in understanding and appropriate/corresponding practicing. Hence, the scaffolding is directly constructed for the immediate task of the presentation in class, however the skills acquired during this process and the overlapping tasks during this time, benefit the student beyond the designed classroom space and time (i.e. for future academic and professional presentations, future inactions and production in second-language as well as broader first-language nuance within upper-level or more formal and/or professional correspondence).

After each 'panel' of presentations and their respective discussions, I would make some overall general comments to the patterns of errors – which were noted by the upcoming presenters and improved upon (i.e. digested). In weeks six, seven and eight, amidst the numerous activities in and outside of class, students worked on papers. They also worked on their second and final presentation which would be an extension of one of their papers from the quarter. They continued to actively incorporate new connectors/sentence starters into their speech in class as well as develop (i.e. add to) their flow charts (i.e. *organigramas*).

In thinking of modeling and extending the spatial and temporal concept of presentation beyond traditional academic, a few experiences were induced to these means. Beforehand, in week 5 and 6 I invited a visiting scholar – currently professor on the East coast (Queens College) and accomplished presenter, to give a short academic presentation on his area of expertise which is issues surrounding language, identity and power with a focus in the Dominican Republic/and broader Caribbean. The students were given a handout pertaining to the presentation as well as asked to prepare questions for the speaker beforehand – and during the presentation/i.e. for discussion immediately after the presentation. During the presentation (which was also filmed) the students were asked to not only concentrate on the content, but also the overall style and structure of the presentation and the language used. We had an extremely successful, fruitful discussion after the presentation (e.g. some students wrote it was the highlight of the class and wished for more in their course evaluations). Another modeling activity was a guest lecture event with a short theater performance, documentary film, and lecture from a local non-profit group concerned with the disappearance of many women (*femicidio*), and journalists, in Juarez Mexico. Students in all three Spanish Language classes in the second year were invited to take part. Students in my beginning second-year class were intellectually and critically comparable, if not even surpassing, the involvement in the event of those in more advanced classes. Impressively, more than half of my class was able to engage with the visitors, asking quite critical questions, and here being able to contextualize it as well. A final modeling activity was the showing of a presentation, exemplified in a film of historical and cultural resonance. The final speech of the Mexican actor Cantiflas in his film *Su Excelencia* (1967), exhibits satire and comedy, but also a critical political view of the 'non-aligned' and context for the students to pick up on. Students were prepared with some background information to Mexican film, Cantiflas as well as Mexico, Latin America and the Cold War. The examples from the Caribbean and Mexico overlapped with the geographical focus in the students' text book at this moment in the class. Students had access to the film in our media library and were to watch this final speech and react to it, both its content, as well as the structure and the language in the speech. Both for students' presentations as well as the guest presentation, event and film speech, I organized forums on our course's website space for students to post audio posts (we also did written posts) – with varying tasks. Usually, it would be to react to one of the presentations – then make sure to listen to a previous post and include a comment to another student's post within their post (i.e. reference another student's post) so that there would be some sort of ongoing string of communication. Through the linking in-class spoken, online written and spoken uploads, there developed a sort of hybrid written-spoken space using 'presentational' language working towards their final presentations, within the broader structure/format of the overall class, proficiency goals, curricular objectives and transferable skills.

In week eight students were to give mini-synopsis of their presentations to partners in class – first 3 minutes, then with a second partner for 1 minute. They were to introduce their topic, give a very abbreviated structure outline and then conclude. Then, they did this again, practicing their ability to re-cast, re-formulate and be more efficient. They were to give each other feedback as well. Here in their feedback, they were to express overall potential interest of their audience and voice any suggestions to make it more interesting, i.e. to increase the potential for their audience to connect to the topic and presentation. Furthermore, they commented on the language and any outstanding holes or gaps pertaining to content. In weeks nine and ten, the students presented their second and final presentations – which were filmed, discussed in a panel setting and then were self-evaluated (with additional reflection and comparison of their language from first to second presentation). These final presentations were longer, more polished linguistically and structurally and were given with overall greater confidence.

After the quarter, I feel that a lot of higher-level language was learned and used by the students. I think that they also raised their consciousness as to prepping and giving an academic presentation in Spanish, as well as overall (to further

note here is the fact that there were many first-year/freshman students who were still learning academic procedures/forms, although some upper class ones as well) and their language production and structuring of such overall. However, I also feel that a bit too much emphasis was given to presentational language whereas the students may had been able to make greater strides by not being as forced to work with this language and solidify what they had. One also has to ask the usefulness of this; ie. what are the goals and aspirations of the students: most want to use the language to studying-abroad, to use language more conversationally and only a small fraction aspired to use it professionally in an academic or other professional setting. Here, consistent surveys and questionnaires could be given and used to continually make adjustments to programs/classes and their corresponding objectives and goals.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS IN GERMAN

Scaffolding for a presentation was, as in Spanish, also worked on in a beginning second-year German class. Here, students were to actively prep for a first and then a second presentation amidst working through themes pertaining to chapters in the textbook (listening, readings) and engaging in further in-class (authentic video and reading materials serving as cultural nuance and points of departure to discussion/activities) and online activities (such as Google Webdoc journals, online forums discussions, out-of-class cultural excursions, a.o.). At the beginning of the quarter, students were explained the German presentation’s guidelines (i.e. time length, choosing theme, organizing structure/language and preparing). Here they were given lists of useful expressions in introducing, connecting, concluding, agreeing, disagreeing, comparing, etc.. These were printed out for the students on colored paper, i.e. not white, so that amongst their papers and notes, it would stick out and students would know to take it and have it beside them to reference every day in class. Many textbooks have lists of such expressions. There is also a plethora of such lists online in German, more so than in Spanish. There are even elaborate PowerPoints on professional presentations, including overall advise, format, techniques and language, easily found online, this was linked to our courses website for the students. In the weeks leading up to the presentations, students were to select examples and actively use new expressions and vocabulary in each class. I showed them here a flow chart of how one could open a topic (Was...angeht,im Bezug auf..., Wenn an....denkt,), develop it (dar über hinaus/zum Beispiel/genauer gesagt...), compare (im Vergleich zu/verglichen mit...) and contrast (einerseits/auf einer Seite.- andererseits/auf der anderen Seite) in a sort of flow chart of ideas. As in the Spanish *organigrama*, I modeled how I personally may think and express this, then encouraged them to think about how they think and would express this themselves and here develop their own flow chart, or *Denk- and Argumentsablauf* (Figure 2). The actively incorporated aspects of their flow chart within classroom activities in the first few weeks, discussing a reading, reacting to a video clip, developing a conversation within further class topics, students especially worked on introducing, connecting and closing language (as well as, later, recognizing statements of other person as they add/give their opinion). Thus, they developed a sense of the structure of an academic presentation, aspects which were consciously build into activities. In week 3 and 4, they watched and engaged with 2-3 short clips or parts of professional and academic presentations as models.

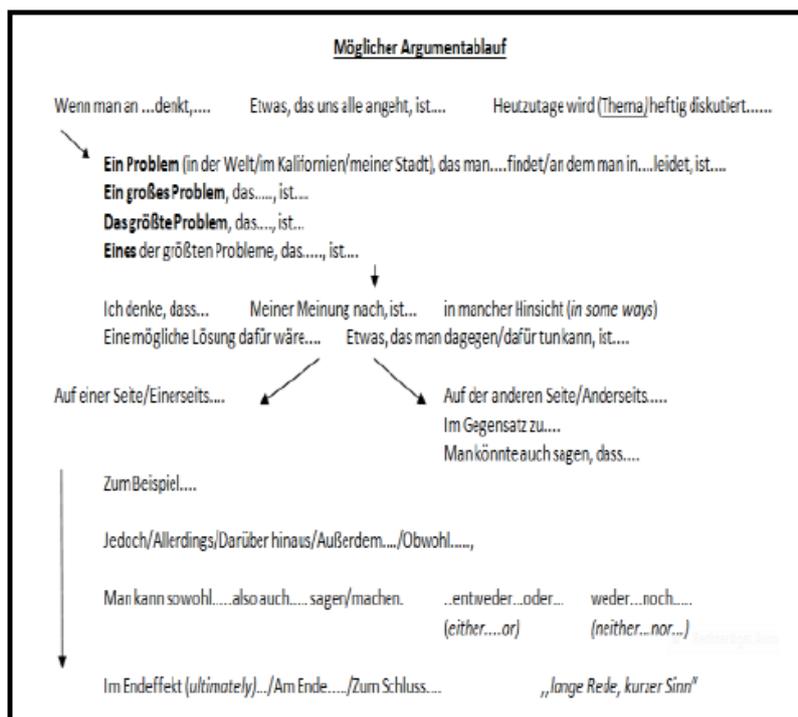


Figure 2. Argumentsablauf

Here to, again, understand the content, but even also key into the structure and language used. In comparison to searching for Spanish examples, there were many more and easier to find German presentational examples online. I primarily found a plethora of useful models via youtube, entering in either the term *Referat* (more within the school or sometimes university setting), *Vortrag* (often times at professional or academic conferences) or *Präsentation* (taken from English, a bit broader in the spectrum) followed by the theme of such a presentation I was hoping to find. If found online, they are then easily utilized in class and also accessible for students further viewing outside of class (as a link in our class' website). Before giving their first presentation, they also were to give a short synopsis to a fellow student, including: intro, why they chose their topic and why/how it could be interesting for their peers, rough structure, and conclusion. The student listening should take notes and give their partner feedback, such as suggestions for improvement and things to include. A further possibility here is to alternatively and/or additionally give a short synopsis to their instructor outside of class. An additional further activities before giving their presentation, they could give brief summaries of their presentation to a partner, then rehash to others what their partner's or partners' presentation(s) was (were) about (sort of warming up the theme – and the presenter, and getting everyone familiar with basic vocabulary – potentially issues relating to the presentation). The presentations were filmed and uploaded to dropbox – and each student was to self-evaluate their own presentation based on a double-sided handout (based off of our Gerlang curricular documents and further German-language presentational resources). All students were required to take notes to each presentation and then respond, comment and ask questions to individual presenters (this could alternatively also be done shortly before their second presentation (i.e. creating some distance). Students received feedback from their first presentation upon turning in self-criticism based upon having seen their uploaded presentation. Personalized areas for improvement were focused on by each individual student (follow up by instructor) in moving towards the final presentation (weeks 6-9). Here writing activities (Webdocs, Forums) encouraged practicing of different functions of presentations and required use of specific language as well (i.e. use of *Redemittel* for comparison, giving opinion, etc..). A further inclusion of ODAs (oral diagnostic assessments) and WDAs (written diagnostic assessment), which are used across language curriculum at our institution, offered an online space for students to further practice description, narration, comparison and even light speculation and hypothesis (the latter more so in second- and third class sequence of second-year). Spontaneous as well as prepared activities played a role in working towards final presentations. Model presentations in German were further posted online for students to analyze. Students also had opportunities to visit campus talks and were to note structure and language of presentations in English but relating to German world (e.g. Rösler (politician), Joffe (newspaper editor)). Not only high frequent structures (as in PowerPoint) were to be memorized (within personality) and actively incorporated, but also useful grammatical structures refined (subjunctive – wenn.../als ob...., passive with modal verbs as well as heightened ability to re-phrase/re-cast in nuancing vocabulary (sehr/viel/überhaupt/n ähmlich/überwiegend/wesentlich)). Final presentations were filmed and students submitted a self-reflection based on this final presentation and in comparison to the first (i.e. with improvement as well as continued areas (or new) of difficulty and ideas for ways they can improve). Students were required to ask questions of each presenter. If time is constrained, discussion could take place online. In conclusion here, students showed a great refinement of overall language (conjugating with modal verbs, verb/word placement, adjective endings, precision, ease in responses) and were enthused to watch and see selves for both presentations (i.e. and associate themselves and speaking the target foreign language).

As students enter into the second and then final class of the second-year German, they continue to work on presentations and presentational language. Depending on the quarter/semester, students are (as stated above) encouraged to visit campus or area talks (for example at the Goethe Institute or other universities or professional forums). One quarter, a graduate student in German with experience in the Olympics came to give a critical and culturally nuanced presentation on sports in Germany. Students were notified beforehand. The presentation was filmed and students took notes on the content, structure and language used. The presentation itself was very interactive and the proceeding discussion was lively and long. Another example, being in the Bay Area and start-up mecca, through personal acquaintances, two Austrian venture capitalists were invited to give a short talk. German classes from the end of 1st year through the whole of the second year were invited (some required) to come. They gave a presentation and then lead a discussion on being a start-up and start-up culture in Austria and the US.

Honing in on one particular class' first presentations (and first implementation of a loose scaffolding for presentational language), students were able to connect temporally using “zuerst, dann...zum Schluss...jetzt muss ich den zweiten Punkt erklären...es geht um...., Es gibt Ursache – and employ appropriate-level vocabulary and even some more complicated structures “weil/obwohl...“- with some self-corrections. Sometimes there was some breakdown though at the higher levels. There was still some pronunciation issues at times “Städte/Bevölkerung’ and difficulties with plural (die Bereich) and article endings (ein Tabelle) at times (which I did not notice so much with Spanish). In real struggles, the verb would just fail to be there “dann als Abschluss...einen kleinen Blick...” – at this point the student just lowered the level to simplify their grammar and structure. From this experience, and comparing to later classes, students made strides from the first to the second presentation (as ‘scaffolding’ a presentation itself become more refined, both future instructors and students have shown to have made greater strides). Gaining confidence in presenting more freely (i.e. with less note cards or none at all), re-formulating and re-casting explanations, introducing, giving outlines, then developing and connecting parts (slides) in working through their presentations and

finally concluding (not just saying "das ist alles"). There is a definite language development and refinement taking place in this process which positively overlaps into a broad array of overall language tasks and thus proficiency. Furthermore, many of the students developed a sense of their presenting style and what it is a presentation is. Here they greatly raised their consciousness of their audience and made the whole experience more fruitful for everyone involved, which is a plus for their language skills as well as over transferrable skills in presenting (in academic and professional realms).

In working with presentational language and in particular, presentations in second-year Spanish and German, it is very apparent that the book market for this topic is developed, and continues to expand in German, whereas in Spanish, there is a definite niche to be filled. Not many professional or didactic sources were referenced in Spanish (from original scaffolding in the Winter and Spring of 2012), however there were numerous sources in German. For example, for German, Shroedel's (2009) *Lernplus+ Die Lernhilfe fürs Gymnasium Referate und Präsentationen* has proven an interesting work and shows concern for the topic/activity of giving presentations in Germany. It works through a step-by-step process of what is a presentation, with exercises and checklists through practicing and then giving it. The focus is for academically oriented High-Schoolers (in German *Gymnasium*), but could serve as a guide and great reference across levels and ages. Amongst the many newer books (from 2006-now) *Methoden-Magazin* also includes links to audio and video examples, which is very encouraging and potentially useful. There is a plethora of more professionally, business minded books as well (i.e. for marketing, start-up proposals, job interviews, etc..) which outline theory, structure and language (to lesser extent) in presenting.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Scaffolding for a presentation in Spanish and then German has presented encouraging and interesting results. First, native English speakers (of which my classes were overwhelmingly composed) learning Spanish obviously would be a bit further along with their second language at the beginning of the second-year than their peers learning German, but both were/are able to engage and progress using similar scaffolding/activities (to note here: not all students native English speakers, especially in German and a growing number of students are already fully bilingual (mostly English/Spanish if in German or English/Chinese in both Spanish and German classrooms) when entering into my foreign language classroom or are entering into their second foreign language). This said; there were some notable differences to be mentioned. Both were able introduce their themes, then connect to why they are interested in this and thus presenting (also hoping to connect to audiences' interest), give a short overview of their presentation, begin and present information, connecting points and then concluding. Both audiences were able to ask critical questions (German audience struggled a bit more with contextualizing their questions at times) and presenters were able to successfully field questions (I would say the German language presenters – at times - struggled a slight bit more, spontaneously responding at a higher level – although not exclusive). There seemed to be a bit more break-down at times (conjugation, word order) when some of the students reached to the higher levels in German, whose structure though (word order especially, also adjective endings) are a bit more complicated. To consider here, in connecting clauses and relative pronoun clauses, one can use 'que' (that) in Spanish quite loosely (develops with more sophistication and precision into *cual*, *lo que*, *lo cual* as well as with prepositions) where as in German, one needs to reference back to the definite article, knowing it's gender and then case-function in the ensuing clause (*der*, *die*, *das*, *die*, then is it nominative, accusative, dative or genitive, with prepositional use a third complication), which is a bit more complicated and hence limiting at this stage in language acquisition. However, into the second and third quarters, these structures become more frequent and more confidently used. Continuing on, at times the integration of higher vocabulary/the topic itself was not well integrated (in both languages) – i.e. going beyond just static presentation of information, but making accessible to audience and making it coherent within the ('your') presentation (i.e. connected, flow, not fragmented). However, with a greater number of cognates in Spanish, there were usually slightly fewer moments of awkwardness. Use of past tense sometimes broke down in explanations in both Spanish and German – i.e. going into present or mixing present and past, although sentence structure usually remained (in Spanish, perfect/imperfect became less clear, in German the use of 'wenn' instead of 'als' became problematic at times). The German (also Spanish at times) students struggled hypothesizing as their command of the subjunctive was notably weaker (however – this is also a superior task for students who are bobbing between IM-IH). In the second and third classes of the second year, this tends to be expressed/utilized more correctly, frequently and more confidently (however, the Spanish subjunctive use is a bit more particular and thus, beyond stock-phrases and memorized structures, remains a struggle for a bit longer than in German, based off of my experience). Finally, the use of technology was successful in providing further space of communication outside of class as well as capturing presentations (and various warm-up and follow-up tasks) and allowing students to view themselves (and others in video clips). Learning from my Spanish experience, I toned down the dominance of presentational language and presentations a slight bit in German, more stealthily integrating aspects of function into a broader variety of tasks and activities which seemed to be more successfully digested by the students and lead to a greater jump in overall language proficiency.

In conclusion, scaffolding for presentations in both beginning second-year Spanish and German has proven a successful strategy in reaching towards higher registry language acquisition and in developing overall transferrable skills.

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Promoting Pre-service Second Language (L2) Teacher Learning via Narrative: A Sociocultural Perspective

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Abstract—This study constitutes a qualitative investigation of a series of interactions between an experienced teacher educator and a pre-service teacher in the context of a teaching English as a second language (ESL) practicum blog. The study demonstrates how the activity of writing a dialogic blog can facilitate teacher professional development. Responding to the recent call to investigate the ways in which teacher engagement in writing (Johnson & Golombek, 2011) can assist teacher learning and given the urge to promote conceptual ways of understanding teaching on the part of the novice teachers (Johnson, 2009), this paper presents a case study that shows both the novice's growth as expressed through writing and reflection in the blog as well as the teacher educator's moves designed to foster the novice's learning. A sociocultural perspective on human cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978) was used as a theoretical framework for tracing the novice's development and capturing the transformative power of the novice's narration as well as the characteristics of the teacher educator's mediation. Our findings indicate that when the teacher educator's mediation is strategically designed, engagement in narrative through a dialogic blog can be a powerful tool for stimulating a novice's more expert understanding of ESL teaching and encouraging the application of that understanding in practice.

Index Terms—dialogic teacher blog, teacher narrative, meditational space, externalization, verbalization

I. INTRODUCTION

Recent perspectives on the nature of teacher knowledge reject a technicist view of teaching and regard teachers as reflective practitioners (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) who learn in and from their practice using reflective tools to learn from and change teaching practice (Johnson, 2009; Mann, 2005). In this view, teacher-authored accounts of their beliefs and practices are legitimate forms of teacher knowledge (Johnson, 2009), and teachers are positioned not as passive recipients of knowledge but as its active producers and users (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). During the last 20 years, researchers have suggested that teachers' narratives can play a critical role in deepening teacher understanding of teaching and learning and promoting teacher inquiry into the lives of their students. Recently, Johnson and Golombek (2011) developed an analytical framework to examine the ways in which teacher narrative promotes learning of English as a second language (ESL) teachers. For Johnson and Golombek (2011), narrative fosters teacher professional development by igniting cognitive processes that can be understood according to three broad and sometimes overlapping categories: externalization, verbalization, and systematic examination.

These ideas have, in turn, prompted a call for research that documents the complex ways in which second language (L2) teachers learn through their own reflections in teacher-authored narratives (Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Park, 2013; Verity, 2000). Here, we will describe just such a study, analyzing a pre-service L2 teacher's interactions with her practicum supervisor in the context of a dialogic blog. Our analysis offers a portrait of a beginning teacher who over time seeks out more and more assistance for herself (and from wider sources), works through the emotional challenges of teaching in the context of a relationship with the supervisor, and tentatively begins to engage in and draw on expert discourse. Importantly, the study also highlights the characteristics of the experienced teacher educator's mediation in terms of its focus on promoting the novice's more conceptual understanding of teaching. The study thus focuses on the nature of the interaction between the teacher educator and the novice within the teaching practicum blog as well as the features of the teacher educator's mediation, leading to the novice's initial efforts to transform her L2 teaching practices.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of narrative supported by the mediation of the experienced teacher educator in the pre-service teacher's development of a more expert understanding of L2 teaching and learning. Given the importance of promoting teacher conceptual understanding of teaching (Johnson, 2009), we explored the nature of the expert teacher educator's mediation in terms of fostering the novice's efforts to achieve a more expert understanding of teaching. In order to trace the changes in how the teacher understands teaching over the period of a one-semester practicum, we used Johnson and Golombek's (2011) framework as a tool to explore the cognitive functions

(externalization, verbalization, and systematic examination) evident in the novice's blog. We found that both the narrative and the teacher educator's mediation each played a crucial part in enhancing the novice's understanding of L2 learning and teaching and helping her apply those understandings in her actual practice. Our study, therefore, extends current research on the use of narrative and teacher educator's mediation to promote teacher learning. The significance of this paper is that it provides new insights for faculty in teacher education programs who are designing and implementing teacher practicums with the use of dialogic blogs and for researchers who seek to understand how teachers learn through narrative.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A sociocultural perspective on teacher learning

We view the interaction between the experienced and the novice teacher through sociocultural theory, which as a theory of human cognitive development serves as an ideal lens through which to "see" teacher learning (Johnson & Golombek, 2003). According to a sociocultural theoretical perspective, human cognitive development occurs through participation in the activities of a given society, with language playing a major role. Vygotsky (1987) was particularly aware of the power of writing for the overall development of human thought. This power stems in large part from the way writing externalizes thought and makes it visible and, therefore, subject to conscious examination and manipulation. According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006), for example, when children learn to write, they "make their thinking fully explicit, if it is to be apprehended by their audience; [and] in so doing, they are at the same time making this thinking visible to themselves" (p. 293). Likewise, through writing in a teaching practicum blog, a pre-service teacher can make her own tacit beliefs about teaching fully explicit to herself and also open them up for the dialogic mediation of a more expert other (i.e., the teaching practicum supervisor).

The sociocultural theory also underscores the crucial role that expert mediation plays in promoting cognitive development. By mediation, we mean "the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e., gain voluntary control and transform) the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 79). Informed by the sociocultural perspective on teacher education, recent research in the field of L2 teacher education argues that teacher education programs should mediate pre-service teachers' development of a conceptual understanding of teaching (Johnson, 2009). Teachers can achieve this by externalizing their everyday conceptions of teaching and then connecting these conceptions to research-based (scientific) concepts at the backdrop of concrete activities (Johnson, 2009).

In Vygotsky's (1963) view, everyday concepts form during practical activities and are less systematic or generalizable than research-based (scientific) concepts and are open to conscious inspection (see also Johnson, 2009). In contrast, research-based (scientific) concepts are defined as "the generalizations of the experience of humankind that is fixed in science, understood in the broadest sense of the term to include both natural and social sciences as well as humanities" (Karpov, 2003, p. 66). In the context of L2 pre-service teacher education, then, scientific concepts (Vygotsky, 1963) are constituted by subject matter (*what to teach*) and pedagogical concepts (*how to teach*). For example, within an L2 writing course, subject matter concepts include the concept of the genre of an academic essay (e.g., expository, persuasive, or argumentative), whereas an example of a related pedagogical concept has to do with the methods used to teach the students how to produce the genre of the academic essay.

Further, it is important that these research-based (scientific) concepts be grounded in the actual activities of teaching (Johnson, 2009). According to Johnson (2009), the internalization of research-based (scientific) concepts can be defined as "a process through which a person's activity is initially mediated by other people or cultural artifacts but later comes to be controlled by the person as he or she appropriates and reconstructs resources to regulate his or her own activities" (p. 33). At the same time, Vygotsky (1986) emphasized that internalization is not a straightforward process from the outside in, but a transformative process whereby a person's (in this case, the teacher's) cognitive structure changes such that changes in her teaching activities follow (Leont'ev, 1981; Valsiner & van der Veer, 2000).

Using narrative to promote teacher learning

Previous research in the context of L2 teacher education has established the utility of reflective autobiographical accounts related to teaching (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Johnson & Golombek, 2002) or journals in which teachers describe and reflect on their everyday instructional decisions and practices (e.g., Bigelow & Ranney, 2005; Johnson, 1994; Numrich, 1996). Reflective writing is an inquiry-based professional development activity whereby a space is created in which teachers can reflect on their teaching beliefs and practices, re-frame their current understandings of teaching, and search for alternative ways of engaging in everyday teaching practices. Borg (2006) notes that "journals and autobiography in particular have been widely employed to support and study teachers' understandings of their own learning and practices," underscoring that writing helps "make ... tacit mental processes explicit and hence available for examination" (p. 250). By externalizing their tacit thoughts and feelings about their teaching beliefs and practices, teachers act as reflective practitioners (Schön, 1987) who learn in and from their practice.

Engagement in writing about one's teaching practices has been found to be effective for stimulating both experienced and inexperienced teachers to reflect on and even make changes to their classroom activities. For example, Golombek and Johnson (2004) showed how a pre-service teacher's engagement in a narrative activity allowed her to connect some of the concepts from her theoretical Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) graduate coursework to her

practical experiences in the classroom, helping her to make sense of her teaching experiences and externalize an idealized conception of what she would like to do in her future teaching. Likewise, Verity (2000) showed how through self-reflective writing an experienced educator regained her sense of expertise in an unfamiliar instructional context (Japan).

In this study, we will explore the role of writing in the development of a pre-service teacher's expertise in L2 teaching as well as the impact of her supervisor's mediation in the context of a dialogic blog. This article offers a sociocultural analysis of the dialogic interactions between an L2 pre-service teacher and her supervisor in an online dialogic teaching practicum blog, with a specific focus on the supervisor's impact on the novice's development of teaching expertise. Given the well-documented affordances of engagement in narrative activities for teacher development, how, if at all, does the pre-service teacher draw on the supervisor's expertise in the context of their written dialogue? As the following analysis shows, over time and as the pre-service teacher moved into field experience, she shifted from simply receiving mediation from the supervisor to eliciting and engaging mediation from the supervisor as well as from her mentor teacher and peers. This shift in the way the pre-service teacher sought mediation unfolded in the context of a developing supportive emotional relationship. In addition, we witness such processes as externalization, verbalization, and systematic inquiry as well as a transfer of knowledge from the dialogic exchanges to the actual novice's classroom, which points to the effectiveness of the supervisory mediation.

III. THE STUDY

Context of the study

The data for the study are from the online dialogic blog entries between a pre-service teacher interning in a master of arts (MA) in TESL program at a large northeastern American university and her supervisor. The data were collected over the period of one semester (January 2008 to May 2008). At the time of the data collection, the pre-service teacher, Kristina, was enrolled in the MA TESL program at the same university. Before she took the internship, Kristina had taught English in an elementary school. The supervisor, Melanie, is a professor at the same university with extensive experience in ESL teaching and in supervising and mentoring MA TESL pre-service teachers.

During the practicum, Kristina was placed in an ESL course offered to prospective international teaching assistants (ITAs) preparing to teach at the university. This class was taught by Elaine, who served as Kristina's mentor teacher. Kristina was required to observe Elaine teaching, practice teach several classes herself, and post her observations and reflections in the teaching practicum blog, to which the supervisor (Melanie) then regularly responded.

Mode of inquiry

Our mode of inquiry was informed by grounded theory (Bogdan & Biklin, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Specifically, we read the blog entries multiple times in order to identify the key phrases and sentences that represented Kristina's evolving understandings of her teaching experiences and Melanie's attempts to further mediate the novice's conceptions of L2 teaching. The blog entries were then coded based on recurring concepts and patterns. The analysis was also guided by previous research on L2 teacher learning (Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Johnson, 2009). We were particularly interested in the cognitive processes that the novice exhibited through writing in the blog. According to Johnson and Golombek (2011), the cognitive processes ignited by engagement in the narrative activity include the following: externalization, verbalization, and systematic examination of one's teaching practices.

Through externalization, teachers can express their understandings, feelings, and perceptions of teaching and students and make sense of their experiences and the day-to-day problems that occur in their practice. Thus, teachers can "make their understandings explicit to themselves and to others" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p. 491). Through verbalization, teachers can internalize knowledge, concepts, and theory. And, through narrative, teachers verbalize connections between day-to-day events and theory. Finally, through systematic examination, teachers engage in pre-determined narrative activities structured to promote inquiry into daily practice.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Portrait of the Novice's Learning in the Context of the Dialogic Practicum Blog

Overall, Kristina (the novice teacher) began by simply receiving Melanie's assistance only when initiated by Melanie (the experienced teacher). However, over time, Kristina gradually transitioned to seeking assistance—both from Melanie and from others such as her mentor Elaine and her peers in the program. This transition took place against a background of Kristina's emotional dissonance and Melanie and Kristina's development of trust and emotional openness between each other. In time, Kristina began to draw explicitly on expert knowledge in ways that point to an emerging ability to claim expert discourse as her own. Importantly, in her blog entries, Kristina was able to re-voice the teacher educator's discourse and to incorporate the teacher educator's ideas into her teaching practice.

In addition, we see how through contributing to the dialogic blog, Kristina externalizes her current understandings of teaching, systematically inquires into her teaching practices, and verbalizes, i.e., connects some of the theoretical concepts of teaching to her own observations of teaching, and even incorporates into her practice some of the pedagogical concepts provided by her supervisor via the blog. The narrative provided the teacher with opportunities to connect theory and concepts to her teaching practice. Further, according to Johnson and Golombek (2011), for teachers

to engage in systematic examination, narrative activities must allow for self-directed, collaborative, and inquiry-based learning connected to teachers' day-to-day experiences. Our findings indicate evidence of this systematic examination of Kristina's teaching practices through her engagement in the narration and reflection in the blog. Consistent with the analytical framework suggested by Johnson and Golombek (2011), Kristina systematically considered her own teaching practice and made decisions about how she might alter it.

In particular, in terms of the cognitive processes ignited through Kristina's engagement in the written narrative of her teaching experiences, we could witness the externalization of her emotions and feelings with regard to her teaching and the supervisor's attempts to connect those everyday conceptions of teaching to more expert conceptualizations. In her last entries in the blog, we also see Kristina verbalizing the concepts described by her supervisor (i.e., instructional paraphrasing, situating an instructional activity, and developing a teaching persona) and reporting on incorporating those concepts in her subsequent classroom teaching practices. Finally, throughout the course of the internship, Kristina participated in a process of systematically examining her teaching activity, which led her to gradually seek more assistance from the wider community of educators (her mentor teacher and the supervisor) as well as to incorporate the materials and ideas of her supervisor in her instructional activities with the goal of improving her teaching practices. Overall, Kristina's learning progressed as follows: She (1) externalized her thoughts and feelings, (2) recognized the loss of self-regulation, (3) experienced emotional dissonance in regard to her first-time teaching, (4) incorporated Melanie's pedagogical concepts of teaching and became conscious of her own learning, and (5) verbalized her understandings of teaching using expert discourse.

In the sections that follow, Kristina's perceptions and understandings and the supervisor's attempts to further mediate her learning will be identified in excerpts from the dialogic blog.

Externalizing thoughts and feelings

In her initial blog entries, Kristina mainly expressed her thoughts and feelings related to observing and teaching in the ITA course. In the following excerpt, we see her first reactions. Interestingly, Kristina shares a very positive response, saying that she has "now understood what the ... class is all about." (Blog entry, 29 January 2008)

After talking to Elaine and observing the class and the corresponding material, *I have now understood what the ... class is all about*—using language (English) and the improvement of, as a foundation, this course is to help students become better aware of the American culture as well as their own teaching in relation to their academic setting they hope to be involved with. [italics indicate emphasis added] (Blog entry, 29 January 2008)

Likewise, in her subsequent blog entry, Kristina continues to relate her reactions to observing the ITA course. In particular, she focuses on the composition of the class, the students' countries of origin, and some of the concerns the students shared.

Interestingly enough the class is made up of ALL Chinese students with the exception of 1 Thai, and 1 Mexican (male) students. The class is fairly evenly divided into half female, half male as well.... Some of the concerns that students mainly had were the following: Understanding HOW to be a TA in the American university. They were frustrated because students were always saying things like, "I don't understand you" over and over again when they're trying to explain it. They realize that it wasn't necessarily their language, but it's HOW they talk with the students and HOW they relay information. (Blog entry, 5 February 2008)

Thus, at least initially, Kristina uses the blog to externalize her emotions and thoughts. However, as her practicum unfolds, she starts to use the blog to identify her instructional concerns and their roots.

In her response to this entry, Melanie attempts to re-direct Kristina's attention to how the course might help these students start to re-position themselves. In addition, during this initial period of the teaching practicum, Kristina does not request mediation (assistance) from an expert other (her supervisor). Instead, it is Melanie who poses a question to Kristina.

As you continue to observe and work with these students *see if you can get a sense of how what they are learning will help to reposition themselves—and see if you can get a sense of how this repositioning ... is changing the way they see themselves as second language users, as potential ITAs, and as future teachers.* (Blog entry, 6 February 2008)

Yet, in her subsequent entry, Kristina fails to return to the issue of how participating in the ESL course might enable the ESL students to re-position themselves. Melanie again attempts to elicit Kristina's response to this issue. This time, the supervisor's mediation is more explicit.

Do they [the teacher and students in the ESL course] talk about how undergraduates view them [the ITAs] or what expectations undergrads may have? Do they talk about how their departments view them? Or other TAs [teaching assistants] in their departments?... Do any of these issues make it into the ... curriculum? (Blog entry, 20 February 2008)

It is likely that upon seeing Kristina's unresponsiveness to her earlier mediational move, the supervisor decides to recalibrate (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) her mediation: she makes it more explicit. In her earlier entry, the supervisor merely suggests a focus for Kristina's observation, whereas in her second entry during this early period of the teaching practicum, she asks more questions related to the actual activities and topics to which students are exposed in this course.

In her next entry, Kristina demonstrates her responsiveness to her supervisor's more explicit mediation: she tells Melanie about an assignment that had helped the students start reflecting on how undergraduate students view them.

I don't think there was any discussion about how they are viewed within their own departments or by their colleagues. However, during their presentation ... they did have to go and talk with faculty and peers about what is typically seen as a "good" TA. (Blog entry, 21 February 2008)

Overall, during this initial period of the teaching practicum, Kristina did not seek mediation from her supervisor. At the same time, her moves shifted from unresponsive to responsive. Initially, Kristina did not reply to her supervisor's request to reflect on how the ESL students' participation in the course she observes allowed them to re-position themselves. Even though it is not clear why Kristina remained unresponsive to the given mediation, it is plausible that due to her limited teaching experience, Kristina needed more explicit mediation to prompt her to respond. Finally, we saw how the blog served as a tool through which Kristina externalized her initial thoughts about the course, whereas Melanie mediated and re-directed those initial understandings, to which Kristina became gradually responsive.

Recognizing the loss of self-regulation

During the next period of the teaching practicum, Kristina assisted her mentor, Elaine, with evaluating the students' oral presentations. In her entry during this period, Kristina requested her supervisor's assistance. In other words, she experienced and expressed a need for mediation from a more expert other (Melanie).

There was no rubric and being a novice, I didn't feel like I could give them an objective assessment. *If there was a criteria that I could follow, I think I would have felt more comfortable.* (Blog entry, 20 February 2008)

In her response, Melanie offers to share some grading rubrics. In her subsequent entry, Kristina accepts the supervisor's help. From a sociocultural perspective, Kristina experienced needs in regard to both object-regulation (grading rubrics) and other-regulation (the supervisor). Kristina also used her supervisor as a resource (Golombek, 2011): the supervisor provided her with concrete grading rubrics that Kristina could use in her teaching.

THAT WOULD BE GREAT!

I actually was meaning to ask you for the rubric that you use for the oral proficiency interview. If you don't mind, I would like to start using that for this class (next time they present), and also for another assignment (... language testing). That's why I didn't feel very comfortable about evaluating them. I just felt that it was based on just my prior knowledge of what I think is needed, rather than being objective and consistent. Hopefully this will be able to help. (Blog entry, 20 February 2008)

At this stage, Kristina seems unable to function without external assistance. The entry above expresses Kristina's reliance on her supervisor's assistance in order to assign appropriate grades to the students' oral presentations. Thus, Kristina's entries created opportunities for her to engage in introspection and sense-making and to explore the day-to-day problems (evaluating student presentations) she was experiencing in her teaching. Furthermore, Kristina's blog represents a mediational space for thinking in which through externalizing and making explicit her thoughts and feelings, we see her struggle to develop her self-regulation.

Overall, due to Kristina's engagement in the practices of teaching (evaluation of students' oral presentations), the nature of her interactions with the supervisor changed. This time, Kristina initiated a request for mediation from the supervisor. From a sociocultural perspective, by vocalizing their need for assistance, learners take greater responsibility for their own learning. It is also important to note that it is engagement in actual teaching that drove Kristina to search for assistance, which confirms the Vygotskian claim about the nature of human development, i.e., that human cognition originates through human involvement in the actual social activities of a given society. Furthermore, Kristina continued to respond to the supervisor's assistance: she decided to use the rubrics Melanie shared with her in her own teaching. Finally, after realizing a loss of self-regulation in teaching, Kristina was able to regain her sense of expertise by relying on her supervisor's assistance. As Golombek and Johnson (2004) argue, teacher educators should play a crucial role in prompting and supporting the novices' development of teaching expertise, which indeed is demonstrated in this case study.

Self-sought mediation from the mentor teacher and the supervisor

As the practicum unfolded, Kristina taught several ESL classes in the course that she observed her mentor (Elaine) teach. Interestingly, Kristina not only sought mediation from her supervisor, but also from her mentor teacher and a peer. This shows her agency as a learner of teaching. She also appealed to expert knowledge (Kennedy, 1999) in order to support her opinion. Thus, Kristina's development as a teacher during the teaching practicum was dependent on her access to and agency in appropriating various mediational means. Kristina made use of various forms of social mediation, e.g., a peer, her mentor, and expert knowledge (Kennedy, 1999). By making this explicit connection to the theories and concepts from her graduate coursework in TESL, Kristina connected educational theory to the practice of L2 teaching.

As noted, during this period of the teaching practicum, Kristina continued to initiate mediation from expert others, specifically, her mentor and her supervisor.

I really want to get feedback from Elaine first, work on that.... I really want to think of something that will engage students.... If you [Melanie] have suggestions on how students could be engaged in doing an analysis of a transcript, your input would be greatly appreciated. I have uploaded the transcript we are using. (Blog entry, 25 February 2008)

This entry demonstrates Kristina's awareness of her need for other-regulation. This time, Kristina sought assistance from both Melanie and Elaine. Apparently, it was Kristina's engagement in the actual activities of teaching that induced

this change. In her response, Melanie made concrete suggestions regarding how Kristina could use the transcript in her ESL class. In addition, Melanie shared with Kristina a rationale for organizing student work.

I'm thinking of how to engage the students with the text in ways *that highlight its essential features, but parsing it out so they don't have to deal with everything at once.* (Blog entry, 26 February 2008)

In this way, Melanie provided Kristina with very explicit mediation. Apparently, based on Kristina's earlier blog entries, the supervisor considered explicit mediation to be the most appropriate form of intervention. Indeed, in her subsequent entry, Kristina reported on how she had incorporated Melanie's ideas into her teaching ("Luckily with some of the advice that Melanie gave me, I re-did the tentative lesson," Blog entry, 11 March 2008). In this entry, Kristina also mentioned the feedback she had received from her mentor: "Elaine was there as well, and she gave me some feedback. She actually said that I did very well and complemented me :)" (Blog entry, 11 March 2008). Here, both the supervisor and the mentor teacher served as expert others mediating Kristina's learning-to-teach.

Self-sought mediation from a peer, the supervisor, and expert knowledge

In a subsequent entry, Kristina reported on how she sought additional assistance from a peer (peer mediation).

The feedback I got back from an observer ... was that the students appeared to again speak more when I was teaching [rather than when her mentor teacher taught]. (Blog entry, 25 February 2008)

In the following entry, Kristina also appealed to expert knowledge (Kennedy, 1999) in order to support her opinion. In particular, Kristina related a comment that one of the ESL students made during the students' discussion of a transcript of a class lecture. In this transcript, the instructor is a native speaker of English and, thus, one of the ESL students proposed that due to this instructor's native-speaker background, she could afford to be friendly and informal with the students. Kristina expressed her disagreement with this student's opinion and appealed to L2 expert knowledge to validate her point of view (the works of Jenkins). In other words, Kristina attempted to verbalize her understandings of the theory and practice of L2 teaching.

One of the female students made a side comment that she believes that the instructor has the luxury to use jokes and be friendly or informal because she was a "native" speaker. *I was a bit shocked to hear this since I hear so much of Jenkins and such from our courses.... I figure, NOW, if we just had them practice more and more, so that they could get used to teaching in their own style, wouldn't that be of help?* (Blog entry, 25 February 2008)

In response, Melanie suggested that Kristina use this instructional situation as a learning opportunity for the ESL students. In her entry, the supervisor illustrated her point by providing concrete examples of how this could be done. The supervisor's mediation was again very explicit.

It seems like a perfect opportunity for you to create a series of mini-lessons that focus on exactly that—how instructors use jokes or play with language as part of their teaching style ... you could find something on youtube ... or you could even record yourself and listen for how you use metaphors or play with the language as you teach—these sorts of prompts should help to get the conversation rolling. Or you could set up scenarios in which they create an exchange in which they have to use more playful language, try it out, and talk about what sort of socio-pragmatic impact it may have on how students view them. Since they brought this up, it seems like a perfectly acceptable "teachable moment" to me. (Blog entry, 26 February 2008)

Yet, Kristina did not return to these suggestions in her subsequent entries. This unresponsiveness may have resulted from the fact that Kristina did not teach the ESL course by herself. Instead, she taught the course in collaboration with Elaine, which might have limited her opportunities to incorporate new instructional ideas.

Overall, during this period of the teaching practicum, Kristina continued to request assistance from more experts others: her supervisor, her mentor teacher, and she also appealed to expert knowledge (Kennedy, 1999) in order to support her opinion. It is evident that as a novice, Kristina experienced a need for other-regulation and the teaching practicum blog served as a "mediational space" (Wertsch, 1985) through which she could appeal to the mediation of a more expert other, such as her supervisor. In addition, the space allowed Kristina to draw on the theory she had learned during her coursework in reference to her classroom experience (i.e., turning to the works of Jenkins). For her part, during this time period, Melanie continued to provide explicit mediation. For example, she not only supplied Kristina with instructional ideas, but she also provided concrete examples of how certain instructional ideas could be realized. In other words, Melanie demonstrated her sensitivity to Kristina's needs as a learner of teaching.

Emotional dissonance

During the final period of the teaching practicum, Kristina taught two ESL classes, both of which were observed by her supervisor who provided feedback on them. In the following excerpt, Kristina gives a strong emotional response in relation to the first class Melanie had observed her teach.

So, on Monday I was really *disappointed in myself for doing such a horrible job.* I noticed myself *get pretty nervous* while teaching ... and it also didn't help when I wasn't completely prepared. Just because *I was nervous*, didn't mean I should have jumped from one idea to the next. In reflecting back, I think I set off this frantic pace for myself in my head which made me want to keep rushing things. I realized that one of the things that I needed that day was understanding what my purpose was. It was funny because when I wrote out the first lesson plan, I had a specific objective in mind and could see the flow of the classroom. The actual day I was teaching was another story. I forgot how important it was to keep the purpose in your head at all times. On the other occasions that I taught, I think that was the one reason why my lessons went so smoothly. (Blog entry, 28 March 2008)

From a Vygotskian perspective, Kristina reported on her experience of emotional dissonance (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Olson, 1995), i.e., a strong emotional response to her teaching. For example, she writes, “So, on Monday I was *really disappointed* in myself for doing *such a horrible job*. I noticed myself get pretty nervous while teaching” (Blog entry, 28 March 2008). This emotional dissonance was rooted in Kristina’s realization of a cognitive contradiction, i.e., a perceived mismatch between her beliefs as a teacher (that she should have an instructional objective in mind) and her practices (she “jumped from one idea to the next”).

In her response to this blog entry, Melanie made the following mediational moves. First, she provided Kristina with emotional encouragement: “No one expects you to be ‘the perfect’ teacher right off the bat” (Blog entry, 29 March 2008). Second, she made concrete suggestions regarding how Kristina could improve her teaching. Specifically, Melanie referred to several pedagogical concepts, such as situating an instructional activity, using instructional paraphrasing, and creating a teaching persona.

Try to begin your lessons *by situating the concept or skill you are going to teach in some sort of context that they are familiar with*—so for today’s lesson, you could have given some directives, both polite and impolite ones, “Could you please stand up?” “Open your books to a blank page.” ... Use instructional paraphrasing: *Use students’ contributions to build upon and to co-construct meaning in the classroom*. Instead of responding with, “OK” or “Anything else?” recast what they have said, relate it to what you are trying to teach them.... *In a way, you are trying to build bridges between what they know and what you are trying to teach them.... Develop a comfortable teaching persona: Work on developing a stronger teaching persona*. It is one thing to relate to students as a fellow student but you need to establish a teaching persona in which you look and sound like you know what you are doing. Acting “sheepish” or “coy” or “silly” may get a laugh out of them, but you need to establish a sense of authority in the classroom. (Blog entry, 29 March 2008)

In this way, Melanie pushed Kristina to start to think about teaching in conceptual ways and to employ these pedagogical concepts in her teaching. Importantly, the supervisor’s mediation was very explicit: she defined some pertinent pedagogical concepts and offered reasons for their importance.

Incorporating Melanie’s suggestions and conscious awareness of learning

During this later period of the teaching practicum, Kristina taught the second ESL class that the supervisor observed. The following excerpt illustrates Kristina’s thoughts and feelings in relation to this class.

This time around, *following Melanie’s advice*, I again tried very hard to engage students by not just replying back by saying “okay” or “right”; instead I attempted to *rephrase their responses*. *This was really difficult and I caught myself saying “okay” or “right” sometimes. But making that conscious effort to rearticulate the students’ responses was, I think, helpful for me, the students and the class environment*. (Blog entry, 21 April 2008)

In this reflection, Kristina returned to the concept of instructional paraphrasing that Melanie had mentioned in her feedback on the first class she observed Kristina teach and reported on how she implemented this concept in teaching. In this way, Kristina showed metacognitive awareness of her learning as a teacher (Yoshida, 2011). By making these moves, Kristina demonstrated her responsiveness to the mediation of the supervisor. From a Vygotskian perspective, Kristina’s responsiveness might have been provoked by the emotional dissonance (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Olson, 1995) she had experienced after teaching the first class that Melanie observed. According to Poehner (2011), “dissonance represents the sort of inner contradiction that ... creates the potential to push cognitive development” (p. 198). In other words, during that period of the teaching practicum (after the first observation by the supervisor), Kristina was ripe for development, which we witnessed in her reflection on the second class she taught.

In the entry related to her second observation of Kristina’s teaching, Melanie affirms Kristina’s ability to improve her instructional activities.

What a pleasure to watch you teach today! *Your lesson had everything I look for in effective teaching, and more*. (Blog entry, 21 April 2008)

The supervisor further noted that Kristina managed to organize her class, situate her instructional activities, use instructional paraphrasing and modeling, and present a competent teaching persona. Again, this entry points to Kristina’s responsiveness to the supervisor’s earlier mediational moves: she was able to materialize the supervisor’s previous suggestions in actual teaching. In order to further promote the novice’s learning, Melanie suggested that Kristina pay greater attention to the questions she asks during her classes, noting that her questions are often confusing because they are too broad and vague.

From a sociocultural perspective, the ability to imitate is a central mechanism for internalization (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). The supervisor’s comments on the second class that Kristina taught suggest that Kristina had succeeded in transforming her teaching on the basis of the pedagogical concepts that her supervisor had described in reference to the first class she had watched Kristina teach. Kristina’s engagement in the actual activities of teaching, her agency in appropriating the new mediational means, and the supervisor’s mediation lay the foundation for Kristina’s potential full internalization of new pedagogical concepts, such as using instructional paraphrasing, situating an instructional activity, and developing an appropriate teaching persona. However, here, there is no evidence that Kristina fully internalized these concepts. That is because, from a sociocultural perspective, only Kristina’s re-contextualization of her new understandings of teaching in her future teaching would suggest that these new symbolic means have indeed become the psychological tools that guide her thinking about teaching and her actual teaching activities (Gal’perin, 1977; Leont’ev, 1992).

In a subsequent entry, Kristina continued to demonstrate her awareness of learning-to-teach (Yoshida, 2011). She not only named a certain instructional practice (“instructional paraphrasing”) through expert discourse, but also illustrated that concept. In this particular entry, Kristina presented transcripts of her conversation with her students during the second class the supervisor observed.

Instance 1 Introduction (1 min)

Me [Kristina]: So since Elaine talked about closings before a lot and you guys have done it in your office hours and your simulations. So what is a closing and when does it actually happen?

St [A student]: Let audience know it is the end of presentation or discussion.

Me [Kristina]: Right, so, it’s basically to tell everyone that something has ended whether it’s your presentation or your lecture. So, for instance ...

... as you can see, I still use “right” but! *This time around, what I do is REITERATE what the student says. For me, this is important because I had been realizing how important this skill is as a teacher!* Also, it’s not shown here, but after, I had given examples ... I talked about why it’s essential to have closings. (Blog entry, 9 May 2008)

Overall, during this final period of the teaching practicum, Kristina demonstrated her emergent ability to think conceptually about teaching. That is, because she was able to transform her teaching activity (the second class that the supervisor observed) in view of her new understandings of teaching, which were mediated via Melanie’s feedback on the first class she observed. It is important to note that Melanie’s suggestions were based on several pedagogical concepts (i.e., using instructional paraphrasing, situating an instructional activity, and developing a strong teaching persona), which reflect her attempts to help Kristina develop a more conceptual understanding of teaching. Interestingly, the pedagogical concept of instructional paraphrasing was particularly salient for Kristina. She both employed the concept in her teaching and described how she did so in one of her entries.

Verbalizing her understandings of teaching using expert discourse

At the very end of her practicum, Kristina observed two other ESL teachers in the same university. One of Kristina’s entries during this period illustrates her emergent ability to name certain teaching practices through expert discourse (Golombek & Johnson, 2004), such as “instructional paraphrasing” and “teaching persona”.

She [an ESL teacher Kristina observed] always *paused*, then *rephrased* what her students had started and then spun another idea off of the student’s.... I realized what the balance between being a teacher and a friend looks like. Unlike my prior teaching experience, she was able to *create a persona* in which she wasn’t demanding or distant with her students, while at the same time *maintaining her authority as a teacher*. Her quiet and demur personality doesn’t make her look weaker in class. Rather, I think that part of her personality makes her students feel welcome. At the same time, I’ve never seen this side of her where she commands the class. (Blog entry, 8 May 2008)

From a Vygotskian perspective, Kristina’s naming of certain teaching practices through expert discourse raised her metacognitive awareness of the teaching activity and also allowed her to re-frame her understanding of teaching (Golombek & Johnson, 2004). Kinginger (1997) concedes that expert discourse enables teachers to enhance their understandings of teaching. The excerpt above both demonstrates Kristina’s awareness of the importance of instructional paraphrasing in teaching and shows her emergent understanding of what it means to create an appropriate teaching persona. Importantly, these two concepts were provided to Kristina by Melanie in her feedback on the first class she observed Kristina teach.

Overall, Kristina’s participation in the teaching practicum experience allowed her to externalize her conceptions of teaching and open them to discursive mediation from the supervisor. During her participation in the teaching practicum, Kristina also sought mediation from her mentor (an expert other) and a peer. In addition, Kristina appealed to expert knowledge (Kennedy, 1999) in order to support her opinion. In turn, Melanie provided Kristina with explicit mediation based primarily on relevant pedagogical concepts. In Johnson’s (2009) view, “scientific concepts provide both a discourse through which to name experiences and a basis upon which teachers are able to ground their internal rationale for alternative ways of understanding themselves and the activities of teaching” (p. 39). On the basis of the relevant pedagogical concepts provided to her by Melanie, Kristina transformed her teaching activity during the second class that the supervisor observed. Kristina also demonstrated awareness of her learning as a teacher by naming her own teaching practices and the practices of a teacher she observed through expert discourse (Golombek & Johnson, 2004). These findings suggest that by the end of her teaching practicum experience, Kristina was able to start moving from externally mediated thinking to internally mediated thinking and teaching activities.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the present study demonstrates the transformative power of engagement in writing a dialogic blog for both individual teacher development and teacher education programs. Writing a dialogic blog can function as a powerful tool for self-reflection and systematic examination of everyday teaching practices, and further teacher educators can trace an individual teacher’s professional development in this context. In other words, novice teachers’ blogs can be useful for monitoring teachers’ development, for communicating with teachers on an individual basis, and for supporting and enhancing teachers’ professional development strategically, especially if they are dialogic where teacher educators regularly read and respond to what teachers are writing about. Thus, because they have the potential to allow the process of teacher learning to be seen as it unfolds, blogs become valuable resources for teacher educators. Access to

the inner working of teacher thinking can enable teacher educators to calibrate their mediation and provide struggling teachers with the exact support and expertise they need at any given point in time. However, whether self-directed or dialogic, blogs and teaching journals, as a form of teacher narratives, are considered the most authentic way to understand teaching and teacher learning from the teacher's perspective (Bailey, 1990; Cizek, 1999; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Doyle, 1997; Lyons & Labosky, 2002). And, as such, blogs and journals represent a legitimate means of utilizing narrative ways of knowing as a meditational tool to support teacher learning within the context of L2 teacher education programs.

A sociocultural analysis of Kristina's and the supervisor's interactions shows that Kristina moved from other-initiated mediation in the observation period to self-sought mediation (Kristina requests Melanie's assistance) when she actually began to teach. Kristina begins requesting mediation once she begins to engage in actual teaching. At the end of the teaching practicum, Kristina also demonstrates an emergent ability to think about her teaching conceptually and to base her actual teaching practices on certain pedagogical concepts, such as, for example, "instructional paraphrasing." From a sociocultural perspective, evidence of full internalization lies in a learner's ability to transfer her new understanding to a different context or to efforts to undertake more complex activities (Gal'perin, 1977; Leont'ev, 1992). On the basis of Kristina's blog entries, there is no evidence that Kristina fully internalized the pedagogical concepts offered to her through Melanie's mediation. However, there is evidence of her emergent understanding of these pedagogical concepts. The present study also demonstrates that a supervisor plays a critical role in mediating pre-service teacher development of teaching expertise by offering critical emotional support and by providing relevant pedagogical concepts and ideas. In this study, the supervisor's assistance allowed Kristina to re-frame her understanding of teaching and even modify some of her instructional practices on the basis of these new understandings. This transfer of knowledge can be understood as suggesting the effectiveness of the teacher educator's mediation.

Overall, the study suggests that L2 pre-service teachers' narration in dialogic blogs can serve as an important mediational tool that fosters pre-service teachers' development of teaching expertise and underscores the critical role of the supervisor in mediating a novice's learning-to-teach. There are several key arguments for using a dialogic blog for this purpose. Fundamentally, a dialogic blog creates a space in which the relationship can develop and in which assistance can be explicitly asked for and offered. It positions the pre-service teacher and supervisor in dyadic communication. It also appears important that this communication be asynchronous, in that it allows the pre-service teacher to step outside the dizzying flow of teaching in real time and articulate her own perspective on what she has seen and done. Similarly, it offers both parties a space in which to articulate ideas and present and receive feedback in a slow and less-threatening way than the more typical face-to-face meeting after a lesson, in which the pre-service teacher often hears all feedback as criticism.

The analysis also makes clear that the dialogic blog is a place where different sources of expert knowledge for the beginning teacher can come together and, potentially, be taken up in an integrated way. We suspect, however, that the extent to which this actually happens depends primarily on the ability of each party to synthesize and interrogate material from a range of sources. Yet, there is potential, at least, to move beyond the classic divide between classroom preparation for teaching as developing primarily declarative knowledge and initial field experiences as developing primarily procedural knowledge: in the dialogic blog, ideas from the field, classroom, mentor, and peers can act as influences on each other.

Finally, we want to point out the utility of the blog not only as a learning space for Kristina and as a way for Melanie to interact with Kristina but as an important tool for Melanie and other faculty members framing the TESL program as a whole. The dialogue in the blog offers a view of when ideas stressed in coursework find their way into the practicum and when they are left behind; where practicum sites pose helpful challenges and where they pose stifling ones; and where relationships develop to support learning or where they might be helped to develop. We have based this study, in part, on the notion that writing in a dialogic blog helps pre-service teachers by making their thinking explicit to themselves and thus subject to their own revision and development. Yet, the same benefits accrue to us collectively as accrue to the individual: in the dialogic reflective blog, the program faculty as a whole can read a rich dialogue of its members engaged in relationship and learning. This reading, in turn, provides an analytical basis for faculty members to revise existing program practices and develop new ones just as the engagement in the blog provides such a basis for individual teachers to revise and develop their own classroom approaches.

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Production of English Syllable Final /l/ by Mandarin Chinese Speakers

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Abstract—This study examined the production of English syllable final /l/s by Chinese speakers. It was found that 1) Chinese speakers had great difficulties in producing syllable final /l/. 2) More importantly, Chinese speakers used three strategies to modify syllable final /l/: vocalization, deletion, and retroflexion. Among the strategies, vocalization is used to modify the syllable final /l/ after front and back vowels, while deletion and retroflexion occur only after back vowels. Furthermore, vocalization and retroflexion occurred after the back vowels more frequently in formal speech than in casual speech. 3) Experienced ESL learners produced more native-like syllable final /l/s than inexperienced ones, and females produced accurate or near accurate syllable final /l/ more frequently than males.

Index Terms—second language phonology, production, English syllable-final /l/

I. INTRODUCTION

It is well known that most adult second language (L2) speakers retain an accent when speaking an L2, even when they can speak the L2 with grammatical correctness and functional fluency. The accent can usually be detected in both vowels and consonants, and may frequently break down communication. With regard to consonants, both prevocalic and postvocalic consonants can be problematic, but the postvocalic ones (i.e., in coda position) seem especially so.

A. Previous Studies on English Consonants in Coda Position

Many studies have been conducted over the past two decades to explore how L2 speakers acquire English consonants. It has been found that native Mandarin and Korean speakers devoiced final stops (Hansen, 2001; Major & Faudree 1996; Wang, 1995). Native Mandarin speakers replaced the interdental fricatives /θ, ð/ with /s, z/, respectively (Hansen, 2001). Native Korean speakers inserted the vowel [ɪ] after the palatal fricative /ʃ/ and affricates /tʃ, dʒ/ (Schmidt & Meyer, 1995; Yeon, 2004). Native Japanese speakers confused nasal /ŋ/ with nasal /n/ (Aoyama, 2003). As well, ESL speakers simplified English consonant clusters using epenthesis, deletion or feature changing strategies (Broselow et al., 1998; Major, 1994; Major & Kim, 1999; Weinberger, 1987). In contrast, one area in the L2 consonant research that seems to have not attracted comparable attention is the second language production of the liquid /l/. Among the limited studies on /l/, most have been focused on the syllable-initial /l/ (Bradlow et al., 1997, 1999; Borden et al., 1983; Goto, 1971; Sheldon et al., 1982, 1985) or its perception in relation to another liquid /r/ by Japanese speakers (Aoyama et al., 2004).

However, very few studies have been undertaken to systematically describe how L2 speakers acquire the English liquid /l/ in coda position. In an investigation of the English syllable final /l/ produced by Korean-English bilingual children, Oh (2002) found that the tip of the tongue gesture was produced earlier by the Korean-English bilingual children than the one by English monolingual children. The Korean-English bilingual children also had an additional gesture in their production, raising the tongue body, a gesture used in producing the Korean /l/. Thus, the result was a clear indication that L1 transfer had played a role in the L2 acquisition. Heselwood and McChrystal (2000) studied teenage Punjabi-English bilinguals and found that these teenagers tended to use a palatalized /l/ to produce the syllabic /l/ in a word like *candle*. They also added a vowel /ε/ before the palatalized /l/, which is very different from the mid-central schwa-type vowel found in monolingual English in these environments. The researchers did not however explain why the subjects made such a modification of syllabic /l/. The last two decades witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number of native Mandarin speakers learning English as a second language. However, only two studies addressed the difficulties that Mandarin speakers had in pronouncing the syllable-final /l/. Lee (1976), for instance, mentioned that the native Mandarin speakers had trouble with the /l/, but he fell short of describing how the speakers exhibited such difficulties. Hansen (2001) conducted another study which pointed out that the syllable-final /l/ in the word *tell* was one of the most difficult consonants for Mandarin speakers. He found that the /l/ was absent in 23% of their production and that 8% of their production involved feature change. Hansen also did not go further to examine closely the nature of the problem.

B. English /l/

English /l/ occurs in three different syllable positions. They are syllable-initial /l/, as in *lip* /lɪ p/, syllable final /l/, as in *peel* /pi:l/ and syllabic /l/, as in *people* /pi:p/. Traditionally, syllable initial /l/ is called light L or clear L (Hattori, 1984; Bladon & Al-Bamerni, 1976), while syllable final /l/ and syllabic /l/ are called dark L. In Sproat and Fujimura's

(1993) study, they used the terms “prevocalic L” and “postvocalic L” to describe syllable initial /l/ and syllable final /l/, respectively. For the purposes of this study, the phoneme /l/ will be categorized by its syllable positions.

According to Sproat and Fujimura’s (1993) study, “All productions of /l/ involve two gestures, one gesture corresponding to the apical extension, henceforth termed the apical gesture, and the other corresponding to the dorsal retraction and lowering, the dorsal gesture. The apical gesture of /l/ is a consonantal gesture and the dorsal retraction gesture is a vocalic gesture since it does not produce a radical constriction in the vocal tract” (p. 304). “Consonantal gestures tend to be stronger in syllable initial position and weaker in syllable final position. Vocalic gestures tend to be weaker in syllable initial position and stronger in syllable final position” (p. 305). The relationship between these two gestures shows that the consonantal apical gesture is attracted to syllable margins, while the vocalic dorsal gesture is attracted to syllable nuclei. In terms of the gestures’ timing, it was found that the apical gesture occurs slightly before the vocalic gesture in producing the syllable initial /l/. Both gestures end almost simultaneously. To produce the syllable final /l/, the dorsal gesture occurs much earlier than the apical gesture. The end of the dorsal gesture is almost synchronous with the beginning of the apical gesture (Browman & Goldstein, 1995). The above descriptions of the English /l/ are abstracted in Figure 1.

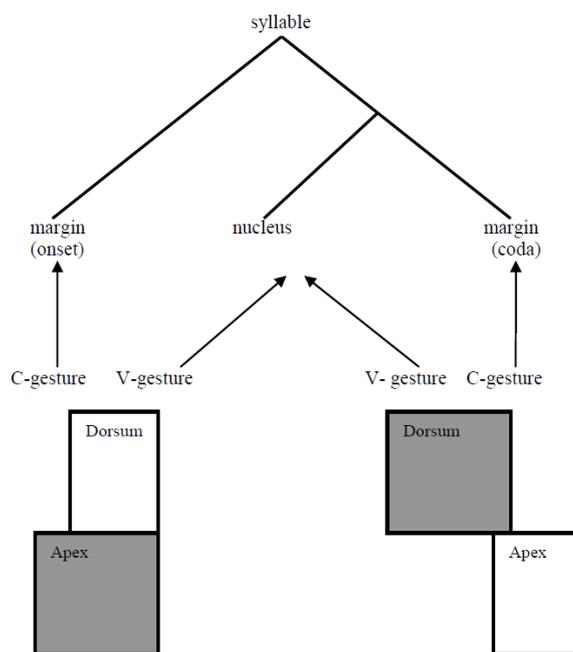


Figure 1. Schematic view of Sproat and Fujimura’s (1993) and Browman and Goldstein’s (1995) gestural account of /l/ in English. Shaded boxes represent stronger gestures. (Revised version of the diagram in Carter, 2003; p78)

C. Research Questions

The present study was conducted to investigate the production of English /l/ in syllable final position by Mandarin speakers and aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How well do Mandarin speakers produce the singleton syllable-final /l/? In other words, what are the variations of /l/, if any, typically produced by Mandarin speakers?
2. What strategies do Mandarin speakers use to modify or approximate English syllable-final /l/?
3. What are the factors that may prevent native Mandarin speakers from producing English syllable- final /l/ accurately?
4. How do linguistic and other factors (such as social factors) affect the way Mandarin speakers modify English syllable-final /l/?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Eight Mandarin speakers (4 male and 4 female) in Victoria, Canada, and eight Mandarin speakers (4 male and 4 female) in Beijing, China, participated in this experiment. All were university students, and all were native speakers of the Northern dialects of Mandarin. They ranged from 20 to 30 in age, and had been taught English in a formal educational environment from junior high school through university for over 10 years. All subjects were free from any medically significant speech or hearing problems.

The eight Mandarin speakers residing in Canada constituted the experienced group of speakers. They all had been in Victoria for at least one year, and were all over the age of 16 when they first arrived. They all had previously passed the

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimal score of 550, the minimum score required for an international student to enter the university. They all had taken undergraduate or graduate courses instructed in English at the University of Victoria and had communicated with local people in English on a regular basis.

The eight Mandarin speakers in China comprised the inexperienced group. All were graduate students in Materials Engineering at the Beijing University of Science and Technology. None had ever been to an English-speaking country prior to participating in the study. The English instruction they received in class was focused on reading and writing abilities, and they seldom used English to communicate with others outside their English classes.

B. Stimulus Materials

Two tasks were used to elicit the ESL data in two speech styles: reading a word list and reading a mini dialogue. In the word-list reading task, forty English words in the syllable pattern CVL were used. All of them were real words. The vowels in the tested words were /ɪ /, /ɛ /, /ɔ / and /u/¹. Each vowel occurred ten times in various consonantal environments in each unit of the task. There were a total of 640 tokens in the word-list reading task (10 CVL × 4 vowels × 16 participants = 640 tokens).

In the mini-dialog reading task, two dialogues were prepared containing the target words with syllable-final /l/. The target words all occurred at the end of phrases or sentences. In other words, all of them occurred before a pause, creating a rhyming pattern in the dialogues. The purpose of this arrangement was to minimize differences from the effects of the following environment. The results of the pronunciations of three of the words in the dialogues were not considered: the name *Phil* when it occurred the first time in the first dialogue, the word *well* when it occurred the second time in the first dialogue and the person's name *Paul* when it occurred the first time in the second dialogue. This is because the pronunciation of syllable-final /l/ in the words *Phil* and *well* might be influenced by the syllable-initial /l/s at the beginnings of the following words, *look* and *let*, respectively. If the speaker speaks quickly, the two adjacent words will be linked together. The syllable-final /l/ of the word *Phil* would be changed into the syllable-initial /l/ of the word *look*. The same process of assimilation could also apply to the syllable-final /l/ in the word *well*. Therefore, the accuracy rate of these tokens could potentially be higher than that of other tokens with syllable-final /l/ following a front vowel. The name *Paul* was followed by the word *would* which begins with the glide /w/, which, in turn, might trigger vocalization of syllable-final /l/. Therefore, the accuracy of the token could potentially be lower than others with the syllable-final /l/ following a back vowel. A total of 304 tokens from the mini-dialogue reading task were analyzed (5 C/l /L × 16 participants + 4 C/ɛ /L × 16 participants + 5 C/ɔ /L × 16 participants + 5 C/u/L × 16 participants = 304 tokens).

C. Procedure

During the word-list reading task, the subjects were tested one at a time in a quiet room. At first, the subject heard accurate productions of the test words, presented by an experienced phonetician, an adult female native English speaker. This step ensured that the subject received the correct input. Then, the subject did a trial reading in order to become familiar with the words. After that, the subject read the word list. The productions were recorded into a computer using PRAAT.

In the mini-dialog reading task, the procedure was similar to that of the preceding experiment. First, the subjects heard accurate production of the test sentences presented. Then they were asked to translate the English dialogues into Mandarin in order to force them to focus their attention on the meaning of the content rather than just the pronunciation of the words. After that, they read the dialogues as if they were a natural conversation.

D. Judgment

The elicited data were judged in two ways, by native speakers and/or by Praat. Two native speakers of Canadian English were asked to identify whether the /l/s produced by the Mandarin speakers were identical to the ones made by the native English speaker. If an /l/ did not match native production, the judges were instructed to indicate how the /l/ was pronounced (or mispronounced). If the judges were not in agreement in their transcriptions, an acoustic analysis was performed with PRAAT, which was used to generate spectrograms for tokens. What was supposed to be the dark /l/ was identified in the following ways:

Phoneme /l/: The F2 drifts downward in frequency, indicating a back tongue position. The F3 drifts upward, indicating a movement of the tip of the tongue towards the alveolar ridge.

Vocalized /l/: The F2 lowers, as the tongue position is relatively back and the lips are relatively rounded, and the F2 angle towards the vowel is steeper than with the syllable-final /l/. F3 does not show a rising tendency.

Deleted /l/: The F2 and F3 of the vowel in the nucleus do not change after finishing the production of the target word.

Retroflexed /l/: F3 lowers and F2 rises, which indicates that the tip of the tongue curls.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Error Rate

¹ Mandarin participants in this study tended to lengthen the short vowels /ɪ/ and /ɔ/ in their production, so the length of preceding vowels was not taken into account.

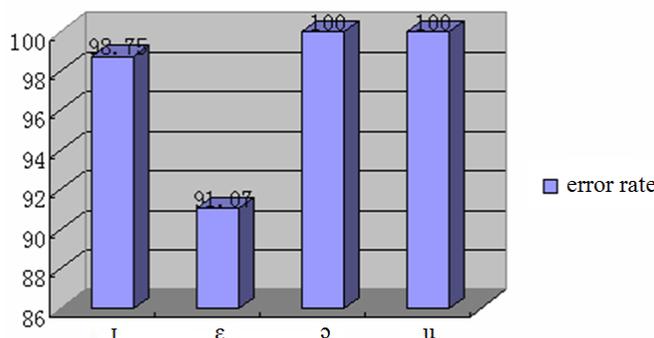


Figure 2. Error rates of production of the syllable final /l/ with different preceding vowels in word list and mini-dialogue tasks

Figure 2 clearly shows that Mandarin speakers had difficulties in producing /l/ correctly in syllable final position. The error rate for syllable final /l/ is extremely high, averaging 97% in all vowel contexts. The error rates for syllable final /l/ after different vowels are all above 90%. Two reasons can be employed to explain these phenomena. Let us consider L1 phonological influence first. In Mandarin, the phoneme /l/ cannot occur in syllable final position. Mandarin only allows nasal consonants /n/ and /ŋ/ and retroflex /ɾ/ in coda position. No other consonant or consonant cluster is permitted in coda position. Therefore, Mandarin speakers might find it difficult to pronounce the /l/ in a new syllable position.

However, this is not an entirely convincing explanation as to why Mandarin speakers cannot produce syllable-final /l/ correctly. Certain other consonants also occur only in syllable initial position in Mandarin, but they are still pronounced with a high accuracy rate by Mandarin speakers when they occur in syllable final position in English. For example, over 80% of the syllable final voiceless stops in Hansen’s (2001) study were pronounced correctly by Mandarin speakers. Therefore, the new syllable position is not a sufficient explanation for this phenomenon. Thus, we should take phonetic influence into account as well. Syllable final /l/ is not only different from syllable initial /l/ in syllable position, but also different in manner of articulation that does not apply to voiceless consonants. The phoneme /l/ has two articulatory gestures: consonantal apical gesture and vocalic dorsal gesture. Both of these are oral gestures, whereas the voiceless stops have only one oral gesture (Browman & Goldstein, 1995). Furthermore, the oral gestures of the /l/ can be considered as two lingual gestures which no other consonants in English (except /ɾ/) have. Therefore, the articulation of the phoneme /l/ is more ‘complex’ (Gick, 2004). Also, there is a time lag between the two lingual gestures of syllable final /l/, whereas the two gestures occur almost simultaneously in producing syllable-initial /l/. Since simultaneous gestures are easier to produce (Kelso et al., 1979), syllable-initial /l/ is easier to produce than syllable final /l/. In sum, Mandarin speakers’ difficulty in pronouncing syllable final /l/ correctly is due to the fact that /l/ does not occur in the position in Mandarin syllable structure patterns, and to the manners of coarticulation of the phoneme /l/. Although syllable-final /l/ is almost always mispronounced by Mandarin speakers, a small percentage of /l/s following the mid front vowel /ε / are pronounced correctly. The reason for this relatively higher accuracy will be discussed in the next section.

B. Error Type

In addition to error rate, error types were further investigated. Three strategies were found: vocalization, deletion, and retroflexion, which are defined as follows:

Vocalization: The apical gesture is lost and the dorsal gesture is maintained. As a result, the vocalized /l/s were heard as a back vowel such as /u/ or /o/.

Deletion: The two gestures of articulation of /l/ are totally lost, leaving no consonantal segment in coda position.

Retroflexion: The tip of the tongue is curled behind but not touching the alveolar ridge. The /l/s were perceived more as the retroflexed /ɾ/.

TABLE 1.
VARIATIONS IN VOCALIZATION

	Preceding vowel			
	i	ε	u	o
Type of vocalization	/ou/	/o/, /u/	/o/, /ou/	/u/
Exception	/u ^r /, /ɣ /	/u ^r /, /ɣ /	---	---

As shown in Table 1, various vowels were substituted for the syllable final /l/ in the production test. The vowel /ou/ consistently replaced syllable final /l/ when the vocalization of /l/ occurred after the vowel /i /. The vowels /u/ or /o/ were used to modify the /l/ when the vocalization of /l/ occurred after the vowel /ε /. The vowel /o/ or /ou/ substituted for the /l/ when the vocalization happened after the vowel /u/. There were exceptions, however: Ten tokens ended with the vowel /ɣ / after the front vowel /i /, and ten tokens with /ɣ / after the front vowel /ε /. Five tokens ended with /u^r/ after the vowel /i / and eighteen tokens ended with /u^r/ after the vowel /ε /.

TABLE 2.
LINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS UNDER INVESTIGATION

Categories	Factor groups
Linguistic	Vowel backness
	High front vowel /ɪ /
	Mid front vowel /ɛ /
	High back vowel /u/
	Mid back vowel /ɔ /
Social	Gender
	Female
	Male
	Experience
	Experienced (Chinese students in Canada)
	Inexperienced (Chinese students in China)
	Style
Formal style (word list reading) Casual style (mini-dialogue reading)	

Shown in Table 2, several linguistic and social factors which may affect the Mandarin speakers' use of strategies for modifying syllable final /l/ are also considered. The production results are presented according to these different factors.

In the following tables, the letter L was used for correct production of the phoneme /l/, V for vocalization, R for retroflex /r/, and D for deleted /l/.

1. The effect of vowel backness

TABLE 3.
PERCENTAGES OF OCCURRENCES OF VOCALIZATION, RETROFLEXION, AND DELETION WHEN THE SYLLABLE FINAL /l/ OCCURS AFTER DIFFERENT VOWELS, WITH THE NUMBERS OF TOKENS IN PARENTHESES

	Preceding Vowels			
	/ɪ /	/ɛ /	/u/	/ɔ /
L	1.25 (3)	8.9 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)
V	98.75 (237)	91.1 (204)	17.9 (43)	37.5 (90)
R	0 (0)	0 (0)	13.8 (33)	16.7 (40)
D	0 (0)	0 (0)	69.3 (164)	45.8 (110)
Total	100 (240)	100 (224)	100 (240)	100 (240)

The row of correct productions shows that Mandarin speakers had great difficulties pronouncing /l/ after any vowel, especially after the back vowels /u/ and /ɔ/. We can also see that Mandarin speakers used the same strategy of vocalization to modify the syllable final /l/ which occurred after both of the front vowels /ɪ / and /ɛ /. They used three different strategies to modify the /l/ after the back vowels /u/ and /ɔ /.

The strategy of deletion was most frequently employed in these two cases. The vocalization strategy came next, and the retroflexion strategy was the one least used to modify syllable final /l/ after /u/ and /ɔ/. Comparing the percentages of vocalization of syllable final /l/ after the vowels /u/ and /ɔ/, it was found that the percentage of vocalization after the vowel /ɔ / was twice as great as the percentage of vocalization after the vowel /u/. The difference between the occurrences of deletion to modify the /l/ after the vowels /u/ and /ɔ / is also significant, $t = 4.798, p < .05$.

This kind of modification can be explained by phonological influence and phonetic influence. Two types of phonological influence predispose vocalization: one is universal syllable structure, and the other is Mandarin syllable structure. The universally least marked syllable structure is the CV syllable (Yavas 1994). Vocalizing the /l/ in coda position can be attributed to the effect of universal preference for open syllables. After being vocalized, the CVL pattern becomes CVV, which is an open syllable. Furthermore, no consonants are permitted in syllable final position in Mandarin, except nasal /n/, /ŋ/, and retroflexed /r/. Therefore, L1 syllable structure patterns enhance the high probability of Mandarin speakers' choosing the strategy of vocalization. Different from stops, which attract an epenthetic schwa to form an extra CV structure (Hansen, 2001; Lin 2001), syllable-final /l/ has articulatory manners which make it possible for /l/ itself to be vocalized rather than being attached with a vowel. As mentioned before, syllable-final /l/ has two articulatory gestures, a consonantal apical gesture and a vocalic dorsal gesture. In syllable final position, the vocalic gesture tends to be stronger and the consonant gesture tends to be weaker. The vocalic gesture also occurs before the consonantal gesture in producing syllable-final /l/ (Sproat & Fujimura 1993; Browman & Goldstein 1995). Therefore, it is more likely for Mandarin speakers to lose the consonantal gesture and maintain the vocalic gesture in syllable final position. The tip of the tongue of the Mandarin speakers might not touch or approach the alveolar ridge to produce an extreme obstruction after the dorsum of the tongue retracts.

Now we need to consider why the vowels /u/ and /ɔ / (and sometimes their diphthong) are selected to be the substitutes for syllable-final /l/. The two vowels share the features of [+back, +round]. According to articulatory phonology, /u/ and /ɔ / have two articulation gestures. One is a lip gesture; the other is a dorsal gesture. When speakers pronounce these two vowels, their lips become round and the dorsum of their tongue retracts. Thus, the vowels cause the dorsal gesture of syllable-final /l/ to be retained and the apical gesture of syllable-final /l/ to be lost. Also, /u/ and /ɔ / have only one lingual gesture, the dorsal gesture. Therefore, the back vowels show a pattern of "lingual simplification" (Gick, 2004). Due to the advantages of similarity of dorsal shape with syllable-final /l/ and the simpler

manner of pronunciation, /u/ and /ɔ / are chosen to modify syllable-final /l/. However, phonetic influence cannot explain the strong preference for one vowel over the other to modify syllable-final /l/ when it follows different vowels, such as /ɪ /, /ɛ /, /u/ and /ɔ /. To account for this, we need to look back to the influence of the L1 phonology. In the Mandarin vowel system, the monophthongs /i/, /ɔ / and /u/, the diphthong /ou/ and the triphthong /iou/ exist. The vowel /ɛ / only occurs after the vowels /i/ and /y/. No back vowels can follow the vowel /ɛ /.

The Mandarin speakers' tendency to transfer their L1 phonological structures to their L2 yields the vowel /ou/ after the vowel /i/ (Here, Mandarin speakers change the vowel /ɪ / to the vowel /i/), and the vowel /u/ after the vowel /ɔ / in the vocalization process. The reason why the vowels /o/ and /ou/ are preferred to modify syllable-final /l/ after the vowel /u/ is quite straightforward: In order to make a segment sound like a syllable-final /l/ and also sound different from the nucleus, the vowel /o/ is chosen rather than the vowel /u/. The diphthong /ou/ is created by the closing procedure of the monophthong /o/.

Since there is no Mandarin syllable pattern that has a diphthong like /ɛ u/ or /ɛ o/, there should be no L1 syllable structure transfer to influence Mandarin speakers' choice between the vocalization options /u/ and /o/. Therefore, Mandarin speakers choose either of these vowels to modify syllable-final /l/. The relatively high accuracy rate of syllable-final /l/ after the vowel /ɛ / produced by Mandarin speakers can also be attributed to the lack of negative transfer of L1 phonological structure.

An interesting substitution was observed in two of the Mandarin speakers. They substituted /u^r/ to modify syllable-final /l/ after the vowels /ɪ / and /ɛ /. The substitute's first articulation feature is the back rounded vowel /u/, and its second articulation feature is the retroflex /r/. This means that when the speakers tried to produce the target segment, the posterior body of the tongue retracted, the lips rounded and the tip of the tongue curled. The sound /u^r/, with three gestures, is more difficult to produce than the liquid /l/, with two gestures. The source of making such a complex and difficult sound might be sought in the influence of Mandarin syllable structure. In Mandarin, the retroflexed /r/ can be attached to the back vowels /u/ and /o/ as a secondary articulation (Duanmu, 2000). These two speakers tried to produce the dorsal gesture of /l/, but also rounded their lips.

Meanwhile, they misproduced the consonantal gesture of /l/ by retroflexing the tip of the tongue rather than extending it to the alveolar ridge. Another of the Mandarin speakers consistently produced syllable-final /l/ as a back unrounded vowel /ɤ / after a front vowel /ɪ / or /ɛ /. This is not a unique way of modifying syllable-final /l/. In African American English, a similar central vowel /ə/ is used to substitute for syllable-final /l/, as in *bea* [beə] for 'bell' and *pia* [piə] for 'pill' (Green, 2002; p. 120). The speaker may have noticed that the target /l/ has no lip rounding gesture, but still failed to produce the apical gesture. Therefore, the dorsum of his tongue retracted but without rounding of his lips.

It was found that the preceding vowels /ɪ/ and /ɛ/ are strong inhibitors of deletion, while the preceding vowels /u/ and /ɔ/ promote deletion. This may be due to 'laziness' of articulation. Since the dorsum of the tongue is already retracted in order to produce the preceding vowel /u/ or /ɔ/, Mandarin speakers might not find it necessary, in this circumstance, to raise the tip of the tongue towards the alveolar ridge to make a constriction in the vocal tract just to produce the apical gesture of syllable-final /l/. Therefore, the /l/ is deleted. Another explanation for the deletion of /l/ is the perceptual difficulty of hearing syllable-final /l/ when it occurs after back vowels. Mandarin speakers might not hear the /l/ after back vowels, and ignore the /l/ in their production. A future study needs to be conducted to prove the perceptual motivation for the deletion of /l/.

2. Effects of L2 experience

TABLE 4.

PERCENTAGES OF OCCURRENCES OF VOCALIZATION, RETROFLEXION, DELETION AND BY STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ENGLISH EXPERIENCE, WITH THE NUMBERS OF TOKENS IN PARENTHESES

Preceding Vowels		/ɪ /	/ɛ /	/u/	/ɔ /
L2 experiences					
Experienced	L	1.7 (2)	8.9 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	98.3 (116)	91.1 (102)	11.7 (14)	42.5.5 (52)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	14.1 (17)	2.5 (2)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	74.2 (89)	55 (66)
	Total	100 (120)	100 (112)	100 (120)	100 (120)
Inexperienced	L	0.8 (1)	8.9 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	99.2 (119 ²)	91.1 (102 ²)	24.1 (29)	31.7 (38)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	13.4 (16)	31.7 (38)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	62.5 (75)	36.6 (44)
	Total	100 (120)	100 (112)	100 (120)	100 (120)

Obviously, the inexperienced Mandarin speakers used the retroflexed /r/ to substitute for syllable final /l/ more frequently than the experienced Mandarin speakers did, $t = 6.007, p < .05$. The difference between the percentages of occurrence of deletion between the experienced group and the inexperienced group was not as obvious as in the case of retroflexion. It was, however, still shown to be significant, $t(238) = 2.861, p < .05$. There was no statistically

² Ten tokens ended with the back vowel /ɤ /. Five tokens ended with /u^r/
³ Ten tokens ended with the back vowel /ɤ /. Eighteen tokens ended with /u^r/

significant difference in the percentages of occurrences of vocalization between these two groups, $t(238) = 1.732, p > .05$.

Unlike the strategies of vocalization and deletion, which do not change the lexical meaning of the original English words, retroflexion might change the meaning of words when syllable-final /l/ is changed into syllable final /r/, as in *pool-poor*. Therefore, the strategy of retroflexion can be a potentially confusing way to modify the /l/. This strategy is “dangerous” for effective communication because it might produce a lexical misunderstanding for listeners. The types of errors made by the inexperienced group are less intelligible than those of the experienced group, as we might expect. Therefore, we can see that the experience of living in an English-speaking country helps people to pronounce syllable-final /l/ more like the English /l/.

3. Effects of gender

TABLE 5.

PERCENTAGES OF OCCURRENCE OF VOCALIZATION, RETROFLEXION, DELETION AND BY GENDER, WITH THE NUMBERS OF TOKENS IN PARENTHESES

Preceding Vowels					
Gender		/l /	/ε /	/u/	/o /
Female	L	2.5 (3)	17 (19)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	97.5 (117)	83 (93)	35 (42)	49.2 (59)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.5 (9)	8.3 (10)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	57.5 (69)	42.5 (51)
	Total	100 (120)	100 (112)	100 (120)	100 (120)
Male	L	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	100 (120)	99 (111)	0.8 (1)	25 (31)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (24)	25 (30)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	79.2 (95)	50 (59)
	Total	100 (120)	100 (112)	100 (120)	100 (120)

There was a significant difference between males and females in the frequency of accurate production of syllable final /l/, $t = 4.437, p < .05$. Also, the chi-square test shows that gender does have an effect Mandarin speakers' choices of strategies to modify syllable final /l/ after the vowel /u/, $\chi^2(2) = 50.033, p < .05$, and after the vowel /o/, $\chi^2(2) = 19.293, p < .05$. We can see that females did not use the strategy of retroflexion as frequently as males did. Female speakers more frequently vocalized syllable final /l/ after the vowels /u/ and /o/. The difference between the percentages of occurrence of deletion after the vowel /u/ between females and males is significant, $t = 3.614, p < .05$. However, the difference between the genders in percentages of occurrence of deletion after the vowel /o/ did not reach a significant level, $t = 1.165, p > .05$.

As mentioned in the linguistic factors section, retroflex /r/ as a substitution for syllable-final /l/ is more consistent with a “Chinese accent” than other substitutions. Therefore, we can say that female Mandarin speakers outperformed male Mandarin speakers in pronouncing syllable-final /l/. Previous research has shown females to be less conservative than males, and more open to linguistic influences from the society of target language (Watt and Milroy, 1999; p. 41). Therefore, females have more chances to perceive English input and produce output of English and are more likely to benefit from these chances. It has also been found that female L2 speakers tend to show higher frequencies of using proper or standard forms of speech and pronunciation than males (Gussenhoven, 1979; Leather and James, 1996; Broeder, 1982). The present study can be regarded as further evidence that females have more chances to acquire Standard English pronunciation, and pay more attention to using it. The males, on the other hand, do not seem to be as concerned about their accent as much as the females do; therefore, their errors in pronunciation of syllable-final /l/ are more accented.

4. Effects of style

TABLE 6.

PERCENTAGES OF OCCURRENCE OF VOCALIZATION, RETROFLEXION, DELETION AND IN DIFFERENT READING STYLES, WITH THE NUMBER OF TOKENS IN PARENTHESES

Preceding Vowels					
Style		/l /	/ε /	/u/	/o /
Formal	L	0.6 (1)	10.6 (17)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	99.4 (159)	89.4 (143)	23.1 (37)	43.7 (70)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	15.6 (25)	16.9 (27)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	61.3 (98)	39.4 (63)
	Total	100 (160)	100 (160)	100 (160)	100 (160)
Casual	L	2.5 (2)	4.7 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	V	97.5 (78)	95.3 (61)	7.5 (6)	25 (20)
	R	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (8)	16.25(13)
	D	0 (0)	0 (0)	82.5 (66)	58.75 (47)
	Total	100 (80)	100 (64)	100 (80)	100 (80)

Using a t-test, we did not find a significant difference in error rates in production of syllable final /l/ between formal and casual styles, $t = 1.123, p > .05$. However, the chi-square test shows that style does have an effect on Mandarin

speakers' preferred strategies for modifying syllable final /l/ after the vowel /u/, $\chi^2 = 12.019, p < .05$, and after the vowel /o/, $\chi^2 = 9.381, p < .05$. There is a significant difference in the degree of use of certain strategies when modifying syllable final /l/ after back vowels. Mandarin speakers are more likely to vocalize the /l/ after the vowel /u/, $t = 2.972, p < .05$, and the vowel /o/, $t = 2.821, p < .05$, in the formal style than in the casual style. Meanwhile, the occurrences of deletion in the formal style were significantly increased over those in the casual style for syllable final /l/ after the vowels /u/, $t = 3.329, p < .05$, and /o/, $t = 3.634, p < .05$. There was a significant threefold increase in the deletion of syllable final /l/ after the vowel /o/ in the style shift from casual to formal. There was no significant difference between the percentages of occurrence of the retroflexion strategy in the two styles, either after the vowel /u/, $t = 1.168, p > .05$, or after the vowel /o/, $t = 0.127, p > .05$.

Several studies (Broselow et al., 1998; Major, 1994; Weinberger, 1987) have compared production of consonants or consonant clusters in different speech styles. Using formal and casual parameter of speech style, three production styles were considered. From the most formal degree to the most casual degree, the order of the three styles is: word list reading (minimal pair reading), sentence reading (paragraph reading), and storytelling (conversation). The "formal equals accurate" axiom proposes that L2 learners achieve greater accuracy or produce more native-like output as their speech style becomes more formal. However, the present study did not find that the error rate in production of syllable final /l/ increased when the reading style shifted from word list reading to mini-dialogue reading. In other words, Mandarin speakers in the study did not produce more correct tokens of the /l/ when the reading style was more formal. However, the study found that a significant change took place when the reading style became formal. The syllable final /l/ after back vowels was more frequently vocalized or retroflexed in the word list reading task. Since there was no linguistic context in the word list environment, speakers paid attention to the spelling of the word and made every segment clearly audible. According to the sonority sequence hierarchy (SSH), vowels and retroflex /r/ are more sonorous than liquid /l/. Therefore, the Mandarin speakers chose vowels and retroflex /r/ in order to make their "/l/" more salient.

IV. CONCLUSION

This is the first study to look at the production of English /l/ in syllable final position by adult speakers of Mandarin Chinese. It was found that Mandarin speakers do have difficulties in pronouncing the /l/ in syllable final positions and show many variations in their modification of the English /l/ in the syllable positions. Furthermore, it provides an explanation as to why Mandarin speakers employ their modification strategies from phonological and phonetic perspectives.

APPENDIX

1. Word list

bill	hill	kill	till	bill	kill	till	bill	kill	hill
bell	cell	dell	tell	sell	bell	dell	tell	sell	bell
cool	pool	fool	tool	pool	cool	fool	pool	tool	cool
ball	fall	mall	tall	call	fall	wall	ball	mall	hall

2. Two mini-dialogues (tested words in bold)

Dialogue One

A: Hi Phil! Look at my laptop. It is a **Dell**.
 B: **Well!** That's **swell**, Bill! For how much did it **sell**?
 A: It is a real **steal**. See the **bill**.
 B: Cool **deal!** *Phil*. I want to buy one as well! Let's **call**.

Dialogue Two

A: Paul, would you like to play **basketball**?
 B: Me? Look at me. I am not that **tall**. I can't play **basketball**. I cannot play at **all**.
 A: You're so **dull**. You're not **cool**.
 B: You're so cruel. Are you thinking I'm a **fool**? I am not a **fool!** At **school**, I'm **cool!**

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Teaching and Learning Ojibwe as a Second Language: Considerations for a Sustainable Future

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Abstract—Successfully revitalizing Indigenous languages is one of the greatest challenges of the present for tribal communities. This is particularly significant when one considers that Native peoples have no other place in the world to retrieve their languages should they disappear. When an Indigenous language is no longer spoken in a community or region, it often ceases to exist as a living language. Teaching and learning language in community-based settings has proven beneficial to increasing awareness and overall proficiency. Instituting Indigenous languages as a medium or topic of study in education systems has been an effective means for many tribes in helping create active centers of teaching and learning. The enhanced systematic use of these languages within community and school-based contexts is necessary to ensuring an integrated and authentic approach to language revitalization. The successful experiences of Indigenous peoples such as the Maori and Native Hawaiians are helpful for tribes such as the Ojibwe who similarly aspire to create a comprehensive and sustainable paradigm of language teaching and learning.

Index Terms—Indigenous language revitalization, language immersion education, culture and language, community language programs, language and sovereignty

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid disappearance of tribal languages from daily life has not gone unnoticed in Native communities. A history of systematic linguistic oppression and assimilation efforts has culminated in the near loss of Indigenous languages in virtually every part of the world. Even in places where the language continues to be spoken with a degree of regularity, older generations of first language speakers are rapidly dwindling. Efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages have been valuable in raising awareness, promoting valuable documentation efforts, and creating emerging networks within which Native language efforts might find long-term continuity (May, 2013).

Communities have attempted to respond to the loss of language in a number of ways. The names of buildings, programs, and street signs are now often composed in the Native language. Language speaking tables and events are increasingly found as regular events on community calendars, and some regions have successfully developed Native language media sources (Noodin, 2013). School-based programs have similarly become widespread and may represent the most common means of teaching and learning Indigenous languages in the present. There is tremendous value in each of these singular initiatives. This paper identifies some strategies that have proven successful in community and school-based settings, and argues that sustainable language use can result from coordinated approaches to teaching and learning across both community and school domains.

II. INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES: CONTEXT OF REVITALIZATION

The Indigenous languages of the Americas have a long and rich history. The numerous language types that are inherent to this part of the world encapsulate a unique reservoir of knowledge and perspective (Campbell, 1997). Nichols (1990) cites evidence for some 35,000 years of language use and differentiation. The thousands of languages that were once spoken have now been reduced to hundreds based on the history of colonization (Campbell, 1997; Hinton, 2001). Even in areas where Native languages are no longer spoken, the original sounds of the landscape are preserved in place-names of Indigenous origin. Revitalizing such languages represents an important reclamation of unique local histories and knowledge repositories. Moreover, it represents a repudiation of the circumstances that have resulted in the present linguistic trauma that impacts nearly all Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples themselves are often leading language restoration efforts. Native Hawaiians are perhaps the first Indigenous peoples in the United States to explore and implement comprehensive language revitalization strategies. Inspired by the work of another Indigenous people, the Maori of New Zealand, Native Hawaiians began to make a number of dedicated efforts in the 1980s to use the language in their homes, communities, and programs for young children (May, 2013; Reyhner, 2003). The results of this movement have been exceptional: “Over one thousand people have become fluent Hawaiian-as-second-language speakers. Almost silenced 12 years ago, Hawaiian can now be heard in Honolulu supermarkets as mothers shop with children. While the bulk of the effort in Hawai’i has gone to schooling

in Hawaiian ... programs are now in place to extend this learning beyond the schools into community-based language-learning activities.” (Henze & Davis, 1999, p.16)

According to Kamana and Wilson (1996), the early and consistent efforts of community members was critically important in re-establishing the Hawaiian language: “At that time, the Hawaiian medium public school system of Hawai’i had been closed for nearly 90 years and the last generation in which Hawaiian was the common language of all Hawaiians was in their seventies” (p.1). Perhaps the nexus of the community’s language revitalization efforts was the institution of a comprehensive P-12 immersion school system. Winning the support and participation of the community was axial to such change, but so too was creating the programmatic and legal infrastructures for such programs to exist (May, 2013). In the case of the native Hawaiian people, it meant changing 100-year-old laws in order to implement their language within school-based programs (McCarty, 2003).

Like the Maori who inspired their efforts, Native Hawaiians have illuminated the way for other Indigenous communities in language revitalization. Not only have they been successful in creating a comprehensive P-12 education system, they have also developed an immersion teacher training program and doctoral programs (May, 2013; Wilson & Kawai’ae’a, 2007). Efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language in the community and school systems have had a positive impact on the resurgence of Indigenous identity and establishing Native Hawaiians as leaders in an American context of language revitalization: “Immersion schooling has succeeded in strengthening the Hawaiian *mauli*, awakening consciousness and self-determination within the Native Hawaiian community, and enhancing children’s academic success. In the process, the programme has served as a model and a catalyst for Indigenous language reclamation efforts throughout the USA.” (McCarty, 2003, p.154)

Other mainland tribal groups such as the Arapaho, Cherokee, Navajo, and Mohawk have benefited from the pioneering work of the Hawaiians in their respective pursuits of creating comprehensive community-based language revitalization strategies. Dr. Steven Greymorning, one of the founders of the Arapaho language revitalization movement, makes the following observation: “It gave me the opportunity to see the full extent of what was possible by observing firsthand three and four year old children speaking their Hawaiian language. It was like witnessing a miracle, and it was the inspiration of those children that I brought back with me to try to instill within our own language program” (Greymorning, 1999, p.14). There is clear precedent for Indigenous peoples to share inspiration and learn from each other about the benefits of revitalizing traditional languages and cultures (Hornberger, 2008). The experience of forerunners in the Indigenous community has demonstrated that language revitalization is a viable and highly desirable option (May, 2013). Revitalization in contemporary times is not without its challenges. The experience of Ojibwe people from the North American Great Lakes region is revealing of both some key challenges and benefits of restoring traditional culture and language in contemporary times. Like many tribal groups today, the Ojibwe are at a critical point in time whereby restoration of traditional culture and language is possible given a coordinated and careful revitalization strategy.

III. THE OJIBWE LANGUAGE: OJIBWEMOWIN

The Ojibwe language continues to be spoken by several thousand people in the United States and Canada. More fortunate communities have well over 100 speakers while many are left with only a handful or fewer (Gresczyk, 2011). There is a substantial history of documentation, with the first examples of dictionaries and descriptive grammars dating back some 200 years. The development of contemporary language-based materials has become increasingly prevalent over the last couple of decades, and the language is taught in virtually every reservation or urban setting with a significant population of Native peoples. Furthermore, many post-secondary institutions offer Ojibwe as a part of undergraduate or even graduate programmes in both the United States and Canada.

In the over quarter-century that Ojibwe has been taught in school and community settings there are relatively few students who have achieved mastery of the language (Gresczyk, 2011). Even in communities with fluent speakers, naturally occurring instances of spontaneous Native language use is increasingly rare. Intergenerational language transmission in the home, particularly from first language speakers to children, is even more infrequent (Noodin, 2013). While there are many variables that can help account for this trend, including the historic political and continuing social impositions by the dominant society not to use Indigenous languages, stakes remain high. As noted by Fishman (1996), a language can disappear in even a single generation.

Until relatively recent times, the Ojibwe language (*Ojibwemowin*) was broadly used for a large number of social and practical functions. Hinton (2001) affirms that Indigenous languages have the ability to be descriptive of and responsive to myriad situations and contexts. As a polysynthetic agglutinating language, *Ojibwemowin* is readily able to synthesize words for new technologies and concepts. Ojibwe, as any living language must, evolves to meet the circumstantial and cultural transitions experienced by the speech community in order to stay alive: “A living language is responsive to its environment. Living languages are in constant use and therefore must be adaptable to changing situations and circumstances” (Benally and Viri, 2005, p.91). The need for modernization notwithstanding, it is critical that an Indigenous language such as Ojibwe retain its original speaking philosophies, functions, and purposes. If care is not taken to preserve the traditional integrity of a language, it risks becoming too much like English and perhaps compromising the special worldview that makes it distinct and valuable (Bonvillain, 2008).

There is a wide belief in the Ojibwe language teaching and learning community that while the language has the ability to evolve, adapt, and change, it was originally given to Ojibwe people to preserve as a means of sacred communication. Its utilitarian uses notwithstanding, *Ojibwemowin* continues to be viewed as one of the most valued components of cultural identity by speakers and non-speakers alike (Gresczyk, 2011). Regarded as the key to cultural traditions such as song, narrative, and ceremony, the importance of the language to Ojibwe people cannot be understated; traditional ceremonies and rituals are dependent on the use of traditional language and cannot be performed otherwise (Johnston, 2003). Ceremonial participation thus remains a powerful impetus to learn and use the language on a regular basis. *Ojibwemowin* is a direct link to some 20,000 years of history, and the essence of the Ojibwe people's identity: "If we –the teachers and students of Ojibwe– sit idly over the next three decades, the language will die. If that is allowed to happen, our children will no longer be Ojibwe. They will be the descendants of Ojibwe people –largely disconnected from the culture of our ancestors and its natural mode of expression– the Ojibwe language" (Treuer, 1996, p.3). Thus it can be understood why there is such a strong imperative to save the language. Not only are age-old ceremonial and cultural practices threatened by the loss of language, so too may be the existence of the Nation itself.

As a language valued for both its everyday and spiritual communicative functions, there are many use conventions that are necessarily observed. Specific genres of stories may be told only during particular times, certain words should never be said out of context, and attention should be given to never offend other human or spiritual beings through careless speech (Johnston, 2003). Special reverence for tribal Elders –who carry a full understanding of how Ojibwe is appropriately spoken– is an integral part of any language revitalization strategy (Noodin, 2013). Like so many Native languages, Ojibwe must be taught with accuracy and respect to ensure that vital meanings are not lost even as new uses are created. These complex meanings make the teaching and learning process a rich and multi-layered protocol that is necessarily rich in cultural knowledge and understanding.

IV. LANGUAGE IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Attempts to restore the language in community life have taken many forms in contemporary Ojibwe language revitalization (Gresczyk, 2011). A return to traditional place-names in community signage is one such example; not only is this restorative of the cultural history of the community, it also returns the language to everyday use. Environments rich in target language terminology can lead to increased use of the language, of particular importance at the present when so few fluent speakers remain (Hinton, 2003). Place-names have special meaning in that they are often descriptive of origin stories, historical events, local knowledge of flora or fauna, spiritual properties or other features important to the past, present, and future of the community (Johnston, 2003). Language learning always involves more than mastery of lexicon and grammar: equally important is the vital corpus of cultural knowledge, situational relationships, perspective, wisdom, self-knowledge, and truth.

In spite of the declining rates of fluent speakers, general community interest in language remains high amongst many Indigenous Nations (Hornberger, 2008). The broad success in revitalization experienced by Native Hawaiian and Maori peoples has provided continued inspiration for increased language use in the home, workplace, and tribal government centers (May, 2013). Increasingly, Ojibwe communities are declaring Ojibwe as the official language of the tribe– a bold move that clearly establishes the use of Ojibwe as a priority (Gresczyk, 2011). When supported by increased learning opportunities for tribal members such local legislation could have powerful outcomes in making Ojibwe the everyday language of business and social interaction again. This requires a broad commitment of the community to ensure that the language initiative gains enough momentum to have the intended outcome (Hinton, Vera, & Steele, 2002).

Ensuring the continued vitality of any language requires intergenerational transmission (Fishman, 1996). For many Indigenous languages this often means bringing together tribal members who are two or even three generations apart (McCarty, 2003). Noodin (2013) writes of contemporary trends to renew language within the home, and the transformative power this can have for communities in building greater language use. Whether it is through using only Native language kinship terms, everyday commands and phrases, or comprehensively labeling the home in the target language, there are many things that every family can do to demonstrate their commitment to language revitalization. An effective approach in Indigenous language revitalization is to connect an individual or family with a fluent speaker and create regular Native language speaking times, field trips, and household activities or games together through a master apprentice program (Hinton, Vera, & Steele, 2002). What seems common amongst such community-based and household strategies is that the efforts must be intentional, sustained, and well planned in order to find long-term success.

Implementing increased community and family-language use strategies were key starting places for Native Hawaiian and Maori peoples (May, 2013). Such initial efforts led to the formation of increased collective initiatives such as the formation of language nests for young children, and eventually the organization and opening of immersion schools (Kamana & Wilson, 1996). While many of these programs were organized by families committed to the language, the support of local political leadership, education professionals, fluent speakers, and the general community was contributory to the sustainability of the efforts. Noodin (2013) writes how this general pattern of revitalization is happening in Ojibwe communities throughout the Great Lakes region, and that there are at least half a dozen Ojibwe language immersion schools presently open. Revitalizing community language use through the opening and

maintenance of community-based schools is a powerful way for Indigenous communities to create local centers of language revitalization and maintenance (Gresczyk, 2011).

V. LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SCHOOL-BASED SETTINGS

At present there are relatively few domains where Ojibwe is exclusively used as a language of communication. Outside of traditional ceremonies, school-based language programs seem to comprise one of the most consistent forums of regular language use and expression. Ojibwe as a second-language programs are quite prolific but meet with little success in terms of generating fluent speakers (Gresczyk, 2011). Such programs are limited by the small amount of daily classroom time, limited resources, and minimal opportunity for relevant teacher in-service. By contrast, immersion schools seem to be one of the most successful ways of building a functional language community (Noodin, 2013). Immersion work is especially productive in the sense that the primary beneficiaries of such efforts are a generation of children who could sustain the language for several generations themselves. The power of membership in a speech community to effect positive learning has been observed by the Hawaiians (Wilson & Kawai'ae'a, 2007), Maori (May, 2013), Arapaho (Greymorning, 1999), and Navaho (Benally & Viri, 2005).

The frequency and duration of in-language contact time in a school-based immersion setting affirms its potential as a means of sustainable language transmission. Authenticity, or relevance to the experience of children learning in a language program, is key to the success of immersion education (Kramersch, 1993). A focus on traditional cultural practices as well as contemporary cultural expressions and knowledge needs is a powerful way of maintaining the interest of children. The immersion classroom is a locale of consistent and focused language usage and constitutes a unique intersection between a student's first and second culture experience. This is particularly important with respect to ever-increasing cultural and ethnic diversity amongst student membership. As noted by Peterson and Coltrane (2003, p.2), "Cultural information should be presented in a nonjudgmental fashion, in a way that does not place value or judgment on distinctions between the students' native culture and the culture explored in the classroom." Culture can be implicitly or explicitly taught in a classroom. Learning does not have to be confined to the classroom as instruction can happen in a variety of contexts (Hinton, Vera & Steele, 2002). Many Ojibwe language immersion schools regularly spend much of their programming time in the outdoors engaged in traditional life-way practices such as maple syrup making, animal tracking and trapping, and traditional materials collecting.

While not all cultural contexts can be replicated in a school-based setting, there is much that can be taught and learned in such mediums. Children in Ojibwe immersion settings implicitly learn respect for cultural traditions and the target language, and are encouraged to speak Ojibwe beyond the classroom setting (Noodin, 2012). Indeed, Garcia and Shirley (2012) suggest that all such schools, in their efforts to become community sources of language and cultural tradition, be regarded as sacred spaces in and of themselves. Focus on both contemporary subject matter and the interest of students is essential to sustaining linguistic and cultural learning momentum. Benally and Viri (2005) stress the importance of this by describing the deleterious effects when students perceive the target culture as being archaic and non-representative of modern life. Thus the culture of the immersion school must also be rooted in the current experience of students in order to maintain a sense of relevance for them.

A vital quality of perhaps all Indigenous language programs is that they reflect the local culture. This implies not simply cultural products or practices, but also the traditional perspective or worldview of the people themselves. How to not only integrate culture, but indeed, create programs with culture at the core, is essential to creating a language program that is culturally authentic and relevant to the people themselves (Kramersch, 1993). It would be impossible to speak the language without a working knowledge of cultural norms:

Language learners need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone. They should know that behaviors and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community. They have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behavior. (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003, p.1)

Because of the diversity of traditions in Indigenous communities, cultural goals may also be different from one community or school to the next. This can apply even from one Ojibwe community to the next. Lafayette (2003, p.82) suggests, "Language instructors need to make certain students understand that the traits of the target culture presented in a textbook may or may not be shared by all members of a given cultural group." Cultural goals should therefore represent that which is valued by local peoples, but the goals should also reflect the lived cultural experience of the local community. While there is much that can and needs to be shared amongst communities, respect for local cultural and linguistic expressions is an important consideration.

What is imperative for the ultimate success of both community and school-based language programming is that a connection between each be established. Exposing students to multi-faceted domains of language use is helpful to ensuring the development of linguistic and content-knowledge skills that transcend school environments. Using language in home, ceremonial, sports, government, and social settings is part of community-level restoration. In learning to use culture in the broader community context, students develop a greater sense of the authenticity of the language learning effort (Hinton, Vera & Steele, 2002). As importantly, students also expand their cultural knowledge of language use, the subtleties and particularities of which might be lost if the language is used only for the teaching of

school-based content. Operationalizing culture at the core of a program is about restoring the context and motivation for target language use. In creating an environment for learners to engage and participate in culturally-based communication norms and practices, community members are empowered as interested and active learners of the target language and its cultural norms:

Putting culture at the core of language education means preparing students to be culture learners. Thus, it is never enough to find and accept someone else's static definitions of the culture. Words and their meaning are linked to a cultural context, and language and cultural patterns change over time and vary according to the situation. To become effective culture learners, students must develop a variety of learning strategies ranging from reflective observation to active experimentation. (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2003)

An important unifying community and school activity is the defining of local cultural goals that support language programming. Even general standards, such as the ones related to culture learning in the 1996 Foreign Languages National Standards, can be helpful for emerging programs seeking to define their own specific applications (Lafayette, 2003). Academic and cultural standards are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but their integration requires thoughtful and careful planning.

VI. LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AND CULTURAL VITALITY

Indigenous immersion schools are in a unique position to make a synthesis of traditional knowledge with contemporary ways of learning and knowing. Technology may be gainfully employed in language learning (Paige et al., 2003). At the same time, development of writing systems for previously unwritten languages has generally been a positive act of preservation and continuity (Reyhner, 2003). A hallmark of any language's future sustainability is its ability to be used productively by its speakers (Fishman, 1996). A cumulative challenge of the present is to ensure that the full adaptability of languages like Ojibwe are maximized for the present and future (Hinton, 2001). Schools provide one important source for new linguistic innovations and uses. Not only do new technologies and artifacts need to be named and described, so too do academic and contemporary concepts. The support of the community is necessary such that schools do not singlehandedly bear the burden of advancing the language into the future.

Revitalizing and developing language for myriad aspects of community life ensures that students have the broad opportunity to hear and use language beyond the confines of school programs. Holding recreational programs, cultural events, social activities, business transactions, and government-based communications in Indigenous languages demonstrates their continued relevance and productivity. As suggested by Fishman (1991), a multi-context setting and approach may be the best means of encouraging the survival of Indigenous languages.

Adapting a language for new situations of use requires a deliberate effort to re-discover, borrow, or synthesize terms that encapsulate the essence of an item or concept (Bonvillain, 2008). Finding ways to express traditional values and speaking norms in contemporary institutional structures is imperative for the language's broad use and survival (McCarty, 2003). Like many Indigenous languages, Ojibwe is well designed to describe the myriad relationships that connect people, communities, the land, and spiritual aspects of life (Johnston, 2003). Institutional structures of modern-day life present a stark contrast to the egalitarian and distributed nature of traditional modes of existence. Bridging the demands of contemporary and traditional phenomena is a day-to-day reality for the numerous immersion schools that are helping lead the language revitalization path.

Whether through the synthesis of new terms, borrowings from other languages, or some combination therein, the development of new vocabulary and ways of using Ojibwe is an exciting task of the present. A revitalized communication about language between communities is concomitantly necessary to help new terms find common or standardized use. Words for contemporary academic subjects or fixtures provide an important and immediately useable reservoir of terms that can be subsequently used in homes and community settings. Such efforts would also be important to explore in community and home based situations (Hinton, 2001). Finding new terms demands a balance between creativity, language expertise, and mastery of traditional philosophies and contemporary knowledge. It is often far too easy to revert to English-based instruction or dialogue when there are no immediate terms to use in *Ojibwemowin*. This is a challenge which can and must be overcome in redefining the language as a continuing and useful means of communication.

Finding a balance between academic, linguistic, and cultural objectives is definitional to Indigenous language immersion efforts (Reyhner, 2003). In the half-dozen existing Ojibwe language immersion programs, Elders and first speakers work alongside language learners to create spaces where the Ojibwe language is used to describe all school-based routines and activities in a way that is distinctly rooted in Ojibwe culture. The cultural value and perspective of *naadamaadiwin* [working together cooperatively] is at the heart of how these programs operate. Incorporating cultural artifacts, routines, ceremonial traditions and field trips are contributory to the unique quality of these spaces. While Ojibwe language immersion programs may use many of the same physical and organizational structures as mainstream programs, there is sufficient room for innovation. And although unique from traditional approaches, the way that Ojibwe is taught and learned in school-based contexts can continue to be done in a way that is true to the cultural ways and philosophies of Ojibwe people themselves.

VII. LANGUAGE EXCELLENCE: GROWING STRENGTH TOGETHER

For many world languages at a critical point in revitalization, establishing quality benchmarks of language use and production is necessary for a sustainable and authentic linguistic future. May (2013) notes the progressive advancements in language excellence achieved by Maori, Native Hawaiian, Navajo, and Cherokee programs, and how such action has strengthened each respective language movement. A significant and common challenge in the continuum of Native language teaching and learning is finding a critical mass of teachers or language mentors (Hornberger, 2008). Excellent language ability is a necessary qualification, as noted by Lightbown and Spada (2013, p.169, “second language learners can only learn the language they are exposed to.” It is important that quality language is taught and learned and as that is the model that will be spoken going forward. For teachers who work in school-based programs, knowledge of world language or academic content standards may also be essential requirements. Those educators who work in immersion schools and who have to teach formal academic content through a Native language, require mastery of multiple skill sets (Wilson & Kawai’ae’a, 2007). Furthermore, while abilities to speak the target language and teach basic academic and classroom skills are important, so too is knowledge of how to teach a language (Hinton, 2003).

In the broad revitalization of Ojibwe, developing quality programs to train teachers and language speakers is a necessity for communities everywhere. Forging partnerships between communities and educational institutions may be one means of ensuring continuous quality language instruction and in-service for community and school-based language revitalization initiatives. In the interim, it is necessary for all community members to become a language teacher, language student, or both. Master speakers, who are increasingly aged in most Ojibwe communities, must also be provided with the requisite support in their efforts to move the language forward. As observed by Hinton, “as speakers age, increasingly, the energy and the burden for language revitalization is among the younger adult generations who are not fluent in their language” (2003, p.79). Both first and second language learners, older and younger alike, have a vital role to play in the broad restoration of Ojibwe culture and language. Demonstrated competence does not necessarily have to be native-like to indicate success (Nieto, 2010). True language revitalization is meant to inspire a lifetime journey of discovery, learning, and use.

VIII. A REVITALIZED FUTURE

North American Indigenous language activists and educators work at the critical junction of linguistic sustainability and language extinction. The next quarter century will see the passing of the last natural-born first speakers of innumerable languages. Ojibwe is one of many languages that could become moribund should a sufficient core of speakers not emerge. Oftentimes, the children who are expected to be avid learners are generations removed from language and many facets of traditional culture. Debate over writing systems, the modernization of language, and whether culture and language belong in a school-based setting will continue to rage on in Indigenous education circles. While it does, valuable opportunities to teach children and families slip away every second.

As the Ojibwe language movement gains momentum in communities everywhere, there are several important lessons that have been learned from local and related Indigenous groups. Helping achieve the participation of all members in the language revitalization effort is important to growing broad success in language tables, classes, master-apprentice teams, or immersion programs. Efforts that are inclusive or based on traditional culture will help ensure the integrity of an Indigenous approach, no matter what changes in physical or organizational structures the present demands. It is important for all efforts to promote excellence in language use, and to help develop teacher training models that will ensure continued leadership as elders and master speakers pass on.

Indigenous languages such as Ojibwe will survive into the future propelled by teams of committed activists, and indeed, as aptly termed by Gresczyk (2011), language warriors. There is both room and need for everyone who is sincere and committed to be a part of the effort. Any language effort needs far more than simply teachers and students (Hinton, 2001). Grant writers, legislators, politicians, administrators, curriculum specialists, graphic artists, parents, teaching methods specialists, are just some of the roles. Language revitalization is fundamentally about community, and bringing everyone’s contributions and efforts to the forefront.

The present movement to revitalize the Ojibwe language will make or break the unbroken legacy of identity and sovereignty that is necessary for the present and future. Language revitalization requires determination and belief in the transcendence of Indigenous identity through culture and language. The critical synthesis of leadership, faith, and effort shown by the *Ojibwemowin* teaching and learning community provides the greatest affirmation that the language will survive. For communities who have taken the leap to grow an immersion school, this revitalization will be the most comprehensive and far reaching. An immersion school brings hope to a community and is a place where learning Indigenous identity through culture and language is desirable and important. The long hours, numerous criticisms, and endless planning details are overshadowed by the rewards of seeing and hearing children use and enjoy a language that is their birthright.

Like other dedicated Indigenous language revitalization efforts, *Ojibwemowin* will continue to evolve as a productive language that is useful in all facets of modern life. It is the teachers of today and tomorrow who will ensure that the Spirit of the language is remembered and extended in this effort to modernize, revitalize, and continue the language for future generations of speakers. Indigenous language immersion education is part of a broader network of language revitalization efforts. Language immersion schools are not meant to stand on their own in the renewal of the language

and culture for another generation. Other efforts, allies, and community connections are necessary for students to develop and appreciate the richness and diversity of their Native language. Within their classrooms, Indigenous language educators stand on the front lines of creating a future for the language and culture. Every day, these small teams mentor children about honoring the historicity, present, and future of the language and culture. It is time to bring language learning into every aspect of contemporary tribal life. The teaching and learning of Indigenous language is every Indigenous person's inherent vocation, and every non-Indigenous settler's responsibility to support.

The connection between language, culture, identity, and sovereignty is a powerful consideration for Ojibwe and other Indigenous nations. Language revitalization is a fundamental act of asserting tribal sovereignty. Present tribal supported efforts to renew Indigenous languages might consider no longer making language a desirable skill, but indeed, a required qualification for employment or even membership. Such action would unequivocally place Indigenous languages such as Ojibwe in the position of prominence they have long deserved. In the meanwhile, supporting community-efforts to unify and grow language program activities such as immersion schools is necessary. Cherishing the present wisdom of tribal elders and growing language knowledge within the youngest generations are initiatives that will ensure the survival of all Indigenous languages into the future.

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Reflective Teaching and Language Teacher Education Programmes: A Milestone in Yemen and Saudi Arabia

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Abstract—A language teacher faces constantly diverse class-room situations; he tries to adopt appropriate theory of learning, approach, technology, and tools and aids to create understanding in context. In doing so, he draws upon his experience and peer-experience to resolve problems and issues through the process of reflection. He takes help of research results, and does research work, sources specialist literature or undergoes need-based training – not once but repeatedly to develop competence to cope with class-room situations and remove social or psychological barriers, more particularly in the case of second or foreign language teaching. In reflective practice, the teacher summons all his faculties, experiences and appropriate theory to practise in the classroom. A language-teacher observes his students' reactions and reflects on the results after responding to such learning behaviour of the students. Following the reflection, the teacher decides to adapt or modify the theory chosen earlier. A classroom is like a laboratory where a teacher relates teaching theory to teaching practice and observes the students' responses. This paper is an attempt to give focus to the importance of reflective teaching in general with special reference to Language Teacher Education Programmes in Yemen and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as check the teachers' awareness of reflective teaching. 50 teachers of English from both the countries were surveyed and interviewed for the purpose.

Index Terms—reflective teaching, language teacher education, peer teaching/interaction, ICT tools, classroom problems, teacher-training

I. INTRODUCTION

Reflection means, to majority of the authorities/educationists, an active, persistent and careful consideration of beliefs or supposed form of knowledge. Language teaching is more than a subject; it is complex of traditions, culture, practices and, to a great extent, communication. Language can best be taught in situations and a social setting.

Reflective teaching is the driving force to innovate for better learning solutions on the part of teachers. Modern generation is tech-savvy and open-minded, apart from being fully aware of rights as human beings and behaviorally interactive; the students do no longer form a dumb class – interaction and higher expectation from the teaching community is basic to education in a class-room setting, almost in all countries. A teacher has to be updated and communicative and given to openness– encouraging students to ask questions or raise queries to clear doubts. The following studies amply support this view:

John Dewey's research studies inspired at least four perspectives on 'Reflection':

- (a) whether reflection refers to thinking about action or whether it also implies action (Gore & Zeichner, 1995);
- (b) whether reflection is relatively immediate and short-term, or an on-going process that lasts for some time;
- (c) whether reflection is innately problem-centred or not. Calderhead (1989) and Schon (1987) are of the view that a problem represents lack of connection, missing life experience or meaning that must be addressed, supplied, and remedied – that reflection is analytical and seeks to form connections between known and new knowledge);
- (d) whether reflection is a process of 'critical reflection' and is concerned with conscious inclusion in reflection of historical, cultural and political values and beliefs, in order to find solutions for practical problems.

Reflection as a process has been given varied descriptions. Dewey has described a logical reflective process as beginning with a perceived conflict, defined by the parameters and context of a situation. Interpretations and inferences are made concerning the interacting variables, followed by a thorough analysis of all options in order to assign meaning to the situation. The final result is that a decision is made, and a solution and a plan of action follow.

It thus, logically follows from the above-mentioned abstract thought that reflection is the essence of education. A reflective teacher considers the variables in the contexts, talks to the self (engages in intra-personal communication), considers the classroom situation, again in context, and discusses the problem or his doubts about adopting a new

method of teaching, a new approach to the subject/topic, new teaching tools/kit and adopting some of the latest electronic devices to arouse the spirit of enquiry among the students to develop critical thinking and understanding like insatiable hunger with keenness to discuss and learn.

A reflective teacher identifies classroom problems, invites peer participation in evolving viable/feasible solutions and experiments with new ideas. While such a teacher develops by personal experience and attains proficiency through innovation and creativity, the students get inspired and actively involved in the learning process. Reflective thinking, on the part of a teacher, can be described as a recursive cycle of teacher-learning that includes using knowledge as a source of reflective observation, concrete experience, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Reflective thinking and action are continuous and never ending. Relevant in this connection is a wise saying in China, reproduced below:

“If you give a man a fish, he will have a meal,
If you teach him to fish, he will have a living,
If you are thinking a year ahead, sow seeds,
If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree,
If you are thinking a hundred years ahead, educate the people”.

Reflective teaching and adoption of the Information Communication Technology tools (ICT tools) with the latest electronic devices will answer the futuristic educational needs of the people who are becoming increasingly interactive.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teacher Education

There are seven components of education, viz., pupils/students, teachers, parents, classrooms, textbooks, curriculum/syllabus and academic institutions. All of these are complementary and supplementary to each other. All of them have to be coordinated for fruitful results. These components have to operate in perfect tandem if we are to have a sound education system. As in any area of learning, in language learning too the teachers are a significant factor. Their skills have to be honed and periodically updated in consonance with the developments taking place in the tech-savvy ambience of the advanced countries. Their education (academic) level, needs to be upgraded and knowledge updated, to help the students acquire the latest academic information and global awareness, apart from a sound understanding of the disciplines. Hence, they have to be given due attention as on them depends the success or otherwise of the teaching/learning process. Humayun Kabir, a popular educationist in India, rightly observes, “*in the absence of good teachers, even the best of systems is bound to fail, but with good teachers, the defects of the system can largely be overcome*”.

In both the countries of the Arab World, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Teacher Education has not been a systematic and planned programme; this applies both to the pre-service and in-service education/training of teachers. However, of late, there are healthy trends in evidence like theory and practice links in technical and management institutions, teaching for understanding, self-study research or what is referred to as action research. But, there are cuts in funding or inadequacy in funding, inconsistency of INSET programmes, and deficient evaluative studies on the syllabus of existing programmes and so on. Contrasts have emerged. This has generated contradictory ideas: “Teacher-Education should be expanded” or “Teacher-Education should be curtailed”. In such a contradiction, the teacher-educators, teacher-trainers, student-teachers and practicing or in-service teachers are obviously in a mixed state of hope and despair. There is, therefore, a need for conducting seminars to deliberate on this subject to form an opinion for evolving a meaningful policy and programme of action.

There is a need to recruit only those teachers who have been given proper training in methods of teaching, those who have got knowledge of various learning/teaching theories and those who are trained in the use of ICT in education. Should it not be possible to find the required number all at once, then there has to be a plan of sending them in batches to the ‘Teacher Training Colleges/Institutes’ as early as possible. An untrained teacher can not do justice to the profession of teaching. In Yemen and also in Saudi Arabia, there is a need to give proper training to the teacher-educators of languages in a systematic way. Proper syllabus has to be drawn through an expert committee. Moreover, training has to be an ongoing process, not a one shot affair because changes are occurring in the environment fast, demanding responsive action in all human activities, education; language education is no exception.

Language Teacher Education

Language teacher education is equally important if not more, in view of the international business relations and humane considerations. In the emerging scenario, there would be no country in seclusion; international cooperation, collaboration and humane consideration have established norms whereby there is accent on evolving international standards for transforming the globe into a unity with eternal peace, harmony and understanding to ensure prosperity and happy life for all irrespective of the different geological, social and cultural differences. In this situation, language teachers have a great responsibility to create supportive atmosphere for learning/teaching of English which is no longer the language of the rulers/Britain but also a shared language of the free countries on the globe. It is the international business language and sine qua non for effective international interaction. English, therefore, has to be learned as a second/ foreign language right from the Montessori-level, simultaneously with the first language. A child acquires first language of its necessity and it will acquire the second language proficiency with the same ease and interest as it does the first language at that early stage without any bias or prejudice. In childhood, a child has a blank slate of mind and it

attempts to learn whatever is taught, of course, necessary facilities have to be ensured. This takes me to suggest that teaching of English as the second/foreign language must be introduced from the earliest stage. To enable this to happen with expected results, the method to be adopted by the English language teacher should be in a situational context; a great focus should be on listening and speaking, first, followed by reading and writing, just the same order of first language acquisition.

Given the situation, what needs to be done to strengthen this function in the general interest is a question that many of us keep asking ourselves. Our own experience as teacher-educators back home (in Yemen) suggests with conviction that the solution lies in reflection on the part of teachers, teacher-educators and/or in reflective teaching. Nonetheless, teacher-education or training (as well as re-training) remains a basic requirement, and it cannot be given a go-bye.

Reflection/reflective teaching

Reflection and reflective teaching is one of the methods to review the current approach to language teaching and to make up for any inadequacy by adopting different approach, pedagogy and methods with ICT inputs. As many studies have been conducted in other parts of the world, let us have a look at the current literature to find out what exactly the reflective teaching is.

According to Pennington (1992), Reflection or Reflective teaching is “*a movement in teacher education in which student-teachers or practicing teachers analyse their own practice and its underlying basis, and then consider alternative means to achieving their ends*”. It is also defined as “*An approach or a process in which practicing teachers and student-teachers collect data about teaching, examine their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching*”.

Simply put, it is the process of looking back and, after a scientific study and analysis of the classroom experience, engaging in research for remedial steps to move ahead in order to give the best possible learning to students, considering also what the students seek, reflecting on changes needed and finding suitable alternative methods or technological tools.

According to Clark and Peterson (1986), Foss and Kleinsasser (1996), a teacher’s reflective way of thinking and learning has a symbiotic relationship with his/her behaviour and instruction in the classroom. Rodgers (2002) opines that teacher reflection encourages professional growth and motivation. Alsup (2006) found that only those pre-service teachers who had developed a strong sense of personal identity connected to professional identity were able to successfully transition into teaching. Freeman (1998) examined teacher thinking and learning and used the term ‘*teacher cognition*’ to describe a field of research that examined teachers’ complex thought processes, including reflection, that occur when teachers plan, reorganize and revise their instruction. Fanselow (1988) gave a similar view in this regard. Greene (1986) admonished educators that the emotional investment, motivation and commitment that are intrinsically part of the reflection process, contribute to a uniquely personal experience for each teacher, and one that cannot be packaged and reproduced as a group of standard techniques. All student-teachers individually will learn to use reflection in a unique manner as they undertake their own professional development. This process leads to learning.

According to Pearsall, Skipper & Mintzes (1997), three criteria have been identified for meaningful learning: (a) the language used in communication must be absorbed and should make sense to the participant; (b) the choice must be freely made to incorporate new concepts in a non-arbitrary, non-verbatim fashion and (c) the individual must possess a framework of concepts to anchor the new knowledge. This is uniqueness.

Hegel (1977) elaborated on the process of ‘meaning-making’. He propounded that this process of ‘meaning-making’ is a form of self-consciousness that arises while negotiating and understanding the concept of the ‘*other*’ person and thus, requires the participation of an ‘other’.

From the foregoing discussion, it follows that no two individuals can share an exact perspective, or become aware, and reflect in exactly the same manner, just because of their uniqueness and variability in cognition, which constitutes a unique identity.

The foregoing discussion of reflection used to connect knowledge concepts may involve a student-teachers’ beliefs as well as knowledge. According to Grossman, Wilson & Schulman (1989), teachers frequently “*treat their teaching beliefs as knowledge*”. However, Grossman et al distinguished beliefs from knowledge as being based more on subjective or affective evidence and more open to dispute, as opposed to knowledge being based on fact. This leads them to the argument that construction of a teaching knowledge base involves an ongoing process of evaluation and re-organization as new knowledge causes a change in beliefs. Grossman, Wilson and Schulman (1989) do also contend that pre-service teachers’ concepts about instruction, learning styles and classroom behaviour derive from their own teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning. According to Lortie (1975), when young, students establish beliefs about teaching through an ‘*apprentice of observations*’. Bailey, Bergthold, Braustein, Fleichman, and Holbrook (1996) opine that teachers later use this store of student observations to elaborate beliefs about good and bad teaching.

There are some more points of view to add to the above discussion. These relate to the nature of reflection. John Dewey (1933), an eminent philosopher, defined reflection as an ‘*active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the ground that supports it and further conclusions to which it tends*’. The second point of view revolves around whether reflection is relatively immediate and short-term, or an ongoing process that lasts for some time: this view is of Schon (1983). Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956) suggests that for human development, there first must be connections made across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

There can be no absolute dictum about the process of reflection, except that it is a personalized process for each human being. Each person experiences reflection uniquely, shaped by individual ability, knowledge, and life experience, and tailored by each person to the needs at hand. A third point of view examines whether reflection is innately problem-centred or not. Calderhead (1989) and Schon (1987) say that a problem represents lack of connection, missing life experience or meaning that must be addressed, supplied and remedied. The fourth point of view is of Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985); Gore & Zeichner (1991), and Smyth (1989). The debate spearheaded by them involves a process of 'critical reflection', and is concerned with the conscious inclusion in reflection of historical, political and cultural values or beliefs in order to find solutions for practical problems. This perspective incorporates reflection for social consciousness through connecting our awareness of others, their lives, and their needs. Van Manen (1977) views reflection as organized in three domains. He calls these as: (a) technical rationality which is dealing with efficiency of instruction in the class room; (b) practical rationality that involves the interpretation of assumptions and educational goals; (c) critical rationality or the consideration of values and ethical concerns. Each domain employs reflection for a specific educational focus: technical rationality involves consideration of class room practice and events; practical rationality implies understanding the learning experience of the student; and critical rationality considers the moral and social implications of classroom practice.

Being an ongoing process, reflection can take many forms. The chart below, adapted from Zeichner and Liston 1996: 47, cited in Bailey, K. A. Curtis and D. Nunan 2001 *Pursuing Professional Development: the self as source* Heinle and Heinle (Thomson Learning) 41 – 42, elaborates on these.

Rapid reflection	Immediate and automatic	Ongoing decision-making while teaching, happens very fast, almost constantly, often privately.
Repair	Thoughtful	Teacher makes a decision to alter behaviour in response to cues from students.
Review	Less formal At a particular point in time	Teacher thinks about, writes about or discusses some element of teaching or students' learning; often interpersonal and collegial.
Research	More systematic Over a period of time	Thinking and observation become more sharply focused around particular issues; involves collecting data over time. E. g. Action research, exploratory practice, teaching journals.
Re-theorizing and Reformulating	Long term Informed by public academic theories	More abstract and more rigorous; teachers critically examine their practical theories, and consider these in the light of academic theories.

To this end, teachers have to ask three main questions which form the process of reflection. These are:

1. What do I do? This question is descriptive in nature. To answer this question, a teacher should keep a record of everything he or she does in the classroom. This can be done by means of tape-recording or video-recording one's classes or taking a colleague's help in observing one's classes, also known as peer observation. It is unfortunate that some teachers are negatively disposed to peer-observation. They, mistakenly think that students will misunderstand or misinterpret the presence of a colleague in one's classes. Teachers also become conscious and that mars the free and open atmosphere, pivotal for learning.

2. What does this mean to me? This question is informative. An answer to this question is very important for the teacher to be able to justify the class activities, he/she practises by noting or mentioning the teaching principles followed.

3. How might I do things differently? This question is the be-all and end-all in the reflection process. At this stage, the teacher should think of alternatives to his/her classroom activities so that he/she can re-construct his or her own teaching process, effecting warranted changes in response to reflective thought and feedback. Thus, this stage is called the re-constructing stage in the reflection process.

In view of reflective thinking, reflective teachers have been referred to as successful practitioners/teachers by many authors. It has earned them credits and the approach has been acknowledged by experts as a positive method. Thus, for our student-teachers and practising teachers to be successful, we, as teacher-educators and teacher-trainers, have to instill in them a love of and passion for teaching and encourage them to:

1. Look forward to meeting the students in the class with a confident and cheerful disposition.
2. Enjoy teaching when in class, and not mar the beautiful process with negative body language and paralinguistic communication.
3. Reflect back with pleasure when the class is over and, think objectively to identify loopholes in the delivery process and find alternative methods to bridge the gap.
4. Be aware while in class, that the aim of 'teaching' is that "learning' must take place: this means that the success or failure of the lesson will depend taking into consideration the learners' needs, their backgrounds, their aptitudes and their roles in the classroom activities.

Naashia Mohamed suggests four ways of becoming a reflective teacher as under:

Maintain a teaching diary: This is a daily record of your professional experiences, particularly focusing on the events in the classroom. Maintaining a regular diary requires discipline as it does consume some time. But it is time

well spent as it will help to clarify your thinking. Include in your diary not only the events that occurred during the lesson, but also your own thoughts and feelings about it as well as students' reactions and responses.

Record a lesson: Recording a lesson is a useful way of getting information about your teaching of which you might not have been aware before. You could audio or video record the lesson, making sure that the students are aware of the purposes of the recording, and that they have no objection to it. Bear in mind, however, that many students tend to be self-conscious and less willing to participate in a lesson if their responses or cues are being recorded. Lesson recordings can help you determine how much you talk; how much time you allocate to students to talk; whether you give equal attention to all the students; your movements in the classroom; your tone of voice; etc.

Obtain feedback from students: Your own students are the best people to give you a feedback on your teaching. You can do this by speaking with the class as a group or individually. You can ask them to comment on what they like and what they don't like about, what you already do in the classroom as well as about what new things they would like you to do. If the thought of getting oral feedback is a bit daunting, you could ask them to complete a simple form in the nature of a questionnaire which would give you specific information about your teaching. You may want to focus this on a particular aspect of your teaching (for example, error correction) or target the questionnaire to teaching in general, but it is preferable to get close-ended and open ended responses. This is possible and more useful if care is taken to prepare this feedback form in simple, clear, direct and understandable language. Students are generally quite open about what they think of your teaching, and provide some very good suggestions about new activities they would like you to try. There is one condition- you should be seen by them as being open to suggestions and be assured that you would not be.

Invite a colleague to observe you: presence of a superior in the class changes the overall climate; the students do not feel frank and raise fewer queries. The teacher is conscious and raises his standard to impress the boss rather than expressing in the language according to the level of students. Therefore, you may not enjoy formal observations of your teaching by a superior, but getting feedback on your teaching through a colleague may be a different experience. Again, you may ask your colleague to focus on a particular aspect of your teaching (for example, your patterns of interaction with students), or to comment on your teaching, in general. The observer can take down notes or use a standard observation form. Immediately after the lesson, make notes about what you felt were your strengths and weaknesses, and then discuss the lesson with your observer-peer (colleague).

Barriers to Reflection

The academic discussion of the process and composition of reflection frequently includes a few barriers to reflection. The inherent characteristics of teaching may discourage the development of reflection on teachers. These barriers include certain realities in teaching, such as, student teachers' prior teaching models, reluctance to reflect, lack of time, the influences of the student-teaching institutions, and the demands of teacher education programmes.

Lortie (1975); Hatton and Smith (1995); Richardson (1996) say that pre-service teachers hold beliefs acquired prior to teacher preparation that impact the ability to adopt a reflective attitude. Fanslow (1988) says that if strong prior beliefs established about teaching negatively impact reflection, novice teachers may be handicapped in planning, reorganizing and revising of their instruction. Johnson says that when unable to reflectively integrate teacher education knowledge, student teachers may reconstruct their practice without reference to their teacher education, and may turn to prior experience for a pedagogical model, reinforcing and perpetuating a previous pattern.

Advantages /Characteristics of Reflective Teaching

Reflective teachers talk unto themselves (engage in intra-personal communication and do analysis), they do not shy away from uncomfortable feedback and unpleasant question. Interaction with specialists in the field to share pedagogical perceptions is one way to enrich the teachers' repertoire. Further, teachers can share their individual pedagogical perceptions to create a richer resource bank.

Calderhead (1992) states that reflective teaching can lead to creative and innovative approaches to classroom and school situations and problems, and this could eventuate into improved learning opportunities for students. Further, reflective teachers would think critically, which involves the willingness to be questioned, taking risks in learning, trying out new strategies and ideas, seeking alternatives, taking control of learning for exploration and analysis, using higher order thinking skills; they reflect upon their own learning processes. They would discuss with others, the problems they encounter in their classroom, to aid their objective analysis of situations, which could eventuate into improved future classroom encounters. Elder & Paul (1994); Halpern (1996), Zeichner & Liston (1996) rightly observe, '*If a teacher never questions the goals and the values that guide his or her work, the context in which he or she teaches, or never examines his or her assumptions, then it is our belief that this individual is not engaged in reflective teaching*' (p.1). This statement takes us to think of teaching as a marketable product of the mind and, therefore, it is incumbent upon the teachers to think of ways to create interest in their teaching. Stated in other words, students have to be pleasantly persuaded and motivated; learning to them should be a delightful, memorable stint of life.

Roe (1992) mentions, "*language teaching is a career for life, and career development is a life-long process*" (p. 1). He states that learning on the job, being informed with new ideas, reflection, and sharing ideas and experiences with colleagues increase the effectiveness of teachers and these are obtained by continuing professional development. Further, teachers' roles have changed with the changing concept of teaching. Murdoch (1994) reports his observations asserting that teachers were previously acting as knowledge transmitters; however, now they have the role of facilitators

who create situations to help learners to use the language, and teachers who arouse students' interest and curiosity are considered successful teachers. Thus, the need for development has emerged from the changes in teachers' roles; teachers can fulfill their new roles only through CPD programmes: "...it is the development of teachers to meet the requirement of being able to engage students' interest that is single greatest challenge for those responsible for organizing in-service training courses." Teacher development programmes offer ways to engage students' interest and the implementation of these ways provides opportunities for teachers to facilitate learning, which help teachers to adapt themselves for their new role as facilitator (p.49). Technology changes coupled with economic well being have propelled changes, and the process is never ending. Therefore, teachers have to adapt, create new approaches and innovate knowledge delivery methods on an ongoing basis.

Richards, Gallo & Renandya (2001) claim that reflection is important in learning to teach. They assert that it is documented as a catalyst in foreign language student-teachers' professional growth. Almost similarly, Novak (2002) says that a professional-reflective teacher is an agent in meaningful learning. Bakhtin (1981) opines that a teacher's reflective experience is like an interaction, or a dialogue with a cognitive 'self'; it is an inner language, or an individual's internal voice that guides in evaluating, determining, and analyzing connections between knowledge and the events of teaching experience. Levin and Camp (2002) pointed out, "*without the disposition to reflect on their performance, teachers are less likely to improve their practice or be able to see the links between theory and practice*".

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is basically based largely on personal observation of the authors in Yemen and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA); the authors observed the same approach in teaching also in India, where they pursued Higher Studies. The observations have, however, been supported by interviews with 50 language teachers from both Yemen and KSA. Therefore, data collection was not consciously attempted. It transpired that the theory of 'reflective teaching' is not even known to the teachers; the students are also not aware of it. Current available literature has been studied for grasp over what is practised in advanced countries under 'reflective teaching' by the language teachers. Situational and contextual teaching is not attempted. For the most part, it is translation method., which is the order of the day, not even an inch has it moved towards modernity; experimentation is out of conceptual context. Some of the studies have been mentioned in this paper. This study is thus basically descriptive too, though to some extent also analytical.

IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The studies mentioned in this paper fully support the demand of the time for teachers to be reflective and find new ways of teaching to cope with the classroom situations and improve the system, adopt new approaches and evolve student-oriented behaviour for betterment of not only students' learning but also for personal development.

Observations: The following observations are made out of the real-life study both in Yemen and KSA, supplemented by the study of various research papers/reports in regard to language teaching:

- (i). None of the language teachers is ready to invite peers to observe the class during his/her teaching.
- (ii). None of the language teachers discusses the teacher's note (e. g. points relating to the topic) with peer(s) for finding out whether some important point is missing from the teacher's note, before going to the class.
- (iii). There is no practice, on the part of language teachers, of preparing a note on the class room situation for reflection after coming out of the class to find solutions subsequently.
- (iv). Classroom situation is not discussed with peers in order to invite suggestions and evolve alternatives as possible solutions to the problem/situations confronted by the language teacher during teaching, on the part of students.
- (v). Group tasks are not given as a matter of strategy; individual work does not provide scope for interaction and ease of learning.
- (vi). ICT devices are either not provided or, where available, scant use is made for language teaching by the teachers concerned.
- (vii). Question-answer sessions are fewer. Conversational method is rarely used.

Results: Keeping in view the above observations, the net result that is inferred by the present researchers/authors is that there is shyness on the part of teachers regarding sharing classroom situations with peers or senior/experienced teachers. There is inhibition to invite voluntarily or willingly any peer as observer in the class while teaching. There is reservation to prepare exhaustive note on points of the topic to share in the class with the help of peers. There is also no scope for experimenting different approaches to solve classroom problems and to evolve ways to make learning a pleasure and convenient to the students. There is still quite a bit of conservatism in language teachers to teach another language, and similarly there is aversion in the students to learn other language, for fear of polluting (or compromising) own culture that is preserved in own/mother/first language. Parents, teachers and students feel pride in learning own language only. For that also, reflective teaching is a far fetched dream as there is lack or absence of conducive atmosphere and lack of support from the administration/management, and there is also lack of tools/devices/ICT in learning institutions. Globalisation is not understood by the teachers and students. The emerging scenario in the global context demands that there should be a quick departure from the one-way etching method to be replaced by the modern

system of teaching where there is place for constant research and experimentation for evolving different methods of language teaching.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is common knowledge that a teacher knows best about the effect of his teaching each day from the responses received when some questions are asked in the class. There is no need for any other person to point out the inadequacies or to suggest better ways. But, of late, it is said that the language teacher, and other teachers also for that matter, must indulge in undertaking a review of the structuring of the lesson and identifying classroom situations to find out answer for the benefit of students although self-development is also possible through reflection on the delivery of teaching in the higher schools and colleges. In fact, reflective teaching involves changes in the way teaching is structured and delivery within the classroom is made. Experience shows that teachers who explore their own teaching quality through critical reflection or reflective teaching, develop changes in attitudes and update awareness which are beneficial in their professional growth.

Having regard to the discussions in this paper as well as the views expressed by the authorities, reproduced in the current literature, coupled with the outcome of select interviews held with teachers and students, and also the literature studied and the whole teaching/learning system observed by us, we can say that reflective teachers talk unto themselves (they engage in intra-personal communication and do analysis of classroom situations by themselves); they do not shy away from uncomfortable, inconvenient and disturbing feedback and unpleasant questions. In addition, interaction with specialists in the language education field (teaching/learning and administrative) to share pedagogical perceptions is one way to enrich the teachers' repertoire. Further, the teachers, including language teachers, can share their individual pedagogical perceptions to create a richer resource bank.

There are no two opinions that reflective teaching can lead to creative and innovative approaches to classroom and school situations and problems. Reflective way in teaching/learning could eventuate into improved learning opportunities for the language students. In this process, the reflective teachers would think critically; this involves the willingness to be questioned, taking risks in learning, trying out new strategies and ideas, seeking and evolving alternatives, taking control consciously of learning for exploration and analysis, using higher order thinking skills (acting as think tanks with the seriousness the subject deserves); they reflect upon their own learning approaches and processes. They would discuss with others (peers and seniors as well as mentors), the problems they normally encounter in their classroom, even sudden ones cropping up with surprise presence, to aid their objective analysis of situations, which could result into improved future classroom purposeful and profitable and competent encounters.

This statement takes us to think of teaching as a marketable product of the mind (service product, so to say) and, therefore, it is incumbent upon the language teachers (English language teachers per se) to think of ways to create students' interest in their teaching. Stated in other words, the students have to be pleasantly persuaded and motivated; learning to them should be a delightful and memorable experience of life, not a boring stint or burden to engineer dullness. In fact, most scholar-researchers agree that language teaching is a career for life; and career development is a life long process. It is also life long learning for the language teachers.

As far as peer interaction, without shyness of any sort, is concerned, learning on the job, being informed with new ideas, reflection, and sharing ideas and experiences with colleagues increases the effectiveness of teachers; there is surely a promise of continuing professional development. It has to be understood that the teachers' roles have undergone change in subtlety with the changing concept of teaching due mainly to the introduction of ICT and being 'student-centred': the teachers were previously acting as knowledge transmitters but now they have the role of facilitators who create situations to help learners to use the language; the teachers who arouse students' interest and curiosity through motivation (not infusing fear of any sort) are considered successful teachers. Thus, the need for development has emerged from the changes in teachers' roles; teachers can fulfill their new roles only through training/retraining, peer-level sharing and discussions and remaining student-oriented and every moment facilitators – nothing different.

All in all, reflection is important in learning to teach. It is documented as a catalyst in foreign language students' and teachers' professional growth. The assertion that a professional reflective-teacher is an agent in meaningful learning by the students is accepted without reservation or contradiction (uncontroverted). We can say that a teacher's reflective experience is like an interaction, or a dialogue with a cognitive 'self'. It is an inner language, or an individual's internal voice; it guides in evaluating, determining, and analyzing connections between knowledge and the events of teaching experience (classroom situations and problems). Further, a teacher's reflective way of thinking and learning has a symbiotic relationship with his/her behaviour and instruction in the classroom. The teacher's reflection encourages his/her personal and professional growth and motivation. Only those pre-service teachers who had developed a strong sense of personal identity connected to professional identity were able to successfully transition into teaching; they experienced no difficulty as they had committed to themselves to be successful.

When we talk of learning of language (English language learning included) and, in fact, all types of learning, we see that three are certain criteria that have been identified for meaningful learning. Firstly, the language used in communication must be absorbed and should make sense to the participant. Secondly, the choice must be freely made to

incorporate new concepts in a non-arbitrary, non-verbatim fashion. Thirdly, the individual must possess a framework of concepts to anchor the new knowledge. We can call it as uniqueness in the teacher and that is his/her asset.

Concluding, we can say that no two individuals can share an exact perspective, or become equally aware, and also be able to/capable of reflecting in exactly the same manner; the reason being that each has different degree of uniqueness and variability in cognition, which constitutes a unique identity. Further, there can be no absolute dictum about the process of reflection; it is a personalized process for each human being. Allah the Almighty has created each individual unique: so, each person experiences reflection uniquely, shaped by individual ability, knowledge, and life experience; it is tailored by each person to the needs at hand by adopting most suitable approach or method. Whenever a problem crops up, it represents lack of connection, missing life experience or meaning that must be addressed, supplied and remedied: hence there is need for continuous reflection and learning to confront situations/problems. The fact that reflection is important in learning to teach cannot be forgotten.

The learning is not, however, smooth; there are barriers in the process of reflection. The academic discussion of the process and composition of reflection frequently includes a few barriers to reflection. The inherent characteristics of teaching may discourage the development of reflection on teachers. These barriers include certain realities in teaching: these are like teachers' prior teaching models, reluctance to reflect, lack of time at disposal (as life is busy for many), the influences (working culture) of the student-teaching institutions, and the demands of teacher education programmes (Syllabi). In addition, the pre-service teachers hold beliefs acquired prior to teacher preparation (pre-conditioning) that impact the ability to adopt a reflective attitude. If such strong pre-conditioning (prior beliefs established about teaching negatively) impact reflection, the 'novice' teachers may be handicapped in planning, reorganizing and revising of their instruction. Such teachers have to be given orientation/induction educative/training courses to cleanse their minds to enable them to move on the path of continuous reflection in the interest of student-community – ultimately serving society and thus smoothen the process of adopting progressive attitude.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

We furnish the following recommendations and suggestions regarding 'Reflective Teaching'.

- There is need for revising the recruitment and selection procedures and eligible qualifications of language/English language teachers. The regulations and criteria for admission to the teaching position and the mechanisms of the distribution (placement and posting, etc.) of teachers need to be revised in order to ensure that only qualified and attitudinally right teachers are selected; isolated rural areas may get higher priority.
- Teacher-training institutions should undertake review of the previous training concepts, practices and the content of training courses as a first step towards building a new training cycle, and monitor its impact on classroom teaching (research).
- There should be proper plan for providing regular and need-based in-service training for teachers using reflective teaching as the core (mode) of these programmes. There should be in-service training courses, at least, one programme every two years, to update teachers with the latest trends in ELT.
- There needs to be viewing other teachers' live or video recorded teaching sessions as a part of the teacher-students interaction.
- Teachers should be aware of the different roles a teacher needs to play inside the class; for instance, the role of organizer, helper, manager, guide, and confidence-booster etc. They should not stick to the role of the knowledge-transmitter alone.
- Teachers should be more involved in research and publication. Research will help them to find out the best practices that can be used in the classroom later.
- Teachers should encourage peer teaching and peer observation among themselves as a matter of practice and profit by it.
- Teachers should cultivate a practice of delivering presentations on important topics relating to teaching before their peers and respond to queries raised during such presentations.
- Teachers should discuss among themselves some peculiar classroom situations or problems to find out practical solutions.
- Teachers should make a programme (planning) for their professional growth. They should feel the need for having a development plan (career path) and set standard of their own.
- Successful and experienced academicians may be invited to talk on teaching methodology, role of IT in teaching, supervise some student activities and conduct question-answer sessions.
- Teachers should seek their students' feedback from time to time; this will help them teach the way their students learn if teachers feel that students fail to learn the way they teach.

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Investigation on the Professional Identity of Senior High School English Teachers

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Abstract—Teachers' professional identity is pivotal to their professional development. Although studies on teachers' professional identity are extensive, professional identity of senior high English teachers in the Chinese context has been understudied. This paper aims to study professional identity of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China by investigating 108 teachers from 5 senior high schools and to analyze obstacles to the professional development of senior high school English teachers. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in this paper. It is found that the overall level of professional identity of senior high school English teachers in Henna province of China is average. The obstacles to the professional development of senior high English school teachers in Henan province of China are manifested mainly in the following three aspects: First, Heavy teaching burden give rise to strong pressure on the teachers; second, the deficiency in research ability has a negative influence on the professional development of the English teachers; and third, the unsatisfying working conditions, low pay level and social benefits. Finally, some countermeasures were put forward accordingly.

Index Terms—senior high school English teachers, professional identity, professional development, obstacles, countermeasures

I. INTRODUCTION

The booming of education can not go without teachers' development which is closely related to teachers' professional identity. No consensus has been reached as regards the definition of "professional identity". According to Kelchtermans (2009), professional identity is concerned with "how teachers see themselves as teachers based on their continuing interaction with their context (Canrinus et al., 2012: 116). Professional identity is not a static process but a dynamic one. It is not only an answer to the question "Who I am at this moment?" but also an answer to the question "What do I want to become?" (Beijaard et al., 2004).

Teacher identity has aroused interest of researchers since the 1990s and has emerged as a separate research area in the last decade (Hao, 2011). Related studies have been witnessed both at home and abroad. The studies abroad can be divided into two categories: those concerned with education in general and those with foreign language education in particular. The studies falling into the first category mainly include: Coldron and Smith (1999) studied the tension in teachers' identity formation, maintaining that a teacher's identity was partly given and partly achieved by active location in social space and that the craft, scientific, moral and artistic traditions were of great significance in educational practice. Using a questionnaire as a tool, Beijaard et al. (2000) explored the way teachers saw themselves as subject matter experts, didactical experts, and pedagogical experts, finding that according to the teachers, professional identity is a combination of the distinct aspects of expertise; Beijaard et al. (2004) classified the previous research on teacher's professional identity into three categories and derived four essential features from these studies. In the end, they pointed out the problems needing to be addressed in the future researches; Jephcote and Salisbury (2009) carried out over a two-year period study to reveal the realities of teachers' working lives and how teachers reconcile competing pressures. Using data collected from Dutch secondary school teachers, Canrinus et al., (2012) studied how the indicators of teachers' sense of their professional identity: self- efficacy, job's satisfaction, occupational commitment and change in teachers' level of motivation were related. They hold that classroom self-efficacy and relationship satisfaction play a key influencing part in the relationship between the indicators. On the topic of teachers' professional identity, different subject matters are taken into consideration. Flores and Day (2006) presented an analysis of the major influences which shaped and reshaped new teachers' identities, disclosing how contextual, cultural and biographical factors interacted to affects the teaching practices of new teachers; Connor (2008) explored secondary school teachers' professional identities and emotional experiences; Through the analysis of the discourses emerged from interviews with a group of Australian primary teachers, McDougall (2010) studied how primary teachers were coming to terms with changing views of literacy. Farrell (2011) discussed the professional role identity of three experienced ESL College teachers in Canada. He identified 16 main role identities of them and classified into three major ones of teacher as manager, teacher as professional, and teacher as acculturator; Pillen et al. (2013) identified six profiles in beginning teachers' professional identity tensions; By dint of the theory of identity development and self-categorization theory, Friesen and Besley(2013) studied the development of first year student teachers' identity from a developmental and social psychological perspective. Adopting a narrative analysis, Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) compared two newly qualified teachers' professional

identity formation, showing that the teachers' initial identities and the storytelling process are important to their professional identity formation. By analyzing three stories in a story competition, Schatz-Oppenheimer and Dvir (2014) examined processes in the formation of novice teachers' professional identity. Compared with the studies in the first category, the studies listed into the second category are far less extensive which include: Guided by grounded theory, Abednia (2012) examined Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity reconstruction and observed three major shifts in their professional identities; Drawing on data from interviews, Lee (2013) examined how four EFL writing teachers constructed and negotiated their identities; Employing exploratory research, Scotland (2014) explored how the experienced English language teachers' professional identities were affected, indicating that institutionally imposed pedagogical adaptation may bring about a renegotiation of professional identity for a few teachers. Studies of professional identity at home are mainly composed of the following: Wei and Song (2005) presented literature reviews of overseas studies of teachers' professional identities; Song and Wei (2006) studied the influencing factors on teachers' professional identities in order to evaluate the present state of teachers' professional identities. Fang and Mao (2008) conducted a research on university teachers' professional identity and revealed some results. Hao (2011) interviewed none EFL teachers to explore the changes of their professional identity with in-service doctoral study experience, demonstrating that their professional identities are multi-leveled, achievement-oriented and discipline-focused; Liu (2012) reviewed the relevant literature ranging from more theoretical works to the empirical works, from the broader research development to the relevant local studies in China. Xu (2013) carried out a four-year case study of four EFL teachers on their professional identity change in the first years of teaching, showing that cue-based and exemplar-based imagined identities are changed into rule-based and schema-based practiced identities. Zhang Lian (2013) gave an analysis of the obstacles to college EFL teacher development and proposed coping strategies in accordance with these impediments.

By reviewing the literature, we know clearly that although great progress has been made on teachers' professional identity these years, professional identity of senior high school English teachers has been little studied, much less to say in-depth empirical studies. Thus, the present study undertakes to fill this gap by embarking on a study of professional identity of senior high school English teachers in the Chinese context. The research questions of this study are: 1) How is the overall level of professional identity of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China? 2) What are the obstacles to the professional development of these teachers? 3) What strategies can wipe out these obstacles?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The questionnaire was sent to English teachers from 5 senior high schools in the northern, southern, eastern and western part of Henan province in China. In total, 120 questionnaires were distributed, 108 were returned, which is a response rate of 90%. Male and female teachers participated in the research take the percentage of 67.6% and 32.4% respectively. Their ages are of a great variety: 7.4 % were born in the 1960s; 36.1 % were born in the 1970s; 49.1% % were born in the 1980s and 7.4% were born in the 1990s. Their teaching experience varied: 11.1% had more than 20 years teaching experience; 41.7 % fell in the category 10–19 years of teaching experience; 47.2% had less than 10 years teaching experience. The academic background of the participants varied: 81.5% have earned bachelor's degree; 6.5% have earned master's degree and only 12.0% received tertiary education. Their academic titles are of variety: 19.4% boast senior professional post; 50% are from professional title 1, 30.6% are from professional title 2.

B. Material

The questionnaire adopted in this study was a revised version of Zhang Lian's (2013) which was composed of three parts. The first part consists of questions about basic working information of the participants: how many lessons they give per week, how many hours they spend to prepare for the lessons per week and so on. The second part of the questionnaire was based on indicators of teachers' professional identities: job satisfaction, occupational commitment, self-efficacy and change in level of motivation (Canrinus et al, 2012). This part consisted of four categories: professional abilities identity, professional effect identity, professional environment identity and professional interpersonal relationship identity, each of which encompassed 3 items. The subjects were asked to what extent they agreed with the items on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1: very dissatisfied, to 5: very satisfied). The third part of the questionnaire consists of three open-ended questions.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion include two parts: the descriptive analysis of the statistical information of the subjects and the analysis of the open-ended questions.

A. Descriptive Analysis of the Statistical Information

The basic working information of the participants is as follows in Table 1:

TABLE 1
BASIC WORKING INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Giving lessons per week	<12 Sessions	13.0	12-16 sessions	79.6	≥17 sessions	7.4		
Personal lesson preparation (hr) per day	≤1hr	13.0	1.5~4 hrs	63.9	≥5hrs	22.2	missing	0.9
Group lesson preparation (hr) per week	≤1hr	0.9	1.5~2.5 hrs	54.5	≥3hrs	41.8	missing	2.8
Homework correction (hr) per week	≤2hrs	9.3	2.5~5 hrs	42.5	6~8hrs	34.3	≥9hrs	9.3
time to read books related to majors	Have time	62.0	Hardly have no time	34.3	Completely have no time	2.8	missing	0.9
Time to read books (hr) per week	0hr	9.3	≤2hrs	62.0	≥3hrs	25.9	missing	2.8
Articles want to publish per year	0	3.7	1	63.9	≥2	25.9	missing	6.5
Time needed to finish one article	≤2wks	13.9	3-4wks	52.7	≥2mths	26.9	≥6mths	4.6
Training program have participated	none	12.0	1	31.5	≥2	55.6	missing	0.9

Some characteristics of the working information of the participants can be shown in Table 1:

First, the daily teaching burdens the participants shoulder are heavy. As indicated in Table 1, 79.6% participants give 12-16 sessions lessons per week, 63.9% participants spend 1.5-4 hours to prepare for lessons per day and it takes 22.2% more than 5 hours to prepare for lessons. 42.5% participants spend 2.5-5 hours on homework correcting per week and 34.3% of them even spend 6-8 hours on homework correcting per week.

Second, the time participants spend reading books related to their majors and doing research is sparse. As demonstrated in Table 1, 34.3% participants said they had no time to read books related to their majors, 62% of them spend less than 2 hours per week on reading and 9.3% of them spent less than 1 hour in reading books concerned. This shows that although most participants are research-conscious, they can not allocate enough time to go in for research due to heavy teaching burden. Some teachers are even satisfied with being a teacher only and have no interest to do research.

To summarize, the participants involved are engaged in heavy teaching task. As a result, they do not have enough time to do research, although the majority of the participants are willing to and a few are reluctant to.

As mentioned above, the four categories of teachers' professional identities are professional abilities identity which include English language proficiency level, English teaching ability and teaching methods, professional effect identity which include teaching effect, teaching evaluation and scientific achievements, professional environment identity which include working environment, pay level and social benefits, and professional interpersonal relationship identity which include relationship with students, with colleagues and with school leaders. The participants' professional identity level are reflected to what extent they agree with these items. The results are presented in Table 2:

TABLE 2
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEGREE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Categories	Items	Very dissatisfied (%)	Not very satisfied (%)	Indeterminate (%)	Quite satisfied (%)	Very satisfied (%)
professional abilities identity	English language proficiency level	1.9	36.1	2.7	53.7	5.6
	English teaching ability	0	18.5	3.7	72.2	5.6
	Teaching method	0	32.4	11.1	54.5	2.0
professional effect identity	Teaching effects	0	36.1	4.6	56.5	2.8
	Teaching evaluation	1.9	14.8	3.7	74.0	5.6
	Scientific achievements	1.71	52.4	4.8	23.8	1.9
professional environment identity	Working environment	17	64.0	3.8	17.9	0.9
	Pay level	26.9	56.5	4.6	11.1	0.9
	Social benefits	22.2	57.4	6.5	13.0	0.9
Professional interpersonal relationship identity	With students	0	6.5	4.6	77.8	11.1
	With colleagues	0	5.6	0.9	76.9	16.6
	With school leaders	0	27.5	19.6	46.1	6.8

In order to show clearly the professional identity degree of the subjects, the information in Table 2 is represented in increasing order according to the degree of the professional identity in Figure 1:

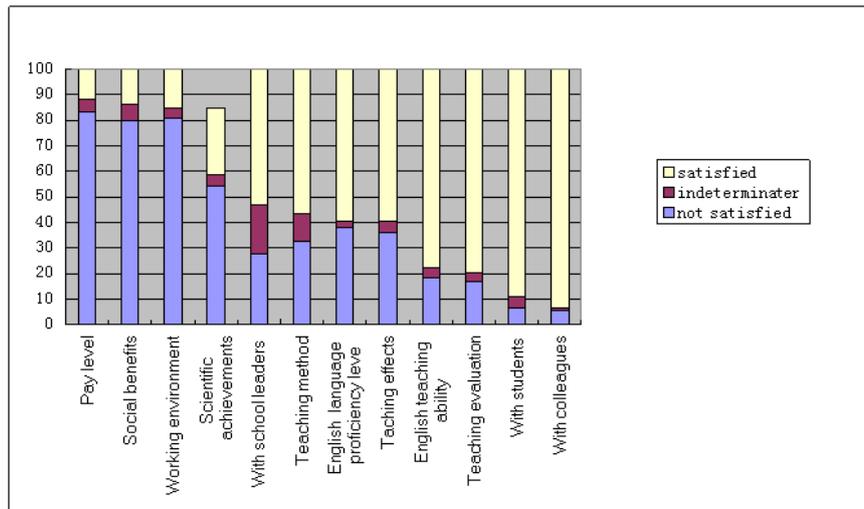


Figure 1 Professional identity degree of the participants

The medium level and standard deviation of the four categories and the overall professional identity are shown in Table 3:

TABLE 3
THE MEDIUM LEVEL (M) AND STANDARD DEVIATION (SD) OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN GENERAL

	professional abilities identity	professional effect identity	professional environment identity	Professional interpersonal relationship identity	Overall professional Identity
M	3.386	3.197	2.133	3.767	3.121
SD	0.186	0.410	0.089	0.318	0.251

It is shown that the general professional identity level is medium ($M=3.121$), the highest professional identity category is professional interpersonal relationship identity ($M=3.767$), followed by professional abilities identity ($M=3.386$), the lowest is professional environment identity ($M=2.133$). In the professional interpersonal relationship identity, the highest identity item is their relationship with colleagues, followed by their relationship with students, which are 93.5% and 88.9% respectively, indicating that the participants are on good terms with their co-workers and their students; in the professional abilities identity, the highest item is teaching evaluation, followed by teaching abilities, which are 79.6% and 77.8% respectively, indicating that the participants have laid a solid foundation for the teaching. The lowest item is pay level, followed by social benefits and working environment, which are 12%, 13.9% and 18.8% respectively.

To summarize, most participants are satisfied with relationship with their students and colleagues but the majority of them are not satisfied with their scientific achievements. The New Curricular Standard (2003) advances that senior high school teachers should strive to become creative, research-oriented teachers. The scientific ability and scientific achievements are important indicators to evaluate a teacher's scientific level. It is generally acknowledged that the scientific abilities of senior high school teachers are very weak, which have a strong impact on their professional identity development. In addition, most participants are not satisfied with their professional working conditions.

B. Qualitative Analysis of Open-ended Questions

The first question is involved in the participants' understanding of professional identity (What do you think is the meaning and gains of being a senior high school English teacher?), about their requirements of professional development (What do you want to obtain most at the present?) and about their advices and suggestions to their school leaders for them to support their professional development (What advices and suggestions do you have to your school teachers for them to support your professional development?) The answers were written originally in Chinese and then translated into English in writing this paper.

1) What do you think is the meaning and gains of being a senior high school English teacher?

Altogether 86 participants responded to this question, the response rate being 79.6%, 4338 words in total. The most highlighted key word is "the realization of self-worth and social values". Nearly all the participants hold that their biggest gains is the realization of self-worth and social values and being a senior high school English teacher is meaningful because they gain acceptance by the students, the parents of the students and society. As expressed by some participants, "I can provide guidance to my students, so I am very proud of my job", "By imparting to the students the cultures of English-speaking countries, the students' horizon are broadened and I am happy", "The students trust me, love me and understand me and I feel fulfilled". It can be seen clearly that nearly all the participants agree that their work is of great significance and they feel happy and fulfilled to do their job."

2) What do you want to obtain most at the present?

Altogether 87 participants responded to this question, the response rate being 80.6%, 4523 words in total. "Opportunities", "time" and "pay level and social benefits raising" are the key words. The exact expression are as follows: "I hope that I can be given a chance to go abroad", "I want to be supplied with training opportunity", "I want to get the opportunities to initiate a project", "What I desire most is for my pay and social benefits to be raised."

3) What advices and suggestions do you have to your school teachers for them to support their professional development?

Altogether 83 participants responded to this question, the response rate being 76.9%, 3311 words in total. The key word of the response is "hope". The exact words of the participants are "I hope school leaders can take into consideration the teachers' health, both physical and mental", "I sincerely hope that the working conditions of the teachers can be improved", "I hope that school leaders can increase the donation to English teaching", "I really hope that I can be given opportunities to learn from professionals", "The school leaders should exercise democracy so as to listen to the hearts of the common teachers".

By the analysis above, we hold that the obstacles to the professional development of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China are as follows:

1) Heavy teaching burden give rise to strong pressure on the teachers. The statistical information indicate that the senior high school English teachers are under great pressure since on the one hand, they have to give many lessons per week, and on the other hand, they are obliged to publish papers to upgrade their academic titles. Consequently, the teachers are experiencing fatigue physically and spiritually.

2) The deficiency in research ability has a negative influence on the professional identity development of the teachers. Though the majority of the participants are in great need of some opportunities to receive further training, yet they are provided litter chance. With no Doubt, many teachers complained that their teaching methods could not keep pace with the demand of the new curricular reform.

3) The unsatisfying working conditions, low pay level and social benefits. Though most teachers regard teaching as a glorious job, they maintained that they had overpaid but gained less. A few of them even want to change their jobs.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper endeavors to study professional identity of senior high school teachers in Henan province of China by investigating 108 teachers from 5 senior high schools and to analyze the obstacles to the professional development of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China. It is found that the overall level of professional identity of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China is medium. There are three obstacles to the professional development of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China: First, Heavy teaching burden give rise to strong pressure on the teachers; second, the deficiency in research ability have a negative influence on the professional identity development of the teachers; and third, the unsatisfying working conditions, low pay level and social benefits.

In accordance with the obstacles this paper discussed, we believe that in order to facilitate the professional development of senior high school English teachers in Henan province of China, all the parties - the teachers, the schools and society alike should combine their efforts. Otherwise, the professional development of the teachers is just empty talks. Therefore, this paper offers some advices and suggestions as follows:

1) The senior high schools should have a change of their roles and pursue humanized management. They are advised to stand in the shoes of the teachers. They are supposed to care for the teachers, do whatever possible to improve their working conditions and raise their pay level and social benefits.

2) Senior high schools should combine with universities to set up training bases. The middle school teachers and college teachers should form "research community" and at the same time function as the true subjects of teacher education. In this way can the theory and practice be integrated. The "national training plan" is a good example carried out in China. In the training, importance should be attached to the real effect of the training rather than to the formality.

3) The development of the teachers depends on internal as well as external factors. The external factors take effect only through the internal factors. The senior high schools English teachers should strengthen their sense of development and take initiatives to enhance their abilities, especially their capacities for scientific research.

The professional development of the teachers is the only way to ensure high educational quality. As said by Wu (2008), only when teachers take education as an indispensable part of their life and fully control the external factors, the teaching job will be an enjoyment. Without the joint effort of the above-mentioned parties, it is impossible to realize this ideal.

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Turkish Teachers' Practices of *Assessment for Learning* in the English as a Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract—Recently there has been a noticeable paradigm shift in educational assessment where assessment and student learning are viewed as inseparable and assessment is perceived as a tool for supporting student learning. This study was designed to investigate Turkish teachers' preferences of common assessment methods in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, their Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices, and determine whether they differed in their AFL practices according to some variables such as years of teaching experience, gender, and public vs. private school context. 120 EFL teachers completed the online self-report Assessment for Learning Questionnaire for Teachers (TAFL-Q) consisting of 28 statements on a 5-point (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) Likert scale ($\alpha = .92$). The findings revealed that most Turkish EFL teachers rely on conventional methods of assessment rather than formative assessment processes. While they generally reported high levels of perceived monitoring (82.86%) and scaffolding practices (86.94%) of AFL, they had significant differences in their assessments, especially monitoring in support of student learning, according to years of teaching experience, gender, and private vs. public schools variables ($p < 0.05$). To practice AFL, teachers need to appraise their current assessment practices and develop AFL strategies and feedback procedures. Their perceptions of AFL cannot change overnight, nor do they can do it individually and independently. They need support from different sources to recognize the effect of their previous perspectives on their practices and weigh them against the insights offered by the new assessment culture. Through self-report and observational data from both teachers and students to get better insights into monitoring and scaffolding practices, further research could be conducted to explore probable mismatches between teacher and student perceptions of AFL in EFL classrooms.

Index Terms—assessment for learning, monitoring, scaffolding, English language teaching, English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers

I. BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been a noticeable change in educational assessment where assessment and student learning are viewed as inseparable and assessment is perceived as a tool for supporting student learning (Davison and Leung, 2009; Stiggins, 2008). This change in assessment paradigm is due to some reform actions in various settings around the world to improve educational planning and practices (Assessment Reform Group, 1999, 2002; Black and Wiliam, 1998, Chow and Leung, 2011; OECD; 2005; Phakiti and Roever 2011). As this policy-supported practice is increasingly encouraged globally, English language teachers are also called on to apply suitable assessment procedures to monitor and evaluate student progress in their own classrooms. (Davison & Leung, 2009).

Given that assessment plays a crucial role in raising standards of achievement as well as informing and supporting student learning, *assessment for learning* (AFL) has been introduced in contrast to *assessment of learning* (AOL) in classrooms and schools (Assessment Reform Group, 2002; Black and Wiliam, 1998; Black et al., 2003; Stiggins, 2005, 2008). To put it another way, there is now a shift from a more traditional testing culture where instruction and assessment are perceived as independent from each other, towards an assessment culture where assessments are conducted, both formally and informally, through monitoring and scaffolding, aligned with classroom instruction to enhance student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998, Black et al., 2003; Davison & Leung, 2009).

AFL is referred to as “the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there” (Assessment Reform Group, 2002, p. 2). Thus, it is an interactive and learner-centered assessment approach evolving in many subject areas of education including English language teaching (Chow & Leung, 2011; Chen et al., 2013). In contrast to AOL, utilized for reporting and decision-making purposes and thus making summative judgments of learning outcomes, AFL integrates assessment into instruction as an ongoing process, where teachers use assessment information to make adjustments in their instructional endeavors and resources. Learners then use this information to modify their learning processes accordingly (Popham, 2008; Pat-El, Tillema and Segers, 2013). To sum up, based on the constructivist views of learning (Berry, 2008), AFL aims to better understand how learners learn, what they can do or cannot do, and makes some deliberations and decisions on how to help them learn.

In field of English language teaching, there is no widely accepted definition of this assessment approach associated with constructivism, with numerous terms used almost interchangeably to mean similar practices and procedures, including terms such as *formative assessment*, *teacher-based assessment*, *classroom-based assessment*, *school-based assessment*, *dynamic assessment*, and *alternative assessment*. These emphasize different aspects of the assessment process, suggesting “a more teacher-mediated, context-based, classroom-embedded assessment practice, explicitly or implicitly defined in opposition to traditional externally set and assessed large scale formal examinations used primarily for selection and/or accountability purposes” (Davison & Leung, 2009, p. 395). Although AFL is grounded in the principles of formative assessment, AFL puts emphasis on everyday “progress in learning as students climb the curricular scaffolding leading up to state standards (Stiggins, 2005, p. 328). Thus, for the purposes of this paper AFL is used to mean much more than formative assessment, highlighting the shift in assessment culture that takes into account monitoring and scaffolding learners, aligning language instruction in support of student learning, and providing students with greater autonomy in the learning process (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Pat-El et al., 2013; see Berry, 2008 for further details about assessment *of, for, and as* learning).

The current literature on assessment shows that different researchers highlight various AFL principles (e.g., Assessment Reform Group, 2002; Black & Wiliam, 1998). This study focuses on two issues of AFL: monitoring learners to follow their progress and scaffolding to enable learners to understand in what areas they should improve (Stiggins, 2005; Pat-El et al., 2013). Numerous studies and reports (Assessment Reform Group, 2002; OECD, 2005; Davison & Leung, 2009; Chow & Leung, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2010) explain and emphasize these two dimensions in promoting student learning. Teachers who implement AFL can monitor their students by observing and making assessments of what is happening in the classroom during learning activities. Then, they can engage in various interactions with students, for example, by encouraging them to reflect on how they can improve their language learning, discussing with students the progress they have made in learning English, and informing students on their weak and/or strong points. As far as scaffolding is concerned, teachers and students need to follow a strategy where they engage in appropriate social interactions, with teachers providing “demonstrations, support, guidance and input and gradually withdrawing these as the learner becomes increasingly independent” (Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 507).

There is evidence emerging in the international literature that teachers’ conceptions and perceptions of assessment affect their instruction and assessment practices (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Davison & Leung, 2009; Brown, 2008). To find out the impact of assessment on student learning, some studies have focused on conceptual attitudes about assessment practices and perceived/observed practice (Brown, 2008; Pat-El et al., 2013). Brown (2008) showed that teachers’ conceptual attitudes towards assessment influence their assessment practices, and in turn, determine learning outcomes. Few studies have attempted to investigate teachers’ perceptions of assessment that affect their instruction and assessment practice. The findings of a recent study (Pat-El et al., 2013) revealed that perceptions of assessment situations and interactions held by teachers and students should be harmonious in order to improve the effects of assessment on student learning. In a very recent study, Lee and Coniam (2013) investigated the implementation of AFL for EFL writing within an examination-driven AOL system in Hong Kong. Their findings indicated that despite efforts to plan and pre-assess instruction, share learning goals with students and use feedback forms to provide feedback and align assessment with instruction, teachers had to follow conventional practices that required detailed attention to errors and summative scores, and were unable to engage students in multiple drafting and peer evaluation on a regular basis.

Research reports and studies into language teachers’ perceptions and practices of classroom-based assessment is very limited (Chow & Leung, 2011; Wu, 2013; Zhou, 2013) and there is a call for research into this type of assessment and assessment research (Davison & Leung, 2009). In the context of Turkey there has also been a shift in the conceptual framework guiding the EFL curriculum and instruction practices, resulting in a new curriculum document putting more emphasis on formative assessment. (MoNE, 2013). To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, whether EFL teachers apply appropriate assessment procedures in support of student learning remains unanswered. The current literature review revealed that there is not even a single study dealing with Turkish teachers’ perceptions and practices of AFL in the language classroom. Thus, seeing this gap in the literature, the present research grew out of a desire to contribute in this respect by investigating Turkish teachers’ perceived monitoring and scaffolding practices of AFL in the EFL classroom and find out factors that may explain probable differences among teachers. Thus, the following research questions were formulated to guide this study.

1. What methods of assessment do Turkish EFL teachers use in their classrooms?
2. To what extent do they monitor and scaffold their students to support learning?
3. Are there significant differences of assessment practices among them by
 - (a) years of teaching experience,
 - (b) private vs. public sector,
 - (c) school type,
 - (d) pre-service vs. in-service training, and
 - (e) faculty-college graduated from?
4. Do they differ in their perceived monitoring and scaffolding practices of AFL in the EFL classroom in relation to their gender and sector?

Given the time and resource limitations, these questions were addressed by using quantitative analysis of data drawn from practitioners teaching EFL in both public and private educational institutions. In this study, it is expected that exploring teachers' perceptions and practices of AFL in the EFL classroom will provide valuable data for both in-service and pre-service training as well as administrators involved. By providing insights into teachers' perceptual attitudes, the findings should lead teacher trainers to evaluate teachers' practices and make adjustments in training programs in line with the curriculum guidelines of their institutions.

II. METHOD

A. Participants

A purposeful sampling technique was used to collect responses from as many online teachers as possible. Patton (1990) describes this technique as the process of choosing specific "information-rich cases" from which the researcher can learn significant information related to the research. Thus, criterion sampling was employed to choose participants based on certain characteristics, specifically, EFL teachers currently teaching in public and private educational institutions. To obtain the most representative sample possible, the questionnaire was sent to as many online EFL teachers as possible, using a social networking service. This way, it was possible to reach and connect with target audience more effectively. The online survey was administered in May 2013 to 400 online teachers. A pre-notification message was first sent out informing potential participants of the survey, followed by a second message containing a link to the instrument. Two follow-up reminders were then sent out to respondents over the course of a month. A total of 120 responses were gathered, yielding a 30% response rate for the survey. This rate was considered satisfactory and higher than most web-based surveys (Manfreda, Bosnjak, Berzelak, Haas & Vehovar, 2008; Shih & Fan, 2008). Accordingly, the sample included 120 EFL teachers working in public and private educational institutions. 80% of the participants (N=96) graduated from EFL teacher education departments that offered a language 'testing' course in their curriculum. 20% of the participants (N=23) graduated from language departments at faculties of science and letters, including English Language and Literature, American Culture and History, and English Linguistics. Except graduates of EFL teacher education departments, the participants reported that they had received an EFL certificate from a Turkish university. As indicated in Table 1, most EFL teachers had 1 to 5 years of teaching experience, followed by those with 6-10 years of teaching experience.

TABLE 1
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Institution/School Type	Frequency	Percentage	Years of Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Primary School (Grades 1-4)	15	12.5	1-5	62	51.70
Middle School (Grades 5-8)	30	25	6-10	37	30.8
High School	24	20	11-15	10	8.3
University	51	42.5	16+	11	9.2
Total	120	100	Total	120	100
Education Sector	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Frequency	Percent
Private	39	32.5	Female	87	72.5
Public	81	67.5	Male	33	27.5
Total	120	100	Total	120	100
Pre-service Training in Language Assessment	Frequency	Percentage	In-service Training in Language Assessment	Frequency	Percent
Yes	73	60.8	Yes	65	54.2
No	47	39.2	No	55	45.8
Total	120	100	Total	120	100

B. Instrument

The instrument for this study was a self-report questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part included questions that characterized the participants such as gender, years of teaching experience, the types of educational institution and sector where they taught EFL, and common assessment methods they used, whereas the second part included Assessment for Learning Questionnaire for Teachers (TAFL-Q) adapted from Pat-El et al. (2013). They developed and validated the instrument in a very recent study that included a sample of 237 teachers from all disciplines, ranging from arts to sciences. It consisted of 28 statements divided into two subscales: (1) perceived monitoring (16 items) and (2) perceived scaffolding (12 items). The participants rated the statements on a 5-point (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) Likert scale. It did not contain any "negative" or "unfavourable" statements that could otherwise be reverse-coded in statistical analysis. Internal consistency was examined using Cronbach's alpha for the whole instrument ($\alpha = .92$) as well as the two subscales, perceived monitoring ($\alpha = .88$) and perceived scaffolding ($\alpha = .89$). These high alpha values indicated good internal consistency and satisfactory psychometric properties of the items in the TAFL-Q (Field, 2009).

C. Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the study were gathered using an online self-report questionnaire administered through a social networking service. The potential respondents were sent out information about the purpose of the study and requested to

participate by clicking the link to the instrument. The online implementation ensured that there were no cases with unreliable or missing data responses among all collected data. Data analysis was performed to address the research questions formulated previously. Statistical data analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 21, a comprehensive computer program used to help researchers perform statistical analysis quickly and accurately. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and mean were computed to characterize the collected data. The independent samples T-test was run to compare the two level variables such as gender and sector. The independent-samples t-test is employed when the two groups or sets of scores whose means are being compared are independent of each other (Mackey and Gass, 2005; Field, 2009). The two way multivariate analysis of Anova (two-way MANOVA) was conducted to measure the main and interaction effects of independent variables on the EFL teachers' perceived monitoring and scaffolding practices of assessment within the AFL framework. In fact, MANOVA is used to test the hypothesis that one or more independent variables, or factors, exercise an effect on a set of two or more dependent variables. This is done to avoid the probability of the so-called Type I error in data analysis. In addition, wherever MANOVA results demonstrated significant differences between groups, Tuckey's Post hoc test was run to determine the exact location of differences among groups measured in the study.

III. RESULTS

The present study yielded some significant findings regarding Turkish teachers' AFL practices in EFL classrooms. This section presents the results of the study in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics, structured along with the research questions set in the study.

A. Research Question 1: What Methods of Assessment Do Turkish EFL Teachers Use in Their Classrooms?

To obtain a model for presenting the results of teachers' preferred assessment methods, their preferences were divided into three groups according to the frequency of use and their percentages. The assessment methods were considered as 'the most preferred' ones if their percentages were within 71 to 100, 'the second most preferred' if they were within 41 to 70, and 'the least preferred' ones if they were within 0 to 40 of the total range.

The results of descriptive analyses revealed that fill in the blank, multiple-choice, true-false, matching and short answer exams were among the most preferred type of assessment methods employed by EFL teachers. Overall, 46.18% of them prefer to use these methods in assessing their language learners. The results of percentages analyses showed that nearly nine in ten (89.17%) of teachers are more likely to use fill in the blank method, 86.67% prefer to use multiple choice type of assessment method, 82.5% favor true-false test items, 81.67% prefer matching method, and 79.17% prefer to use short-answer exam type of assessment method (Figure 1).

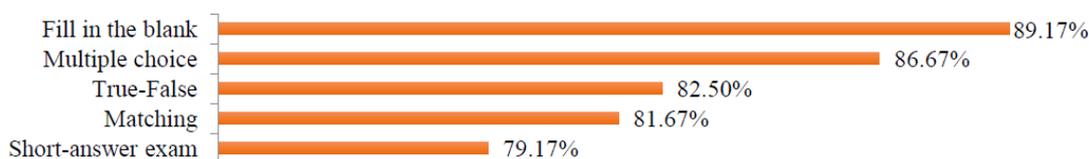


Figure 1. The Most Preferred Assessment Methods by EFL Teachers

Oral exams, group work, project, portfolio, performance assessment, essay type exam and oral presentation were the second most preferred assessment methods among EFL teachers. Their frequency of use and percentages ranged from 60.83% for oral exam to 46.67% for oral presentation. Other assessment methods in this category fell within these two methods with nearly the same frequency and percentages of usage, i.e. around 50% (Figure 2). Only 40 teachers are more likely to use formative ways of assessment.

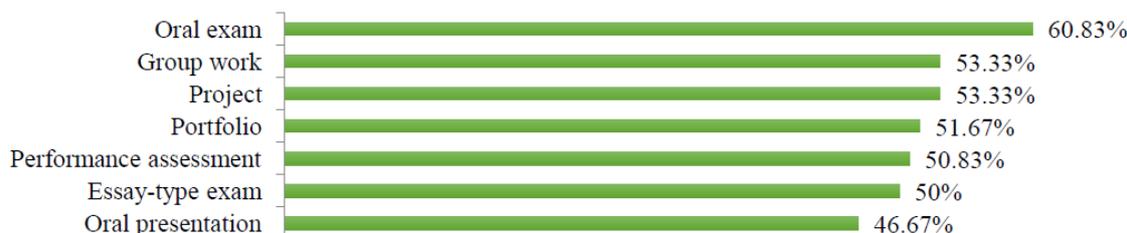


Figure 2. The Second Most Preferred Assessment Methods by EFL Teachers

The least preferred assessment methods were rubric, self- and peer-assessment, observation form, drama, structure grid and other methods which, on average, account for 14.27% of the total percentages of methods used for assessing language learners (Figure 3). These methods are mostly considered as formative practices (Black et al. 2003, Chen et al., 2013).

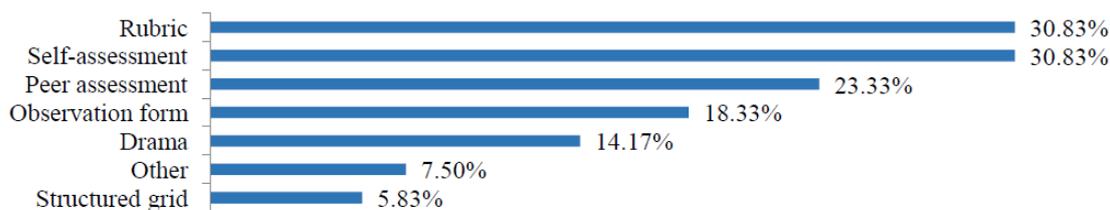


Figure 3. The Least Preferred Assessment Methods by EFL Teachers

B. Research Question 2: To What Extent Do They Monitor and Scaffold Their Students to Support Learning?

The results of descriptive analyses indicated that the mean scores obtained for the items under perceived monitoring factor were consistent within the scale. That is, 81.25% of the participants rated above 4 (Table 2). The highest mean score (M=4.58, SD=.71) was received for item 11 (*I give students guidance and assistance in their language learning*), suggesting that most teachers (94.16%) prefer to monitor students during their practical teaching. In contrast, the lowest mean score was ascribed to item 5 (*I give my students the opportunity to decide on their language learning objectives*), indicating less participation on the part of students in the process of language learning as well as assessment. The careful scrutiny of the results indicate that all the mean scores under 4, i.e. scores for items 3, 4 and 5, are related to learners’ active involvement in the process of language learning as well as assessment. This implies that EFL teachers are less inclined to involve their students in decision making and setting language learning objectives. On the whole, 82.86% of them agreed with perceived monitoring aspect of AFL, 3.7% disagreed and 13.54% were undecided on the usefulness of monitoring as an AFL practice.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EFL TEACHERS’ PERCEIVED MONITORING PRACTICES OF AFL

Items and Item Descriptions	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I. Perceived Monitoring							
1. I encourage my students to reflect upon how they can improve their language learning.	1	1	13	46	59	4.34	.77
2. After a test, I discuss the answers given with each student.	1	7	19	36	57	4.18	.95
3. While working on their assignments, I ask my students how they think they are doing.	0	5	25	60	30	3.96	.79
4. I involve my students in thinking about how they want to learn English at school.	0	4	26	58	32	3.98	.78
5. I give my students the opportunity to decide on their language learning objectives.	3	13	40	39	25	3.58	1.01
6. I ask my students to indicate what went well and what went badly concerning their assignments.	2	4	22	54	38	4.02	.88
7. I encourage students to reflect upon their learning processes and how to improve their learning.	0	3	13	56	48	4.24	.74
8. I inform my students on their strong points concerning language learning.	1	4	12	50	53	4.25	.83
9. I inform my students on their weak points concerning language learning.	0	6	13	50	51	4.22	.83
10. I encourage my students to improve on their language learning processes.	1	0	7	53	59	4.41	.68
11. I give students guidance and assistance in their language learning.	1	2	4	33	80	4.58	.71
12. I discuss assignments with my students to help them understand the content better.	1	1	9	43	66	4.43	.74
13. I discuss with my students the progress they have made in learning English.	1	2	10	55	52	4.29	.76
14. After an assessment, I inform my students on how to improve their weak points.	2	1	15	42	60	4.31	.84
15. I discuss with my students how to utilize their strengths to improve on their assignment.	1	2	17	47	53	4.24	.82
16. Together with my students, I consider ways on how to improve on their weak points.	0	1	15	53	51	4.28	.71

Note: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree.

The results of descriptive analyses indicated that the mean scores for the items under perceived scaffolding of AFL were also highly consistent within the scale. Strangely enough, all of the participants rated the items positively and the obtained mean scores were all above 4 (Table 3). All in all, 86.94% of them agreed to adopt scaffolding, 3.19% disagreed and 9.87% were hesitant whether to use it or other way round. The highest mean score (M=4.65, SD=.65) was received for item 25 (*I give my students opportunities to ask questions*). This suggests that most (96%) believe in the importance of asking questions during learning a foreign language. The lowest mean score, on the other hand, was obtained for item 24 (*I ensure that my students know what areas they need to work on in order to improve their results*). This implies that not all teachers pay much attention to the problematic areas during their teaching, with 79% zeroing in on the weak points of students.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EFL TEACHERS' PERCEIVED SCAFFOLDING PRACTICES OF AFL

Items and Item Descriptions	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
II. Perceived Scaffolding							
17. I adjust my language teaching whenever I notice that my students do not understand a topic.	1	3	5	48	63	4.41	.76
18. I provide my students with guidance to help them gain understanding of the content taught.	1	3	12	45	59	4.32	.82
19. During my class, students are given the opportunity to show what they have learned.	1	3	17	42	57	4.26	.85
20. I ask questions in a way my students understand.	1	1	4	31	83	4.62	.67
21. By asking questions during class, I help my students gain understanding of the content taught.	1	0	10	41	68	4.46	.72
22. I am open to student contribution in my class.	1	1	5	33	80	4.58	.69
23. I allow my students to ask each other questions using English during class.	2	5	10	42	61	4.29	.91
24. I ensure that my students know what areas they need to work on in order to improve their results.	0	7	18	56	39	4.06	.84
25. I give my students opportunities to ask questions.	1	1	3	29	86	4.65	.65
26. My students know what the evaluation criteria for their work are.	1	3	18	50	48	4.18	.83
27. I ensure that my students know what they can learn from their assignments.	2	4	23	45	46	4.08	.92
28. I can recognize when my students reach their language learning goals.	0	3	17	62	38	4.13	.74

Note: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree.

C. Research Question 3: Are There Significant Differences of Assessment Practices among Them by (a) Years of Teaching Experience, (b) Private vs. Public Sector, (c) School Type, (d) Pre-service vs. In-service Training, and (e) Faculty-college Graduated From?

The two-way multivariate analysis of variance (two-way MANOVA) was conducted to assess the effects of such factors as years of teaching experience, private vs. public sector, school type, pre-service vs. in-service training, and faculty-college graduated from on the participants' tendency to choose and adopt monitoring and scaffolding practices of AFL in EFL classrooms. A non-significant Box's M test ($p=0.823$, $P>0.05$) indicated that there was homogeneity of covariance matrices of the dependent variables across the levels of groups.

The results of multivariate tests indicated a significant main effect for participants' years of teaching experience with respect to their assessment practices (Wilks' Lambda=.648, $F(6, 66) = 2.664$, $P=0.022$, $p<.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.195$, observed power=.830). However, the results showed no significant main effect between gender, school, sector, pre-service vs. in-service training and faculty-college factors and preference for specific assessment practices among EFL teachers (Table 4). There was also statistically significant interaction effect between gender and sector variables on the teachers' tendency to use their assessment practices (Wilks' Lambda=.730, $F(2, 33) = 6.109$, $P=0.006$, $p<.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.270$, observed power=.857).

TABLE 4
THE EFFECT OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES MEASURED ON THE CHOICE OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

Variables	Main Effect				
	λ	df	F	Sig.	η^2
Gender	.997	2;33	.045	.956	.090
Years of teaching experience	.648	4;66	2.664	.022*	.195
School	.907	6;66	.548	.770	.047
Sector	.966	2;33	.574	.569	.034
Pre-service training	.937	2;33	1.103	.344	.063
In-service training	.979	2;33	.358	.702	.021
Faculty- college	.855	2;33	2.142	.133	.115

* Significant at .05 level

The results of tests of between-subjects effects, or univariate tests, demonstrated that there was a significant difference among EFL teachers in relation to years of teaching experience and adopting monitoring activities of AFL $F(3, 85) = 4.141$, $p=0.013$; $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .27$, whereas no significant difference was found as regards their scaffolding practices. Also, there was a significant interaction effect between gender and sector variables and preference for monitoring $F(3, 85) = 12.076$, $p=0.001$; $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .26$. However, gender and sector variables had no significant interaction effect on participants' perceived scaffolding in support of student learning (Table 5).

TABLE 5
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Variables Independent	Dependent	Univariate Analysis			
		df	F	Sig.	η^2
Years of teaching experience	Monitoring	3,85	4.141	.013*	.27
	Scaffolding	3,85	.486	.694	.041
Gender *Sector	Monitoring	3,85	12.076	.001*	.26
	Scaffolding	3,85	3.315	.077	.089

* Significant at .05 level

A post-hoc test was also run to find out exactly where the significant differences between groups existed. The post hoc (multiple) comparisons using the Tuckey’s HSD test revealed that the participants with 1-5 years of teaching experience differed significantly in monitoring students during language learning from those with 6-10 years of teaching experience (Table 6).

TABLE 6
POST HOC TEST FOR TEACHERS’ PREFERENCES OF ASSESSMENT METHOD

Tuckey’s HSD	Multiple Comparisons				
Variables	(I) Years of teaching experience	(J) Years of teaching experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Monitoring	1-5 years	6-10 years	4.3204*	1.36985	.017
		11-15 years	.8258	2.24710	.983
		16+ years	.1804	2.15735	1.000

* Significant at .05 level

Analysis of the reliability effect test, according to Cohen (1988), showed a moderate significant difference for years of teaching experience (partial $\eta^2 = .27$) and interaction effect of gender and sector variables (partial $\eta^2 = .26$) on EFL teachers’ perceived monitoring and scaffolding practices of AFL in supporting student learning. Cohen’s (1988) reliability effect indexes for small, moderate, and strong relationships are $r=0.1, 0.30,$ and $0.50,$ respectively. As for the main and interaction effect of other factors on assessment preferences, the results showed no significant differences between the variables.

D. Research Question 4: Do They Differ in Their Perceived Monitoring and Scaffolding Practices of AFL in the EFL Classroom in Relation to Their Gender and Sector?

The results of descriptive statistics for Turkish EFL teachers’ perceptions and practices of assessment for learning (AFL) in the EFL classroom demonstrated differences between males and females with respect to their preferences to use monitoring and/or scaffolding for assessing their students. The highest mean score ($M= 67.51; SD=8.20$) for perceived monitoring was received by males while the lowest mean score ($M=67.22; SD=7.58$) was observed in female group. Conversely, females rated more positively ($M=52.19; SD=6.63$) than males ($M=51.54; SD= 5.65$) in their perceptions of perceived scaffolding factor. However, the results of the Independent Samples t-test showed no significant differences between groups in relation to their perceived monitoring, $t (118)=-.176, P=0.861, P>0.05,$ and perceived scaffolding, $t (118)=-.498, P=0.619, P>0.05.$

The results further revealed that 82.76% of the participants agreed with *Perceived Monitoring* practice of assessment, whereas four in ten (3.7%) reported not practicing it. Moreover, nearly nine in ten (86.94%) of them agreed with scaffolding, while 3.19% stated that they preferred not to adopt scaffolding as an assessment practice in classrooms. Drawing upon these findings, it can be concluded that Turkish EFL teachers are more likely to use scaffolding as an AFL practice. As shown in Figure 4, the total mean score for perceived monitoring method was 4.20 while the total mean score for perceived scaffolding was 4.33.

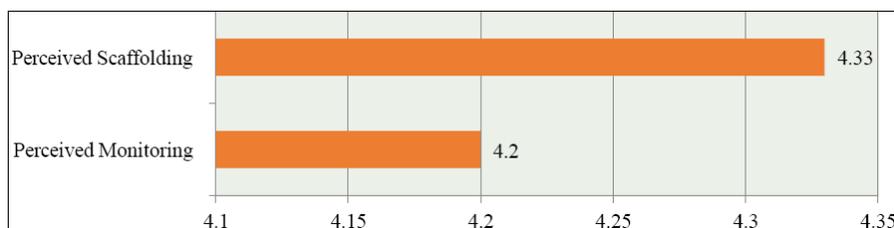


Figure 4. Turkish EFL Teachers’ Perceived Practices of AFL in the EFL Classroom

As for the sector variable, the results, as determined by Independent samples t-test, showed a significant difference between teachers who work for private sector, $t (118)=2.253, P=0,026, P<0.05$ and those from public sector in relation to monitoring factor, while no significant difference was found between groups regarding scaffolding factor, $t(118)=1.426, P=0.157, P>0.05.$ The highest mean scores for both monitoring ($M = 69.61, SD=7.54$) and scaffolding ($M=53.20, SD= 5.53$) was obtained for private sector, while the low scores for both monitoring ($M=66.19, SD=7.89$) and scaffolding ($M=51.44, SD=6.68$) were received for public schools.

IV. DISCUSSION

An important finding of the present research is that most Turkish EFL teachers rely on conventional methods of assessment rather than formative assessment tools such as self-assessment and peer assessment which are considered as the indispensable part of monitoring aspect of language teaching and learning. This may be due to the fact that EFL teachers consider formal examinations as to be the only form of assessment. In other words, formal or summative assessment, otherwise known as assessment of learning (AOL), is mainly practiced by EFL teachers rather than formative assessment or assessment for learning (AFL) (Boraie, 2012) due to the washback effect of final assessment or testing on language teaching, learning and assessment in contexts where students' performance in final exams is of utmost importance rather than their achievements as in the case of process learning and portfolio, project, and self- or peer-assessment. However, as Sardareh and Saad (2012, p. 344) rightly put it, in AFL learners play an active role in language learning and monitoring their progress. "They constantly collaborate with their teacher to monitor their current level of achievement in relation to the learning intentions." In other words, learners are given opportunities to actively communicate their learning evidence to their teachers, peers, and their parents, monitor their learning progress and control their success coupled with a strong self-reliance and self-confidence resulting in their success in language learning.

Focusing only on AOL clearly runs counter to recent developments in the assessment culture supported by experts as well as national and international organizations (OECD, 2005; Black et al., 2003; Pat-El et al., 2013). Monitoring student learning is also suggested by *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CoE, 2001). Following CEFR, emphasis on alternative assessment methods *such as self-assessment, project and portfolio evaluation, (student-teacher cooperation), pen and paper tests, self-and peer evaluation* (including listening and speaking skills) and *teacher observation and evaluation* are also emphasized in the new English language curriculum put into effect by the Turkish Ministry of Education in 2013 for grades 2 to 8 (MoNE, 2013). Self-assessment is greatly emphasized by the new curriculum since learners/users are encouraged to monitor their own progress and achievement in the development of communicative competence as the ultimate goal of language learning.

Additionally, MoNE's (2013) new curriculum emphasizes that students' achievements are going to be controlled and evaluated through self-assessment checklists which ask students to assess their own learning from an action-based perspective. This does not mean, however, that formal or summative assessment should be totally abandoned when assessing learning outcomes. In keeping with the new curriculum, formal evaluation of the language learners will be carried out through the application of written and oral exams, quizzes, homework assignments and projects. This will be done, as in the past, to provide an objective record of students' success at the end of the semester and academic year. Therefore, both AFL and AOL are going to be put into practice in Turkish schools.

The significance of self- and peer-assessment as useful and widely-used strategies in AFL or formative assessment has also been highlighted by researchers interested in Assessment for Learning in language classrooms. Chow and Leung (2011, p. 142), for instance, argue that "one of the characteristics of AFL is that through the process of self- and peer-assessment students are expected to study the assessment criteria repeatedly and refine their judgment with the support of teacher feedback". They further state that the use of checklists in the project is that it provides ample opportunities for both teachers and students to use the same checklists for teacher, and student self- and peer-assessments, reducing the difference in expectations between students and teachers.

In an attempt to investigate the implementation of AFL for EFL writing within an examination-driven AOL system in Hong Kong, Lee and Coniam (2013) found that while teachers strengthened planning and pre-assessment instruction, involving students in making decisions on learning objectives, providing feedback and aligning assessment with instruction, they had to use conventional practices that required detailed attention to errors and summative scores, and failed to engage students in multiple drafting and peer evaluation on a regular basis. They also found that students had mixed opinions about motivation and this indicated that they were experiencing some tension between innovative and traditional assessment practices. Their results also confirmed that AFL contributed to the improvement of students' writing performance, suggesting that AFL had a facilitative role in language learning.

Another finding of this study revealed that Turkish EFL teachers differ significantly in their perceptions and practices of monitoring central to AFL to support student learning. Indeed, teachers with 1-5 years of experience differed in perceived monitoring practices from those with 6-10 years of experience. This is closely related to the development of teacher efficacy beliefs (Akbari and Tavassoli, 2011) among prospective teachers since "there is some evidence that course work and practica have differential impacts on personal and general teaching efficacy (Hoy, 2000, p. 6). According to Hoy (2000), general teaching efficacy goes through stages of fluctuation and appears to increase during college coursework, then decline during student teaching. This suggests that the "optimism of young teachers may be somewhat tarnished when confronted with the realities and complexities of the teaching task (Hoy, 2000, P.6)". Nevertheless, additional observational data is required to confirm this aspect of Turkish EFL teachers' practices of monitoring as part of AFL. Also, it would be of interest to conduct interviews with students and collect data about their perceptions of teachers' assessment actions.

Although gender had no significant main effect on the participants' perceived monitoring and scaffolding practices, there was indeed a significant interaction effect between gender and sector on their perception of monitoring. A close

examination of the mean scores for the groups revealed that female teachers got lower scores in the monitoring indicator, which also requires additional data to confirm their monitoring practices in AFL. With regard to sector variable, the findings revealed that the participants working for private schools, are more likely to monitor and scaffold their students than teachers from public schools. This implies that there exist a myriad of factors ranging from availability of facilities, social support, teacher assessment literacy, teacher autonomy, and school accountability (Ajila, 1997; Brown, 2008) to fringe benefits- various non-wage compensations provided to employees in addition to their normal salaries. As a matter of fact, the purpose of offering fringe benefits mainly is to provide incentive for the employees, increase the economic security of them, award employees who are doing notably well or having seniority, give first chance for an individual for job promotion, attract employees to fields where there is a high demand such as teaching, keep quality of employees, etc (Stanford, 2008; Malveaux, 2010). It is also argued that rewards, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, do have important implications for individuals' overall job satisfaction and desire to commit to their job (Papadaki and Papadaki, 2006) and is one of the factors which help to combat burnout among employees.

While male EFL teachers reported lower scores as regards scaffolding practices, there were no significant differences of perceived scaffolding practices between male and female participants. In fact, both male and female teachers had high perceptions of scaffolding for AFL in support of student learning, suggesting that from a sociocultural perspective they value scaffolding as a crucial assessment practice in promoting student learning in Turkish context. This finding seems to be in line with those of another study by Kayi-Aydar (2013, p.324) that revealed that "student and teacher questions scaffolded language learning and use, and positively affected students' participation during teacher-led whole class interactions. Similarly, Sardareh and Saad (2012, p.351) argue that AFL, based on the teaching strategies like scaffolding and cooperative learning, "improves students' learning and guides them to develop their learning. Therefore, teacher should provide students with an appropriate learning context that help them improve their learning."

V. CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding the widespread adoption of AFL in education in the western context (Black et al., 2003; OECD, 2005), there has been comparatively little research into AFL in English as a second or a foreign language. That is, AFL has been neglected by teachers and researchers, especially in Turkish context, partly because of the traditional dominance of the field by great tendency to employ summative assessments to make decisions about students' learning and to measure the extent of their achievement of the instructional program learning outcomes (Boraie, 2012; Popham, 2009, Stiggins, 2005, 2008). Currently, the field of language assessment is undergoing a shift from conventional testing culture (AOL) to assessment culture (AFL), whereby assessment practices aim to inform not only the teachers about student learning but also students about their own achievement.

The present study showed that Turkish EFL teachers also differ significantly in their perceptions and practices of assessment for learning (AFL) in the EFL classroom, especially in employing monitoring their language learners' performance during the course. Although some actively use monitoring as a reliable assessment strategy for supporting student learning, there are a considerable number of them who pass it by indifferently for no good reasons. It is important for teachers to remember that AFL is different from traditional forms of examination and testing in that traditional forms consider context as a neutral and unimportant factor and suggests that the assessor or examiner must remain objective throughout the whole assessment process. However, the core content of AFL is that assessment should take place during regular curriculum between teachers and students since the ultimate attainment in language learning can and should be shaped and improved by teachers' and students' active involvement, and through monitoring, self- and peer- assessment, and constructive feedback on the part of the students. It is also worth mentioning that there is ample evidence in the literature (Davison & Leung, 2009, Carless, 2008; Davison & Hamp-Lyons, 2010; Kennedy et al., 2006), suggesting that even AOL for students' language skills should be carried out language formatively since this helps teachers to give constructive student feedback and enhance language learning.

On the other hand, one must accept that it is hardly possible for teachers to accomplish AFL by working individually or independently. There is a need to recognize their existing assessment practices and then "plan a comprehensive program that takes into account the interrelationships between teaching, learning, and assessment" (Lee, 2007, p. 209). Teachers can then determine instructional strategies and feedback procedures by considering the school's language curriculum. Language teachers must also ask their learners to take responsibility for their own learning by engaging in assessments, for example exercising self-assessment grid (CeO, 2001) on a regular basis. As AFL is an important professional skill for the 21st century teachers, both pre-service and in-service teacher trainers need to guarantee teachers' understanding and exercising it (Boraie, 2013; Davison & Leung, 2012; Lee, 2007).

A major limitation of this study is that the findings are based on self-report data only from the EFL teachers, who may have reported more use of AFL strategies than they actually did. It would be of great interest to gather self-report and observational data concurrently from both teachers and students to get better insights into monitoring and scaffolding practices and find out whether there are great teacher-student mismatches for AFL in EFL classrooms.

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The Study of the Chinese People's Inductive Inclination in Communication*

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Abstract—As globalization becomes a fact, it is true that more and more communication happens among people in different languages. In order to avoid conflicts in cross-cultural communication because of misunderstanding between Chinese people and westerners, the further study of cross-cultural communication is necessary. According to Sapir & Whorf Hypothesis, the use of language is involved far more than words, but also the way of thinking. For language and thought, they work side by side. This paper, reviews Sapir & Whorf hypothesis and argues that because of the factors of geography, ideology and history, the Chinese people have the inductive inclination in communication and we believe our research can promote the communication between Chinese people and westerners.

Index Terms—inductive pattern, deductive pattern, inclination, communication, Chinese, westerners

I. INTRODUCTION

Linguists have concentrated their attention on the language system itself since for a long time. Saussure (1982) defines language as a semiotic system of expressing concepts. Nowadays, with the establishment and development of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, the study of language gradually turns from language system itself to the function of language, which widens the fields and produces quite a few new macro-linguistics and one of them is intercultural communication. Generally, people consider Hall's book, *The Silent Language* (1959) as the mark of the beginning of intercultural communication. In his book, Hall emphasizes the importance of culture in communication of human being. He argues that culture is the life environment of human being so all the aspects of human being's life are affected by culture and changed with culture. In other words, culture decides the existence of human being, including the ways of self-expressions, feelings, thinking, behaviors and settlements and so on. It is these which are regarded as common but rarely studied to affect man's behaviors subtly (Hall, 1959). Since 60s-70s of last century, the anthropologists, linguists, socialists and so on have studied these things from various angles and a lot of books are published. However, in the view of the writer of this paper, most of the scholars focus the surface and hardly concern the deep difference such as the differences of national psychology, character, quality, value orientation and way of thinking of different countries.

In the preface of *The Corpus of the Study of the Comparison between Chinese and English*, the Chinese linguist Lv Shuxiang (1983) points out that it is not difficult to point out the difference but it is hard to explore the reasons while in fact, it is the final purpose of the research.

Sapir & Whorf Hypothesis (Hu Zhuanglin, 2011) suggests that men's language helps mould men's way of thinking, and as a consequence, different languages may express speakers' special ways of understanding the world. On the one hand, people do not perceive the world freely but rather they do by language. On the other, language is a filtering structure, which distorts the reality and thus influences and controls people's thoughts. Sapir-Whorf's Hypothesis now has been developed into a strong and a weak version. The strong emphasizes the decisive role of language as the shaper of men's thinking pattern. The weak one, on the other, holds that there is a correlation between language, culture and thought.

From Sapir & Whorf Hypothesis, we can say that language, therefore, would seem to have a major impact on the way an individual perceives and conceptualizes the world. So we are surely convinced that if Aristotle speaks in Chinese, his logic would have been different.

According Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, some scholars stereotypically think that, when the Chinese talk with the others, they must adopt inductive pattern, while the westerners, deductive. As Scollon & Scollon (2000, p. 123) argue: "The result of these different discourse strategies is that there arise the unfair and prejudicial stereotypes of the inscrutable Asian or of the frank and rude westerner." Then, Scollon & Scollon, argue that, in spite of the evidence from both ancient and contemporary sources proves that inductive pattern is widely approved used in Asian, but it is quite wrong to consider that inductive pattern is only used by Asians.

Based on the above researches, this paper argues that because of the effects of geography, ideology and history, the

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Chinese people have their own culture, which deeply influences their thoughts, so in their verbal communication, they have the strong inductive inclination. We think that our research can promote the westerners to know more about Chinese language, culture and the way of thinking, which, of course, can reduce misunderstanding between Chinese people and westerners in verbal communication.

II. INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE PATTERN IN COMMUNICATION

Scollon & Scollon (2000, p. 1) have a good example to explain inductive pattern in communication. In a business meeting between Hong Kong Chinese and Anglo-North American businessmen, one of the Chinese might say the following:

Because most of our productions are done in China now, and uh, it's not really certain how the government will react in the run-up to 1997, and since I think a certain amount of caution in committing to TV advertisement is necessary because of the expense, so, I suggest that we delay making our decision until after Legco makes its decision.

Here the Chinese businessman adopts a periodic order of presentation in which the main point is deferred until sufficient background of the topic has been done, and according to Scollon & Scollon, this is a typical inductive pattern in verbal communication, which can be summarized as:

Because of Y (topic, background, or reasons)
=>X (comment, main point, or action suggested)

On the other hand, a westerner tends to expect a discourse pattern of opening the discussion with the introduction of the speaker's main point so that other communicators can react to it, which has them have time to prepare their arguments on the speaker's topic. For this process we can call it as a typical deductive pattern, which can be written as:

X (comment, main point, or action suggested)
=>because of Y (topic, background, or reasons)

Here we can analyze the above business meeting in detail. For the Chinese businessman, his main point is that he wants to delay in making a decision until after Legco makes a decision. Scollon & Scollon (2000) call this line of argument inductive, in which it places the minor points of the argument first and then derives the main point as a conclusion from those arguments. According to Scollon & Scollon, the schema of inductive pattern is like this:

Because of A, and because of B, because of C and the others, therefore D.

On the contrary, in deductive pattern, it follows that main points first, the minor or supporting arguments latter. So, the deductive pattern can be written as:

It is D, because of A, because of B, because of C and the others.

Based on Scollon & Scollon's (2000) analysis, we give a summary about the contrast between the inductive and the deductive pattern as follows:

Inductive	Deductive
Cyclical	Linear
Climax	Anti-climax
In order of time or space	Cohesive devices (such as because)
Outcome and what	Process and why
A list of phenomena	Problem solving
Conclusion in the end not the beginning	Conclusion at the beginning not in the end

III. THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S INDUCTIVE INCLINATION

The Chinese people's inductive inclination in daily life can be proved in different areas. Wang Moxi & Li Jin (1993) once did an experiment, in which they had the Chinese students write an essay of argumentation. According to their statistics, 80% of the Chinese students adopted inductive pattern, which is much different from the very typical deductive pattern of Americans (Hu Chao, 1998).

The similar phenomenon can be found in the writing of narration. For instance, for the order of narration, westerners usually list the information focus openly at the beginning and then the outer environment (time, place and means and so on). On the contrary, the Chinese people almost list the outer environment firstly, and then the information focus in the end. So for the westerners, the order of narration is generally arranged as:

(1) Agent/ the content of the event/ the outer environment.

For example,

<u>Tom</u>	<u>did his homework</u>	<u>once again as mother required at home early in the morning.</u>
Agent	the content of event	the outer environment

On the contrary, the common thinking order of narration of Chinese is:

(2) Agent/ the outer environment/the content of the event, so the above sentence can be written in Chinese as follows:

一清早	在家里	按妈妈的要求	汤姆	又	做了一遍作业。
yi qing zao zai	jia li	an ma ma de yao qiu	Tom	you	zuo le yi pian zuo ye
the outer environment		agent	the content of event		

The differences between the inductive and deductive patterns between Chinese people and westerners are typically

shown between Xun Zi's "The Persuasion of Study"¹ and Francis Bacon's "Of Study."

In Xun Zi's "The Persuasion of Study", he adopts inductive pattern. First, the minor statement, "The sons of Gan, Yue, Yi, and, He, they speak using the similar sound when they are born, while when they grow up, their habits are much different." Second, the topic or the main point: "Teaching makes them so".

In Francis Bacon's "Of Study", he adopts a deductive pattern. First, he gives the topic or the main point, "Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability." Second, it is the minor or the comment, that is, the explanation of delight, ornament and ability one by one.

Kaplan (quoted from Bander, 1978) points out that, the thinking model of the English discourse is linear. It begins from the topic of a sentence, and then it develops the sentence around the topic, while the eastern discourse thinking model, is circular/spiral (Hu Chao, 1998). It discusses around the outer of the topic not discusses from the beginning of the topic. The common view is that, the Chinese people's thinking way is inductive which is featured as from the specific to the general, from the concrete to abstract, while the westerners' is deductive which is featured as from the general to specific, from the abstract to concrete.

IV. THE FACTORS OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S INDUCTIVE INCLINATION

A. *The Factor of Geography*

The natural and geographical context of one country or a race, to some degree, determines their culture orientation, living-style and communicative behavior. So Firth (1950) argues that language study should begin with environment.

China is an inland country. The origin of the Chinese culture is the area of the Yellow River, where the climate is temperate zone.

The result of the physical geography leads the Chinese people take agriculture as their occupation. The feudal rulers preach that people should take agriculture as main branches, while commerce as an insignificant stunt. The natural economy has the following features: A. regularity; B. self-sufficiency. These features form a special agricultural or continent culture. According to Jia Yuxin (1997), the Chinese agricultural or continent culture can be characterized as: A. conform to nature; B. conservative; C. inward character; and D. not willing to risk. This kind of culture leads the Chinese not willing of risk or changeability, so for the Chinese people, in their verbal communication, they do not prefer to give the topic or the main points at the beginning because that means a kind of risk since they have to present their ideas at first, that is, they like inductive pattern but not deductive one.

B. *The Factor of Ideology*

Confucianism is the main ideology, which influences the Chinese people for thousands of years. Kong Zi (Confucius), the founder of Confucianism, is the product of the natural economy of China. Guo Shangxing & Sheng Xingqing (1994) introduce Kong Zi like this: Kong is family name, his given name is Qiu and his literary name, Zhongni, but he is often referred to by his title of honor, Kong Fu Zi, Master Kong or Sage Kong. *The Analects* (Huang Chichuang, 1997), a collection of notes of the master's discourses, conversations and traces is kept by his disciples is the earliest and most reliable source on the life and teaching of Kong Zi, which is regarded as the basic "scripture" of Confucianism. The influence of Confucianism is so predominant that if anyone should be asked to characterize in one word traditional Chinese life and culture, that word would be 'Confucianism', primarily a code of ethics and a system of philosophy. Confucianism has left its mark on Chinese politics and government, family and society, and art and literature. In a certain sense, Confucianism even functions as a religion in the ancient community (Scollon & Scollon, 2000).

The Chinese people's communication is greatly influenced by Confucianism, which can be analyzed from the following aspects.

1. Facework

Scollon & Scollon (2000) define "facework" as the negotiated public image, mutually granted each other by participants in a communication event. They (2000, p. 38) claim "Any communication is a risk to face. It is a risk to one's own face, at the same time, a risk to the other persons'."

Because of the ideology of Confucianism, traditionally, the Chinese people cherish their faces very much. Kong Zi thinks (Huang Chichuang, 1997) that the man of humanity wishing to be established himself seeks also to establish others; wishing to be developed himself, he seeks also to establish others. Lao Zi² (Lau, 1964) thinks that the man who is wise does not speak, or the one who speaks is not wise, and he also preaches that doing everything by doing nothing. So the Chinese people believe that "Silence is gold." or "Scourge comes from speaking." As Samovar, et al (1998) say, Chinese communication pattern and use of language are similar to the indirectness and face-saving pattern of Japanese and the pattern of Koreans—they believe face-saving is crucial and the losing of face is a shame.

Because of the ingrained idea of facework, when Chinese people talk with the others, they would be prudent, that is to say, they like protecting their faces, moderating and following middle way but not an aggressive one. So in verbal communication, in order not to lose their faces, they prefer the inductive pattern to the deductive, that it is to say, they

¹ "The Persuasion of Study" is Xun Zi's (a famous Chinese thinker) classical essay, in which Xun Zi explores why and how to study.

² Lao Zi is a Chinese philosopher and founder of the Taoist religion in China. His name means "Old Master". He worked as a librarian at the court of Chou. When the kingdom showed signs of decay, Lao Zi left and was never heard of again. Tao Te Ching is said to be his principles of his philosophy.

would not give the topic or conclusion or the critical demand at the beginning.

2. Harmony

Chinese culture belongs to being not doing. For thousands of years, they emphasize to be harmony with nature but not be the master of nature. For instance, Lao Zi holds the cooperation view, in which he argues that Heaven and man are unity. Hui Shi, a native of the state of Song, and a friend of Zhuang Zi, holds that one should love all things equally. The ancient Chinese claim that the universe is one (Guo Shangxing & Sheng Xingqing, 1994). So, for the Chinese, harmony is one of primordial values of Confucianism and Chinese culture. It is rooted in Chinese religion in which they argue that the ultimate goal of human behavior is to achieve “harmony”, which leads Chinese people to pursue a conflict-free and group-oriented system of human relationships. For example, the proverb of Chinese “The first man to raise his voice loses the argument.” This is much different from the English proverb “Early bird catches the worms”. In history or at present, the Chinese would like to have harmony with the neighbor countries. They would not invade others. Even the others invade them, if the war can be avoided, they would compromise to them. There are so many examples: The Southern Song Dynasty submits to King; The marriage between Prince Wen Cheng and Son Zanganbu³; One of the founders of China, Chairman Mao Zedong’s words reflect this idea exactly, “If the one does not offend me, nor do I.” Even today, the Chinese leaders emphasize: Stability overcomes everything. Scollon & Scollon (2000, p. 38) argue that in verbal communication, “...the Chinese tend to be concerned that good relationships are maintained, even this means that less information maybe exchanged....” Therefore, the Chinese people would not give his conclusion or accurate meaning at the beginning but in the end to arrive at the harmonious goal. That is why Samovar, et el (1998) think that the Chinese people like indirect language while the westerners like direct one, and this is also a reason why in communication the Chinese prefer inductive pattern to deductive one.

3. Hierarchy

As Han nationality, in the use of language, the Chinese people have their own characteristics. The feudalism, based on the natural economy, rules the Chinese thought for thousands of years. The core of the feudal patriarchal clan society is the hierarchy among the social members. In *The Analects*, Kong Zi (Huang Chichuang, 1997) preaches a term called Rite. In his answer to Yan Yuan, one of his disciples on what is humanity, Kong Zi describes Rites as to restrain oneself and abide by rites is humanity. The essence of Kong Zi’s Rites reflects in the following sentences: Do not look when your action would be contrary to rites; Do not listen when your action would be contrary to rites; Do not speak when your action would be contrary to rites; Do not touch when your action would be contrary to rites (Huang Chichuang, 1997). When Duke Huan of Qi⁴ asked Kong Zi about how to govern a country, he answered: There is a government, when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father and the son is son. For the obvious hierarchy of ancient Chinese, we can also find proof in *Zuo’s Commentary*⁵. In this classical book, it (Guo Shangxing & Sheng Xingqing, 1994) writes: The Li constitutes the warp of Heaven, the principle of earth, and the conduct of the people. Later, Dong Zhongshu⁶, the greatest Confucianism scholar of his day, reaffirms the teaching of Kong Zi and Meng Zi. Among the five social relationships—between sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, brother and brother, friend and friend, he thinks the first three is very important, and he propounds it as “Three cardinal guides”. That is, the sovereign is the guide of his subject, the father is the guide of his son, and the husband is the guide of his wife. Here, to be the guide means owning absolute authority. These relationships, as Dong Zhongshu maintained, are all derived from the principle of Ying and Yang. The sovereign is Yang, while the subject Ying; The sovereign is Yang, while the subject Ying; The father is Yang, while the son Ying; The husband is Yang, while the wife Ying. Dong explains further that the king was co-equal with heaven, and heaven, earth, and the ruler of men are just one. He also popularizes the set of “Five Constant Virtues”, which is described as humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness. The mainstay of Confucianism ethics, these theories are a severe mental burden on the majority of the Chinese people in the long years of feudal society, which makes the Chinese people know “there is a power distance between old and young, leaders and subordinates or even teachers and students.” For example, even here today in the daily life, the subordinate usually calls his vice director as director but not vice director. The students call the vice professor as professor not vice professor, otherwise, it shows that he does not know customary rules of good behavior. As a result, when the lower power group talks with the higher one, they must pay much attention to the customary rules of good behavior, so they do not dare give the topic or conclusion at first but in the end. That is also an important reason that the Chinese people like inductive pattern.

C. *The Factor of History*

As one of the four civilized ancient countries, China has a long splendid history. Chinese people are proud of their more than five thousand years civilization. They like to tell the westerners their four great inventions, the Yangshao culture, pottery wares in Ban Po Village, the Silk Road, and the Great Wall and so on. They terribly believe in the significance of prior event. So the Chinese culture belongs to past-time orientation (Samovar, et el., 1998). The Chinese, with their tradition of ancestor worship and strong pride in their culture persistence for thousand years, take the past as a

³ This happened 1300 year ago in Tang Dynasty, in order to arrive at a harmonious relationship, the emperor married his princess (Wen Cheng) to a Tibet local chief (Son Zanganbu) and this story is popular in China still today.

⁴ A monarch in Warring State of China.

⁵ A classic book on Confucian historical biography.

⁶ A thinker and Confucian in the Western Han Dynasty of China.

guide to show how to live in the present. These cultures (p-time) have histories that date back thousands of years, so they find out it normal to take a long-range view of events and are less likely to be rushed when they face decisions (Samovar, et al., 1995). So, the Chinese people believe future is unknowable. A phrase can be an instance “drink today while drink you may”. The feudal ruling class preaches “Eliminating human desires, and reserving heavenly principles.” In fact, the past long history is a kind of burden for the Chinese. The past-time orientation makes the Chinese people no confidence for the future, so when they talk with the westerners, they prefer to inductive strategies to avoid to give ideas or make decisions at the beginning in communication.

V. CONCLUSION

Successful intercultural communication is based on sharing culture knowledge between the speakers (Scollon & Scollon, 2000). It is a false dichotomy that the Chinese must adopt inductive pattern while the westerners have to choose deductive strategy in verbal communication, while the investigation of the physical environment, the ancient ideologies and past history of China, shows that the Chinese people have the inclination of using inductive pattern in speech events and we think this research can make less miscommunication between the Chinese and the westerners in intercultural communication.

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On the Use of Modern Technological Technique for the Teaching of Anaang/Ibibio Tones

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Abstract—Tone is an important feature of African tone languages. The aspect of tone identification, marking and analysis seem to be problematic in the teaching of most Nigerian languages; even in the existing orthographies apart from Yoruba and Tiv. The paper therefore proposed the use of modern technological aid for effective teaching of tones, with a view to providing insight into the analysis of Anaang/Ibibio tones. This study examined the relevance of the computer and software in language to show how the teachers-learners in a setting like Anaang/Ibibio stand to benefit from the use of modern technological devices in language research. The paper argues that teachers need to revise their methods in line with current technological trends for a better understanding of tone. This entails taking advantage of the double resources which the computer, and the access software provided, and adding to it the human intelligence. The position of the paper is that the computer is a more recent direction in language research and proved to be result oriented for the teaching/learning of tone. The application of modern technological device like software PRAAT and computer enhanced a feasibility study of the different patterns of tone. The use of spectrographic analysis actually converted the abstract sounds to ideal and visible sounds, thereby enhanced easy identification of the different tones. This paper therefore establishes a basis for the understanding of the relative tone/pitch forms of Anaang/Ibibio

Index Terms—tone, computer, software, technology

I. INTRODUCTION

Anaang/Ibibio are classified as tonal languages. The meanings and the production of the syllables, words, phrases and sentences are severely guided by the tonal pattern of the language. Therefore, the teaching of Anaang/Ibibio cannot be productive without a proper understanding of tone. In this modern technological era, there is an increased interest in the use of computer for teaching. This technology has extended to the teaching of language specifically, phonetics, lexicography, speech technology and descriptive linguistics. The reality of the mechanism of tones are still not understood even with the advances made in speech processing technology. However, with strides made in computer technology, lots more have been done on tonal investigation in Nigerian languages including Ibibio (Gibbon, Urua, Ekpenyong 2006, Urua 2007).

Nigeria is a pluri-linguistic nation where only three languages; Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo are recognized as the major and official Nigeria languages alongside English (FGN 2006). Other Nigerian languages including Ibibio and Anaang therefore fall among the minority languages. Ibibio has been developed to a standard form and taught in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. The teaching of Anaang is only restricted to primary and adult education since it is yet to be developed to a standard level. Despite the rate of growth in the Ibibio language, the teachers as well as the learners of the language still find it difficult to tone mark correctly.

Tone is an indispensable distinctive feature of African tone languages. It contributes to both lexical and grammatical contrasts. Therefore any lexical or grammatical construct in African tone languages that is not properly tone-marked automatically leads to ambiguity in meaning. Consider the following pair of words from Ibibio.

1. /ɔ́bɔ́ŋ/ 'mosquito' and /ɔ̀bɔ́ŋ/ 'chief'

The misplacement of the tones on the segments can make one to address a 'chief' ɔ̀bɔ́ŋ as 'mosquito' if the downstepped tone [!] is omitted to produce /ɔ́bɔ́ŋ/. It is therefore imperative to introduce a practical approach to the teaching of Ibibio/Anaang tones with a view to providing insight to the features of Anaang/Ibibio tones. This work therefore aims at establishing an instrumental method on how to identify tones and how to apply it in teaching using modern technological tools like software PRAAT and computer. Modern instructional technique is not equivalent to new techniques. It means improved and additional environmental settings to adapt to an old concept, in order to meet the demands of the 21st century teaching techniques.

A. Importance of the Problem

Tone teaching/learning has been seen as a problematic area in the process of indigenous languages usage in Nigeria. One of the problems often identified is lack of material resources or teaching aid. Tone has been seen as a problematic phenomenon owing to its abstract nature. This abstractness actually attracted negative influence on the use of tone even in the approved orthographies of Nigerian languages. In the manuals of the orthographies of Nigerian languages

(Okwuiduishu & Salami 2000), except for Yoruba and Tiv, it has been unanimously agreed that tone marking on lexical as well as grammatical items should be ignored except for scholarly research. Various Nigerian language authors equally perceived the marking of tone as being cumbersome, clumsy and time consuming. To those scholars, tone marking can make graphology of Nigerian languages generally ugly to the sight, and overloads the graphological representation of the discourse with tone marks, especially if all the tones are indicated. This, accordingly, will make reading difficult and possibly discourage even the enthusiastic readers. In an attempt to support this view, Gudu(1990) clearly added that in the reading of scripts like Tiv, with observed tone marks, one has to do three things simultaneously to achieve meaning: to keep one eye on the grammatical relationship of the words, keep another eye on tone marks and observe the diacritics on the affected letters. This gives writers the authority to publish texts in Nigerian languages, including primers, without tone marking. By so doing, the teachers as well as the learners do not have reference materials for the learning of this abstract phenomenon. This equally makes the teachers to gloss over the teaching of tone in the language classroom. However, the argument that tone marks defaces pages of printed texts, is no argument. To leave tones unmarked in Anaang/Ibibio writing leads to a distortion from the true and essential structure into English. Tones help to ambiguate words, phrases and sentences, which otherwise look alike.

The second aspect is caused by lack of teaching aid. In Akwa Ibom State with well over four hundred primary and post primary schools, the government is only interested in the provision of laboratory and equipment for the teaching of only sciences, while materials/aid for language teaching is completely neglected. This, however affects the teaching of Anaang/Ibibio as subjects in schools.

However, if Anaang/Ibibio must be effectively taught in the Nigerian language classroom setting, where most of the teachers are not even efficient in tonal usage, identification and analysis, it is necessary for the teachers to go a step further to acquire computer knowledge in order to make effective use of the necessary technological teaching aid for language teaching, specifically for the analysis of tone in this era of technological development.

Teachers today are confronted with keeping abreast with rapid changes in science and technology. In the midst of school population and technological explosion, the teachers can no longer attempt to be the sole information giving instrument in the classroom. Secondly, the population explosion in schools is no longer favorable for traditional information/teaching in the classroom. Hence, the need for computer assisted instruction in schools as a tool for problem solving including language issues. The application of modern technology in the teaching of tone is effective in the production, acquisition, storage and retrieval of recorded data for use. This implies that the data stored for the practical teaching can easily be retrieved and used for subsequent teaching/learning exercises including research. Teachers are therefore encouraged to make use of computer/software for effective teaching of tones in African tone languages including Anaang and Ibibio.

Those who advocate the writing of Nigerian languages without tone marks are following the writing system of English. Tone languages are syllable-timed, while English is stress-timed and intonational. Therefore, tone marks cannot be applied for English writing system. The absence of tone marks in Nigerian tone languages is a distortion from the structure of the language to English, which invariably, results in the distortions of meanings. Consider the differences in the following pairs;

Ekpo ‘ghost’	Udo ‘second male child’	Mfon ‘grace’	Ikpát ‘foot’
*Ekpo	*Udo	*Mfon	*Ikpát

There is a distortion of the meanings of those words owing to the absence of tone on personal names as indicated with asterisks. The pronunciation of the pairs are presented below.

Ékpò ‘ghost’	Ùdó ‘second male child’	Mfón ‘grace’	Ìkpàt ‘foot’
*Ékpò	*Ùdó	*Mfón	*Ìkpàt

Tone marks have to be written because the structure of the language requires it for correct pronunciation, and meaning of elements of words, phrases and sentences. The point in this paper is not whether tones should be marked in Anaang/Ibibio, but on the techniques for the teaching of tones in the classroom. Tone is an integral part of grammar in tone languages. It is closely related to stress in intonational languages. The difference is that, stress has no fixed pattern for some languages. The application of modern technological device like software PRAAT and computer enhances a feasibility study of the different patterns of tone. It enhances precision on the exact height of each tone. Tone manipulation is made easy, feasible and accurately interpreted with spectrographic analysis. It provides empirical result to speech synthesis. The use of spectrographic analysis actually converts the abstract sounds to ideal and visible sounds, thereby enhances easy identification of the different tones.

It is against this background that this paper proposes an instrumental approach for the teaching of Anaang/Ibibio tones and suggests the use of modern technological devices like the computer and software PRAAT as a practical approach. The main aims of the study therefore include: To identify the different types of tones in Anaang/Ibibio, to classify and analyse these tones, to manipulate the different tones using sound spectrograph, and to provide a step by step practical procedure for the teaching of Anaang/Ibibio tones as a basis for effective language learning.

B. Relevant Scholarship

Lots of research has been carried out on the study of African tone languages. Crucial among the study in Nigerian languages include (Yoruba (Akinlabi 1985, Connell & Ladd 1990) Hausa, Tiv (Sewuse 2011), Ibibio (Akinlabi &

Urua 1997, Connell 1987, Essien 1990, Urua 2001, 2007), Anaang, Efik, Ibibio, (Cook 1969, 1985, Connell 1987, Greenberg 1963, Udoh 1998, Diblugunaya & Michael, 2003), Yala (Armstrong 1968), among others. Tone is defined as the use of contrastive, but relative pitch on a syllable. Tone is said to be an inherent property of the syllable in the sense that each syllable must have at least one tone. The tone bearing unit of the syllable is the vowel or syllabic segment. In other words, tones are marked on the peak constituent of the syllable. The pitches of voice in words keep changing in line with the variation of the tones on the syllable. Tone is represented with the following convention.

(L)ow = [ˊ], (H)igh = [ˋ], (D)ownstepped high tone = [!], Low-High cluster [ˊˋ], High-Low cluster [ˋˊ].

The square brackets stand for phonetic realization, while slant slashes // are used for phonemic realization of sounds. Tone is very crucial in lexical as well as grammatical formation. The pronunciation of grammatical as well as lexical items are determined by the tonal patterns of the language. At the same time, the semantics of the words are also determined by tones. In addition, the vital importance of tone in African tone languages is seen in the use of tone for communication of messages as explored in dances, poetry, riddles, tongue twisters, praise names among others (Urua 2001, Michael 2013). Therefore, the totality of African tone languages is based on the understanding of tone in order that a better analysis of the language is concluded effectively.

Previously, teaching was considered as a purposeful attempt by one (teacher) to impact knowledge or skills to another (learner). Within this context, the teacher role was that of the facilitator of learning; and the onus of learning, when properly guided rested more on the learners. Teaching however, involves ranges of activities aimed at assisting the learners to acquire knowledge, attitude values, habits and skills (Okwuenu 1996). In this vain, much blame is laid on the teacher who transmits knowledge to the learner. In order to avoid these blames, scholars however, focused and delineated instructional methods, strategies, techniques, for effective teaching. One of such methods include the cognitive apprenticeship approach (Filmore 1976, Brown 1984, Carrell 1984, Schachter 1988) which is applied to simplify the task by scaffolding (extra help) and fading (diminishing the assistance) and allowing the students to complete the tasks through which the students are able to achieve mastery. In this regards, the teacher walks the students through the process in the practical participatory way, in which the instructor mind, and that of the students get automatically integrated together as that of experts. In this modern technological era, there is a shift from pure traditional teaching method to a more sophisticated technique including the application of computer and software for language teaching.

In linguistic studies, there is a change from quantitative to qualitative processing of language in a number of technologies. This includes the use of computer/software. Computer on its own cannot teach or conduct any research. It has to be manned by human. The computer is a product of human intellect because in any computer operation, there are powers of human intellects behind it. Computer is seen as a stool (Gibbon 2009), a complex artifact constructed by human. The computer does not and cannot think, therefore empirical and reliable result depends on the ability of the researcher to direct the computer. The use of computer to analyse data provides the foundation for yielding fast and quick speed. It maximizes the potential of the researcher, enforces criteria for consistency, completeness and soundness in this case, the teacher is able to avoid undergeneralisation and overgeneralization. It enhances the complementarities between machine and human and allows for cross fertilization benefit (Neufeld 1987, Sinclair 1997, Salamani 2008). The application of computer software to tone teaching triggers a practical design for both the teacher and the learner and enhances dependable output.

In the learning of tone, Ohala (1978, 1986, 1995) and, Beckman (1986) proposed an experimental method as a well established method for the discovery of the physical correlate of the linguistic messages. Experimental phonology is viewed as a serial process, which include: making a claim, testing the claim, revise or abandon the claim, test the revised claim. Ultimately, in the series of analysis, there is plausibly a major acoustic-auditory component to the instrumental study. This continuous process following Ohala, would lead to a convergence of result which support a more confidently held beliefs.

II. PREVIOUS WORK

A sample study of the aspect of tone had been conducted earlier with 300 level B.A. linguistics undergraduates from the University of Uyo. Findings proved that it was a bit easy to identify the level High & Low tones, but very difficult for the subjects to identify or tone-mark the non-level tones like the downstepped high tone and tonal clusters. In the Linguistics Department of the University of Uyo, where Ibibio is offered as a Degree programme, it was discovered that the aspect of tone-marking was equally problematic to students on introduction. This problem was of course, arrested at some point with the introduction of a modern technological device including computer and software PRAAT for an instrumental teaching of tones. (Details on the sample procedure is presented in section III: A) The application of software PRAAT for the annotation of the pitch form showed that the two languages share the same number of tones. Spectrographic reading showed that Anaang as well as Ibibio have two level tones; High (H) and Low (L), plus a downstepped high tone (D), High-Low (HL) and Low-High (LH) clusters of tone, which were all phonemic. Since tone is an abstract phenomenon, it is more practicable and easy to identify and appreciate the relative pitches on segments when displayed on a computer/software. Consider the following items from Anaang/Ibibio.

a. Anaang examples

A	B
1. ákpá 'water surface' H H	àkpá 'first' L H
2. má 'love' H	mà 'finish' L
3. ákpá 'he is death' H H	ǎkpá 'you are death' LH H
4. átèm 'he is cooking' H L	ǎtèm 'he cooked' LHL
5. ádèp m̀kpó 'he bought something' H L H H	ádèp m̀kpó 'did he buy something?' H H H H
b. Ibibio Examples	
6. éfèRé 'he ran' H H H	éfèRé 'he is running' H L H
7. èjèt 'he is washing' H L	èjèt 'you are washing' L L

The difference in the pairs of the words is caused by the alteration of the tone on the initial segments. If there is no tone marking, it will not be easy to show the differences in meaning between these pairs, which look alike in spelling. It is tone that accounts for why (4a & 6b) are in the present and (4b & 6a) in the past time formation, why (3b & 7b) make use of a second person and (3a & 7a) a third person, why (5a) is a statement and (5b) a question. Other than tone, all the words in (1-2), structures in (3), phrases in (5-7) are otherwise alike in all aspects. In other words, they all have the same segments, but, different tones, which make a meaning difference. This proves that tones have to be fully marked in songs, stories, poems, proverbs, narratives, tongue twisters, riddles, in grammatical books and prose. A proper understanding of a tonal language is based on the understanding of the use and application of the tones in this technological era. This is made easier through the use of modern technological tools/computer software for teaching.

Method

Data was collected from two related languages of the Lower Cross family (Anaang and Ibibio) based on the standard variety. Twelve informants were purposefully selected from each of these language groups. A list of 200 Ibibio/Anaang lexical and grammatical items was administered to these informants. They provided the actual pronunciation which was recorded with a tape. The recorded items were then transferred into a computer system for speech synthesis/ annotation using software PRAAT. The recorded items were transcribed and classified. The data in turn was used as raw materials for the teaching of tones. The transcribed data was in turn stored as voice data or sound wave for tone annotation, identification, tone marking and manipulation using the 300 level B.A. Ibibio /linguistics undergraduates of the University of Uyo, for the sample study. The instrument used for this research were made available in the Linguistics/Faculty laboratory of the University of Uyo. This include; desktop computer, projector, pointer, power point, earphone, mic, and software PRAAT.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.

The data presented covers lexical and grammatical tones in Anaang/Ibibio respectively. The data is presented in three levels of the syllable. These are: monosyllables, disyllables and polysyllables.

8. L	H	LL	HH
b̀ 'collect'	dí 'come'	èmèm 'peace'	ímá 'love'
ǹ 'give'	dá 'stand'	ibà 'two'	étó 'tree'
tèm 'cook'	má 'love'	ùdi 'grave'	íják 'fish'
9. LLLL		HHH(H)	
ibèrèdèm 'comforter'		úkpóhóré 'key'	
inèmèsit 'happiness'		úkárídém 'independence'	
nt̀ùb̀ 'fost'		ékpémmé 'bottle'	
10. HDH			
̀b̀́ 'chief'		m̀!b̀k 'please'	
11. Mixed lexical tones			
LHHH		HHL	LLHL
àkpókóró 'table'		údarà 'star apple'	nt̀uènb̀k 'alligator pepper'
12. Pairs of contrastive level tones			
tèm L 'cook'		mèn L 'swallow'	bòn L 'father a child'
tém H 'cut grass'		mén H 'carry'	bón H 'keep'

There is a contrast in the meaning of the words when the low tone on the vowel is substituted with a high tone.

13. Grammatical tones

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| a. | | b. | |
| ádémémé ‘you are awake’ | | ádémémé ‘are you awake?’ (Question formation) | |
| ákpeép m̀kpɔ́ ‘he taught ’ | | ákpeép m̀kpɔ́ ‘he is teaching . (Aspect) | |
| átó ú!ké ‘where are you from?’ | | átó ú!ké ‘where is he from? (Person) | |

Anaang

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 14. L | H | LL | HH |
| mà ‘finish’ | sé ‘look’ | èkà ‘mother’ | úrúk ‘rope’ |
| dòp ‘be quiet’ | bén ‘carry’ | ènɔ́ ‘gift’ | sínné ‘put on’ |
| keèt ‘one’ | ɔ́ʒít ‘lock’ | èkpèk ‘chin’ | ékpó ‘masquerade’ |

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 15. LLL | HHH |
| nt̀r̀d̀d̀ ‘cassava’ | ɲkáníkà ‘clock’ |
| idòrèɲèn ‘hope’ | útuéníkàɲ ‘lamp’ |
| idàrètʃít ‘joy’ | ɲkánáfàɲ ‘rust’ |

16. HDH
 ú!ké ‘where’ ú!mí ‘this way’

17. Mixed lexical tone
 HLHLH
 m̀kp̀f̀iòb̀ùf̀iòp ‘butterfly’ ɲkùkùm̀kp̀ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́r̀iɔ́ɔ́ ‘locust’

18. Pairs of contrastive level tones
 ɲkàɲ ‘charcoal’ ákpá ‘water surface’ ábót ‘hill’
 ɲkàɲ ‘rib’ àkpá ‘first’ àbót ‘creator’

19. Grammatical tones
 ákà úf̀ɔ́kíb̀ɔ́k ‘he is going to the hospital’ ákà úf̀ɔ́kíb̀ɔ́k? ‘is he going to the hospital?’
 ágwèt m̀kpɔ́ you **wrote** something. ágwèt m̀kpɔ́ ‘you are **writing** something’
 àkèrè dié ‘what is **your** name?’ àkèrè dié ‘what is **his** name?’

Procedure

For the teaching/learning procedure, subjects were made to use data on lexical tones, pairs of contrastive lexical tones, and grammatical tones for the tone marking exercises. The students were able to mark lexical level tones on words with simple syllables only. They encountered some difficulties in the marking of words with mixed, and non level tones. Tones on grammatical items, phrases and sentences were completely avoided by the students. Based on this problem, the use of computer software was introduced as a practical guide. The subjects were made to go through a step by step instrumental design procedure for tone identification and annotation with the following guide:

- Using the data presented, identify the different tonal patterns in the language. Read the data aloud, and listen to the different pitches of the words. Segment the words into component syllables and produce the words aloud with closed lips, taking them syllable by syllable.
- Tone-mark the syllables from left to right based on the perceived relative pitches, read out the words a second time syllable by syllable to confirm the pitch variations.
- Read the words using the inbuilt mic., record them into a computer as sound document, using software PRAAT, and open the sound wave in the PRAAT for annotation of the data.
- Click on the window of the PRAAT and open the sound spectrograph for annotation. Click on the visible icon on the spectrograph and fix the boundary of each pitch by listening to the output using the earphone. Annotate the pitch of tone using sound spectrograph, click on the displayed visible section of the spectrograph again to listen to the pronunciation of the annotated pitches. Listen to the different pitches.
- Annotate the segments by drawing vertical lines across the spectrograph to segment each sound. Repeat the audio production to confirm the sound output. Trace the pitch pattern of the tones by marking the frequency (Fo) of the spectrographic reading as measured in ‘decibel (dB)’.
- Repeat the exercise with the same procedure using contrastive pairs of words, mixed level tones, lexical tones, grammatical tones, phrases, and concluded with sentence formation.

The practical session was repeated for two weeks at a duration of three hours per week. At the end of the practical session, it was established that Anaang/Ibibio have the same tonal pattern as proposed earlier by various scholars (Urua 2007, Michael 2009). The two languages have two level tones, a downstepped high tone and a cluster or a combination of the two level tones. The students were given a twenty item data on Ibibio for tone marking exercises to test their knowledge and effectiveness of their practical experiences. Based on their performances, the subjects were made to go through a step by step tone manipulation procedure starting with sequences of low tones, followed by sequences of high tones. This was concluded with the manipulation of contrastive pairs, lexical tones, phrases and sentences. This was repeated for one week. At the end of the practical, students were made to tone mark grammatical

items of ten short sentences, to ascertain their post experience exposure and to determine the degree of the effectiveness of the practical technique. At the end, the subjects had no difficulty in identifying tones. The acoustic analysis of the annotation of few tones is as presented in (figures 1-8).

Each of the figures contains a wave form (top row), pitch trace (bottom row). Each column contains the different sounds of the segments. The distinction between each tone level is measured by the timing of the radiated frequency of the pitches on the right edge of the spectrograph. The annotation process is specifically guided by the practical procedure above. Each figure shows the physical display of the heights of each tone. The figure is a spectrographic or physical display of sounds on computer software PRAAT.

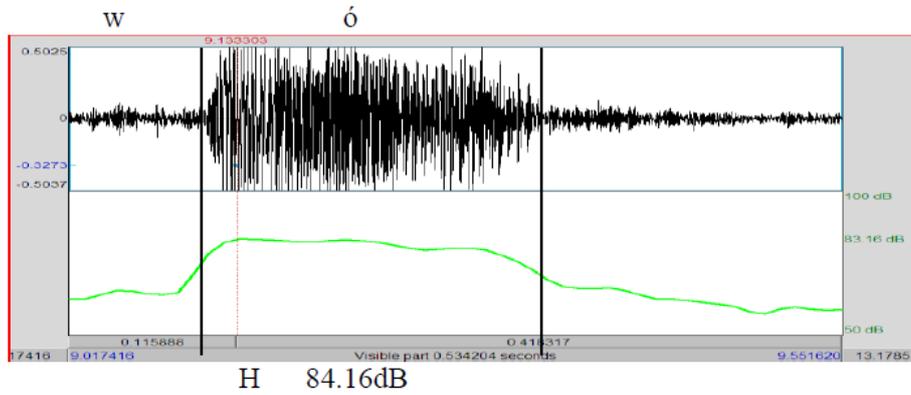


Figure 1. An acoustic analysis of a high tone; /wó/ 'tell' H

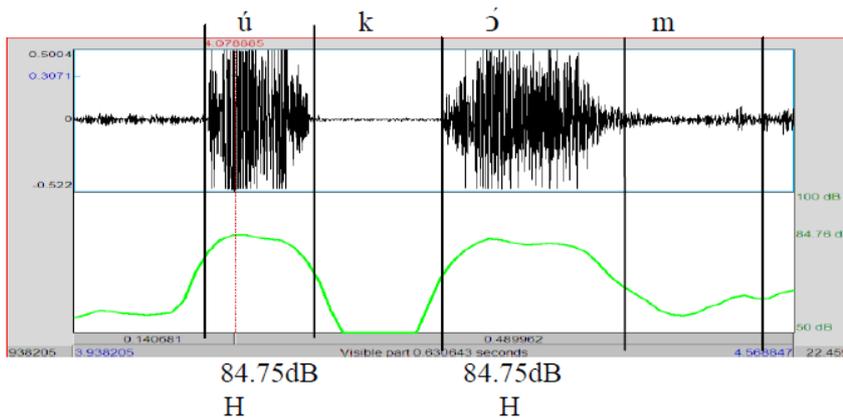


Figure 2. An acoustic analysis of two high tones; /úkó m/ 'plantain' H – H

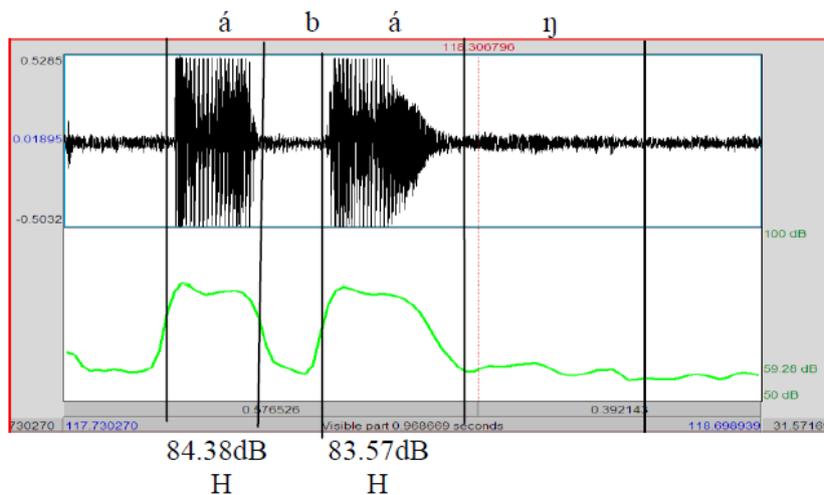


Figure 3. An acoustic analysis of high tones /á b á ñ/ 'water pot' H – H

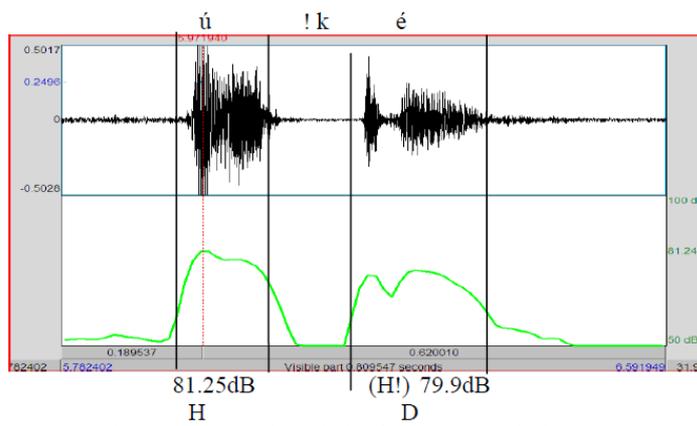


Figure 4. An acoustic analysis of a Downstepped High tone; /ú!kó/ 'yonder' H!H

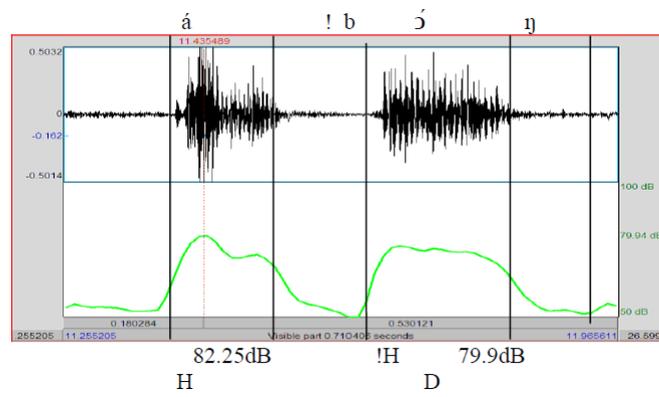


Figure 5: An acoustic analysis of /ábóŋ/ 'Chief' H – ! H

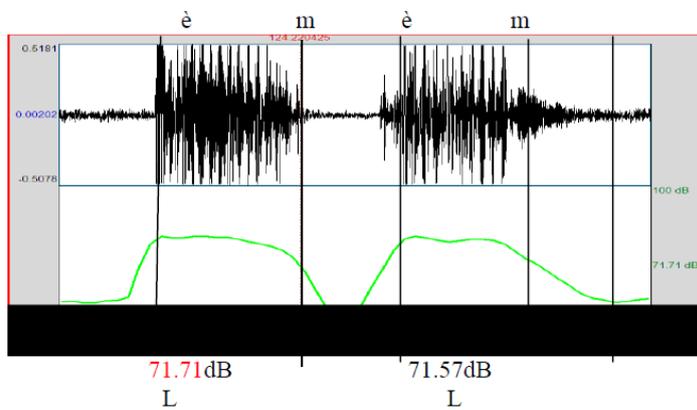


Figure 6: An acoustic analysis of level low tones; /èmèm/ 'peace' L L

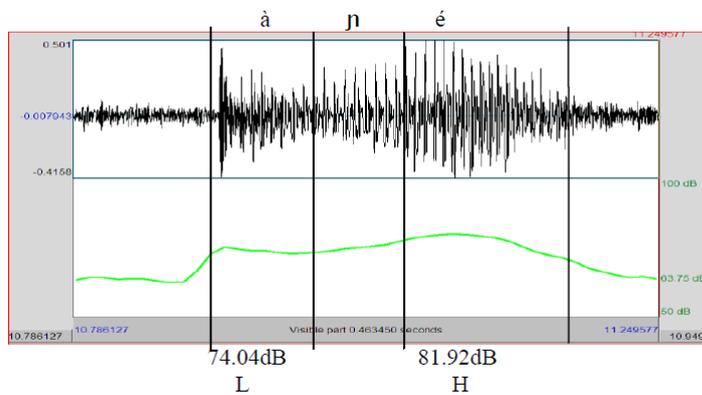


Figure 7: An acoustic analysis of mixed low and high tones; /àŋé/ 'him/her' LH

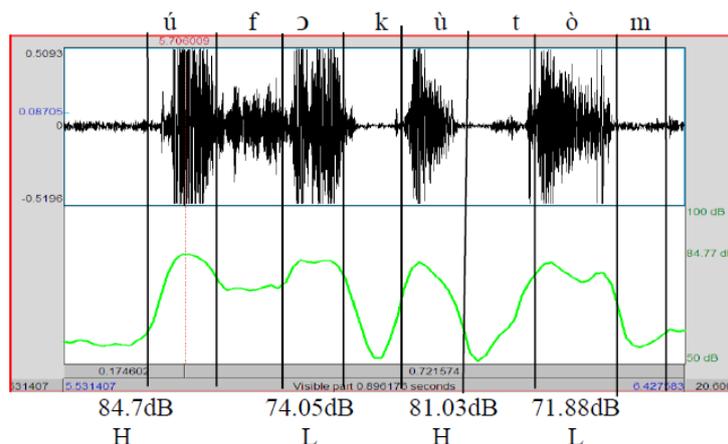


Figure 8. An acoustic analysis of [úfókútòm] 'office' H-L-L-L-L

/úfók/ + /útóm/ → [úfókútòm]

The spectrographic analysis of the tones is as follows;

The black zig zag pattern on the first row of the spectrograph represents the acoustic patterns of sound wave. Vowels have dense darker wave form than the consonants. The lemon colour line with hills/valleys structure is the pitch variations of voice that determine the actual heights of each tone. The pitch variation of the tone is presented in fundamental frequency (Fo) measured in decibel (dB) or Hertz (Hz). The vertical lines show the boundary of each sound. The spectrographic reading is from left to right. The last dark row is the visible part of the spectrograph.

The reading of each spectrograph is as follows;

- Figure (i) presents an acoustic analysis of a level high tone. There is an uprising of the pitch level from the valley. The rising does not fluctuate, rather it has a level trace just like a plateau. The level nature of the acoustic form of the pitch makes the tones in Anaang/Ibibio to qualify for 'level tones'. The acoustic reading shows that the pitch level of the tone stood at 84.31 dB.

- Figures (2&3), show two level high tones respectively. Observe also that the column of the tone on the vowels have a kind of plateau pattern each, with an average pitch height of 83-84dB.

- The next figures; (4&5) present acoustic analysis of a downstepped high tone. The initial tone of each of the figures is a high level tone with a frequency of 81-82.25dB respectively. The tone on the second syllable is not as high as the initial high tone. It has been downstepped, but not low enough to be qualified for a low tone and not high enough to be qualified for a high tone. The acoustic analysis shows that downstepped high tones have a pitch level of 79.9dB

- The spectrograph in (6) represents level low tones. The data in / èmèm/ / has two level tones. The pitch reading is at 71dB, which is lower than the pitches of high and downstepped tones. Therefore, the acoustic height of the tone in / èmèm/ / is qualified for a low tone. Observe that there is a kind of plateau lines in the column where we have vowels in the spectrograph, while consonant sounds have a kind of valley lines, which indicate the absence of tones on consonant sounds. This in essence shows that tones are marked on vocalic sounds and not on the consonants. The pitch level in / èmèm/ / is between 71 dB and 72 dB.

- The next diagram represents low and high mixed lexical tones. The initial syllable has an average acoustic reading of 74dB representing a low tone, while the second syllable has an average point of 81dB indicating a high tone.

- The last figure (8) is a representation of mixed phrasal tones. The acoustic analysis shows an average reading of 81dB-84dB for high tones and 71dB-74dB for low tones.

A summary of the acoustic reading for the three tones is as follows:

H	L	D
81dB-84dB	71dB-74dB	78db-79dB

The spectrographic displays of the different tonal patterns therefore indicate that high tones should have a pitch of 81dB and above, downstepped high tone 78-79dB. The pitch level that falls below 75dB is a low tone. With a spectrographic analysis, it is possible to visualise the pitches of tones, describe precisely the relative heights of the tones based on the relative frequency, which is calculated in decibel dB. The acoustic analysis shows that Anaang/Ibibio qualified to be classified as registered tone languages with terracing level systems. A register tone language has level pitches relative to one another with little or no gliding (Urua 2001, Welmars 1973).

Anaang/Ibibio attest two level tones: high, Low plus a downstepped high. The tones are all contrastive. The downstepped high tone is also contrastive as the omission of the downstepped symbol in /m'íbók/ 'wrestling can be mistaken for /m'íbók/ 'peace' in Ibibio. The application of computer software for the teaching/learning of tone is yet to be fully utilized by researchers. The poor attitude towards the marking of tone in scripts even in paper presentation at

conferences by scholars presents the actual state of the position of tone in language learning. They see tone marking as an uninteresting and cumbersome venture specifically as the conventional computer key board does not have keys for the different tones. Therefore a fair knowledge of the application of computer is imperative for an effective research on tone. The application of computer software PRAAT is a commendable stride to the teaching/learning of tone. The acoustic display of tone on the spectrograph enables both the teacher and the learner to visualise the tone, listen to, and perceive the pitches, and do lots of other interesting things like tonal manipulation, analysis and classification and also say precisely the unit of segment for tone placement. For the linguists to effectively develop Nigerian languages, the understanding of the intricacies of tone is imperative. It is believed that when the approach for tone/language teaching changes in line with the new technological trends, language research and teaching outcome on tone will become effective and relevant.

Grammatically, Anaang/Ibibio tones can mark grammatical functions like tense, aspect, persons and question formation. Tone is an important phenomenon in African tone languages. The understanding of tone enhances correct and ease of pronunciation, meaning and vocabulary development. The teaching of the grammar as well as the literature in tonal languages cannot be successful without tone. The aspects of both reading and writing in tonal languages are severely guided by tone. Therefore the marking of tones in published texts and research works should not be glossed over by scholars and writers.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study examines the advent of the computer in language to show how the teachers/learners in a setting like Anaang/Ibibio stand to benefit from the use of computer in language research. The paper argues that teachers need to revise their methods in line with current technological trends for a better understanding of tone. This entails taking advantage of the double resource which the computer, and the access software provide, and adding to it the human intelligence. The position of the paper is that the computer is a more recent direction in language research and proved to be result oriented for the teaching/learning of tone.

Basically, with the introduction of the use of computer in the school curriculum, language teachers should make extra effort to apply their knowledge of computer to linguistic computing as a step to the understanding of speech synthesis. Tonal annotation is an aspect of speech synthesis which requires competent knowledge of computer use, therefore language teachers have to be computer literate. It has generally been affirmed that the combination of the computer, and its access software has revolutionized language research and taken it to heights previously unimagined because of the capability of the computer to perform research tasks in ways beyond the human ability. The use of the computer is complementary to the human researcher and enables the optimization of research value and time since the computer can access those features that are too abstract in texts, sees beyond the human eye, stores and handles very expansive data, and works with incredible and reliable result and speed. The application of modern technology in the teaching of tone is effective in the production, acquisition, storage and retrieval of recorded data for use. This implies that the data stored for the practical teaching can easily be retrieved and used for subsequent teaching/learning exercises including research. Teachers are therefore encouraged to make use of computer/software for effective teaching of tones in African tone languages including Anaang and Ibibio.

In conclusion therefore, there are many challenges for the linguists, the language teachers and for the learners. To make teaching effective, to make sustainable learning, to benefit effectively from language research, linguists, teachers and the research communities need to take advantage of the resource of the computer and the access software. Instrumental study of language gives priorities, reduces exceptions and liberates the creative mind in tonal analysis. When the methods of language instruction changes in line with current technological trends, indigenous language teaching will become relevant and productive.

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A Review of Role Shifts among China's Secondary School EFL Teachers from a Social-constructivist Perspective

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Abstract—Teacher development has been a focus of innovation in China's English as a foreign language (EFL) instruction with much attention given to teachers' professional promotion, which is aimed at rendering students' enhancement in learning. With the emphasis on facilitating learner autonomy and lifelong education in recent reform efforts, it has become significant that students should try to self-control their learning and become more active thinkers and problem-solvers. To ensure learner-centered EFL instruction, teachers have to highlight the development of students' independence and autonomy by re-orienting their roles from knowledge disseminators to organizers, partners, consultants, and facilitators. As such, the current paper raises concerns about the review of secondary school EFL teacher roles in China from the perspective of social constructivism which encourages language teachers to interact with their students and help them to apply the language themselves instead of only providing them with the language knowledge. At this point, language teachers are really mediators rather than knowledge-givers. Hopefully, this review paper would contribute to the shift of today's EFL teacher roles in China from disseminators or knowledge-givers to mediators of students' language learning for the further sake of providing reference evidence for policy makers, curriculum developers, and educators in this regard.

Index Terms—secondary school, EFL, role, mediator, constructivism

I. INTRODUCTION

This review is aimed at surveying the body of literature available related to the role scopes of secondary school English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in China, involving seven sections in all. The first section concerns the background elucidation of teacher role shifts in China's secondary schools. The second is concerned with the review of teacher roles in China's history. The third centers on EFL instruction in China, on the basis of which the roles of EFL teachers in China's EFL teaching context are reviewed as a fourth section. The subsequent two sections attempt to look at the literature on Feuerstein's (1980)12 mediated learning experience parameters incorporated into Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development for the sake of profound comparison between mediators and non-mediators and the discussion of teachers' roles as well prior to a conclusion drawn in the final section.

II. BACKGROUND

Conventionally, China's education system is governed by the Ministry of Education (MOE), where high schools are categorized into junior and senior levels with three grades in each level (Li, 2004). Junior secondary education is compulsory prior to non-compulsory senior period (MOE, 2001). An underlying framework of China's current secondary education system is shown in Table 1. Currently, only 40 percent of China's junior high students attend by examination senior high schools beyond the 9-year compulsory education, and the entrance examination to key senior middle schools is keenly competitive (Education in China, 2005). The tertiary education sector is also competitive in that the proportion of China's college-age population in higher education has reached only about 35 percent now (Education in China, 2005). In this case, secondary school teachers consider striving to equip their students with sufficient competence needed for the matriculation examinations to senior high schools and colleges/universities as their primary teaching target (Ng & Tang, 1997). The pressure that students encounter from future entrance examinations limits youngsters' English learning to concentrating solely on discrete-point grammatical rules and memory of linguistic knowledge rather than English skills and abilities (Tseng, 1999).

Under such circumstances and conditions, young high school students in China hold competitive attitudes towards learning on account of the pressure from the entrance examination (Chen, 2005). In most cases, these students are conservative and tend to study individually for fear that their peers will surpass them in the competition for higher education (Hsieh, 2003, cited in Chen, 2005). They are unwilling to collaborate with their peers in learning, so it seems toughly challenging for EFL teachers to encourage their students to learn interactively from each other in the language classroom (Chen, 2005). Consequently, the teachers have to teach what is tested, and they would learn what is

examined only (Kang & Wang, 2003). Educational authorities and schools tend to evaluate teachers' work chiefly with reference to their individual students' average scores in examinations (Kang & Wang, 2003).

TABLE 1
BASIC FRAMEWORK OF CHINA'S CURRENT SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

Grade	Structure	Note
	College/University Matriculation Examination	
Sr. 3 Sr. 2 Sr. 1	Key Senior Middle School Common Senior Middle School Technical School	Non-Compulsory Education Period
	Streaming Examination for Senior Middle School or Technical School	
Jr. 3 Jr. 2 Jr. 1	Junior Middle School	Compulsory Education Period

Note. Adapted from the published article "Statistics education for junior high schools in China" by Li Jun, 2004, p. 219.

China's new *National Standards of English Curriculum for Basic Education* (hereafter as *Curriculum*) was generated on the basis of multiple intelligences theory and social constructivism (Gardner, 1993). Multi-intelligences view that "learners individually possess diverse learning styles and intelligences" (Ediger, 2000, p. 35), and social constructivism "provides various ways to access the students' multiple intelligences" (Teague, 2000, p. 9). The establishment of the new *Curriculum* seems necessary since "the current situation of English education still does not meet needs of the economic and social development" (MOE, 2001, p. 2). As such, in the course of the execution of the *Curriculum*, EFL teachers are requested to take note of the following instructional principle shifts to change "the notions and behaviors of learning for students and teaching for teachers" (National Curriculum, 2000, p. 18):

- Curriculum contents: shift from systematic presentation of individual disciplines and excessive emphasis on traditional knowledge to looser integration among modern society; technological development and the learners' life;
- Curriculum evaluation: shift from excessive emphases on memorization of facts and competitive examinations to the integrated assessment to dual focus not only on the outcomes but also on the learners' development and teaching improvement; and
- Curriculum management: shift from highly centralized to a shared management with responsibilities distributed among the nation, localities and schools. (pp. 5-6)

The above shift transformations of the new *Curriculum* seem to bring about teacher role shift "from subject-centered, teacher-centered to student's development-centered, and shift from one-way of knowledge to the all-round development including value and attitude" (National Curriculum, 2000, p. 7).

III. TEACHER ROLES IN CHINA'S HISTORY

China experienced over 30 dynasties in its history during which education began more than 2,000 years ago with a renowned philosopher and educator named Confucius (551-479 B.C.), who "made learning a lifelong practice and pursuit for personal cultivation for both knowledge and moral behavior" (Zeng, 2005, pp. 17-18). Teacher roles in China from Confucius' era to present are twofold, namely, the role as an educator responsible for educating students and the role as a governmental recommender in terms of ethic matters of society (Zeng, 2005). Since then, teaching has been a traditional professional career hierarchized with a high position and thus respected by the society (Zeng, 2005). Social values rooted in Confucian philosophy determined that the teacher role was aimed at making society in good order and harmonious as well as trying to lead other people in relieving their hardships (Kim, 1999, cited in Zeng, 2005). The teacher role was also to help young learners become well-behaved and cultured by cultivating their "qualities of *ren* (2) (humaneness), *yi* (4) (righteousness), *li* (3) (ceremony and courtesy), *zhi* (4) (wisdom and intelligence), and *xin* (4) (faithfulness and loyalty to parents and superiors, and trust to friends)", which were crucial to the construction of harmonious society (Zeng, 2005, p. 19).

Confucius, however, failed to be conscious of the value of productivity and innovation since he conceptualized a teacher as a knowledge-transmitter by claiming that "I have transmitted what was taught to me without making up anything of my own" and that "I have been faithful to and loved the Ancients" (Waley, 1938, p. 123). This traditional notion has tremendously affected China's education for over 2,500 years as regards curriculum designs, textbook application, teaching methods, and teacher roles (Zeng, 2005).

Xun Zi (298-238 B.C.), a scholar and philosopher in the Warring States Period, followed Confucian philosophy and emphasized the dignity of teachers who were absolute authorities in the presence of students who had to behave as told to, to build up a close relationship with teachers, and to respect their teachers by looking them up as their own family seniors (Zeng, 2005).

Dong Zhongshu (179-104 B.C.), another Confucian educator and philosopher of China's Han dynasty, developed Confucian education ideas and put more emphasis on the importance of teachers' dignity, so he was known as the most representative thinker inheriting Confucius in China's history (Jiao, 1976). He improved the Confucian ethical norm and established *Three Cardinal Guides* with reference to which the prince is the guide of his ministers with the father as

the guide of his sons and the husband being the guide of his wife (Zeng, 2005). This resulted in a popular saying that “if one serves as your teacher for only one day, he will serve as your father your entire life”, which was bound to raise the social hierarchy of the teacher role (Zeng, 2005, p. 24). Dong’s three cardinal guides were incorporated into Confucius’ five qualities *ren(2)*, *yi(4)*, *li(3)*, *zhi(4)*, and *xin(4)* of being a gentleman, constituting *san(1)gang(1) wu(3)chang(2)* (three guides and five qualities) in Chinese terms which have dominated Chinese people’s moral criteria for more than 2000 years (Jiao, 1976; Li, 1991; Waley, 1938; Zeng, 2005). In concurrent educational practices, teachers were greatly affected by this notion because they were looked on as the “shapers of mind” (Watson, 1963, cited in Zeng, 2005, p. 22).

Some other influential scholars such as Mencius (372-289 B.C.), Han Yu (768-824 A.D.), Zhu Xi (1130-1200 A.D.), and Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909) held different perspectives on teacher roles, but they shared the same assumption that “teachers should be masters of the classics, experts in ritual, and be imbued with profound knowledge themselves” (Zeng, 2005, p. 24).

During the period between the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and China’s implementation of the reform and opening policy (1949-1978), teacher roles were still traditional since teachers were spoon-feeders of knowledge whose students were “containers” or “warehouses” accepting knowledge (Lewin, Little, Xu, & Zheng, 1994, p. 170). Thereafter, Tai (2003) summarized some new terms concerning teacher roles emerging during this phase, but people normally cared about their positive meanings only and neglected their limitations:

- “the engineer of human souls”, strengthening the teacher’s role to shape students’ souls but neglecting that teachers’ souls should be purified first,
- “the pedagogue”, emphasizing knowledge transmitting but neglecting students’ dynamic creativity,
- “the knowledge authority”, centering on respecting teachers but ignoring the interaction with students,
- “a bucket of water”, emphasizing that the teacher first has “a bucket of water” in storage (metaphorically imparting knowledge) before giving students “a cup of water” but neglecting that the teacher’s knowledge also needs updating,
- “a candle”, metaphorically sacrificing themselves to enlighten students but overlooking the teacher’s exhaustion of knowledge resources,
- “the gardener”, pruning but treating students as living plants without thinking,
- “a human ladder”, paving the way for students to succeed in exams but failing to cultivate students’ creativity and imagination. (cited in Zeng, 2005, pp. 44-45)

In 1978, China hoped to realize the four modernizations of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology by the end of 2000 (Lam, 2002). Until 1983, Deng Xiaoping (1983), chairman of the then Chinese Communist Party, proposed that “education should be geared to modernization, the world, and the future” (p. 109, cited in Zeng, 2005, p. 56), which soon became the leading principle for the educational reform. Since then, all the society has stressed creativity and innovation since teachers as professional practitioners must create and innovate inherently (Yang, 2003). With the development of later reforms in EFL instruction, teacher roles in China have been required to be shifted gradually from traditional instructors to assessors, helpers, researchers, organizers, participants, tutors, facilitators, prompters, mediators, and so on (Fu, 2003; Harmer, 2001; MOE, 2001).

IV. EFL TEACHING IN CHINA

EFL teaching has a history of over 100 years in China which has boasted one of the largest populations of EFL learners internationally so far (Ye, 2007; Zhang, 2008). In the past 30 years, sufficient emphasis has been laid on EFL instruction in China, which is probably attributed to the open-door policy to the outside world (Xu, 2006). In 1957, for example, there were only 843 secondary school EFL teachers in China, but in the 1990s more than 310,400 (Ross, 1992). Cowan, Light, Mathews, and Tucker (1979) assert that “the Chinese view English primarily as a necessary tool which can facilitate access to modern scientific and technological advances and secondarily as a vehicle to promote commerce and understanding between the PRC [People’s Republic of China] and countries where English is a major language” (p. 466). By 1982, EFL was greatly valued and promoted as the most fundamental among different foreign languages being taught in China (Lam, 2002), and it became a compulsory subject from primary schools to colleges and universities (Zhang, 2008).

EFL instruction begins with Standard Three as an elective; primary and secondary school students are required to have at least four class hours of EFL learning per week (MOE, 2001). To date, EFL has become one of the three main compulsory subjects (i.e., Chinese, English, and mathematics) in the high school curriculum (MOE, 2001; Zhang, 2008). Statistically, over one quarter of the Chinese population at present are learning EFL, and likely, Chinese EFL learners will surpass the English-speaking population in the coming few years (Liu & Teng, 2006, cited in Zhang, 2008).

Historically, the first national syllabus on EFL teaching for secondary schools in China was introduced after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) to enhance students’ reading and self-learning abilities (Ng & Tang, 1997). The underlying skills of the language such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing were improved for the potential political reform and further study (Fu, 1986). The syllabus was then revised in April, 1981, in which students learned the four basic language skills, but reading was specially emphasized (Ng & Tang, 1997). The textbook *English* published twice by the People’s Education Press in 1977 and 1982 based on the syllabi attempted to move away from the traditional grammar-translation approach (Ng & Tang, 1997).

In 1993, another revision was made to the syllabus for the purpose of teaching EFL in high schools as “training of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills among students to enable them to acquire the foundation of the English language and to use English for communication” (China’s State Education Development Commission [SEDC, the predecessor of MOE] 1993, p. 1). Concurrently, the People’s Education Press published two sets of official textbooks: *Junior English for China* for junior high school students and *Senior English for China* for seniors in collaboration with the British Longman Group Limited for enhancing students’ communicative and expressive competence in the real life setting (Liao, 2003).

In 2001, the MOE introduced the new *Curriculum*, and secondary school EFL teachers were required to apply task-based language teaching (TBLT) (MOE, 2001). Two editions of the *Curriculum*-based textbooks for senior high school students were introduced in succession throughout China, that is, the newly-edited *Senior English for China* in 2003 (Senior English for China [SEFC], 2003) and *New Senior English for China* in 2007 with major changes in each of the new editions (New Senior English for China [NSEFC], 2007). However, there were four editions of the textbook series *Project English* for juniors during 2004-2008 based on the *Curriculum* with minor changes, linking up well any edition of the senior series (Beijing Ren’ai Education Research Institute [BRERI], 2008).

The 1993 *National English Syllabus* is rooted in communicative language instruction philosophy focusing on needs and techniques (Ng & Tang, 1997), claiming that “the teacher’s role should be a facilitator and helper to guide students to develop good and effective learning habits” (SEDC, 1993, p.7). Then, the 2001 *Curriculum* underscores the importance of EFL teachers’ roles such as mediator, facilitator, partner, consultant, and reflective practitioner in view of the theoretical characteristics of TBLT (MOE, 2001; SEFC, 2003).

SEDC/MOE can decide the goals, objectives, curricula, syllabi, and textbooks throughout the country since China’s education system is characterized by high centralization (Yu, 2001). As Liao (2003) and Yu (2001) put it, this sort of intervention from top to bottom plays an important part in stimulating EFL teachers to conform to prescribed teaching roles in the language class. However, numerous studies have revealed that the spirit of the 2001 national *Curriculum* for secondary schools has not really been put into effect and that EFL teachers’ elementary goal of preparing students for various public exams and role as knowledge-giver or transmitter through grammar-translation have remained unchanged (e.g., Le & He, 2007; Qiao, 2008; Zhang, 2007).

As a matter of fact, most secondary school EFL teachers in China have noted that their students have encountered many barriers as regards speaking and writing in EFL (Kang & Wang, 2003). This case seems to be attributed to the insufficiency of appropriate proper teaching strategies utilized in EFL instruction classrooms (Ng & Tang, 1997). Most probably, it gets rooted in the deficiency of studies with respect to teacher roles (Leng, 1997). Now that there does exist a gap between the MOE requests and EFL teachers’ classroom practices respecting teaching roles, the current research study attempts to bridge the gap in the emerging literature concerning the extent of teachers’ adherence to MOE requests in EFL teaching and learning.

V. TEACHER ROLES IN CHINA’S EFL TEACHING CONTEXT

Historically, China is an authoritarian state, whose classrooms are greatly influenced by the Confucian stratified social hierarchy characterized with teacher-centeredness, textbook-centeredness, and grammar-centeredness (Liao, 2003). Therefore, classrooms in China have been dominated by teachers for a long time who are always standing and talking in front of the blackboard with students sitting in lines and rows to listen and take synchronous notes meanwhile (Sun, 2005). The absence of a teacher role as the authority seems inconceivable in China’s classrooms (Medgyes, 1986). In such a context, students are too apt to view teachers as the main source of knowledge information and are used to speech-dominated instruction (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996).

The grammar-translation (GT) approach, the earliest method EFL teachers employed in China, focused literally on grammar education by means of translation and interpretation of rule after rule (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, more and more Chinese students are gradually accustomed to this instructional approach and commence to feel strong interest in learning EFL grammar since the vast majority of them hold a view that if they understand this system, it would help them apply EFL more effectively and efficiently (Harvey, 1985).

Another instructional method utilized after the GT counts as the direct method, viewing language as a habitual skill or technique to be achieved by continuous repetition and imitation (Ye, 2007). The implementation effect of the direct method is even more outstanding in small classes, which seems comparatively adaptable to EFL novices but inappropriate in populous China (Ye, 2007). In actual fact, in the process of execution, the role of the EFL teacher in the class does not seem to alter dramatically in comparison with the teacher as knowledge transmitter only in the above-mentioned GT.

Early in the 1990s, the communicative language teaching (CLT) method was formally introduced to China, aiming to stimulate young EFL learners to utilize language as a medium in communication (Ye, 2007; Yu, 2001). As such, teachers are in a position to foster learners’ comprehensive EFL skills in addition to the cultivation of their competence of applying these skills in authentic settings (Ye, 2007). Galloway (1993) contends that the CLT approach could help learners relieve their tense mood in respect to the outcomes of class activities leading to different reactions and responses. In the CLT process, teachers readily play the roles of adviser, facilitator, and co-communicator facilitating communication in English, monitoring student performance, and undertaking communicative activities together with

their students (Johnson & Morrow, 1981). In accordance with Ye (2007), CLT implementation might be constrained by numerous factors, the two of which are (a) that the textbook designed for CLT destroys the integrity of EFL and increases students' difficulty in learning EFL; and (b) that the teacher role played in the process is challenging to evaluate.

In the last few decades, the emerging audio-lingual approach has come to EFL teachers' classrooms, which lays more emphasis on students' listening and speaking with the help of teachers' underlying interpretations of sentence patterns and attempting to avoid the native language (Ye, 2007). In this case, the EFL teacher in class performs the organizer of students' mechanical imitation activities rather than the cultivation of EFL skills, therefore causing the insufficiency of students' flexibility in learning and competence of reading and writing (Ye, 2007).

While the various teacher roles in the said approaches are all implemented to different extents in today's EFL classrooms in China, but most teachers prefer the grammar-translation strategy, for any attempt for interactions in the class from EFL teachers like pair-work, group-work, team-work, game-plays, and some other communicative tasks would run the risk of resistance or even resentment from the side of students (Chen, 2005). A lot of EFL teachers have tried to change their previous dominant processes in class, but they still fail due to frustration, losing their initiatives and rather acquiescing to traditional practices (Campbell & Zhao, 1993). Teachers proceed to experience the conventional GT approach generating the typical environment of keen competition in lieu of cooperation so that low-achievers would be left behind eventually (Richards & Rodgers, 2000).

VI. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Social constructivism as a ground theory in education has developed in the past few decades (Teague, 2000). Gergen (1995) asserts that all knowledge ought to be constructed via social interaction in the module of social constructivism. Any more competent person could transmit knowledge information to somebody else, and effective language learning could also be processed at this very moment because participants concerned are involved in constructing knowledge via interaction (Gergen, 1995). "Mediation theory has played a central role in social constructivist framework" (Sun, 2005, p. 6), typically defined as the demonstration of humans' cognitive process for the sake of revealing the relationship between people and their community (Tocalli-Beller, 2003). Donato and McCormick (1994) claim that mediation has two forms: (a) One is called artifact mediation concerned with teaching materials, and (b) the other is named social mediation and characterized by the spoken and written structure of language, chances for interactive activities, and help from the teacher and more capable peers. Social mediation is viewed as the core of the research concerning mediative interactions (Gibbons, 2003), which determines the effectiveness of learning through social interactive activities between different people in knowledge and competence (Vygotsky, 1978). In the language classroom, the teacher with the most knowledge plays the role to find ways to help learners reach higher levels of knowledge and competence by engaging in joint efforts and interacting with learners instead of following curriculum guidelines only (Williams & Burden, 2000).

Primarily, social constructivism is grounded on the works of Vygotsky and Feuerstein, which have a few central tenets involving the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and mediative conception (Lantolf, 2000). "Although these ideas are only just beginning to be applied in a systematic way to language teaching, there is considerable accumulating evidence from a vast number of studies in general and special education to enable us to conclude that their influence can be both powerful and profound" (Williams & Burden, 2000, p. 84). As such, the two grand theories inform the basic research questions of and are of interest to the present study.

A. *Vygotsky's Social Constructivism*

Vygotsky's ZPD is viewed as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and level of potential development as determined through solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, p. 86). In the language classroom, teaching in the ZPD can offer learners adequate interactive opportunities for their development through the zone with the help guided, which establishes learners' intellectual powers in this learning atmosphere (Oxford, 1997). At the commencement of a learning procedure, teachers assume most of the task prior to both of them undertaking cooperative responsibility (Schunk, 2000). Gradually, teachers reduce assistance as scaffolding till students can execute the learning task alone and get through their ZPD eventually (Campion, Brown, Ferrara, & Bryant, 1984). However, the implementation of the ZPD seems difficult to handle in the language classroom compared with Feuerstein's mediative tools as illustrated in the subsequent section.

B. *Feuerstein's Mediation Review*

Feuerstein (1980) compares the concept of mediator with a narrower view of the teacher as disseminator of information from four perspectives: (a) mediation relating to helping students learn autonomously and consider and address problems independently by controlling their own learning, (b) learners as active participants in the process of mediation involving interaction between mediator and learner, (c) reciprocation occurring in mediation, and (d) the mediator needing to urge learners to interact with accessible materials alone by each possible means until they are capable of true self-direction by reminding them "to note that learner autonomy involves more than the provision of

suitable self-access materials” (cited in Williams & Burden, 2000, p. 68). For this sake, Feuerstein (1980) produces a program concerning teaching students learning strategies with the name Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) where Feuerstein proposes 12 parameters as indispensable criteria for evaluating the quality of MLE interaction: significance, purpose beyond the here and now, shared intention, a sense of competence, control of own behavior, goal-setting, challenge, awareness of change, a belief in positive outcomes, sharing, individuality, and a sense of belonging (pp. 289-290).

The child’s cognitive development is derived from social interactions with adults or peers and occurs in the ZPD referring to the gap between the child’s present developmental level and those higher levels that might be arrived at, which Vygotsky terms the actual and potential levels respectively (Seng, Pou, & Tan, 2003). The actual level is constructed based on cognitive understanding, whereas the potential level relies upon external modification through targeted mediation (Seng et al., 2003). Vygotsky, however, neglects to delineate in detail the specific procedures applied by fostering children to internalize the mental tools provided by adults or more competent peers (Seng et al., 2003). Kozulin and Presseisen (1995) think that “Vygotsky made no attempt to elaborate the activities of human mediators beyond their function as vehicles of symbolic tools”, which “left considerable lacunae in Vygotsky’s theory of mediation” (p. 69, cited in Seng et al., 2003, p. 87). One response to these lacunae, specific to the situation of mediation, can be found in Feuerstein’s MLE (1980), in which the 12 mediative criteria might help identify the traits of social interaction that facilitate cognitive change (Seng et al., 2003).

As a result, the application of Feuerstein’s mediation theory incorporated into the ZPD is expected to be the strongest rationale to conduct teachers’ role as mediator as students’ facilitation is the target of education (MOE, 2001). At this point, it seems meaningful for the ZPD and Feuerstein’s mediation to be applied together for the most persuasive justifications of this study.

C. Teacher as Mediator

Mediators do not determine who is right or wrong, but rather help participant sides reach their own agreements by creating constructive space for jointly checking underlying individual interests (e.g., needs, hopes, concerns, and desires), generating relevant information, forming options, and making options (Gay, 2000). In this event, if applicable, teachers should play organizers and mediators of cultures and conductors of the social environment for learning (Gay, 2000). Thus, successful mediators can help students to link novel messages to their personal experiences as well as to learning in relation to other areas and come to understand what they should conduct while puzzled (Tinzmann et al., 1990). Eventually, students’ maximal potentials for self-regulation learning are to be facilitated for the future autonomous learning strategies (Tinzmann et al., 1990).

Concurrently, students should also realize their roles’ shift appropriate to the mediative classroom due to the adjustment of the teacher’s role. As Tinzmann et al. (1990) observe,

Their [students’] major roles are collaborators and active participants. It is useful to think how these new roles influence the processes and activities students conduct before, during, and after learning. For example, before learning, students set goals and plan learning tasks; during learning, they work together to accomplish tasks and monitor their progress; and after learning, they assess their performance and plan for future learning. As a mediator, the teacher helps students fulfill their new roles. (sec. 3)

Apparently, it is a trend for teachers’ role to be changed from being an instructor to becoming a constructor, facilitator, coach, and creator of learning environments (Teachers’ Role, 2007). It is insufficient for the teacher to transmit only content knowledge to students, but they are also responsible for students’ higher cognitive skill levels, enhancement of information literacy, and their collaborative working practices (Teachers’ Role, 2007). As such, today’s teachers are required to be efficient, open-minded, and critical mediators between students and their indispensable perception (Teachers’ Role, 2007).

VII. DISCUSSION OF TEACHERS’ ROLES

In view of the need to compare the mediator role and other teacher roles, the operational definition of *traditional teachers* is drawn on, representing non-mediators in this study, and non-mediators’ instruction is also operationally defined as teaching traditionally. EFL teacher roles at issue are thus discussed in the following account.

The above review seems to verify that the scope of teacher roles has been widened since more and more research has been showing interest in what the teacher should do in the language classroom (Sun, 2005). “Mediators not only concern the subject matter, the methodology, and techniques, but also concern the most important aspect of the teaching and learning process: the learners” (p. 23). Teacher roles such as helper, counselor, designer, involver, and enabler can be embraced by the role of mediator in essence since mediators not only teach learners but also help them to self-regulate their learning, to set their own goals, to monitor their strategies, to involve students in activities, and to enable them to be independent and confident learners (Brook & Brook, 1993). Table 2 serves to summarize the differences between traditional teaching roles and the teacher as mediator.

TABLE 2
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL TEACHERS AND MEDIATORS

Traditional Teacher	Mediator
The term "student" is often used.	The term "learner" is often used.
Teachers are the leaders of students.	Mediators are collaborators with learners about their language learning.
The teaching process is predetermined.	There is a negotiated and flexible pathway.
Teachers teach students from prescribed textbooks.	Mediators orientate learners to authentic materials.
Teachers are assessors of their students.	Mediators discuss with learners different ways to self-monitor their learning progress.
Teachers are instructors or organizers.	Mediators are reflective listeners.
Teachers monitor a whole class and look for common language problems.	Mediators emphasize learners' differences and help them realize learning strategies.
Teachers give the feedback on learning tasks.	Mediators encourage learners to reflect on the outcomes of language learning tasks.
Teachers target only students' outcome in language learning.	Mediators target learners' integral development.
The climate in the language classroom is authoritarian.	The climate in the meditative language classroom is more democratic than authoritarian.
Nearly all teaching activities are teacher-centered.	Activities are either learner-centered or interactive between the mediator and learners.

Note. Adapted from Harmer (2001), Hedge (2002), and Sun (2005).

Since the spirit of the new *Curriculum* is to a great extent based on mediation theory for the sustainable development of learners, the main focus should be on the effective implementation of mediation in the future secondary school EFL classrooms (MOE, 2001; Sun, 2005). Throughout the literature available, it is assumed that researchers and educators have conducted a considerable amount of role-related research (e.g., Lamb, 1995; Liao, 2003; Nunan, 1987; Wang, 2002), most of which, however, is concerned with teaching approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT). Secondary school EFL teacher roles have remained traditional in most cases, and mediative classrooms are thus rare in China.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teachers' consciousness of roles is vitally essential in their professional development, so this review paper critically highlights the survey of the body of literature in favor of social constructivism for the purpose of looking at the changing views of teacher roles, from which it seems more challenging for an EFL teacher to help students construct knowledge than to instruct directly. Teachers' roles have changed and will proceed to change to meet new requirements as schools gradually become locations where children learn about the world of work and get prepared for successful citizenship by socializing and collaborating with others around them. Likewise, EFL curriculum and instruction have already been altered since the new *Curriculum* centers on thinking techniques and strategies at higher levels in order to succeed in school and life. The teachers need to be more concerned about the teaching procedure in lieu of learning consequence, to facilitate students' implementation of how to learn instead of only what to learn, and to encourage students to learn creatively rather than adaptively. As such, it is hopefully assumed that this paper could push the present pedagogical transformation all over China by identifying secondary school EFL teachers' execution of mediation functions for the further sake of theoretical verification of students' quality-oriented development. This conduct thus seems to adapt to the cutting-edge rationale that teacher roles are viewed as vitally fundamental issues to be resolved regardless of whatever educational potentials, settings, and problems since teachers are decision-makers in tackling the class process.

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Investigating the Effect of Consciousness-raising Techniques on Learning the English Tense System by EFL Students

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Abstract—This study explores the effect Consciousness-raising techniques (henceforth, C-R techniques) can have on the learning of the English tense system. The sample of the study (n=100) was randomly drawn from beginning EFL students at Taif University, KSA. The experimental design was used to carry out the study. The sample was divided into an experimental group (n=50) and a control group (n=50). Data for the study was collected via a test the researcher designed and administered to the two groups of the study. In addition to that, a special treatment of learning tasks and activities was given to the study's experimental group only. The data collection instrument (i.e. the test) comprised six questions relating to the form and uses of the present and past simple tenses. Data was then analysed by SPSS. The results of the study were statistically significant in favour of the experimental group (t-test value 1.072, the two-tailed level of significance .006 and $p < .05$).

Index Terms—C-R techniques, explicit, implicit, monitoring device, tense system

I. INTRODUCTION

Drawing on the researcher's experience as a university EFL teacher, the topic of this research work has been chosen for the following reasons:

First, the area of grammar has always been considered by EFL students as a priority to mastering the target language be it in relation to writing, speaking or reading. Within the grammar of English, the tense system has always been a problematic area for EFL students whose L1 is Arabic probably because of these reasons:

1. The differences between the two languages' grammatical systems
2. The way(s) verbs are conjugated in English
3. The rather abstract nature of the concept of tense in grammar

Second, since the main aim of grammar instruction is to help learners produce error-free English, it is essential for EFL teachers to experiment with and develop more effective ways of teaching grammar. Unlike traditional, rule-based and rote learning methods of learning grammar points, C-R techniques are seen as beneficial to learners for their presumed ability to draw EFL learners' attention to features of the target language, thus participate in increasing their linguistic feel for English.

Third, for EFL learners to achieve automaticity and accuracy in the target language, recourse to some sort of explicit grammar work could be helpful. This making use of explicit grammar work in the EFL context is often linked to enhancing learners' linguistic competence and proficiency in the target language.

A. Literature Review

One of the key questions EFL experts and practicing teachers have been busy with is whether to teach grammar explicitly or implicitly. Prominent among language teaching experts who tried to answer that question was Krashen (1982). He strongly objected to any explicit grammar teaching (EGT). He thinks that EGT leads to a 'learned' knowledge (i.e. conscious/explicit knowledge) which is useful to learners only as a 'monitoring device' learners refer to in order to edit and check the grammatical well-formedness of the sentences they produce.

Subsequently, Krashen modified his views on teaching grammar and suggested that classroom formal instruction can be effective particularly as far as EFL students are concerned. On the other hand, Rutherford (1987) avoided talking of grammar teaching; instead, he used the rubric 'grammatical consciousness-raising', which is, in essence, tasks and activities meant to draw learners' attention to the formal features of the target language. The objective of these C-R techniques is to ease EFL learners through the 'grammaticization process' which refers to "the process of achieving linguistic expression through recourse to grammatical rule" (Rutherford, 1987, P.189).

Ellis (1993) viewed C-R as an endeavour to bring to learners' attention specific formal features of the target language based on what they have been exposed to. To Ellis (1996) C-R is a guided problem solving in which learners are encouraged to notice particular features of the target language (p.64).

Therefore, according to Tanaka (1998) C-R characteristics can be summarized as follows:

1. C-R is an inductive approach which does not usually present learners with rules.
2. C-R observes the principles of universal grammar.

3. C-R rejects PPP (i.e. presentation, practice and production) in favour of activities that promote understanding of grammar.

4. C-R is learner- directed.

5. C-R teaches learners how to learn.

6. C-R is process and *not* product oriented.

7. C-R presents learners with data and invites them to make conclusions based on that data.

8. C-R is a means to an end and not an end in itself. (Tanaka, 1998, p.12)

Speaking of grammatical C-R techniques, there are three issues involved:

(i) They have a clear role

(ii) Their role is not clear

(iii) They do not have any role

According to Schmidt (1990), the role of conscious v. subconscious processes in language is still not fully grasped in applied linguistics. However, Rutherford and Sharwood-Smith (1985) state that conscious processes in EFL learning are very important facilitators in language learning. To Krashen (1999), the conscious-subconscious continuum constitutes two unrelated processes:

(1) Subconscious learning which he calls acquisition

(2) Conscious learning (i.e. learning in formal settings)

Questions such as the following do arise regarding Krashen's stance on the role of the conscious-subconscious: are the two complementary? Do they impact on one another? Which one leads to the other? Do they play an equal role in EFL learners' development? And most importantly, which one should EFL teachers focus on more than the other? Questions like these are still far from conclusively being answered.

Moreover, Krashen's views on the conscious – subconscious dichotomy (i.e. conscious vs. subconscious – learning vs. acquisition) have been disputed by renowned researchers like McLaughlin, Rossman and Mcleod (1983). Moreover, Chomsky's (1965, 1980 and 1986) influential writings rekindled interest in the conscious – subconscious phenomena. Thus, language learning is believed to involve a subconscious element (i.e. an implicit process in which the system of language is gradually absorbed) but not necessarily separated from a conscious component.

B. Aims of the Study

This research work was carried out to achieve the following:

1. To explore the effectiveness of C-R techniques in learning the English tense system.
2. To find out whether C-R techniques can be used with the study's sample.
3. To discover the advantages of using C-R techniques.
4. To draw EFL learners' attention to the benefits of using C-R techniques in learning grammar points.

C. Limitation of the Study

This study is limited in two respects: first, within the area of the English tense system, it is limited to investigating the effectiveness of using C-R techniques by EFL students to learn about the present simple tense and the past simple tense especially regarding their form(s) and uses. Second, it is limited to a group of beginning EFL learners (n= 100) at Taif university, KSA.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Questions of the Study

This study was carried out to find answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent can C-R techniques be effective in learning the English tense system?
2. What do EFL teachers need to do in order to familiarize their students with C-R techniques as tools for learning grammar?
3. Can EFL students wholly depend on C-R techniques to learn the English tense system?
4. What are the advantages for EFL learners to learn the English tense system via the use of C-R techniques?

B. Hypotheses of the Study

In addition to the above questions of the study, this study was carried out to test the following two hypotheses:

1. The performance of the study's experimental group is the same in both the pre-test and post-test of the study.
2. The performance of the study's experimental group in the post-test is different from the pre-test.

The method this study uses is the experimental method with the purpose of finding out how effective consciousness techniques are when employed to help university EFL students to learn about the form(s) and uses of the present and past simple tenses.

C. Subjects of the Study

The sample of the study (n=100) was randomly drawn from first-year EFL students at Taif University in Khurma. The sample was divided into two groups: the experimental group (n =50) and the control group (n =50).

TABLE I.
SUBJECTS OF THE STUDY

	Experimental group	Control group
Number	50	50
TOTAL	100	

D. Instruments of Data Collection

The two groups took a pre and post-test pertaining to the present and past simple tenses (see appendix i). The test, which was designed by the researcher, comprised six questions relating to the form(s) and uses of the present and past simple tenses. Question one of the test was a 10-item gap-filling question in which subjects fill gaps in given sentences with the correct present simple or past simple verb form. The second question was a 5-item matching question requiring subjects to match present-tense verb forms with their corresponding past forms. Question three of the study asked subjects to decide whether given sentences are correct or incorrect according to the tense of the verb. The fourth question of the test used to collect data for the study was a ten-item classification question in which subjects had to sort out given verb forms into a table of two columns: present forms and past forms. The penultimate question in the test administered to the study's subjects was in tabular format requiring subjects to make complete sentences using their own correct verb forms (either present simple or past simple tense depending on the context of each sentence). The last question in test subjects took was a substitution question to be answered by changing simple present tense verb-forms into simple past verb-forms and vice versa.

In addition to the pre- and post-test administered to the study's experimental and control groups, only the experimental group received a treatment of C-R tasks and activities designed by the researcher (see appendix ii). These tasks and activities were meant to draw the attention of members of the experimental group to the formal features of the present and past simple tenses together with their uses. All tasks and activities were done outside the classroom at subjects' own pace and choice of which tasks and activities to do first, second, etc. Since the general purpose of these C-R tasks and activities was to raise awareness to the formal and usage features of the two tenses the study focused on, there was no intervention of any sort on the researcher's part for any explanation and/or correction.

Owing to the complexity and difficulty posed by the area of tenses within the English grammar to beginning EFL students, the researcher opted to limit the study only to the present and past simple tenses. Furthermore, the researcher assumed that the English tense system is an area that deserves researching to make its learning easier and effective especially to beginning, low-proficiency EFL students.

E. Procedures

Prior to the administration of the data collection instruments (i.e. the test and the C-R tasks and activities), the researcher asked three EFL colleagues who are PhD holders to review the data collection instruments by checking, editing and evaluating them so as to establish their content validity. As for the test reliability, it was worked out using Cronbach's alpha which estimated the test reliability as .73.

Consent to take part in the study was sought from the two groups (n=100) the researcher worked with and participants were made fully aware of the study's aims, objectives and limitation together with the time and dedication especially required from members of the experimental group of the study. On the ethical side of the study, the researcher did assure all participants that their answers and scores will be used only for the purpose of the study they kindly accepted to participate in.

The two groups of the study took the pre-test during the first term of the academic year 2013 on the same day but in separate rooms and invigilation duties were assigned to four colleagues of the researcher. The test was scored out of 100 marks. After three week of the administration of the pre-test to both groups of the study, the two groups took the same test again as a post-test which was rated by the researcher in the same way the pre-test was rated.

III. STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Measures of descriptive statistics were employed to statistically treat the data generated by the study's instrument of data collection. The analysis of subjects' test scores relating to the pre and post-test was done using SPSS. In addition to measures of descriptive statistics, t-test was used to work out how similar or different the performance of the experimental group was in the pre- and post-test of the study was. The t-test is used to compare the means of the experimental group before and after the test administered to the study's two groups. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989:231) the t-test "helps determine how confident the researcher can be that the difference between two groups (experimental and control) as a result of a treatment are not due to chance".

TABLE3.1
SUBJECTS' SCORE FREQUENCIES IN THE PRE-TEST

Range of scores	Experimental group		Control group	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
95-100	0	0%	0	0%
90-94	0	0%	0	0%
85-89	0	0%	1	2%
80-84	3	6%	4	8%
75-79	2	4%	3	6%
70-74	6	12%	7	14%
65-69	5	10%	7	14%
60-64	11	22%	6	12%
55-59	8	16%	6	12%
50-54	5	10%	4	8%
45-49	7	14%	6	12%
40-44	3	6%	4	8%
< 40	0	0%	2	4%
TOTAL	50		50	

Table 3.1 displays the distribution of the frequencies of subjects' scores in the pre-test according to the ranges between 100 and <40. It was clear that the scores of the two groups were very similar in relation to the upper ranges of the scores (i.e. from 100 down to the upper eighties). However, regarding the experimental group there was no score below 40 compared to two cases of scores less than 40(4%) in the control group.

TABLE3.2
SUBJECTS' SCORE FREQUENCIES IN THE POST-TEST

Range of scores	Experimental group		Control group	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
95-100	0	0%	0	0%
90-94	1	2%	0	0%
85-89	3	6%	1	2%
80-84	4	8%	5	10%
75-79	8	16%	3	6%
70-74	8	16%	7	14%
65-69	10	20%	9	18%
60-64	5	10%	7	14%
55-59	7	14%	4	8%
50-54	4	8%	6	12%
45-49	0	0%	3	6%
40-44	0	0%	5	10%
TOTAL	50		50	

According to the data shown in table3.2, subjects' score frequencies in the post-test were similar regarding the upper score ranges (90-100), whereas, scores in the lower ranges (45 and below) were obtained by 8 members of the control group (16 %). By comparison, there was no case of a score in the range 45 and below in the experimental group. Interestingly, score frequencies in the range 65-69 were very similar in both groups of the study wherein 10 members of the experimental group (20%) got scores in 65-69 range compared to 9 subjects of the control group (18%).

As for the connection between subjects' scores in the pre-test and post-test, on the whole, all members of the experimental group of the study did achieve positive gain (i.e. the difference between their pre-test score and their post-test score was greater than or equal one). On the other hand, five participants of the control group (10%) scored a zero gain (i.e. their pre and post-test scores remained the same). Another five members of the control group (10%) obtained a negative gain in their taking of the two versions of the test (i.e. their post-test score was less than their pre-test score).

In terms of minimum and maximum scores in the post-test, scores of the experimental group did clearly move upwards while those of the control group did slightly change.

TABLE3.3
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS IN THE PRE AND POST-TEST

Group	N	Range	Mini	Max	Mean	SD
Expgrouppre-test scores	50	40	41	81	60.64	10.682
Expgrouppost-test scores	50	40	50	90	68.38	10.681
Cnrlgroup pre-test -scores	50	51	36	87	60.90	13.012
Cnrlgroup post-test -scores	50	45	40	85	62.34	12.323

Table 3.3 summarizes the results of the study's two groups in terms of measures of descriptive statistics. It was interesting that the ranges (i.e. the difference between the maximum and minimum score) of the experimental group in both the pre and post-test of the study were the same (40). However, for the control group, the range of the scores in the pre-test was 51 compared to 45 in the post-test. According to the table, the means of the scores of the control group in both versions of the test did slightly change (60.90 to 62.34). However, for the experimental group, the mean in the pre-

test was 60.64 compared to 68.38 in the post-test. Furthermore, the statistics in table 4 indicated that the standard deviations of the two groups of the study in the pre and post-test clearly demonstrated how varied the performance of the two groups was according to their test scores.

TABLE3.4A
T-TEST PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

Pair	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental group pre-test scores	60.64	50	10.682	1.511
Experimental group post-test scores	68.38	50	10.681	1.510

TABLE3.4B
T-TEST PAIRED SAMPLES CORRELATION

Pair	N	Correlation	Sig.
Experimental group pre-test scores	50	.955	.000
Experimental group post-test scores			

TABLE3.4C
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

Pair 1	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the difference			
Expgrppretestscores	-7.740	3.206	.453	Lower	1.072	49	.006
Expgrpposttestscores				Upper				10.829

Tables 3.4a, 3.4b and 3.4c show the results of SPSS t-test analysis of the scores of the experimental group in the pre-test and post-test. Table 3.4a, which is labeled paired samples, gives descriptive statistics (i.e. the mean, standard deviation and standard error of means) for the experimental group before the treatment and after the treatment. Table 3.4b displays the value of the correlation coefficient together with the significance level of the two-tailed t-test. The statistics given in table 3.4c are about the differences in the analysis of the experimental scores in the pre-test and post-test. The mean, standard deviation, standard error of mean of these differences in addition to the 95% confidence interval for mean differences.

According to table 3.4c, the t-value is 1.072 with 49 degrees of freedom. The two-tailed p-value is .006, which is less than the level of significance (i.e. $\alpha = .05$). Therefore, the study's null hypothesis which states that the performance of the study's experimental group is the same in both the pre-test and post-test of the study is rejected.

AS for how subjects' scores in the pre and post-test are related, the correlation coefficient, which was calculated at the significance level of 0.05 (table 3.4b), is .955. Therefore, it is clear that there is strong positive correlation between the scores of the experimental group in the pre-test vis-a vis the post-test.

Most probably due to the influence of the consciousness-raising tasks and activities offered to the study's experimental group prior to their taking of the post-test, it can be said that their scores in the post-test were a little better than those of the control group whose members did not receive any treatment. The difference between the scores of the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test is herein referred to as the gain score as is shown in table 6 below.

TABLE 3.5
STATISTICS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP GAIN SCORES

Group	N	Range	Mini	Max	Mean	SD
Experimental group	50	15	2	17	7.54	2.984
Control group	50	15	-7	8	1.44	3.105

In terms of the statistics given in table 3.5, it can be concluded that the gain scores of the experimental group, on the whole, were better than those of the control group as the minimum gain score was 2 and the maximum was 17 (the mean average was 7.54 and the SD was 2.98). As for the control group, -7 was the minimum gain score and the maximum was 8 (the mean average was 1.44 and the SD was 3.10).

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Following the analysis and discussion of the data collected via the test the study used as the main instrument of data collection, these results were arrived at:

First, the performance of the experimental group in both versions of the test was better than that of the control group particularly regarding:

1. The range of test scores
2. The highest and lowest scores
3. The difference between the post-test and the pre-test scores (i.e. gain scores)

Second, there was strong positive correlation between the scores of the two groups of the study in the pre-test in relation to the post-test.

Third, as far as the study's experimental group is concerned and judging by the statistics and figures given in the previous tables, it may be said that C-R techniques may have achieved good results with the sample of EFL learners

who participated in this research work. This is so particularly in connection with concepts /notions within the grammar of English (e.g. the tenses) known to have posed a lot of difficulty especially to beginning EFL learners.

Fourth, as learning means, C-R techniques can be effective if and when used in conjunction with other techniques. On the teaching side, EFL teachers can always use a combination of C-R techniques together with explicit, formal instruction by way of strengthening the teaching methods they are familiar with. In addition, C-R techniques may have the advantage of lessening students' dependence on the teacher, thereby, fostering learner-independence, a goal EFL teachers have always been encouraging learners to achieve.

Fifth, C-R techniques may work better if and when employed in dealing with rather complex grammatical concepts like the one the current study investigated. Furthermore, if C-R tasks and activities are carefully designed, they can be effective with all levels of EFL learners.

As to how the analysis of the data collected shed light on answering the questions this study was carried out to answer, it is important to point out that not all questions of the study were equally supported by the results reached. Regarding the first question of the study which asked about the extent to which C-R techniques can be effective in learning the English tense system, the previously outlined results lend a lot of support to answering the question. Almost all the statistical measures of central tendency and variability used in data treatment did show that the performance of the experimental group may have, to a large extent, been influenced by the C-R techniques employed.

Questions two and three of the study (the former was concerned with familiarising EFL learners with C-R techniques and the latter was about making EFL learners dependent on C-R techniques), the results and findings did not directly bear on these two questions. However, since C-R techniques are meant to draw EFL learners' attention to the formal features of the target language, the more they are used, the more learners will be familiar with them and, therefore, get some benefits out of them.

The fourth question the study was meant to provide answer to was about the advantages of learning about the English tenses through the use of C-R techniques. The results of the statistical analysis of the experimental group scores indicated that the group had benefited from the C-R tasks and activities taken before the post-test. This special treatment package of C-R tasks and activities offered to the group may have played a role in the group's better gain scores (i.e. the difference between the post-test score and the pre-test score). Therefore, the results of data analysis did support the answer to this question of the study. It may also be said that C-R techniques can have the potential of consolidating the learning of the English tenses together with building in learners some sense of independence from the teacher.

V. CONCLUSION

This study was designed and carried out to investigate the effect of C-R techniques on the learning of the present and past simple tenses by EFL learners. The purpose of the study was to find out whether C-R techniques can be used with the study's participants together with the advantages they have as a means of learning. Generally, C-R techniques are thought to have the ability of drawing EFL learners' attention to how the target language works. The subjects of the study were drawn from beginning EFL students at Taif University, KSA. A pre and post-test on the present and past simple tenses was administered to the sample of the study as the main data collection instrument.

Following the analysis of the data generated, the results did show that C-R techniques can be effective in learning the formal features and uses of present and past simple tenses by EFL learners. Since the main aim of using C-R techniques is to raise EFL learners' language awareness, it goes without saying that they can help learners to be less dependent on the teacher and formal instruction even when dealing with arduous learning tasks such as the tenses.

As for whether or not the results and findings arrived at match with the previously stated aims of the study, the researcher believes that the study's aims have been corroborated by the results reached though with varying degrees of support.

Finally, based on the study's results and findings, the researcher would like to recommend the use of C-R techniques to help EFL learners to increase their language awareness and be less dependent on explicit, rule-giving instruction.

APPENDIX A. THE TEST USED TO COLLECT THE STUDY'S DATA

Dear student,

The following questions are meant to find out how much you know about the:

1. The present simple
2. The past simple
3. The differences in form between the two tenses
4. The contexts in which the two tenses are used

I will be grateful to you if you take some of your time to answer these questions using what you know and what you have already been taught about English tenses.

Q.1

Fill the gaps in these sentences with the suitable verb given below: (visited, equals, live, travelled, leaves, drink, like, watched, flows, born):

1. I ----- in a small town near Taif.

2. Every morning, I ----- a cup of tea.
3. Yesterday, I ----- an interesting film.
4. Water----- from high to low places.
5. Last week, ----- my friends.
6. I ----- football.
7. I was ----- in 1999.
8. Two plus three ----- five.
9. My flight to Jeddah ----- at 6:30 p.m.
10. Ahmed and Faisal ----- to London last month.

Q.2

Match the present form of the verb with its past form:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. Begin | 1. Drove |
| 2. Come | 2. Found |
| 3. Drive | 3. Began |
| 4. Find | 4. knew |
| 5. Know | 5. Came |

Q.3

Which of the following sentences are correct (✓) and which are wrong(X)?

1. My car are new. ()
2. I visit my uncle last Monday. ()
3. Fahad always eat pizza on the weekends. ()
4. He send me an e-mail yesterday. ()
5. They likes to play basketball. ()

Q.4

Put these verbs in the suitable column (break, learn, became, felt, buy, eat, dreamed, left, hear, make, wrote, sat, forget, went, sleep, kept, rise, paid, win, and told):

Present		Past	
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	
6		6	
7		7	
8		8	
9		9	
10		10	

Q.5

Fill the gaps in the table below to make complete and correct sentences:

	Pronoun	Verb	Complement
1	I	.....	my car.
2	We	.....	to Jeddah last week.
3	He	.....	in Damam.
4	She	.....	her children to the zoo yesterday.
5	They	.....	football every evening.

Q.6

In each of the following sentences, change the tense of the verb from present to past or from past to present:

1. He studies English at college.
2. I drank a cup of tea.
3. We know the answer.
4. They ran away.
5. She spoke to her husband by telephone.

APPENDIX B. THE C-R TASKS AND ACTIVITIES OFFERED TO THE STUDY’S EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

• Task One

In each of the following sentences, underline the verb then try to answer the questions that follow:

1. I want to be a teacher.
2. He likes football.
3. They visit Jeddah every weekend.

- 4. We speak English
- 5. Ahmed and I go to the same college.
- 6. She studies mathematics.

Q.1. What did you notice about each verb form?

Q.2. Can you draw a comparison between the forms of the verb when used with a name or the pronouns he/she against the other pronouns?

• Task Two

Study these present simple tense verb-forms and their equivalent past simple forms in this table:

Present simple	Past simple
become	became
blow	blew
build	built
choose	chose
cut	cut
creep	crept
drive	drove
find	found
get	got
hold	held
lie	lay
look	looked
pay	paid
see	saw
show	showed

Q.1. Are the two forms each verb the same or different?

Q.2. In what way(s) are the two forms different?

Q.3. Can you work out rules for changing the present tense forms of these verbs into their equivalent past forms?

Q.4. What are you going to do in order to avoid making mistakes in using the past forms?

• Task Three

In each of the following pairs of sentences, identify the difference in time-relations in the verbs used:

1. (a) He likes reading. (b) He like dreading.
2. (a) I visit my uncle every weekend. (b) I visited my uncle last month.
3. (a) I usually drink coffee in the morning. (b) I drank a cup of coffee on my way to college.
4. (a) They enjoy watching films. (b) They enjoyed watching the film.
5. (a) We study English every day. (b) We studied English yesterday.
6. (a) Birds fly (b) He flew to London five hours ago.
7. (a) It breaks easily. (b) He broke his arm a year ago.
8. (a) My name is Fahad. (b) His father named him Fahad.
9. (a) He drives fast (b) He drove to Mecca.
10. (a) They come from a rich family. (b) I came yesterday.

• Task Four

Study this table and try to answer the questions that follow:

Present simple form	Past simple form
buy	bought
cooks	cooked
deal	dealt
dream	dreamed/dreamt
freeze	froze
hear	heard
leaves	left
says	said
sob	sobbed
stops	stopped

Q.1. Can you say there is one, unchanging rule for the present tense forms and their equivalent past tense forms?

Q.2. Did you notice that the endings in both the present and past tense forms affect not only the way they are written , but also how they are said?

Q.3. Talk to your classmates about working out some guidelines concerning how the present and past tense verb

forms are made.

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A Study on Offering Chinese Culture Course for Non-English Major Students in China

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Abstract—In an era when English is widely used as the uncontested lingua franca, learning English is becoming an increasingly focal point in China. Realizing the fact that students' cross-cultural communication skills hold such an important place in their language learning process, the college English language curriculum has been modified to better enhance students' cross-cultural communication ability and indeed certain innovations can be identified. However, problems still exist especially for non-English major students. They are exposed to curriculum which is solely concerned with the understanding of 'Anglo' cultures and the shortage of Chinese culture in college English teaching can obstruct students' communication ability. The study explores the necessities of offering Chinese culture course in English language for non-native English major students. On the basis of the focused interview, the study focuses on students' previous learning experience and demonstrates their expectations for this course. Combining students' responses and drawing on evidence from students' expectations, the course is designed in detail and evaluated in terms of what is worthwhile and effective in enhancing students' cross-cultural communication ability. It is argued that, such a course will make it possible for students to become successful cross-cultural communicators and eventually improve their English proficiency.

Index Terms—curriculum, motivation, culture, English-language teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language education is currently experiencing rapid and significant change. The need for students in China to acquire language proficiency in language other than Chinese is more critical than ever, especially in light of the challenges that economic globalization and social mobility pose to students in the 21st century (Spring and Madeline, 2012). Education is an activity which not only aims at cultivating students with knowledge but preparing people for life, for living. Today, the aim of preparation needs to take into account the context of an accelerating globalization in which the learning of English is becoming an increasingly focal point for China's higher education system. It is commonly observed that modern technology has turned our world into a small village. (He and Miller, 2011, p. 428). Under the situation of globalization, improving students' cross-cultural communication skills becomes particularly important because lots of chances are available for learners in China to communicate with people around the world. When talking about the cross-cultural communication ability, the relationship between language and culture can not be overlooked. A well-known fact is that culture and language are closely interrelated. "Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lines. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex way" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 3). That is to say, when we learn a foreign language, understanding that culture is of great importance. Just as Byram (1994) states, "cultural learning has to be take place as an integral part of language learning, and vice versa" (p. 5). Culture should be understood as the 'active process of meaning making' (Street, 1993, p. 25), and seen as the act of "doing" rather than just "being", namely, as dynamic and fluid rather than static and predefined (Alsagoff, 2010). That is to say, how to more efficiently incorporate culture learning in foreign language classes should be attached great importance. Then, the question regarding which culture should be taught arises: the native culture the learner possesses based on past experiences, or the culture of the foreign language, or both of them? Considering English teaching in China, western culture teaching is indeed a part of the curriculum. However, the question of the role of Chinese culture in the curriculum is overlooked by educators and, as a result, lots of problems have arisen. For example, the potential threat of learning foreign languages to students' national identity, the unsatisfactory ability of expressing things relating to Chinese culture when communicating with English speakers and so on. Just as Rao (1996) claims, "Chinese students remain at a loss when they meet English speakers. Students of English can neither understand what the English speakers say, nor can they express themselves in English" (p. 458). Based on the above problems, my research seeks to identify the necessities of offering Chinese culture course in English language for non-English major students. In the first part, through the focused interview, students' previous experience relating to conducting cross-cultural communication and their expectations for this course are illustrated. Then, the course is described in detail and evaluated in terms of its effective effects in enhancing students' communication ability. The third part focuses on the significance of offering such a course for students followed by the conclusion part.

II. THE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE AND EXPECTATIONS

The focused interview was conducted to illustrate students' English language learning experience and the problems which they met during the process of conducting cross-cultural communication. A total of 50 informants among which 15 participants are engineering major students, 20 are Chinese major students and 15 participants major in business were interviewed individually. Each student was required to answer several questions and the qualitative data was then gathered to provide some useful information for the design of the course because learners' opinions count a lot in the teaching process. Below are some typical comments by participants which reflect what they said about their experience of learning English and their self evaluation of proficiency in English language when conducting cross-cultural communication.

Interviewer: Do you think English language learning is a successful experience for you?

Interviewee: When I was in high school, learning English was not a difficult thing for me because every time I could get relatively high scores in the examination. After entering college, I find that most times we need to learn by ourselves and if we can pass CET4 (College English Test Band 4) and CET6 (College English Test Band 6), we almost achieve the ultimate goal. However, I still find it is hard for me to express my ideas in English in class sometimes. (Jin, female)

Interviewer: How much do you know about cross-cultural communication ability? Do you have some chances to meet English speakers and communicate with them? Are you a good communicator?

Interviewee: Our English teacher mentions a little about it when offering college English courses. I have some basic knowledge about such kind of ability and I know it is very important. Ever semester, we have several classes taught by foreign teachers so we have chances to chat with them. Generally speaking, I think I am a good communicator and I really like to communicate with others in English. (Yang, male)

Interviewer: Are you good at expressing western topics? Are you troubled by expressing topics concerning Chinese ones?

Interviewee: Our English teacher often introduces something relating to western culture to us before the detailed discussion of the text. Our textbook contains some articles on western culture and we can know a lot from it. However, we rarely have the chance to learn something about our native culture. Actually, I do not know how to translate "si da fa ming" in English. (Qiang, Male)

Interviewer: Do you think it is necessary to offer Chinese culture course in English language for you?

Interviewee: Yes, it is crucial. I remember once I met a foreigner when I paid a visit to the West Lake. The foreigner was so interested in the story of the White Snake and he expected me to tell him the story. However, I found it is so hard for me to describe the whole story in English because I do not know how to translate some Chinese words into English. I felt very frustrated. (Lin, female)

III. OFFERING CHINESE CULTURE COURSE IN JIANGSU UNIVERSITY

A. Background

Realising the significant role of English and considering English as the preferred language of world trade and commerce, science and technology and international relations, it is no wonder that since the mid 1960s, English has been taught in universities in China. This has been given political approval: "The study of English is regarded as necessary for acquiring technological expertise and for fostering international trade by Chinese Communist Party" (Adamson and Morris, 1997, p. 3). Since English has become a compulsory course, the English language curriculum attracts people's attention because it directly relates to language teaching and student learning. The college English curriculum has been modified to meet the learners' needs and innovations in the curriculum can be found such as the changing focus from writing and reading to speaking and listening, the emphasis on enhancing students' learning strategies and capacity for intercultural communication and so on. However, we still find that there are some problems relating to the teaching content which have negative effects on learners learning process. One of them is the shortage of Chinese native culture teaching in the process of college English language teaching. It is well known that language classes should incorporate the teaching of culture as part of their content, and just as the linguistic model, cultural content of English courses in the Expanding Circles traditionally focused on that of Americans and Britons (Matsuda and Friedrich, 2011). For example, both the teaching material and the teaching pedagogy are imported from western countries. What's more, most of the recommended articles relating to English learning are written by English-speakers. As a result, students' learning motivation is low and their intercultural communication ability is not satisfactory. The reason is that we live in a certain culture just like a fish lives in the water. Once we come to a quite different culture, we just like a fish out of water (Lu, 2012). When students are exposed to the language in the text book which they do not share, they may feel that they are not part of the culture they are learning about and tend to feel a barrier even reject the whole process. In 2010, Xiao Longfu and some other teachers made an investigation into the ability of non-English major students to communicate in English about Chinese culture. The investigation illustrates that though Chinese people know a lot of Chinese and Chinese culture, many people still fail to express the native culture in English language. Chinese cultural aphasia does exist. Considering the fact that the spread of English has broadened the definition of 'English-speaking culture,' the cultural content of an EIL class also needs to expand (Matsuda and Friedrich, 2011). In order to solve the problem, the Chinese culture course in English language in Jiangsu university is planned to be offered for one year. The first semester exposes students to an introduction to Chinese culture. It aims at

equipping students with basic knowledge of Chinese traditional culture and more importantly, cultivating their ability of expressing and translating topics relating to Chinese culture in English language. The second semester focuses on the comparison between Chinese culture and western culture so as to make students understand the cultural differences, express those differences in English language and explore the reasons behind those differences. The second semester is also for practice, which is in fact, a very major aspect of providing chances for enhancing abilities of expressing, evaluating and spreading Chinese culture.

B. Aims of the Course

The course aims to enhance students' ability to express Chinese culture in English language. It also aims at bringing positive learning experiences to students by encouraging them to conduct cross-cultural communication and making them aware of the fact that cross-cultural communication is a two-way orientation. What's more, offering Chinese culture course is also the need of spreading the Chinese culture. The reason is that only when we have a good command of English language and Chinese culture in the language of English, can we spread the native culture when communicating with foreign guests. It is of great importance for Chinese people to be able to express topics on Chinese culture so that people outside of the country can understand China from their perspectives and know more about Chinese history, legend, civilization and so on. Furthermore, it also aims to provide a channel for students to improve their English language proficiency by offering them the opportunity to listen to lectures on Chinese culture, read selected works, and interact with each other in workshops, which will at last develop students' critical thinking ability.

C. Teaching Pattern of the Course

It has become common knowledge that teaching methods have great effects on students' learning outcomes. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) claim, "If language learning is to be improved, it will come about through changes and improvements in teaching methodology" (p. 15). The teacher should make great efforts to enhance students' ability of expression, translation ability and critical thinking ability. In order to achieve this goal, the student-centered teaching strategy should be advocated and the communicative language teaching methodology as well as task-based instruction should be adopted. The course is conducted through lectures on introducing some basic knowledge along with workshops which aims at providing opportunities for students to learn from each other and to know what their classmates have done. Students in each class are divided into four to five groups for workshops and the workshop is held every month lasting 60 minutes. Students in each group communicate with each other on some given topics, make comments and ask questions so as to share their opinions. At the workshop, teachers act as the facilitators who provide help when necessary and encourage students to express their own viewpoints freely. After class, students are required to do some tasks relating to the course. While processing the requested tasks, students have opportunities to read more, communicate with people and think dependently. For example, students are required to find articles on Chinese culture which is full of Chinese characteristic and translate articles after class. At the workshop, students make comments on their classmates' work and revise the translation version through discussion. Such kind of teaching method can arouse students' interest and motivate them to learn. As for the way of assessment, it can be comprehensive such as tests, writing essay, oral translation, presentation and so on, which is inclined to assess students ability to express Chinese culture, evaluate the cultural differences between Chinese culture and western culture, translate articles including words, expressions, idioms relating to Chinese cultural connotations.

IV. DESCRIPTION

A. Lectures

McDermott (1993) claims that "teaching by telling is an ineffective mode of instruction for most students. Students must be intellectually active to develop a functional understanding" (p. 297). In order to achieve the best learning outcomes, the two-way interactive teaching method which stresses upon self-learning and encourages teacher-student interactions should be adopted. It is the teaching approach that provides time and questions for students to think and discuss. In that way, it is easier for teachers to cultivate a supportive classroom atmosphere to promote interactions and promote learners' intellectual engagement and learning motivation in class. Specific speaking, teachers combine discussion teaching method with question teaching method through various in class activities such as group discussion and students' giving lectures so as to arouse students' enthusiasm for the course and improve their communicative skills to a great extent. When giving lectures, teachers can put forward some heated-discussion topics relating to native culture and discuss them with students. Besides, by asking questions or letting students present their puzzled questions for the whole class discussion, teachers aims at promoting students' participation in the learning process, which is beneficial to their performance. In each lecture, students are provided with 3-5 concept questions and sufficient time to think about and discuss these questions. For example, the lecturer presents some pictures relating to the four great inventions of ancient China and then poses some questions to the students from easy to difficult, from describing to comparing them with inventions of other countries. The students are first asked to think about these questions individually, then to discuss with their neighbours, and finally to discuss them with the whole class. What's more, the questions chosen by teachers are mostly context-rich ones which are related to students' everyday life and their background knowledge.

B. Selection of the Dominant Instructional Model

It is commonly believed that the dominant instructional model(s) of the course should be selected according to the aim of the course and the needs of learners. If an English program was situated in a community where English is used exclusively or extensively and its goal was to assist newcomers get adjusted to the new community, the variety used locally is probably the most appropriate model (Matsuda and Friedrich, 2011). For this course, the selection of an instructional variety should be made locally and individually. Various contextual factors such as learner goals, learner's language proficiency, teacher's background and the material availability should be taken into consideration. For most students taking this course, the variety used locally is probably the most appropriate model.

C. Selection of Teaching Materials

It is acknowledged that the selection of teaching materials is an integral part of curriculum planning because it influences the learner's learning outcome to a great extent. "Coursebooks provide teachers and learners with a range of professionally developed materials within tried and tested syllabus structures", allowing teachers to spend their valuable time more on facilitating learning than materials production" (Bell and Gower, 1998, p. 116). Actually, there are varieties of coursebooks on teaching Chinese culture such as "Aspects of Chinese Culture" published by Tsinghua university press, "An Introduction to Chinese Culture" published by Congqing university press, "Chinese Culture: A Course Book" published by University of Science and Technology of China press and so on. By collecting all the insightful and meaningful articles from more than 20 books, teachers edit the teaching material based on the students' interest, which focuses on different aspects of Chinese culture such as a brief history of China, Chinese characters and language, calligraphy and painting customs and festivals, Chinese religions, architecture and gardens, traditional Chinese medicine, Chinese philosophy and so on. For the second semester, the teaching material contains articles mainly about the analyses of cultural differences between Chinese culture and western culture and the causes behind them. Based on the topics on the coursebook for the first semester, the second semester textbook provides information on corresponding cultural things in western countries so as to make students compare the cultural differences and search for the causes.

D. Workshops

Besides lectures, the workshop is held every month lasting 60 minutes which provides more chances for students to share their experience as well as their findings and helps to improve students' language proficiency. "The main purpose of the workshop is to learn how to do something better or to understand something better. Participants adopt the role of learners. Resource persons have high expertise and behave as instructors. The workshop may include the learning of skills and thus involve much practice" (This, 1979, p. 51). Therefore, such kind of meeting of people who cooperate with each other in groups dealing with problems by themselves allows considerable practices and communications. In the workshop, teachers put forward some problems or assign some tasks relating to the course content, which requires students to fulfill some tasks such as translating articles, evaluating some different cultural phenomena, presenting their group work findings, writing some papers and so on. It is believed that "The workshop can be considered a unique instructional format for continuing education programs. Although it shares some characteristics with other formats, it has features that make it unique and uniquely suited to achieving a particular type of learning outcome" (Thomas and Sork, 1984, p. 10). On the whole, students hold positive attitudes towards the workshops and they are looking forward such kind of teaching format. One student replied in the interview:

Actually there are few opportunities for us to attend the workshops. I think it is an effective and interesting way for us to learn more and communicate with our classmates. I hope I can improve my expression ability and English language proficiency through it and I will try my best to take part in it (Fei, female).

V. SIGNIFICANCES OF OFFERING CHINESE CULTURE COURSE FOR NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS IN CHINA

The purpose of using English is not solely to learn from others, as we may have believed in the past. Our goal now is to establish and maintain an equal, mutually respectful relationship with others, which requires the ability to perceive and analyze the familiar with an outsider's perspective (Matsuda and Friedrich, 2011). Therefore in addition to global culture and the cultures of future interlocutors, what is equally important for EIL users is the knowledge of the students' own culture and the ability to explain it in such a way that outsiders can understand it. For non-English major students, they have fewer English classes than English major students while still get the chance to use English for communication purpose as English majors. By offering Chinese culture course for them, students can become more motivated to study and their cross-cultural communication ability can be greatly enhanced.

In the first place, offering Chinese culture course in English language for non-English major students has the effect of enhancing students' learning motivation and improving students' learning outcomes. "For the learners who have deeper understanding and appreciation of the target language as well as deeper understanding and appreciation of native culture have a 'productive orientation' in language learning" (Fromm 1948, cited in Gao and Cheng and Zhao and Zhou 2005, p. 40); they are more motivated by self-actualization needs" (Maslow 1957, cited in Gao and Cheng and Zhao and Zhou 2005, p. 40). It is believed that when identifying with one's own culture, students can learn foreign language easier because they see themselves as a speaker of that language and are more willing to use the language to communicate,

which helps enhance their learning motivation. The research of Gardner and Lambert and of Acton and Walker de Felix determined that integrative motivation (the intention of becoming a part of the target culture as well as speaking the target language) resulted in more effective language learning than did instrumental motivation (the intention of learning the language to serve a purpose, such as getting a job (cited in Valdes, 1986, p. 2). When learning the course, students will feel familiar with the teaching content and they don't need to express themselves about something strange to their temperament or alien to their thought, which will arouse their interest.

Secondly, offering Chinese culture course for non-English major students can enhance their cross-cultural ability. According to the interview, most students though have some knowledge of Chinese culture, they lack of the ability to express them when communicating with foreigners. The fact that cross-cultural communication is a two-way orientation suggests that during the process of communication, just talking about western culture will not arouse the interest of foreigners and can not meet the need of foreigners who are curious about Chinese culture. Only by introducing Chinese culture to foreigners and discussing the cultural difference with them, can we conduct the successful and meaningful cross-cultural communication. What's more, two non-native English speakers are able to understand each other better when conducting communication even if they do not talk within the framework of, for instance, British culture (Suzuki, 1975). We need to admit the fact that English, influenced by one's own native language and own culture and his own personality, can be used with confidence.

Thirdly, offering Chinese culture course for non-English major students can help to maintain their national identity and it corresponds with Chinese foreign language policy. Kirkpatrick (2002) claims that "speakers of a new variety of English will want to preserve their identity, and the reflection of their pragmatic and cultural norms in the local variety of English is an important way of doing this" (p. 215). When learning the course, students are more aware of their own culture and they have opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of national culture, which helps them to maintain their national identity. English has a sort of psycho-cultural advantage for the speakers because they do not need to throw their own identity away (Suzuki, 1975). Just as Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg have point out, "the EFL teacher, while introducing foreign students to some aspects of American culture, must also encourage students to maintain their own cultural identity. To achieve this, the teacher must talk about cultural relativism as well as the universality of certain components shared by different cultures" (cited in Valdes, 1986, p. 158). Besides, adding Chinese culture in the English curriculum also corresponds with Chinese foreign language policy. Chang (2006) claims that "The prominence that English has in language policy is due to the enormous prestige of its instrumental value. The dominance of English is such an inevitable reality that language policy must come to terms with it. The most important thing is that its dominance must be properly managed so as to produce maximally favorable outcomes for China" (p. 516). Adding Chinese culture in college English language curriculum can therefore ensure better learning outcomes, help to maintain national identity, and reserve and promote national culture, which can benefit the whole country.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the Chinese culture course in English language for non-English major students in Jiangsu University, and in light of the evaluation offers considerable changes as they would be implemented in Chinese universities. The role of national culture in the English language curriculum should be taken into consideration because it is as impossible to escape from one's native culture as it is to get out of one's own skin. This paper has sought to explore and address problems relating to college students English leaning, conducted from the aspect of culture and its significance for learning. I have proposed that it may be particularly important and effective that students read foreign-produced texts about their own country or locality. We should be aware that English curriculum design should meet the needs of students according to real-life situations and in the Chinese context, for learners need an English language teaching curriculum that teaches them about the cultures of people they are most likely to be using English with, and more importantly, they need to figure out how to compare, relate and present their own culture to others.

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A Study on ELT High School Teachers' Practices to Foster Learner Autonomy

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Abstract—The present study aims to identify the practices of ELT high school teachers to foster learner autonomy and to examine the differences with respect to the background variable of gender. The participants of the study were ELT high school teachers in the province of İzmir, Turkey ($N=118$). Data were collected by means of Autonomy Practices Questionnaire, which is a structured quantitative and qualitative measure. The analysis revealed that ELT teachers are highly motivated to foster autonomy through some particular practices such as activity-based practices, material-based practices, student-centered practices, and objective-based practices. Moreover, gender has significant effect on ELT teachers' student-centered practices to foster autonomy. The results were discussed with regard to real practices of ELT teachers and ELT curriculum implementation.

Index Terms—learner autonomy, English curriculum, practices to foster autonomy

I. INTRODUCTION

Gardner (2010) signified that there are more bilinguals in the world than monolinguals, and in more populated countries like China, India, and Nigeria, bilingualism is more of a requirement rather than an exception. English language teaching has definitely become one of the most demanding and crucial issues in many societies with technological and scientific developments, with improvements in international relations, in commercial accomplishments, and in transportation. These developmental changes have elicited a desire to learn about other cultures and nations, and with the concept of globalization, the importance of acquiring foreign languages (especially English) has been recognized by millions (Richards, 2006). Turkey is one of those places where educational issues have begun to attract people's attention as a result of competitive system of education and in this system the circumstances require students' acquisition of foreign languages autonomously to be able to have an important position in the society.

There is also a growing focus in the literature on the concept of autonomy in English language teaching (ELT), together with its obvious and hidden effects on the teaching process (Barfield & Brown, 2007; Broady & Kenning, 1996; Cotterall & Crabbe, 1999; Little, Ridley, & Ushioda, 2003). In general, the promotion of students' autonomy can be possible through helping students to identify their own goals, using effective strategies to achieve these goals, and creating consciousness of social contexts. (Inomata, 2008). Although there are responsibilities that belong to the teachers and the students, whether the students and the teachers are aware of the importance of the concept and of the possible ways to enhance language learning autonomy in the classroom context are some particular points that the recent research addresses.

According to constructivism which is tightly bound to learner autonomy, the students are encouraged to construct their own knowledge and fulfill their own learning needs and interests. The Ministry of National Education in Turkey have specified constructivist approach as a core element in foreign language teaching and even in the other fields such as classroom teaching and science teaching. Related to constructivist approach, Benson (2001) and Little (2007) indicated that learner autonomy is more than a skill of the learner. In essence, it is a product of a constant process of interaction between the learners and the teacher. Therefore, this study is necessary to investigate the products, in other words practices of the teachers, which constitute the interaction between the learners and the teacher to foster learner autonomy, rather than being concerned with students' and teachers' perceptions about learner autonomy.

As a supplementary method of constructivism in the ELT context, communicative language teaching has come into prominence. On this basis, some amendments related to ELT curriculum have been placed in light of the constructivist approach, in which learner-centeredness and learner autonomy are the spearheading factors, by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) in recent years. In 2007, the MONE in Turkey revised and restructured the National English Teaching Curriculum at the primary and secondary levels. According to this recent reform, CLT has been announced as the main base of the ELT curriculum, one of the main goals of which is described as to “develop written and oral

communication skills of learners". Furthermore, this curriculum prescribes that "the main concern is the use of language as a means of communication rather than the rules of grammar, which is the traditional method". Subsequent to the adoption of the new CLT-based curriculum, MONE removed all the existing textbooks used in schools and replaced them with newly written course books based on the CLT approach. The present study provides English language teachers with useful resources to reflect on their own teaching through a structured quantitative and qualitative instrument. Secondly, two main implications for practice will be framed: promotion of autonomous learning environment and adjustments in ELT curriculum to promote autonomous learning.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Background

At first, the theory of autonomy in language learning emerged as a result of research on the practice of adult self-directed learning, which is characterized by Knowles (1975) (as cited in Benson, 2001). Self-directed learning seemed as a kind of basic element in adult education, since it was accepted to include a long-term period in which individuals agree to accept responsibility for all decisions related to their learning. In the 1970s and 1980s, this concept attracted considerable attention of the authorities, although it was not formally integrated into education.

It is important to state the fact that both autonomy and self-directed learning are concerned with teaching language learners first how to think, and then how to learn, and finally, how to take control of their own learning. At the same time, it can be beneficial to mention the trivial difference between autonomy and self-directed learning that was simply underlined by Dickinson (1987), indicating that self-directed learners accept responsibility for all the decisions related to their learning, but not autonomously put those decisions into action; however, in autonomous learning, the learners both feel completely responsible for all the decisions concerned with their learning and the completion of these decisions.

B. Definitions of Autonomy

In literature, the common viewpoint about learner autonomy is that it emerges as a result of learners' approval of responsibility for their own learning (Benson & Voller, 1997; Little, 1991; Dickinson, 1987). This means that autonomy requires the learner to develop control over his or her own learning and his or her own role in that process. According to Benson (2001), this control might take numerous forms for different individuals and even different forms for the same individual along with the contexts or time. For instance, the learner who shows a high degree of autonomy in one area can be non-autonomous in another.

Further definitions have emphasized that learner autonomy is not specific knowledge the learner has, but rather, a capacity that allows him or her to direct his or her own learning. For example, Little (1991) stated that "Autonomy is a capacity – for self-regulated learning, critical thinking, decision-making, and independent actions. Development of a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his or her learning is a fundamental requirement".

C. English Curriculum Implementation

Nunan (1985) supported that English course designs, which are course syllabi, should comprise needs assessment, objective setting, selection of the learning resources and activities, language learning setting, and evaluation. However, learners' needs and expectations should be analyzed thoroughly because the general structure of the learner-centered approach necessitates the development of separate syllabi to satisfy different needs of the learners rather than the development of an entirely differentiated curriculum, which is impossible. Allwright (1986) also asserted that learners are confused about the learning objectives of language lessons because of the lack of communication between the learners and teachers. Therefore, teachers have the responsibility to explain the objectives as clearly as possible and to ask about the learners' opinions about the objectives as well.

On the other hand, Johnson (1989) added his opinions to Allwright's assertion and claimed that, first of all, language teachers should explicitly outline the objectives of their courses. Secondly, they should inquire about the possible contradictions between the perceptions of learners and teachers with regard to content and methodology. If there are, negotiations should be made to find solutions. Thirdly, modifications related to the implementation of on-going course should be conducted.

D. Research Studies Conducted in Turkey on Learner Autonomy in Language Teaching

In their study, Bozpolat and Gömleksiz (2011) aimed to investigate the opinions of sixth grade students at elementary schools in Sivas, Turkey with regard to learner autonomy in foreign language learning. They made use of the descriptive research method through a questionnaire applied to 975 elementary school students selected randomly in Sivas city center in the spring term of the 2010-2011 academic year. The results of the study indicated that in terms of readiness for self-direction, studying independently in language learning, and of the classifications of selecting content and assessment, and motivation, female students were more successful. However, there was no significant difference found among the students' views about the importance of the teacher, the role of the teacher as a supervisor, about the objectives of the lesson, language learning activities, and evaluation and interaction with other cultures sub-scales in terms of the gender variable.

Balçıkkanlı (2008) conducted a study that aimed to foster learner autonomy through activities at the Preparatory School of Gazi University. In order to achieve this goal, two classes were selected randomly, each of which consisted of twenty learners studying English from several faculties at Gazi University, as an experimental group and a control group. Before implementation, a learner autonomy questionnaire, consisting of three parts, was administered to both groups to reveal possible levels of autonomy they possessed. While the experimental group was instructed in the autonomy implementation, the control group continued their education without any alteration. After the 12-week implementation process, the same questionnaire was administered to both groups once again. At the end of the process, the statistical results were analyzed and interpreted. The results showed that the learners in the experimental group scored higher than those in the control group and the experimental group had a strong tendency towards autonomy compared to the control group with a few exceptions. According to the results, it was concluded that the syllabi of the preparatory schools should be restructured in parallel with the principles of learner autonomy. It was also decided that the course books that were used at preparatory schools should be evaluated as to whether they encourage autonomy or not, in-service training for teachers should be provided, and as a final point, self-access laboratories should be developed technically to make best of them.

E. Research Studies Conducted in Other Countries on Learner Autonomy in Language Teaching

Haseborg (2012) conducted a participatory research study to contribute to the experimental knowledge base of autonomy to help fill some of the gaps in the body of research pursuing the answers to the questions such as, "How do students perceive the ability to make autonomous learning choices?", "How does the ability to make autonomous choices regarding format, content, and timing affect motivation?", and "Which areas of language learning most benefit from autonomous learning choices?". The data were collected by means of two surveys, a learning journal kept by each participant in the study and completed for every work cycle, and reflective statements of the participants. The findings of the study indicated that it is also in the interest of the teacher to provide a well-structured learning environment. At the same time, many students also reported that their skills improved in terms of communication and in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Lastly, it was realized that the choices made in relation to projects to improve the four skills benefited the students' self-confidence and helped them progress their ability to communicate in German.

Benson (2010) conducted a collective case study of four Hong Kong secondary school teachers' experiences with regard to obstructions to the development of teacher autonomy in English language teaching, and their implications for teacher education. The study was designed as an interview-based study and the participants were four English teachers approaching the end of a two-year part-time MA in Applied Linguistics program at a university in Hong Kong. The findings of the study suggested that the constraints were systemic and primarily focused around 'Schemes of Work', school-based regulations, and the supervision system. On the other hand, participant teachers were able to create spaces for teacher autonomy, but the nature of these spaces was developed according to the school context and partly through previous educational experiences as either learners or teachers. Through the study, it was also concluded that the impact of teacher education courses that depend on experimentation with new ideas in the classroom tend to be inadequate in many state school systems and language teacher education may benefit from a teachers' practices employed with great passion to perform their professions.

In Norwegian secondary schools, Trebbi (2003) performed a study to compare the traditional curriculum with an experience-oriented curriculum, which enables the learners to control their own language learning and flexible goal setting. Further aims of the project were to "promote students' insight into what it is to learn French/German and the advancement of their capacity to take charge of their own learning" (Trebbi, p. 172). Trebbi also stated that five years after the implementation of the new curriculum, some of the teachers showed the constraints of rejection, but re-arranging the traditional concepts and innovative approaches were also observed. Additionally, it was realized that it is very difficult to implement principles of learner autonomy on a curricular level.

Camilleri (1999)'s study included questionnaire of classroom activities data collected from 328 teachers in six European contexts (Malta, The Netherlands, Belorussia, Poland, Estonia, and Slovenia) and consisted of 13 items each asking about the extent to which learners, according to the teachers, should be involved in decisions about a range of learning activities, such as establishing the objectives of a course or selecting course content. In the Maltese context, although it was difficult to define how much they were aware of the autonomy concept, teachers' views, based on classroom experience, were positive because teachers displayed their willingness to care about learners' decisions about their learning strategies and content and these factors' positive effects on the outcome of language teaching process.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do ELT high school teachers foster learner autonomy in their classes?
 - 1a. Which practices do ELT high school teachers use to foster learner autonomy?
 - 1b. Do male and female teachers differ in their practices while fostering autonomy?
2. What are ELT high school teachers' strengths with regard to fostering learner autonomy through ELT curriculum in their classes?

3. What are ELT high school teachers' needs with regard to fostering learner autonomy through ELT curriculum in their classes?

4. What are ELT high school teachers' suggestions with regard to fostering learner autonomy through ELT curriculum in their classes?

The data collection instrument was cross-sectional, which means that it was administered at one specific point in time. Both quantitative and qualitative data necessary to answer the research questions in this survey study were collected through a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The aim was to identify ELT high school teachers' practices to foster learner autonomy during their classes with regard to four categories of curriculum implementation: (1) determining objectives, (2) determining the content, (3) planning for the instructional process, and (4) evaluation. Moreover, ELT high school teachers' opinions were examined about their strengths, needs, and their suggestions to the stakeholders from the perspective of the challenges they encounter with regard to objectives, activities, materials, and evaluation while developing an autonomous learning environment. Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted to obtain a deeper insight into the research questions that were used in this study (Table I).

TABLE I.
OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Research Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review • Previous studies
2. Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience Sampling
3. Research Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sectional Survey Design
4. Instrument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire constructed by the researchers
5. Data Collection Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of the questionnaire to 118 high school ELT teachers in their school settings within 20 minutes
6. Data Analysis Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPSS software program for descriptive and inferential statistics
7. Interpreting the Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant literature and the context of the present study

B. Participants

The target population of the study included all ELT high school teachers serving at the 9-12 grade levels (15-18 years old students) and implementing high school ELT curriculum in both public and private schools in İzmir, Turkey. İzmir is the third biggest province in Turkey and it's famous for its citizens' great interests in educational issues. There were 2801 ELT high school teachers in İzmir. The accessible population of this study, due to its convenience, consisted of 118 high school ELT teachers from 18 different high schools in different parts of the city; therefore, the socio-economic status of the setting was relatively better than other cities in Turkey. 136 ELT teachers were sampled in this study. In total, 118 of them returned the questionnaires which resulted in a response rate of 87%. Among participant ELT teachers ($N=118$), 56% ($n=66$) of them were female, whereas 44% ($n=52$) of them were male. The participant teachers were definitely well-trained ones because they were supposed to pass several vocational examinations after graduation to take up an appointment and İzmir is known to be a city which is very difficult to be appointed as an English teacher because of its positive attributes in terms of an ideal educational environment.

C. Instrument

In the present study, a three part questionnaire was developed by the researchers through investigating relevant research studies because there were no research studies that specifically aimed to explore teachers' practices to foster learner autonomy in English language teaching. The first part aimed to collect data about the demographic characteristics of the participants including several background variables, such as age, gender, academic status, graduation department, vocational status, serving at a state or private school, type of the school, duration in the profession, the number of classes taught, number of the students taught, the number of the teaching hours in a week, ELT course book they use, the number of the in-service training programs they attended in the last 3 years, and name of these in-service training programs (see Appendix A). The second portion, which consisted of a 32-item, 5-point Likert scale, measuring 5 for "always", 4 for "often", 3 for "sometimes", 2 for "rarely", and 1 for "never", was developed to measure the frequency of the practices of ELT high school teachers to enhance learner autonomy in their classes. The rating for the scale was from always to never. The items in this section aimed to measure ELT high school teachers' practices foster learner autonomy during their classes with regard to four categories of curriculum implementation: (1) determining objectives, (2) determining the content, (3) planning for the instructional process, and (4) evaluation. The third part included 4 open-ended questions to collect qualitative data through the questions based on their strengths, needs, suggestions, and extra information related to objectives, activities, materials, evaluation with regard to developing an autonomous learning environment.

D. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Factor analysis was used as a data reduction and classification method (see Appendix B). Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was carried out to identify clusters of variables. One-Way Repeated Measures of Analysis of Variance was conducted to compare the dimensions of the practices that ELT high school teachers implement to foster autonomy. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to examine the differences in the dimensions of the practices with respect to the background variable of gender. The .05 level was established as a criterion of statistical significance for all the statistical procedures that were performed.

In order to analyze the open-ended data obtained through 4 questions at the end of the questionnaire, the data were firstly coded under predetermined themes with regard to research questions and the closed-ended items of the questionnaire. The codes under each theme were identified according to the predetermined themes and the coded data were subjected to content analysis. Based on the frequencies and percentages, some responses that were explanatory of the quantitative data were reported.

IV. RESULTS

A. Results Concerning the Dimensions of Practices to Foster Autonomy

In the ELT high school teachers' practices questionnaire used in this study, dimensions were related to the "ELT activities practiced by the teachers", "practices used by the teachers to foster learner autonomy through the use of information and communication technologies", "practices to enhance learner autonomy through informing them about their own responsibilities in English language acquisition", and "practices to enhance learner autonomy through informing them about the general objectives of the English classes".

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test indicated sampling adequacy for factor analysis. The KMO measure was 0.721 and also Bartlett's test of sphericity (.00) was significant. Initial principal component analysis with varimax rotation of the 32 items inventory revealed ten factors with eigenvalues greater than one. However, results of the inventory in terms of the variety of the loadings indicated that four factors should be examined since they had large loadings and defined most of the items.

Initial principal component analysis calling for four factors was conducted. In four-factor structure, four items (Items 10, 21, 23, 29) were omitted since they weren't loaded heavily on these factors. After deleting the four items, subsequent factor analysis for the refinement of the four-factor structure retained items weighted highly on their own scale. These four dimensions explained 44% of variance. "Activity-Based Practices" subscale pertained 14 items. On the other hand, "Material-Based Practices" subscale pertained 5 items while "Student-centered Practices" subscale pertained again 5 items. Lastly, "Objective-Based Practices" subscale pertained 4 items. Moreover, overall reliability test was conducted and value of Cronbach's Alpha was satisfying as: $\alpha = .83$

Next, items clustered within each dimension were examined in terms of their content. The investigation of item content revealed that items loaded meaningfully into dimensions. These dimensions were named as (1) activity-based practices, (2) material-based practices, (3) student-centered practices and (4) objective-based practices.

B. Results Concerning the Difference among Dimensions of ELT High School Teachers' Practices to Foster Autonomy

A one-way repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if significant mean differences existed among these dimensions. The dimensions of ELT teachers' practices for fostering learner autonomy as most frequently and least frequently were examined.

To begin with the sphericity assumption of repeated measures ANOVA, Mauchly's test was conducted. Sphericity assumption indicated the equality of variances of the distinctions between dimensions (Field, 2005). Mauchly's test (.001) indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ($\chi^2(5) = 20.922, p < .05$), therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ($\epsilon = .89$) because the data was accepted spherical and the variances of differences were accepted to be homogenous if that ϵ is closer to 1.00 (Field, 2005). For that reason, it could be concluded that the data did not embody a deviation from sphericity (Table II).

TABLE II.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR FOUR FACTORS

Dimensions	Mean	SD
Activity-based Practices	3.77	.48
Material-based Practices	3.82	.73
Student-centered Practices	3.81	.60
Objective-based Practices	4.32	.49

After that, repeated contrast test was used to determine priorities and to answer the research question of which practices ELT high school teachers use to foster learner autonomy. According to the results, there was a significant mean difference only between student-centered practices dimension and objective-based practices dimension [$F(1,117) = 65.529, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .359$] (Table III).

TABLE III.
REPEATED CONTRASTS OF THE DIMENSIONS

Practice Dimensions	df	F	P	η^2
AP vs. MP	1	.782	.37	.007
MP vs. SP	1	.029	.86	.000
SP vs. OP	1	65.529	.00	.359

Repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant overall difference among the means of 4 dimensions. A follow-up pairwise comparison was conducted to examine carefully the mean differences among dimensions. There was a significant mean difference between objective based practices dimension and each of the other dimensions (Table IV). Namely, the mean differences between OP-AP, OP-MP, and OP-SP were significant at the $p < .05$ while there were no significant differences between the other pairs (AP-MP, AP-SP, MP-SP).

TABLE IV.
PAIRWISE COMPARISONS OF THE ACTIVITY-BASED, MATERIAL-BASED, STUDENT-CENTERED,
OBJECTIVE-BASED PRACTICES FACTORS

(I) Practices	(J) Practices	Mean Difference (I-J)	SD	P
Activity-based Practices	Material-based Practices	-.057	.064	1.00
	Student-centered Practices	-.043	.065	1.00
	Objective-based Practices	-.551	.056	.00
Material-based Practices	Activity-based Practices	.057	.06	1.00
	Student-centered Practices	.014	.079	1.00
	Objective-based Practices	-.495	.074	.00
Student-centered Practices	Activity-based Practices	.043	.06	1.00
	Material-based Practices	-.014	.079	1.00
	Objective-based Practices	-.508	.063	.00
Objective-based Practices	Activity-based Practices	.551	.056	.00
	Material-based Practices	.495	.074	.00
	Student-centered Practices	.508	.06	.00

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

C. Results Concerning the Difference among Perceived Dimensions of Autonomy Practices with Respect to Certain Background Variables

1) Gender

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to find out whether there is any significant mean difference among the dimensions of ELT high school teachers' practices to foster learner autonomy with respect to gender. This analysis disclosed that gender difference had no significant effect on the dimensions of fostering autonomy [Wilk's $\lambda = .94$, $F(4,113) = 1.84$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$]. Table V shows the means and standard deviations of the dimensions of fostering autonomy with respect to the gender.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on each dependent variable was conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. The univariate tests indicated non-significant differences between male and female teachers on 3 dimensions of fostering autonomy: activity-based practices [$F(1,116) = .026$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$], material-based practices [$F(1,116) = .928$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .008$], and thirdly objective-based practices [$F(1,116) = .000$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$]. On the other hand, the univariate tests revealed significant difference between male and female teachers on student-centered dimension of fostering autonomy [$F(1,116) = 6.466$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .053$]. Consistent with the results of univariate tests, comparison between means of female and male teachers revealed that mean differences were non-significant for all dimensions of fostering autonomy except student-centered practices dimension which was significant (Table VI).

TABLE V.
THE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE DIMENSIONS OF FOSTERING AUTONOMY WITH RESPECT TO THE GENDER

Dimensions	Gender	Mean	SD
Activity-based Practices	Female	3.78	.55
	Male	3.76	.39
Material-based Practices	Female	3.88	.68
	Male	3.75	.79
Student-centered Practices	Female	3.93	.57
	Male	3.65	.61
Objective-based Practices	Female	4.32	.55
	Male	4.32	.42

TABLE VI.
COMPARISONS OF MEANS OF FEMALE AND MALE ELT HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ON FOUR DIMENSIONS

Dimension	(I)Gender	(J)Gender	Mean Difference (I-J)	P
Activity-based Practices	Female	Male	.015	.872
	Male	Female	-.015	.872
Material-based Practices	Female	Male	.131	.337
	Male	Female	-.131	.337
Student-centered Practices	Female	Male	.279(*)	.01
	Male	Female	-.279(*)	.01
Objective-based Practices	Female	Male	.000	.999
	Male	Female	.000	.999

Based on estimated marginal means
 * The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
 Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

D. Results Concerning the Qualitative Data

Parallel to the quantitative data, most of the participant teachers indicated that they found themselves capable of implementing activity-based practices to foster learner autonomy in their classes via involving the students in the process of determining activities, using different and attractive activities in the classes, assigning projects and making use of technology in their classes.

Among all, 82 of the participants shared their opinions with regard to their needs while fostering learner autonomy and 37% (n=30) of the respondent teachers signified that they face with students' motivation problems and this might hinder improvement of language learning autonomy in their classes. At the same time, lack of technological devices and necessary materials are other two important factors that affect autonomy in English classes according to 25 ELT teachers (30%).

Among all, 70 of the participants shared their opinions with regard to their suggestions while fostering learner autonomy and 37% (n=26) of them expressed the importance information and communication technologies in English classes and 22 of them (32%) highlighted that course books should have supplementary materials used by means of technology to be able to implement some particular techniques such as audio-visual materials for listening or interactive modules for reading activities for the enhancement of language learning autonomy in their classes.

V. CONCLUSIONS

As parallel to the findings of Yahong (2009)'s research study through classroom observations, her own journal, her students' journals, and through interviewing with them, substantial percentage of the ELT high school teachers in this study remarked that they frequently offer variety in class activities via considering different learning styles of their students, make use of activities related to daily lives of them, use activities that will contribute to social progress of their students, and lastly give them various responsibilities (board arrangement, today's proverb, phonetics, important events, etc.) of in-class and out-of-class activities.

Although the results in the present study indicated that there was a significant difference among the means of 4 dimensions of ELT teachers' practices for fostering learner autonomy, the greatest mean difference was determined between student-centered practices dimension and objective-based practices dimension according to the repeated contrast test. This indicates that ELT high school teachers give more importance to objective-based practices than the other dimensions of practices. On the other hand, as the data did not embody a deviation from sphericity ($\epsilon = .89$), it can be concluded that fostering learner autonomy is highly affected by the dimensions of practices ELT high school teachers use to foster autonomy in their classes. The findings of the study of Nakata (2011) showed that many Japanese EFL high school teachers got the importance of autonomy, but they were not completely ready to promote it. However, ELT high school teachers in İzmir seemed to have acquired the importance of autonomy and also they had assumedly started to promote it.

The results indicated that gender has non-significant effect on 3 of the dimensions of practices which are activity-based practices, material-based practices, and thirdly objective-based practices. On the other hand, the univariate tests revealed significant difference between male and female teachers on student-centered dimension of fostering autonomy. According to the findings, compared to male ELT high school teachers, female teachers implement student-centered practices to be able to enhance learner autonomy in their classes. This might be because of the authoritarian nature of the male teachers who resist to accepting the evolving English language teaching environment which puts the students into the center in consideration of constructivism. This difference between males and female might be valid for this dimension because other dimensions were not directly bound to the human nature as much as student-centered dimension of fostering autonomy. Therefore, the findings also indicated that female and male teachers equally made use of the other three dimensions of practices to foster autonomy in their classes. Related to this finding, Evrekli, Şaşmaz-Ören, and İnel (2010) conducted a survey design study and examined student teachers' self-efficacy levels for implementing the constructivist approach in terms of gender. In terms of implementing constructive theories in the classroom, the result was found to be in favor of the female student teachers similar to the finding of the current study.

Majority of the respondents indicated positive attributes to foster learner autonomy and to develop autonomous learning environment in their classes. The strengths which were stated entirely supported the findings related to the closed-ended items in the questionnaire and provided implications about how eagerly ELT high school teachers foster learner autonomy in their classrooms.

Although the participant ELT teachers mentioned their intensive use of practices with regard to fostering learner autonomy in their classes while developing an autonomous learning environment, important number of them signified that there might be negative influences related to the learners themselves and the context in which they aim to improve autonomous language learning such as lacks of technological devices and authentic materials.

Findings of the ELT high school teachers' suggestions with regard to fostering learner autonomy in their classes while developing an autonomous learning environment revealed that they have high motivation towards promotion of learner autonomy and attempt to produce solutions for the development of autonomous learning environment as parallel with the findings of the quantitative data.

Most frequently stated solutions were:

- (1) Information and communication technology must be provided in English classrooms.
- (2) Course books should be improved by the experts and supplemented by interactive CDs.
- (3) Motivation of the students towards learning English should be enhanced.

VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings of the study according to the quantitative data indicated that the dimensions of the practices to foster learner autonomy in English classes are totally parallel to the four elements of curriculum implementation process as previously mentioned and these four dimensions are almost equally used by ELT high school teachers to a considerable extent. However, objective-based practices are implemented more than the other types of practices to foster autonomy as a result of a paired comparison. Another significant result was that female ELT high school teachers give more importance to the student-centered practices more than males do to be able to foster learner autonomy in their classes. This finding was interrelated to the reason stemming from the authoritarian nature of the male teachers which also implies the motherly nature of the female teachers that puts the students into the center.

On the other hand, qualitative data indicated that ELT high school teachers have a contributive approach towards the enhancement of learner autonomy and also have lots of problems stemming from motivation level of the students, lack of capabilities of the language learning environments, and teacher-administration-headquarters relations.

The design of the study made it possible for the researchers to consider two main implications for practice: promotion of autonomous learning environment and adjustments in ELT curriculum to promote autonomous learning. In the process of fostering learner autonomy in language learning, learner choice is essential. In consequence, developing an autonomous learning environment, which provides students with opportunities to make decisions on the objectives and content of the lesson, plan, observe, and evaluate their learning process.

At this point, language learning context is very important and it is supposed to employ all the constituents such as curriculum, administration, teachers, learners, resources, effectively and in an ideal order. For instance, Dörnyei (1998) identified inadequate school facilities such as too big groups of classes and frequent change of teachers as demotivating factors in language learning environment. At the same time, ELT teachers identified some other problems that hinder fostering learner autonomy in their classes as: (1) lack of information and communication technology in English classes, (2) demotivating approach of the administration towards development of autonomous learning environment, (3) inefficiency of the course books, (4) lack of motivation of the students towards English language teaching, etc. Together with the other problems mentioned before, all the hindrances deriving from external factors to the development of autonomous learning environment should be minimized through collaborative works of the stakeholders.

As stated by Benson (2001) there has been positive consequences of the experiments in which the learner was encouraged to take a certain amount of control over the planning and assessment of classroom learning and these experiments have also shown that learners are able to exercise control over these aspects of their learning on condition that they are provided with the opportunity to do so together with the necessary guidance. According to the major findings of this study, it was identified that ELT high school teachers put their objectives into practice with regard to development of autonomous language learning environment in their classroom settings in spite of external obstructions. On the other hand, they have many expectations to improvement of conditions in general to be able to achieve their aims related to effective teaching of English language. These expectations should be shared by the curricularists, administrators, learners, and even by the parents as well.

Furthermore, ELT high school teachers in this study described their particular strengths to form an autonomous language learning environment such as inclusion of the students into the process of determining objectives of the lesson, making use of contemporary language teaching methods and techniques which are beneficial for the improvement of metacognitive skills of the students, and utilizing variety of activities and resources according to different learning styles of the students to be able to promote their motivation towards learning English language. These strengths of the teachers are important since they indicate that the on-going circumstances in ELT classrooms are on behalf of the improvement of an autonomous learning environment. Thus, in-service training programs can be very beneficial for

fostering autonomy in language learning through informing the ELT teachers about the most effective strategies to foster autonomy and technology use in language teaching.

Thirdly, the participant ELT teachers' needs to develop autonomous learning environment and their suggestions to improve the concept should be taken into consideration by the authorities and necessary amendments should be put into practice. For instance, as a new approach to foreign language learning and foreign language teaching, autonomous learning highlights the learners' individual and social awareness of the learning process. Accordingly, the curricularists will need to re-examine the course objectives, course designs, language learning materials, and supplementary resources with the aim of fostering autonomous learning. Acting upon the analysis, research will be conducted to find out the basic principles and aspects of autonomous learning from the perspectives of both teachers and students through observation or action research. After that, discussions will be held to determine what could be done in accordance with the data obtained from the teachers. As a result, these stages will be integrated into curriculum development.

VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this part recommendations for future researchers are presented.

1. In the present study the data were gathered only from ELT high school teachers, a further study can be carried out via collecting data from ELT elementary school teachers or from the teachers at both levels, which might give a better idea for the curriculum members when designing new programs to develop autonomous learning.

2. A further research can be conducted as a case study in school settings by which researchers can gather data from various data sources such as biographical or end-of-course questionnaires, needs analysis, student diaries and portfolios. In this way, a more detailed depiction of how learners receive autonomous language learning strategies and develop their decision-making skills of objectives, activities, materials, and evaluation can be examined.

3. A further research can be conducted as a case study in school settings by which researchers can gather data through their observations of the practices which are indicated to be done by ELT high school teachers with regard to fostering learner autonomy while developing an autonomous learning environment.

APPENDIX A. DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANT ELT HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS (N=118)

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender (N=118)		
Male	52	44.06
Female	66	55.94
Age (N=118)		
25-30	33	27.96
31-40	29	24.57
41-50	44	37.28
51-57	12	10.16
Academic Status (N=118)		
Bachelor Degree	90	76.27
Master's Degree	27	22.88
Doctoral Degree	1	.8
Faculty graduated from (N=118)		
ELT	92	78
English/American Literature	22	18.6
English Linguistics	1	.8
Others	3	2.5
Master Program graduate (n=27)		
Educational Administration and Planning	8	29.62
Curriculum and Instruction	7	25.92
ELT	6	22.22
American Language and Literature	1	3.70
English Literature	1	3.70
International Relations	2	7.40
Oral Skills	1	3.70
Teaching Turkish to Foreigners	1	3.70
Communication	1	3.70
PhD Program graduate (n=1)		
Educational Administration and Planning	1	100
Field Status (N=118)		
Teacher	100	84.74
Expert Teacher	9	7.62
Senior Expert Teacher	5	4.23
Head Teacher	1	.8
Administrator	3	2.5
Type of School (N=118)		
State	103	87.3
Private	15	12.7
School Category (N=118)		

General High School	10	8.5
Anatolian High School	73	61.9
Vocational and Technical High School	13	11
Anatolian Vocational and Technical High School	14	11.9
Science High School	4	3.4
Others	4	3.4
Teaching Experience (N=118)		
1-9 years	35	29.66
10-19 years	36	30.50
20-29 years	43	36.44
30-36 years	4	3.38
Number of classes (N=118)		
1 class	26	22
2 classes	12	10.16
3 classes	28	23.72
4 classes	26	22
5 classes	14	11.86
6-10 classes	12	10.16
Number of students for each teacher (N=118)		
19-23 students	20	16.94
40-100 students	45	38.13
202-207 students	53	44.91
Weekly class hours (N=118)		
4-19 hours	34	28.81
20 hours	24	20.33
21-28 hours	60	50.8
Number of different course books used (N=118)		
1 course-book	91	77.11
2 course books	21	17.79
3 course books	5	4.23
4 course books	1	.8
Number of times attended in-service training in last 3 years (N=84)		
1 training	18	21.42
2 trainings	27	32.14
3 trainings	19	22.61
5-25 trainings	20	23.80
Field of in-service training attended (N=84)		
ELT	66	78.57
Computer Practices	23	27.38
Others	12	14.28

N for each item may vary due to missing responses

APPENDIX B. FACTOR LOADING OBTAINED VIA PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS WITH VARIMAX ROTATION

<i>Items of the Questionnaire</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>D2</i>	<i>D3</i>	<i>D4</i>
16. I use different activities to my students' enhancement of time management in my classes.	.700	.173	.253	.025
9. I assign individual projects (poster, brochure, essay, presentation, etc.) to my students.	.642	.115	-.081	.209
12. I make my students do groupwork as out-of-class activities.	.611	.027	.190	-.118
19. I use activities that will contribute to social progress of my students.	.597	.346	-.018	-.124
31. I regularly have private talks with my students for the evaluation of their own academic progression.	.589	-.027	.055	.189
22. I give my students various responsibilities (board arrangement, today's proverb, phonetics, important events, etc.) of in-class and out-of-class activities.	.551	-.088	-.212	.113
14. I make adaptations to foster learner autonomy by using different activities in my classes.	.535	.172	.211	.075
11. I make my students do groupwork as in-class activities.	.526	.036	-.193	-.113
30. I make use of peer evaluation in class activities.	.506	-.011	-.077	.222
13. I make my students have their own portfolio.	.490	.137	.117	-.077
17. I offer variety in class activities via considering different learning styles of my students.	.487	.306	.031	.098
15. I encourage my students to make their own interpretations in class activities.	.473	.195	.337	.115
7. I involve my students in the process of determining in-class activities.	.465	.097	.268	-.011
18. I use activities that are related to daily lives of my students.	.416	.403	.011	-.143

26. I use information and communication technology (computer, internet, delinescope, etc.) effectively in my classes.	-.054	.859	.067	.067
27. I establish an environment in which my students use information and communication technology (computer, internet, delinescope, etc.).	-.004	.769	.052	.111
28. I encourage my students to use information and communication technology (computer, internet, delinescope, etc.) outside the class.	.221	.578	-.009	.187
20. I use activities that will contribute to cultural development of my students.	.391	.524	.204	-.263
25. I prepare authentic materials according to the observable needs of the students.	.322	.499	.059	.166
4. I encourage my students to determine their own needs for the acquisition of English Language.	.019	.009	.756	-.068
5. I encourage my students to determine their own learning styles for the acquisition of English Language.	.096	-.042	.738	-.040
3. I encourage my students to set their own objectives.	-.064	.066	.624	.405
6. I encourage my students to determine contents they need to learn for the acquisition of English Language.	-.003	.096	.606	.185
2. I take my students' opinions into consideration while determining objectives of the lesson.	.118	.060	.516	.070
1. I clearly explain the general objectives of the lesson at the beginning of the term.	.012	.038	.087	.743
8. I emphasize that the responsibility of learning belongs to the students themselves in my classes.	-.040	-.017	.178	.724
32. I inform my students about the fact that the teaching process of the lesson is interoperated among parents, colleagues, administrators, and students.	.348	.070	.059	.577
24. I guide my students to get the most out of the course book.	.096	.240	.003	.536

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Investigating Chinese College Learners' Use of Frequency Adverbs: A Corpus-based Approach*

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Abstract—The present study aims at finding out the differences between Chinese college English learners and the native speakers with regard to the use of frequency adverbs. This paper, based on corpus linguistics, is intended to examine how Chinese college English learners use the 20 most frequently used frequency adverbs, or TTFAs, the top twenty frequency adverbs in their written and spoken English and how they use these TTFAs differently from the way native speakers use them as recorded in the native speakers' corpora. From the research result, we can find that Chinese college learners tend to overuse and underuse certain TTFAs in their speech and writing. The overusing tendency is slightly stronger than the underusing tendency in both speaking and writing. The use of TTFAs is found to be problematic for Chinese college English learners. Compared with the native speakers, Chinese college learners seem to have a multifold problem. From the perspective of language learning, the research findings shed light on the problems for the learners in their vocabulary acquisition and EFL learning. Chinese college learners should try to enlarge their vocabulary and vary their choice of TTFAs in their writing and speaking. At the same time, they also should develop a register-awareness in choices of frequency adverbs.

Index Terms—frequency adverb, corpus, TTFAs, use

I. INTRODUCTION

Frequency adverbs are a category of adverbs which can tell us how often something happens, happened or will happen (Wen and Ting, 2003). Spoken and written English texts contain large quantities of frequency adverbs such as “often”, “never”, “always”, “sometimes” and etc. A major part of English adverbs as they belong to, frequency adverbs play an extremely important role in both oral and written communication. Through using frequency adverbs, the language user can express how often something is, was or will be the case (Biber et al., 2000). More usually, however, language users are concerned with frequency adverbs with respect to a specified or implied span of time and refer them to “the rate of occurrences per unit of time” with inexplicit numerical values (Leech & Svartvik, 1994).

A number of studies (such as Wen and Ting, 2003; Odlin, 1989; 2001; Leech et al., 2001) have shown that the use of frequency adverbs is problematic for language users, in particular for foreign language learners. However, these studies did not compare Chinese college English learners' use of frequency adverbs between different registers such as speech and writing, nor did they make a systematic comparison between Chinese college English learners and the native speakers with regard to the use of frequency adverbs. This paper, based on corpus linguistics, is intended to examine how Chinese college English learners use the 20 most frequently used frequency adverbs, or TTFAs, the top twenty frequency adverbs (Leech, et al. 2001; cited in Wen and Ting, 2003) in their written and spoken English and how they use these TTFAs differently from the way native speakers use them as recorded in the native speakers' corpora. The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

- (1) Compared with the native speakers, do Chinese college English learners overuse or underuse frequency adverbs?
- (2) Do they overuse or underuse frequency adverbs differently across spoken-register and written-register?
- (3) Do they demonstrate a similar pattern of writing-speaking difference as the native speakers in the use of frequency adverbs? If not, what are the differences?
- (4) For such differences, can we find some reasons from different aspects such as culture, society and education?

II. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The computer learner corpora used in this study included a written English corpus, 474,511 words of essay writing by college English learners from the Chinese Learner English Corpus (CLEC) developed by Gui and Yang (2003), and the College Learners' Spoken English Corpus (COLSEC), which funded by the Chinese National Social Science Research Foundation and completed in the early 2004. CLEC and COLSEC were designed to be sister corpora. The native speaker control corpora used in this study are Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS), a sub-corpus of International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE), which contains 181,879-word essays written by British and American

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students and a spoken English corpus, LONDON-LUND Corpus. Table I provides detailed information of the four corpora used in this study. We use WordSmith Tools (Scot, 1998) and PowerConc (Liang et al. 2013) to find the occurrence frequencies of each TFA in the four corpora respectively and then to compare them. Since the sizes of the four corpora are different, all the raw counts are computed into normalized frequencies (occurrences per 1,000,000 words).

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE DATA OF LEARNERS' CORPORA AND NATIVE SPEAKER'S CORPORA

Type of corpus		Size of the corpus	Total words
The learner corpora	CLEC (ST3, ST4)	474,511	1,182,972
	COLSEC	708,461	
The control corpora	LOCNESS	181,879	715,142
	LONDON-LUND	533,245	

III. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

A. Normalized Frequencies of TTFAs in Learner Corpora

The first research question of this study concerns the general tendency of the use of TTFAs by Chinese college English learners. Figure 1 brings out a significant difference between Chinese college students and the native speakers with regard to the use of TTFAs. All together, we studied 20 frequency adverbs in this study. There are only 3 frequency adverbs that Chinese learners and the native speakers use similarly. The rate of similarity is 15%. However, Chinese college learners use 85% of the TTFAs differently with the native speakers. Among them, overuse occupies 45%, underuse for 40% respectively. From the table II we can see that in the learner corpora, there are 8103 occurrences of the TTFAs per million words while in the control corpora, there are only 4314 occurrences per million tokens. Chinese college learners use 3789 frequency adverbs more than the native speakers. Table II also shows us that Chinese college English learners not only overuse (9) more TTFAs than they underuse (8) them, but the overusing tendency is much stronger than the underusing tendency. The difference in average normalized frequency between the two corpora is far greater in the overused TTFAs (473 occurrences) than in the underused ones (57 occurrences).

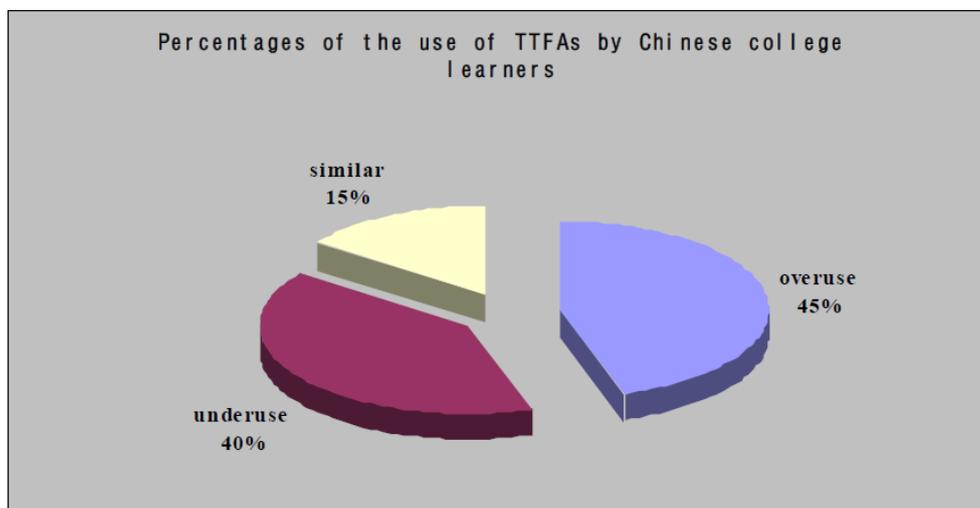


Figure 1: Pie chart of TTFAs used by Chinese college learners

TABLE II.
AN OVERALL COMPARISON BETWEEN THE LEARNERS' CORPORA AND THE CONTROL CORPORA

	TTFAS	The learner corpora	The control corpora	Difference	Tendencies	Degree of overuse or underuse
1	always	1910	799	1111	overuse	9 overused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 473
2	often	1723	470	1253	overuse	
3	sometimes	1094	116	978	overuse	
4	usually	727	161	566	overuse	
5	never	666	726	-60	underuse	
6	ever	565	605	-40	underuse	
7	once	531	509	22	overuse	
8	constantly	206	117	89	overuse	
9	frequently	199	24	175	overuse		Similar 3
10	generally	103	114	-11	underuse	
11	hardly	72	83	-11	underuse	8 underused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 57
12	in general	64	42	22	overuse	
13	regularly	61	24	37	overuse	
14	mostly	56	60	-4	similar	
15	no longer	35	246	-211	underuse	
16	twice	28	73	-45	underuse	
17	increasingly	23	77	-54	underuse	
18	normally	17	41	-24	underuse	
19	occasionally	14	9	5	similar	
20	rarely	9	18	-9	similar	
Average normalized frequency		8103	4314	3789		

B. Comparison of Chinese Learners' Use of TTFAs with the Native Speakers' in Their Writing

Table III brings us the fact that Chinese learners tend to use more TTFAs in their writing. In the CLEC, the average normalized frequency of TTFAs is 267. However, there are only 155 occurrences of TTFAs in the LOCNESS. Chinese college learners use 112 frequency adverbs more than the native speakers. The difference is significant. But through the close examination of the normalized frequency difference in each TFA in the CLEC and LOCNESS, we can find both overuse and underuse of TTFAs exist in Chinese college learners' English writing. Chinese college learners not only overuse more TTFAs (11 TTFAs) than they underuse them (5 TTFAs), but the overusing tendency is much stronger than the underusing tendency because the difference in average normalized frequency in the overused TTFAs (237 occurrences per million words) between CLEC and LOCNESS is much greater than that in the underused TTFAs (71 occurrences per million words).

TABLE III.
A COMPARISON BETWEEN CLEC AND LOCNESS

	TTFAs	CLEC	LOCNESS	Difference	Degree of overuse or underuse
1	often	1271	423	848	11 overused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 237
2	always	1206	506	700	
3	sometimes	398	93	305	
4	usually	432	137	295	
5	frequently	169	22	147	
6	ever	398	269	129	
7	constantly	202	115	87	
8	never	485	445	40	
9	once	417	396	21	
10	in general	57	38	19	
11	regularly	27	16	11	
12	occasionally	13	5	8	Similar 4
13	hardly	65	66	-1	
14	mostly	48	49	-1	
15	rarely	8	16	-8	
16	normally	6	22	-16	
17	generally	72	110	-38	5 underused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 71
18	twice	21	60	-39	
19	increasingly	19	77	-58	
20	no longer	27	231	-204	
Average normalized frequency		267	155	112	

C. Comparison of Chinese Learners' Use of TTFAs with the Native Speakers' in Their Speaking

Table IV shows how Chinese college learners overuse and underuse TTFAs in their speech. In the learners' spoken corpus COLSEC, there are 138 occurrences of TTFAs per million words, but in the native speakers' spoken corpus LUND there are only 61 occurrences per million words. Chinese college learners used 77 TTFAs more than the native speakers in one-million-word speaking. The difference exists, but not significant as that in their writing. Chinese college learners overuse 7 TTFAs and underuse 3 ones. There are 10 TTFAs with similar frequencies to the native speakers. As

in their writing, Chinese college learners tend to overuse more TTFAs than they underuse them. Overusing tendency (average normalized frequency difference is 263) is slightly stronger than the underusing tendency (average normalized frequency difference is 93).

TABLE IV.
A COMPARISON BETWEEN COLSEC AND LUND

	TTFAs	COLSEC	LUND	Difference	Degree of overuse or underuse
1	sometimes	696	23	673	7 overused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 263
2	always	704	293	411	
3	often	452	47	405	
4	usually	295	24	271	
5	frequently	30	2	28	
6	generally	31	4	27	
7	regularly	34	8	26	
8	increasingly	4	0	4	Similar 10
9	in general	7	4	3	
10	constantly	4	2	2	
11	once	114	113	1	
12	rarely	1	2	-1	
13	mostly	8	11	-3	
14	occasionally	1	4	-3	
15	twice	7	13	-6	
16	no longer	8	15	-7	
17	normally	11	19	-8	
18	hardly	7	17	-10	3 underused TTFAs Average normalized frequency difference 93
19	never	181	281	-100	
20	ever	167	336	-169	
Average normalized frequency		138	61	77	

D. Comparison of Chinese College Learners' Use of TTFAs in Their Writing and Speaking

Table V is a summary of the difference between the use of TTFAs by Chinese college English learners and the native speakers. In CLEC, Chinese learners overuse 11 TTFAs per million words. The average normalized frequency difference is 237. While in COLSEC, though Chinese college learners overuse 7 TTFAs per million tokens and the number is less than that in CLEC, the average normalized frequency difference is 263. It indicates that the overusing tendency is much stronger in speech than in writing. Similarly, in terms of the underusing tendency, Chinese college learners underuse 5 TTFAs in one-million-word writing and only 3 TTFAs in the same length speaking. But the average normalized frequency difference in COLSEC is 93. The underusing tendency of Chinese college learners in speaking is stronger than that in writing. In CLEC, Chinese college learners use 4 TTFAs similarly with the native speakers. While in COLSEC, there are 10 TTFAs with the same occurrences. But in COLSEC, the average normalized frequency difference (-18) is much bigger than that in CLEC. Generally speaking, Chinese college learners differ more from the native speakers in speaking than they do in writing with regard to the use of TTFAs.

TABLE V.
A COMPARISON OF TWO SETS OF FREQUENCY DIFFERENCES

		CLEC-LOCNESS	COLSEC-LUND
Overuse	Number of TTFAs	11	7
	Average normalized frequency difference	237	263
Underuse	Number of TTFAs	5	3
	Average normalized frequency difference	71	93
Similar	Number of TTFAs	4	10
	Average normalized frequency difference	-2	-18

E. Writing-speaking Differences of TTFA Use in Chinese Learners' Corpora and the Native Speakers' Corpora

Table VI is a detailed description of the writing-speaking difference of TTFA use both in Chinese learners' corpora and the native speakers' corpora. We can find that the difference in learners' corpora (129) and the native speakers' corpora (50) are all positive. That is to say, both Chinese college learners and the native speakers use more TTFAs in writing than they do in their speaking. However, the average writing-speaking difference of the TTFA use by Chinese college learners is much bigger than that by the native speakers (129>50). We also can find the much more visualized difference from figure 2. These two groups show us two totally different writing-speaking difference patterns.

TABLE VI.
A COMPARISON OF REGISTER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LEARNERS' CORPORA AND THE NATIVE SPEAKERS' CORPORA

	TTFAs	Difference LOCNESS-LUND		TTFAs	Difference CLEC-COLSEC
1	often	376	1	never	819
2	once	283	2	often	502
3	no longer	216	3	usually	304
4	always	213	4	once	303
5	never	164	5	normally	231
6	usually	113	6	sometimes	198
7	constantly	113	7	rarely	139
8	generally	106	8	always	137
9	increasingly	77	9	constantly	58
10	sometimes	70	10	hardly	50
11	hardly	49	11	mostly	41
12	twice	47	12	increasingly	40
13	mostly	38	13	generally	19
14	in general	34	14	occasionally	15
15	frequently	20	15	regularly	14
16	rarely	14	16	in general	12
17	regularly	8	17	frequently	7
18	normally	3	18	ever	-5
19	occasionally	1	19	twice	-7
20	ever	-67	20	no longer	-298
Average difference		50	Average difference		129

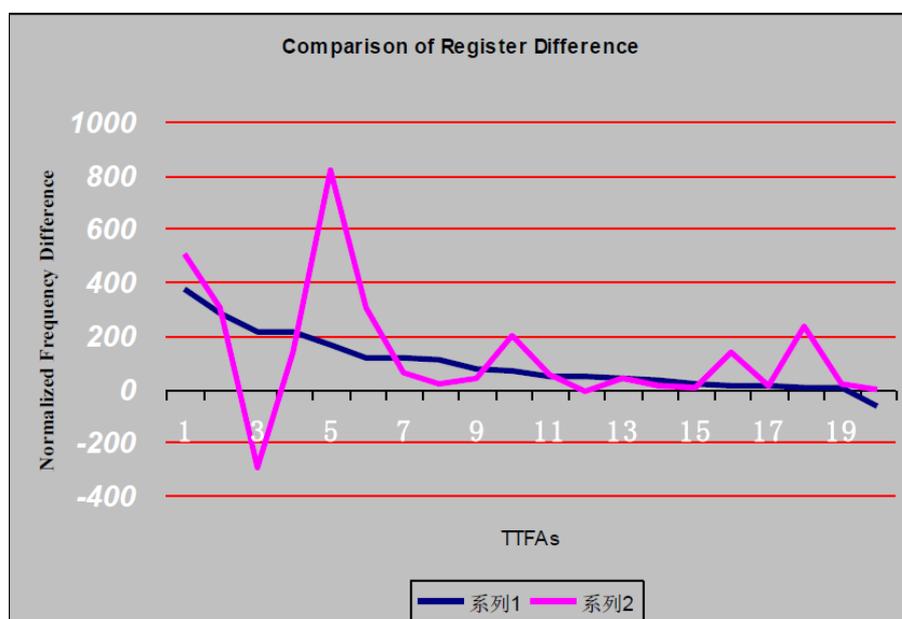


Figure 2: Register differences of Chinese learners and the native speakers

Notes: 系列 1 indicates learners' writing-speaking differences of each TTFAs. 系列 2 stands for the writing-speaking difference of each TTFAs of the native speakers. On X axis, from 1 to 20, the sequence of TTFAs is often, once, no longer, always, never, usually, constantly, generally, increasingly, sometimes, hardly, twice, mostly, in general, frequently, rarely, regularly, normally, occasionally and ever.

F. Comparison of Register Difference of TTFAs Used by the Learners and the Native Speakers

Table VII is a comparison of the differences of TTFAs use between Chinese college learners and the native speakers with regard to their registers. As it shows, most of the TTFAs are written-register sensitive. On the use of the TTFAs, both Chinese college learners and the native speakers think that most of them are written-register sensitive, only 1 for spoken-register sensitive and 3 for register neutral. However, a close examination of table VII shows the complexities of the picture. Chinese college learners have a significant register difference with the native speakers on the use of TTFAs. In the native speakers' corpora, "ever" is spoken-register sensitive; but for Chinese college learners, "no longer" is spoken-register sensitive; in the learners' corpora, "regularly", "normally", "occasionally" are written-register sensitive, but they are register neutral in the native speakers' corpora. These findings tell us that Chinese college learners still do not have clear register awareness in their choice of TTFAs.

TABLE VII.
REGISTER DIFFERENCE OF TTFA USE IN LEARNERS' CORPORA AND THE NATIVE SPEAKERS' CORPORA

	Learners' corpora		Native speakers' corpora	
	Number	TTFAs	Number	TTFAs
Spoken-register	1	<u>no longer</u>	1	ever
Written-register sensitive	16	never, often, usually, once, <u>normally</u> , sometimes, rarely, always, constantly, hardly, mostly, increasingly, <u>generally</u> , occasionally, <u>regularly</u> , in general.	16	often, once, no longer, always, never, usually, constantly, generally, increasingly, sometimes, hardly, twice, mostly, in general, frequently, rarely.
Register neutral	3	<u>frequently</u> , <u>ever</u> , <u>twice</u>	3	Regularly, normally occasionally

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

From the above study, it is found that Chinese college learners tend to overuse and underuse certain TTFAs in their speech and writing. Generally speaking, the overusing tendency is slightly stronger than the underusing tendency in both speaking and writing (see Table II and Figure 1). The overusing tendency is more marked in Chinese learners' writing than in their speaking according to the normalized frequencies of TTFAs (see Table V). Chinese college English learners overuse certain TTFAs but underuse some of them (see Table III and Table IV). They demonstrate a totally different pattern of speaking-writing difference with the native speakers (see Figure 2). Chinese learners display a general tendency to use more TTFAs in their writing (see Table VI). In sum, the use of TTFAs is found to be problematic for Chinese college English learners. Compared with the native speakers, they seem to have a multifold problem.

It's very hard for us to find the exact reasons why there is a so big difference between Chinese college learners and the native speakers with regard to the use of TTFAs. We can only give some possible factors that affect Chinese learners' choice of TTFAs. Firstly, Chinese college learners have a much smaller vocabulary than the native speakers. They try to overuse what they are familiar with, and to underuse even do not use what they are not. Secondly, the reasons why some TTFAs are overused by Chinese learners maybe come down to the Chinese language transfer. There are many high frequency words in Chinese which have the similar meanings with certain TTFAs, such as "often", "always", "usually", "never" and etc. Comparatively, some words are few. So Chinese learners tend to overuse the former, but underuse the latter. Thirdly, Chinese learners seem to lack a register-awareness, which reflects in their tendency to use many written-register-sensitive words such as "no longer" in their speaking. Conversely, they use spoken-register-sensitive word "ever" as register neutral. Finally, Chinese college English learners lack a full understanding of the semantic properties of some frequency adverbs, especially those with similar meaning.

V. CONCLUSION

From the perspective of language learning, the research findings shed light on the problems for the Chinese College English learners in their vocabulary acquisition and EFL learning. To solve the problems, several suggestions have been provided: Firstly, Chinese college learners should learn to differentiate the choices of frequency adverbs and try to acquire these words in a direct manner. Secondly, Chinese college English learners should place more emphasis on the restrictions imposed on certain frequency adverbs and improve semantic understanding of them. Thirdly, exposure to a greater range of registers to improve register awareness has been suggested. Finally, Chinese college English Learners should be aware that learning the native English writing and speaking conventions is inextricable from learning to write and speak. Put it in a simple way, Chinese college English learners can try their best to vary the choice of TTFAs both in their writing and speaking. At the same time, they also should develop a register-awareness in choices of frequency adverbs in their speaking and writing.

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Using Self-regulation to Enhance EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—This study was an attempt to investigate the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 149 Iranian EFL language learners studying at Islamic Azad Universities of Qazvin and Tehran (North, and Science and Research branches) were selected from a total number of 200 based on their performance on TOEFL PBT test and randomly put into two experimental and control groups. The experimental group received direct teaching along with task-based instruction on self-regulation in reading in ten sessions. The tasks/activities were designed based on self-regulation strategies proposed by Zimmerman (1989). The results showed the rejection of the null hypothesis, thus concluding that self-regulation has a significant effect on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. This investigation has some implications for language programs for ESP/EAP purposes in Iran.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, self-regulated learning, self-regulation strategies, Iranian EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty years, the concept of learning strategy has been influential in both language learning and teaching. Generally it is believed that learners with strategic knowledge of language learning become more efficient and flexible, thus they can acquire a language more easily. However learning strategies are not theoretically and operationally well-defined. Theoretically, various terminology and classifications have been used to refer to learning strategies (such as O'mally & Chamot, 1990). Operationally, the psychometric properties of the assessment instruments measuring learning strategies are in question (Dornyei, 2005; Tseng, Dornyei & Schmitt, 2006; Ellis, 1997; Gu, 2005). To overcome some weaknesses, scholars turned to a related and new concept, self-regulation. However, according to Dornyei (2005), this does not mean that scholars have developed second thoughts about the benefits of learning strategies. The effectiveness of one's own learning is seen as more important than ever before. The new concept of self-regulation "offered a broader perspective than the previous focus on learning strategies" (p. 190). That is, there is a shift from "the product (strategies) to the process (self-regulation)" (p.191). In addition self-regulation is a more dynamic concept than learning strategy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-regulated Learning

In both educational psychology and language education, extensive research effort has been made to teach students how to learn. Since the 1970s, due to the findings in cognitive science, the research concern in L2 learning and teaching has shifted from methods of teaching to individual differences. Thus, investigating language learning strategies has become a featured research area in L2 studies. Comparing the research on language learning strategies in second language acquisition and self-regulated learning in educational psychology, scholars have suggested that further research in language study can be enriched through self-regulated learning (Dornyei, 2005; Ping, 2012).

According to Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory (SCT), self-regulation is not only determined by personal processes, but also influenced by environmental and behavioral factors in mutual ways. Based on the social cognitive learning theory, Zimmerman (1989) defines self-regulation as the degree to which students are "metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process" (p.1). Zimmerman adds that this definition implies reciprocal relationship among three processes of personal, behavioral, and environmental (see Figure 1). Therefore, developing strategies to control person, behavior, and environment help students to be self-regulated in learning.

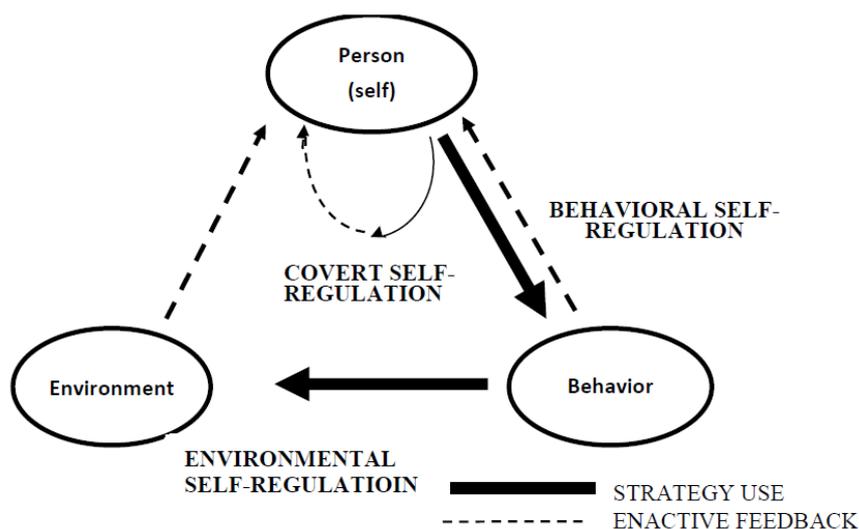


Figure 1. A triadic analysis of self-regulated functioning (Zimmerman, 1989, p. 3)

Personal influences: There are four personal influences: students’ knowledge, metacognitive processes, goals, and affect. As far as students’ knowledge is concerned, a distinction is made between three types of knowledge: declarative, procedural, and conditional. Declarative knowledge refers to knowledge about specific learning strategies. Procedural knowledge is knowledge of how to use these strategies, and conditional knowledge is the knowledge of when and why strategies are effective.

To Zimmerman, metacognitive decision-making processes involve two levels of planning and controlling. At a general level of self-regulation, planning involves decisional processes for selecting or changing self-regulation strategies. At a specific level, control processes guide monitoring of strategic and nonstrategic responses. According to this analysis, “students’ effectiveness in planning and controlling their use of personal, behavioral and environmental strategies to learn is one of the most visible signs of their degree of self-regulation” (p. 6)

Taking the concept of goals into account, Zimmerman states that goals should be set on the basis of their proximity in time, referred to as proximal goal setting. Paris and Winogard (2011) assert that when goals are set by others, behavior is obedient rather than self-directed. They point out the differences between proximal vs. distal goals, attainable vs. unattainable goals, and performance vs. mastery goals. According to Lapan (2010) and Torrano and Torres (2004), numerous studies have shown that learners who adopt mastery goals were more successful than those learners with performance goals. Mastery goals aim at expanding one’s understanding of a subject or improving one’s skills. On the other hand, performance goals target at avoiding inferiority or avoiding looking bad in relation to peers.

Affective states can also influence self-regulated learning. Zimmerman claims that evidence shows anxiety can, for example, impede different metacognitive processes, particularly control processes, and this, in turn, can inhibit setting long-term goals. He further adds that to social cognitive theorists, self-efficacy is a key variable affecting self-regulating learning because it is related to two key factors of learning strategy use and self-monitoring. Self-efficacy relates to a learner’s beliefs about his or her capabilities to learn or to perform a task. Crozier (1997) and Torrano and Torres (2004) assert that the concept of self-efficacy, as proposed by Bandura (1989), refers to “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance. It is concerned not with the skills one has but with the judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses” (Crozier, 1997, p. 168). Lapan (2010) asserts “self-regulated learners are less likely to attribute poor performance to ability. They are more likely to understand poor performance as being due to insufficient effort or to the implementation of ineffective strategies” (p. 3).

Behavioral influences: According to Zimmerman (1989), there are three classes of student behavioral responses which are of relevance to the analysis of self-regulated learning: self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction. Each of these classes is influenced by personal processes, as well as environmental processes. In addition, the actions in these classes are observable, teachable, and interactive.

Self-observation refers to systematically monitoring one’s own performance. “Observing oneself can provide information about how well one is progressing toward one’s goals” (Zimmerman, p. 7). Zimmerman adds that two common behavioral methods of self-observation are reporting and recording of one’s actions and reactions.

Self-judgment refers to “students’ responses that involve systematically comparing their performance with a standard or goal” (p.7). Standards or goals may include social norms or temporal criteria, such as earlier performance or tests. Two common ways of self-judgment are checking and rating. Re-examining one’s answers to a leaning problem and rating one’s answer in relation to those of others or an answer sheet are two examples of checking and rating procedures respectively.

The third class of student self-regulated response is self-reaction to one's performance. Zimmerman mentions three interdependent classes of self-reaction strategies, which are derived from SCT. The first one is behavioral self-reaction strategies by which students try to optimize their learning responses. Using such strategies as self-praise or self-criticism is a case in point. The second class of reaction strategies are personal by which students seek to enhance their personal processes, such as goal setting or memorizing. Environmental self-reaction strategies are the third class by which students try to improve their learning environment. Structuring one's environment and asking for help are, according to Zimmerman, two common environmental self-reaction strategies.

Environmental influences: Social cognitive theorists have paid particular attention to the impact of social experience and environment on human functioning and learning. Zimmerman mentions five environmental influences which are assumed to be reciprocally interactive with personal and behavioral influences.

Modeling is one type of environmental influences, which are given particular emphasis in SCT, and has effect on self-regulation. Modeling of affective coping strategies is an example in this regard.

According to SCT, verbal persuasion is another important form of environmental influences; however, Zimmerman states that this type of social experience is less effective because it depends on learners' level of verbal comprehension, but if combined with other forms of environmental experiences, it can be a powerful medium for conveying a wide variety of skills. Verbal elaboration of a manipulation sequence is an example of verbal persuasion.

Direct assistance from others, like seeking help from teachers regarding an assignment, and using symbolic forms of information, such as pictures, diagrams, and formulas are two other sources of social support.

The final type of environmental influence is the structure of the learning context. According to SCT, learning is highly dependent on the context, such as task or setting. Changing the difficulty level of a task or changing a noisy academic setting to a quiet one are two cases in point.

Various models have been proposed for self-regulated learning. Two mostly referred are the Zimmerman (2002) model and the Pintrich (2004) model. However, in this study, the Zimmerman model has been used.

The Zimmerman model: Zimmerman describes self-regulated learning as an open and cyclical process on the part of the learner that occurs in three main phases: forethought, performance/volitional control, and self-reflection. Each phase is divided into subcategories. As seen in Figure 2 the forethought phase is the planning phase which precedes learning. This leads to planning which, in turn, combines with learners' motivational beliefs. The second phase is performance phase during which learners employ a variety of strategies which help them to maximize their academic performance. In addition, self-regulated learners observe different aspects of their performance. In the third phase, self-reflection, judgments are made about one's actions. As mentioned earlier, these phases are considered cyclical. The forethought phase prepares the student for learning and influences the performance phase. This in turn affects the processes of the self-reflection phase which interact with the next forethought phase. Each phase can facilitate or hinder the subsequent phase of the cycle (Zimmerman, 2002).

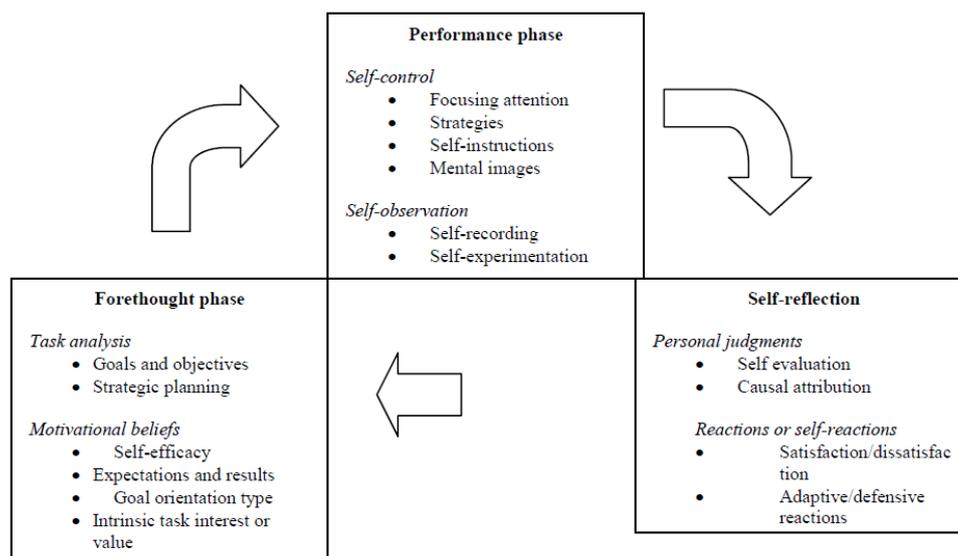


Figure 2. The Zimmerman model's of self-regulated learning cycle (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 67)

Zimmerman (2002) explains that self-regulated learning is not only a simple personal trait that learners either possess or lack, but it consists of the selective use of specific processes personally adapted to each learning task. He adds that self-regulated component skills are as follows:

(a) setting specific proximal *goals* for oneself, (b) adopting powerful *strategies* for attaining the goals, (c) *monitoring* one's performance selectively for signs of progress, (d) *restructuring* one's physical and social context to make it

compatible with one's goals, (e) managing one's *time use* efficiently, (f) *self-evaluating* one's methods, (g) *attributing* causation to results, and (h) *adapting* future methods. (p. 66)

Zimmerman (1990) defines self-regulated learning strategies as "actions and processes directed at acquisition of information or skills that involve agency, purpose, and instrumentality perceptions by learners" (p. 5). To be more specific, Zimmerman and Martinez (1986, cited in Zimmerman, 1989) found fourteen types of self-regulated learning strategies. The main categories are listed below:

1. Self-evaluating
2. Organizing and transforming
3. Goal-setting and planning
4. Seeking information
5. Keeping records and monitoring
6. Environmental structuring
7. Self-consequating
8. Rehearsing and memorizing
- 9-11. Seeking social assistance
- 12-14. Reviewing records

According to Cho (2010) and Torrano and Torres (2004) studies show that self-regulated learners are active and they generally make use of the following activities:

1. Cognitive activities: rehearsal, elaboration, and organization
2. Metacognitive activities: goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation
3. Recourse management activities: time and effort management, seeking help from others, and structuring environment
4. Affective activities: self-efficacy and volition (will power to accomplish certain jobs)

Self-regulated learners are not only supposed to succeed academically but to develop long-life learning skills. Enhancing these skills is seen as a major function of education (Zimmerman, 2002). Studies show that learners do not learn self-regulated strategies automatically and that the development of self-regulated strategies does not develop with age (Lapan, 2010; Orhan, 2007). On the other hand, research shows that self-regulated learning is teachable and can lead to increase in students' achievement (Abrami et al., 2010; Mirhassani, Akbari, & Dehghan, 2007; Orhan, 2007; Sanz De Acedo & Iriarte, 2001; Tseng, Dornyei, & Schmitt, 2006). However, Zimmerman (2002) states that learners are rarely given choices to practice self-regulation in academic settings. A self-regulated learning perspective has implications for the ways teachers should interact with students. In this regard, different scholars have made suggestions to promote self-regulated learning. The following are some general guidelines for enhancing self-regulation suggested by Torrano and Torres (2004), and Lapan (2010).

1. Direct teaching: Self-regulation can be taught directly by explaining the strategies that can help or hinder the learning process to the students.
2. Modeling: Modeling is an indirect way of teaching self-regulation. In this procedure students observe the teacher performing self-regulation strategies.
3. Practice: Practicing overt and covert strategies can be done through a variety of learning tasks. It can be done first guided and then independently. Overt strategies are those that can be seen, such as underlying and note taking, while covert strategies are referred to as internal mental processes, such as imagery or relating new information to prior knowledge.
4. Self monitoring: Students can self-monitor themselves by making use of internal and external factors, on the one hand and setting short term realistic and specific goals, on the other hand.
5. Self-evaluating: Evaluating their own performance, students will understand the benefits of self-regulated learning. In this regard, Paris and Winogard (2011) state that teachers can help learners to think of failure as a constructive process. That is, teachers should help students realize how to respond to the failure matters not the failure itself. Analyzing the reasons behind the failure can help learners to revise their approach to learning, and start over with better plans.

Different studies investigated the role of self-regulated strategies and language learning and found positive relationship between application of self-regulated learning strategies and success in language learning (Abrami et al., 2010; Mirhassani, Akbari, & Dehghan, 2007; Orhan, 2007; Sanz De Acedo & Iriarte, 2001; Tseng, Dornyei, & Schmitt, 2006). Research has also depicted that self-regulation facilitates reading ability in particular (McMahon & Dunbar, 2010; Nash-Ditzel, 2010; Swalander & Taube, 2007).

Furthermore, Nash-Ditzel's (2010) study showed that teaching techniques based on self-regulation and reading strategies could significantly promote improved reading abilities in college students. Using interviews, think-aloud protocols, informal observations, and document analysis, Nash-Ditzel found that the knowledge and ability to use reading strategies contributed to the students' ability to self-regulate while reading.

McMahon and Dunbar (2010) showed that empowering learners through self-regulated online learning, rather than traditional learning approach, based on knowledge transfer, develops students' independent skills in reading and understanding academic texts. In their study, the participants used on-line environment to promote their reading

comprehension through a process of scaffolded reciprocal teaching. Students engaged in tasks that required the use of a specific set of tools, such as links and discussion boards to share idea about the visual context.

Swalander and Taube (2007) investigated the effect of self-regulated learning on reading ability. The results showed that family-based prerequisites, academic self-concept, and reading attitude significantly influenced reading ability. Academic self-concept showed a direct and strong influence on goal-oriented strategies and on reading ability in the eighth grade Swedish students.

III. METHODOLOGY

Since reading is a multidimensional skill involving a variety of cognitive, linguistic, and non linguistic factors, teaching it is a complex matter. The main purpose of the present study is investigating the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Participants

The type of sampling employed in this study was purposive. That is, sample groups were judged to be representative of the population (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

A sample of 149 female and male Iranian EFL language learners studying at Islamic Azad Universities of Qazvin and Tehran (North, and Science and Research Branches) participated in this study. As is typical of Iranian EFL learners, females outnumbered males. Since the ratio of males to females could not be kept constant in each class, gender was excluded from the analysis. With regard to the learners' first language, the participants were monolingual whose native language was Persian, and English was the foreign language they were learning.

The participants were selected on the basis of their language proficiency scores from a population of 200 EFL learners. The 2003 version of the paper-based TOEFL (PBT) was administered to all learners. Learners whose scores were within plus and minus one standard deviation based on the TOEFL mean score were considered in this study. From this population a sample of 149 participants were selected.

Based on the participants' performance on the language proficiency, six classes were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation

The TOEFL PBT was administered as a standardized measure to check the homogeneity of subjects in terms of language. The test reading comprehension section was also used as a means for assessing the students' reading comprehension in pre-testing and post-testing. The test was administered in 50 minutes.

Data Collection Procedure

The procedure followed to carry out the present study is described in three phases of pre-treatment, treatment, and post-treatment.

Pre-treatment: First, the TOEFL PBT was administered to all participants. The TOEFL was used to homogenize students regarding language proficiency level, and, at the same time, its reading section was used as a means to measure the students' reading comprehension (pre-test). Then, the participants were randomly put into experimental and control groups. Since there were six classes, three classes, which received treatment, were considered as the experimental group, and the remaining three classes as the control group.

Treatment: In this phase, the experimental group received direct teaching of self-regulation strategies in reading, along with task-supported instruction, in ten sessions. To implement the treatment, each session, the researcher first introduced the topic of the reading text to activate the students' schemata. Then, she gave the students a sense of purpose for reading by informing them that self-regulation process would help them to be an active reader, and that they would be able to control the reading process, their behavior, and their environment better by applying self-regulation strategies while reading. For example, the researcher introduced environmental structuring, which was the first self-regulation strategy in their task sheet (Appendix), as follows:

Teacher: Environmental structuring is one of self-regulation strategies which help you to make your learning process easier by selecting or arranging your physical setting. To do so, you can isolate, eliminate, or minimize distractions. You can also break up your study period and spread it over time.

Then the students had to apply those strategies in the form of the designed tasks/activities which are described below. The tasks/activities were based on self-regulation strategies proposed by Zimmerman (1989) (see Table 1). The strategies included in eight categories, which had to be carried out successively (see Appendix):

1. Environmental Structuring
2. Organizing and Transforming
3. Goal Setting and Planning
4. Keeping Records and Monitoring + Organizing and Transforming
5. Seeking Information + Seeking Social Assistance
6. Rehearsing and Memorizing
7. Reviewing Records
8. Self-evaluation + Self-consequating

The tasks/activities in the environmental structuring category required the students to pay attention to the environment and find the distractions, such as air conditioner and their classmates' whispering. Then they had to write

if they could have adjusted the situation for the better results, or they should have tolerated the distractions. Organizing and transforming tasks/activities, however, helped the students to take a quick look at the text before reading to see how the text is organized in terms of title, heading, sub-heading, and paragraphs. The tasks/activities in goal setting and planning category got students to guess how much time they needed to read the text and do the activities. Therefore, they learned to budget their time in advance. The tasks/activities in the next category focused on keeping records and monitoring, as well as organizing and transforming strategies. Here, the students were required to read the text paragraph by paragraph, draw an outline, and highlight the ambiguous words, phrases, or sentences for further investigation. The tasks/activities in the fifth category assisted the readers to seek information and social assistance. To do so, they specified which ways they would like to use to remove the ambiguities they had encountered in the previous phase. Rehearsing and memorizing tasks/activities drew students' attention to the strategies that helped them to memorize unfamiliar words. So, they were required to check the strategies that seemed most useful to them. Tasks/activities related to reviewing record strategy asked students to go back to the previous phases and check if they had taken all the steps, and they had to remove any unclear points before going to the next phase. Finally, there were self-evaluation and self-consequating tasks/activities that required students to self-evaluate themselves by answering some questions about their performance, such as how they scored themselves and how they did the activities.

An example of tasks/activities is provided below. Taking environmental structuring strategy as an example, the students in the experimental group were required to practice this strategy in the form of the following task/activity.

Task: Environmental Structuring

Pay attention to your environment. What distracts you? How can you change the situation for the better?

Distractions	I can adjust it by ...	I should tolerate it
Air conditioner		
People's whispering		
Noise from outside the room		
Your thoughts		
Others: -----		

Therefore, every session, the students in the experimental group practiced self-regulation strategies on a reading text. However, the control group did not receive any treatment on self-regulation either directly or indirectly. Their classes were conducted in the traditional way; that is they were only required to read the reading texts and to do the follow-up tasks/activities of the book without any reference to self-regulation.

In other words, both groups enjoyed the same time exposure every session. In practice, both followed three phases of pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading. The only difference was the explanation and application of self-regulation strategies, which were not practiced in the control group. After introducing the topic, the students in the control group were given time to read the text. Then they were required to do routine reading activities, such as comprehension questions and vocabulary study.

It is worth mentioning that task-supported teaching was selected as a means of instruction for the experimental group because it teaches learners how to proceduralize strategic solutions to problems (Skehan, 1996). Equally important, task-supported instruction has strong empirical evidence (Nunan, 1991). Furthermore, it focuses on meaning, real word relationship, and outcome (Prabhu, 1987, Skehan, 1996) which are of interest in self-regulation.

Since studies show that learners do not learn self-regulated strategies automatically and that the development of self-regulated strategies does not develop with age (Lapan, 2010; Orhan, 2007), the students who did not receive treatment were considered as non self-regulated learners.

Post-treatment: Having practiced ten sessions of reading, the participants in both groups took the very reading comprehension section of the TOEFL as reading comprehension post-test.

TABLE 1
SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES (ADAPTED FROM ZIMMERMAN, 1989 & NRC/GT, 2011)

Category definitions	Substrategies
<p>A. Personal. These strategies usually involve how a student organizes and interprets information and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organizing and transforming:</i> Self-initiated overt or covert rearrangement of instructional materials to improve learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlining • Summarizing • Rearrangement of materials • Highlighting • Drawing pictures, diagrams, charts • Flashcards/ index cards • Webs/mapping
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Goal-setting and planning:</i> Setting educational goals or subgoals and planning for sequencing, timing, and completing activities related to the self-set goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequencing, timing, completing • Time management and pacing

(Table 1 continues)

(TABLE 1 CONTINUED)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Keeping records and monitoring</i>: Self-initiated efforts to record events or results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note-taking • Lists of errors made • Record of marks • Portfolio, keeping all drafts of assignments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rehearsing and memorizing</i>: Self-initiated efforts to memorize learning materials by overt or covert practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mnemonic devices • Teaching someone else the material • Making sample questions • Using mental imagery • Using repetition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reviewing records</i>: self-initiated efforts to reread notes, tests, or textbooks to prepare for class or further testing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rereading records, tests, textbooks • Reviewing cards • Checking if something is missing
<p>B. Behavioral: These strategies involve actions that the student takes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Self-evaluation</i>: Self-initiated evaluations of the quality or progress of students' work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task analysis (What does the teacher want me to do? What do I want out of it?) • Self-instructions; enactive feedback • Attentiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Self-consequating</i>: Student arrangement or imagination of rewards or punishment for success or failure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating to motivate; self-reinforcement • Arrangement or imagination of punishments; delay of gratification
<p>C. Environmental: These strategies involve seeking assistance and structuring of the physical study environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeking information</i>: Self-initiated efforts to secure further task information from nonsocial sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using library resources • Using Internet resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental structuring</i>: Self-initiated efforts to select or arrange the physical setting to make learning easier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting or arranging the physical setting • Isolating/ eliminating or minimizing distractions • Breaking up study periods and spread them over time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeking social assistance</i>: Self-initiated efforts to solicit help from peers, teachers, and adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking from peers • Asking from teachers or other adults • Emulating exemplary models

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In order to investigate the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension the following analyses were run:

The TOEFL was administered to 200 participants at three branches of Islamic Azad University, namely Qazvin Branch, Science and Research Branch, and Tehran North Branch. Based on the mean scores plus and minus one standard deviation, 149 cases whose scores were between 13 and 27 were selected to participate in the main study.

An independent t-test was run to compare the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the pretest of reading comprehension in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of reading comprehension ability prior to the main study. As displayed in Table 2, the mean scores for the experimental and control groups are 13.38 and 13.01 on the pretest of reading comprehension

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS PRETEST OF READING COMPREHENSION

GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	76	13.38	4.013	.460
Control	73	13.01	5.184	.607

The results of the independent t-test ($t(147) = .48, ns, P > .05$, it did represent a small-sized effect ($r = .040$) indicate that there is not any significant difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups on the pretest of reading comprehension. Thus, it can be concluded that the two groups enjoyed the same level of reading comprehension ability prior to the main study.

TABLE 3
INDEPENDENT T-TEST PRETEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.927	.028	.485	147	.628	.368	.758	-1.130	1.865
Equal variances not assumed			.483	135.61	.630	.368	.762	-1.138	1.874

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is not met (Levene's $F = 4.92, P = .028 < .05$). However due to the fact that the ratio of the larger sample size over the smaller sample size ($76/73=1.04$) is lower than 1.5 (Pallant 2005), there is no need to worry about the violation of the assumption.

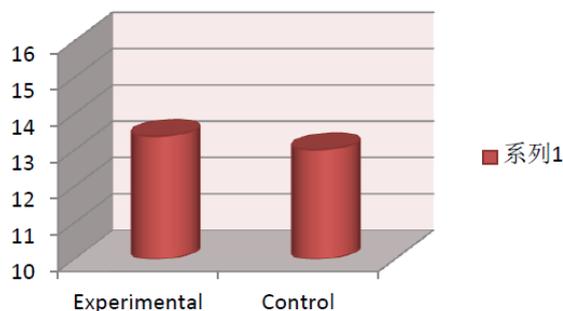


Figure 3 Pretest of reading comprehension by groups

The research question investigated the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension. The question, along with the findings are presented and discussed below.

Concerning the reading comprehension of the experimental and control groups, an independent t-test was run to compare the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the reading comprehension posttest in order to investigate the effect of the treatment on the improvement of the reading comprehension of the EFL learners. Table 4 shows that the mean scores for the experimental and control groups are 17.68 and 10.34, respectively.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: POSTTEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	76	17.68	4.122	.473
Control	73	10.34	3.010	.352

Regarding the posttest of reading comprehension in the experimental and control groups, Table 5 demonstrates the results of the independent t-test. The findings indicate that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the posttest of reading comprehension, $t(147) = 12.3, P < .05$. It indicates a large-sized effect ($r = .71$). Thus, the null-hypothesis stating that there is no statistically significant difference between reading comprehension of self-regulated readers and non self-regulated readers is rejected. The result of the analysis is presented in Figure 4.

TABLE 5
INDEPENDENT T-TEST: POSTTEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	6.142	.014	12.3	147	.000	7.342	.593	6.169	8.514
Equal variances not assumed			12.4	137.30	.000	7.342	.590	6.176	8.508

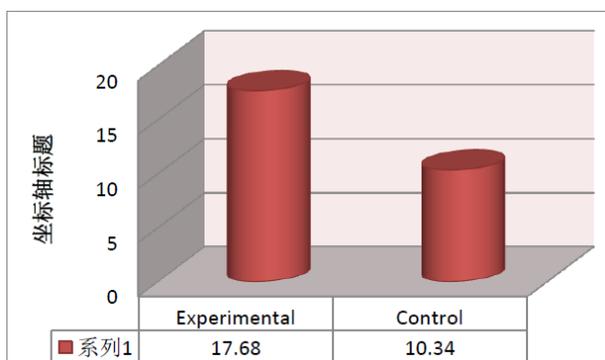


Figure 4 Posttest of reading comprehension by groups

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The outcome of this part clarified that self-regulated learning had a significant effect on EFL learners' reading comprehension. That is to say the use of self-regulation reading tasks/activities (see Appendix), which were designed based on self-regulation strategies (Zimmerman, 1989), significantly increased learners' reading comprehension. In other words, it can be concluded that teaching techniques based on self-regulation can significantly promote reading performance in college students, and it develops students' independent skills in reading.

It is worth mentioning that in this study the concept of self-regulation was narrowed down to eight categories of strategies in reading. The strategies were based on Zimmerman's self-regulation strategies tapping three areas of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences. The participants in the experimental group were exposed to explicit teaching on self-regulation strategies through instructors' explanation, along with task-supported teaching; they had to apply what they had been taught on different reading texts in task-supported forms. On the other hand, the researcher did not introduce the concept of self-regulation to the control group.

The findings are consistent with earlier research on self-regulation (McMahon & Dunbar, 2010; Nash-Ditzel, 2010; Swalander & Taube, 2007). In the same line with this study, Nash-Ditzel (2010), found that teaching techniques based on self-regulation and reading strategies can significantly promote reading abilities in college students. McMahon and Dunbar (2010) also reported that empowering learners through self-regulated on-line learning develops students' independent skills in reading and understanding academic texts. Finding a positive impact of self-regulated learning on reading ability, Swalander and Taube's (2007) study showed that academic self-concept significantly influenced reading ability. Academic self-concept showed a direct and strong influence on goal-oriented strategies and on reading ability in Swedish participants. Swalander and Taube assert that one of the important duties of educators at school is strengthening students' trust in their own ability to succeed in literacy activities and to assign a positive value to reading.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper aimed at investigating the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension. From the findings of this study, it could be concluded that the application of self-regulation in reading enhance EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Therefore, language teachers, specifically those teaching the reading skill are highly recommended that they include more educational practices on self-regulation in their teaching. This matter can guarantee both the leaning of the students and increasing their motivation which is by itself an improvement factor in learning too. On a larger scale, inclusion of tasks/activities based on self-regulated learning in textbooks encourage the students to participate actively in their learning process, see themselves as agents of their own learning, and develop their independent skills.

APPENDIX

Self-regulation Reading Tasks

You are going to go through some reading self-regulation phases which help you to be an active reader metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally. Therefore, you will be able to control yourself, your behavior and your environment better while reading.

Please fill in the charts and answer the questions as recommended below, and then e-mail the complete form to me.

1. Environmental Structuring

Listen to your environment. What distracts you? How can you change the situation for better?

Distracters	I can adjust it by -----	I should tolerate it
1. Air conditioner		
2. People's whispering		
3. Noise from outside the room		
4. Your thoughts		
5. Others: -----		

2. Organizing and Transforming

Take a quick look at the text, and then complete the following chart.

Questions	Answers
1. What is the title of the text?	
2. How many paragraphs are there in the text?	
3. How many headings are there in the text?	
4. How many subheadings are there in the text?	

3. Goal Setting and Planning

Before treading the text, go through the following steps:

1. Go over the pre-reading questions.
2. Guess how much time you need to read the text and do the activities:

I guess I need ----- minutes to go through the text and do the activities.

4. Keeping Records and Monitoring + Organizing and Transforming

Read the text paragraph by paragraph. Please take the following steps in this phase:

1. If you face any ambiguous word, phrase or sentence, take one of the following steps to highlight them for further investigation:
 - annotating
 - underlining them
 - jotting them down on your notebook
 Is there any other way you would like to use to highlight them? If yes, please specify?

2. Draw an outline for the paragraph.
3. Write a 1-3 sentence summary according to your outline.

5. Seeking Information + Seeking Social Assistance

Which of the following ways did you use or would you like to use to remove the ambiguities in the previous phase? Please specify them.

Ways	I tried this way to -----
Guessing	
Surfing the net	
Asking the teacher	
Asking your friends	
Consulting a dictionary	
Others: -----	

6. Rehearsing and Memorizing

Which strategy helps you most to memorize the new words? Please put a check mark on the following list (You may check more than one option).

Strategy	
Writing them down	
Using mental imagery	
Using repetition	
Using flash cards	
Sticking them on the wall	
Learning them from the context	
Learning them through derivation	
Recording and then listening to them	
Building them through synonyms or antonyms	
Others: -----	

7. Reviewing Records

Go back to the previous phases and check the following:

Have you taken all the steps?

Is there any unclear point? If so, remove it before going to the last phase.

8. Self-evaluation + Self-consequating

Self-evaluate yourself and answer the following questions.

1. How much did you get the text? 100% 50-100% less than 50%
2. Which phase helped you more to deal with the text? -----
3. Have you done the activities correctly? All of them Most of them Some of them
4. Was your time estimation correct? Yes No
5. How was your performance in general? Very well So-so Not satisfactory
6. How do you score yourself from 1 to 20? -----
7. Is there anything else you would like to add about your performance? Please specify (you may specify it in Persian)? -----
8. How do you like this way of reading a text? Merits: ----- Demerits: -----

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An Empirical Study of Applying E-mail Exchange to College English Learners' Writing

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Abstract—The present study is to find the effect of E-mail exchange activity on the students' writing proficiency. It aims to answer the following questions: (1) How does the E-mail exchange influence the students' writing? (2) What is the students' attitude toward using E-mail in English learning? (3) What problems do the students encounter during their E-mail exchange activity? After the E-mail exchange for an academic semester, the data was collected and analyzed with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results indicate that E-mail exchange activity promotes the students' writing proficiency a lot. Generally speaking, the students hold a positive attitude toward the activity, and both their learning motivation and self-confidence get improved. Their problems are mainly lack of vocabulary, low response, and cultural difference, etc.

Index Terms—E-mail exchange, college English, writing teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a difficult skill for native speakers and nonnative speakers alike. It is a complex process, because writers must balance multiple issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, diction, vocabulary, and mechanics (Rass, 2001). English writing is especially difficult for Chinese students not only because they are expected to create written products that demonstrate mastery of all of the above elements in a new language but also because they have different cultural and thinking patterns contrasted with the English native speakers. Among the various forms of facilitating language teaching and learning via the Internet, E-mail has been so far the most popular and useful tool. In China, applying the E-mail into English writing teaching is still a relatively new field due to the late access to the Internet. Even though there are heated discussions about the effects of E-mail on language learning in China, there is not much empirical evidence that supports its potentials. A few researchers have conducted some empirical studies to explore the potentials of E-mail. However, many of them admitted that there was much room for improvement due to some practical difficulties. Besides, the studies nearly all concern English majors, neglecting the majority of English learners in China. In order to find more evidence to support the potential of E-mail application in the English teaching in China, the present study is conducted with a group of non-English majors in a university.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With the development of computer technology, using E-mail to facilitate language teaching started to gain more and more attention of scholars abroad in the 1990s. Since then a large amount of literature has been worked out. Though there has not been convincing experimental evidence on the use of computer technology to improve language skills in all areas, the majority of the studies indicate positive attitudes of students toward technology use.

Janda (1995) conducts a series of E-mail activities to help his EFL students build up collaborative writing skills. The activities include interpreting and discussing statistics from graphs and charts; explaining, interpreting and discussing comic strips and other humor; preparing for an oral presentation by laying out and discussing each student's main points and arguments; and solving a literary jigsaw in which students have different amounts of information. These activities provide rich opportunities for students to gather together and engage in the writing collaboratively.

Belisle (1996) discusses student and teacher benefits of using E-mail in EFL writing instruction. The argument of the author goes that over a network, using E-mail and sharing files, students have the chance to collaborate and work together with other classmates, peers, and teachers. Therefore, acting in the electronic community can help learners create, analyze, and produce information and ideas more easily and efficiently. Through this increased electronic access to the world around them, Belisle claims, students' social awareness and confidence increases.

Choi (1998) reports on E-mail exchange project in Korea. Both teachers and students report improvements in children's reading skills, consolidation of vocabulary and increased motivation. The article concludes by emphasizing the importance of planning and preparation in conducting a key pal exchange and stresses the pivotal role played by the external moderator in such an undertaking.

Compared with the studies abroad, researches in China are relatively far slower and fewer. Gu (1998) claims that four interaction interfaces of E-mail should be given equal attention for successful E-mail assisted English teaching. In 1997, she and her co-researcher, David Catterick organized an E-mail key pal project accomplished collaboratively by

graduate students. Students worked together to complete their term paper. The project is intrinsically motivating for them because of the meaningful tasks, real sense of audience and improving of computer literacy. Students' imagination, creativity and cooperative ability are put into full play.

Pan (2000) conducted an experiment on E-mail-assisted teaching programs. He attempted to find whether it was effective and feasible to facilitate culture teaching via E-mail. To guide the students, topics like lifestyle, food and clothing, love, marriage and family life were suggested by the instructor. The findings showed that students took a positive attitude towards the activity, and it not only widened students' horizon, but increased their expressing ability.

Shang (2007) conducted a study in Taiwan, which focused on examining the overall effect of using E-mail on the improvement of writing performance in aspects of syntactic complexity, grammatical accuracy and lexical density, as well as investigating the relation between the number of E-mail exchanges and writing performance. By applying qualitative and quantitative research methods, the major finding demonstrated that students made improvements on syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy. An increase in lexical density, however, was not observed.

In recent years, the information technology develops at a higher speed than ever, and it is no longer so hard as before for students to get access to the Internet. Students are required to attend the computer course and this renders them enough knowledge necessary throughout the E-mail exchange activity. All these provide researchers with favorable conditions to conduct further research. The purpose of the study is to find out whether the E-mail exchange activity can contribute to College English writing teaching. It will also investigate the students' motivation and confidence in English writing, and their attitude toward the E-mail exchange activity.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

(1) How does the E-mail exchange influence students' writing? Is there any statistically significant difference between the writing performance of the experimental group (EG) and that of the control group (CG)?

(2) What problems do students encounter in the E-mail exchange activity? What are the advantages the activity brings to the students?

(3) What are students' attitudes toward using E-mail in English learning?

B. Subjects

The subjects in the study were 74 non-English majors in a University in China. They were of two naturally occurring classes with each class 37 students. They were at the first year's study and taught by the same instructor. The EG was the E-mail group, and the CG was the non-E-mail group. All the subjects had learned English for at least seven years and most have some basic knowledge about computer technology. The E-mail group were arranged to communicate with students in the USA. via E-mail throughout the Autumn Semester. The E-mail communication was conducted in English and lasted for four months. Throughout the activity, it was assured that both two groups got the same encouragement, and the only difference was that the EG wrote in E-mail while the CG not.

C. Instruments

Three data collection instruments used in the study include the pre- and post-writing tests assessing students' writing ability, a questionnaire for surveying students' attitudes to E-mail exchange activity, students' E-mail messages and answers in the exit interview.

a. Writing Tests. The writing tests aimed to measure student writing ability before and after the E-mail exchange activity. Therefore, a pre-test and post-test were conducted to determine the effectiveness of this activity. The topics in the two tests were the same. Students were asked to write an article about the topic "the craze of going abroad for further study", which might prompt them to express a lot.

b. Questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to elicit students' attitudes toward their experience in the E-mail exchange activity and their perceptions about the advantages and problems of using E-mail. It consisted of 20 questions in all. In the questionnaire, subjects were required to answer on a five point scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=uncertain; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree. Students were informed that the survey was for the purpose of research, and was not to be used to evaluate their performance.

c. Interview. To confirm the subjects' answers to the questions in questionnaire, an in-depth, interview was conducted with 10 randomly selected students in the experimental group. The interview went on in a comfortable atmosphere and students were free in expressing their opinions.

D. Procedure

When the EG and CG were decided, members in EG were asked to get their E-mail addresses ready for the E-mail exchange activity. Then, those who did not know how to send and receive E-mails were instructed by their classmates. After that, a list of the subjects' E-mail addresses was produced. The researcher sent all the subjects a letter and got replies, which means that their E-mail channel worked well. In this way, all the subjects got ready for the activity.

a. Obtaining the E-pals

Obtaining the appropriate E-pals plays a very important role in the activity. There are several ways generally, like

asking foreign friends to assist you in finding some native speakers; giving the subjects some pen pal websites and letting them choose by themselves according to their own interest; or having a discussion with the foreign teacher directly with the help of the Internet. Nowadays, there are a number of international pen pal projects on line. The following are usually taken as some of the most useful ones:

<http://www.iecc.org/>

<http://www.interpals.net/>

<http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/>

<http://www.penpalworld.com/>

<http://penpalsnow.com/>

<http://www.epals.com/>

<http://penpals.net/>

However, some of the previous studies recommended that among all the ways the best is for the teacher to team up with a class in a different country directly (Gu, 1998). Therefore, in the present study the researcher posted pieces of messages on several popular pen pal websites seeking one American class as partner. Finally, a class from the Atlee High school in Richmond, Virginia, the USA was chosen. They were found to be suitable for the activity because the American teacher was interested in this activity and the number of the students was same as that of ours. Besides, they were at their second year's study in high school. They were supposed to be good partners considering that their English proficiency might be a little higher than the EG members. After some negotiation, an agreement was reached that the researcher sent the list of Chinese students' E-mail addresses to American teacher, and then the American students would start the E-mail exchange activity.

b. Establishing Communication

In the following week, the subjects in the EG all felt excited to receive the E-mails from the American students. The exchange started with their self-introductions. But after several days, a few students sent the researcher E-mails complaining that their letters were returned from Richmond as undeliverable ones. The researcher tried to send messages to those addresses and received the same response as the students did. Fortunately, E-mail communication with the American teacher functioned well, and the problem was discussed with him. The website server in Richmond was suspected to be the cause of the problem, or maybe the foreign E-mail system firewall was too picky, but no exact reason was found. To continue the activity, the American teacher suggested his students trying their E-mail exchange with another address. In this way the problem got solved and the communication went smoothly.

c. Conducting the Study

After the subjects started their E-mail exchange with American students, they were required to write at least one letter a week to their e-pals and forward it to the researcher so that their performance in the activity can be controlled. If it contains something private, the subjects can keep them to themselves. The researcher suggested some topics, and an agreement was reached with American teacher that students would be encouraged to talk about the suggested topics in their messages in the activity. Nevertheless, the content of the E-mail messages was not graded for fear of giving them too much pressure, and the choice of topics was left to student discretion. The proposed topics are as follows:

my dream; leisure activities; the Internet and the world; the Olympics and me; on-line romance; air pollution/environmental protection; love, success and wealth; What does the USA./China attract you most? China and the world; my favorite occupation; the person I like most; an memorable trip; music in our life; cultural shock; the effects of exercise on our health; The world is becoming warmer, your comments on this?; What do you think of going abroad to get further study?; Dating is popular with students on campus, what is your opinion?; What attitudes should we take to money?; Is there friendship between boys and girls?; How to face success and failure?

At the end of the semester, the students in both experimental and control groups took an identical writing test (post-test), they were supposed to write an article with roughly 120 to 150 words in 30 minutes on the topic "the craze of going abroad for further study" as they did in pre-test. Independent samples T-test was carried out to see whether there was significant difference between the scores obtained for both two groups. And an attitude survey was conducted to the experimental group to know the E-mail group's attitude toward the activity and perception. Finally, some of the subjects in the experimental group were interviewed, in which their opinions of participating in the activity were asked.

E. Data Collection

The pre-test and post-test were conducted to 74 students in the experimental and control classes in the beginning and end of the semester respectively. At the end of the project, students in the experimental class were given the questionnaire asking them to comment on various aspects of the activity. Among the 37 copies distributed, 37 were returned, 36 were valid. All subjects answered the questionnaires within 10 minutes in classroom and their responses counted for the investigations. At the end of the autumn semester, 10 students in the experimental class were interviewed to check the reliability of their answers to the questionnaire, and to give students an opportunity to provide more in-depth responses.

F. Data Analysis

The results were analyzed by using SPSS17.0. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to analyze the data. First, students' compositions were scored by two teachers according to the rating scale by Heaton

(2000). Correlation analyses were performed between the two sets of scores. The degree to which two such sets of scores varied was estimated by calculating a correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient has a high value of 0.934, which was significant at the 0.01 levels. The students' names and classes in composition paper were concealed. The evaluation of writing performance was based on the scores of the pre- and post-writings by the students. Then independent T-tests was performed to examine if there was a significant difference between the means for the experimental and control groups in the pre- and post-writings; paired sample T-test was performed to see whether the means in pre-test and post-test for the E-mail group differed significantly.

IV. RESULTS

A. A Comparison of the Writing Performance of EG and CG in Both Pre-writing and Post-writing

In the beginning of the semester, an independent sample T-test was conducted to check the difference of pre-test scores between the two groups. The mean score of the EG is 79, CG is 78.46, the mean difference is 0.54. The p-value (0.699>0.05) showed that the writing performance between the two groups was not significantly different.

The same T-test was administered to check the difference of post-test scores between these two groups (see table 1). The mean of the EG is 83.19, while the CG is 81.05, thus the difference is 2.13514. The p-value (0.043<0.05) of the T-test in the table indicated that significant difference was found between the post-test scores.

TABLE 1
THE RESULT OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST OF TWO GROUPS' MEANS IN THE POST-WRITING

		Levene's Test for Equality of variances				T-test for equality of means	
		F	sig	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	M difference
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	.022	.883	2.058	72	.043*	2.13514
	Equal variances not assumed			2.058	71.98	.043	2.13513

*p<.05

In the questionnaire, four questions were designed to survey the subjects' perception on the E-mail exchange activity; they were mainly about the usefulness of the activity. The results are illustrated in the following table.

TABLE 2
THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONS ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USEFULNESS

Survey questions	min	max	M	SD	N
15. This kind of E-mail exchange may promote my English writing performance.	3	5	4.03	0.774	36
16. I think exchanging E-mails in English is a good way to improve writing ability.	3	5	4.33	0.717	36
17. I feel my English writing ability gets improved after the activity.	2	5	3.47	0.774	36
18. I am satisfied with this kind of E-pal correspondence.	1	5	3.94	1.068	36

Note. Min=minimum max=maximum M=mean SD=standard deviation N=number of the subjects

The subjects rated high the statements "This kind of E-mail exchange may promote my English writing performance." "I think exchanging E-mails in English is a good way to improve writing ability." with the mean scores 4.03 and 4.33 respectively. They rated fairly high the statement 17 and 18, which means that most of them felt their writing proficiency got improved and they were satisfied with the activity.

B. The EG Members' Attitudes toward Using E-mail in English Learning

EFL students will be more successful in their attempts to write in a second language when they possess positive attitudes toward second language learning in general. In the questionnaire, the subjects were asked to rate their attitudes toward the activity on a five-point scale.

TABLE 3
THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONS ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES

Survey questions	min	max	M	SD	N
1. I think this kind of E-mail exchange is very interesting.	3	5	4.58	0.554	36
2. I am glad to know foreign E-pals.	4	5	4.69	0.467	36
3. I enjoy participating in this kind of activity.	3	5	4.44	0.607	36
19. I'll continue the E-mail exchange with my E-pal after the semester.	2	5	4.22	0.866	36
20. If possible, I'll suggest my friends communicating with foreigners via E-mail.	3	5	4.25	0.692	36

As can be seen from the table, the subjects in the E-mail group had positive attitudes toward the E-mail exchange, for the mean scores of all the questions in this category are above 4.00, which means that most subjects agree with the statements of the questions. Among the five questions in the category, the first three are about their belief; the last two are about their behaviors. In the above table, the mean score for question number 19 and 20 is 4.22 and 4.25 respectively, this means that the majority of the subjects intended to continue E-mail exchange after the activity was over, and they would advise their friends to conduct this kind of exchange.

C. The Changes of EG Students' Confidence and Motivation in English Learning before and after E-mail Exchange

In the present study, questions 11-14 of the questionnaire were designed to discover the students' confidence and motivation in English writing. The following table shows the results:

TABLE 4
THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONS ON STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION

Survey questions	min	max	M	SD	N
11. This kind of E-pal correspondence promoted my learner autonomy.	2	5	3.61	0.803	36
12. I have more confidence in English writing after the activity.	2	5	3.50	0.845	36
13. I become more active to write in English now.	2	5	3.44	0.809	36
14. The activity enhanced my interest on English and motivation to learn it.	2	5	3.83	0.737	36

The subjects rated statement 14 "The activity enhanced my interest on English and motivation to learn it." with the highest score 3.83, and statement 11 followed with the score 3.61. This indicated the subjects got more interest and a higher motivation in English learning. And they believed their autonomy in learning got enhanced. The scores of the statements 12 and 13 were a bit lower than 11 and 14, while they were still fairly high.

D. The Problems EG Students Encountered during Their E-mail Exchange and the Advantages They Perceived

Question 4-6 are supposed to survey the subjects perceived advantages and 7-10 about the problems (see table 5).

TABLE 5
THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS AND ADVANTAGES IN THE ACTIVITY

Survey questions	min	max	M	SD	N
4. Communicating with my E-pal makes me feel my writings become meaningful.	2	5	4.25	0.841	36
5. I know more about the foreign culture after the activity.	1	5	3.75	1.079	36
6. Writing with E-mail makes me feel relaxed, not so nervous as writing in the traditional way.	2	5	3.86	1.046	36
7. Sometimes I can not understand my E-pal's letters well because of the culture differences.	1	5	2.97	1.158	36
8. Generally speaking, my E-pal's low responses make me feel upset.	1	5	3.00	1.493	36
9. I can not express myself very well in the E-mail.	2	5	3.08	0.806	36
10. When communicating with my partner, I often feel my vocabulary is not sufficient.	2	5	4.42	0.692	36

The table showed us well some of the perceived advantages and encountered problems for the subjects. The subjects rated the statements about the advantages comparatively high. The high scores indicate that most of the subjects agree with the statements. Particularly for the statement 4, the mean was as high as 4.25. This means that nearly all the subjects believed E-mail exchange made their writings meaningful. As for the problems, statement 10 got the highest mean 4.42; the other three were about 3.

E. The Effects of E-mail Exchange on the Students' English Writing

In the E-mail exchange with the American students, the subjects must get some influence from their partners. While their general writing proficiency might get improved, some changes might also occur to their aspects of writing. In the present study, the five parts—content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics were included and compared to find the possible changes. The following is the result of the paired sample T-test of the scores of these five parts in the pre-test and post-test writing for the EG (table 6).

TABLE 6
THE RESULTS OF PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST OF THE SUBENTRIES' MEANS FOR EG'S PRE- AND POST-WRITINGS

	M	t	df	sig.(2-tailed)
Con 1-con 2	-1.08108	-4.097	36	.000**
Org 1-org 2	-.58459	-2.876	36	.007**
Voc 1-voc 2	-1.10811	-5.240	36	.000**
Lan 1-lan 2	-1.18919	-4.263	36	.000**
Mech 1-mech2	-.05405	-.442	36	.661

**p<.01 Note: con=content, org=organization, voc=vocabulary, Lan=language, mech=mechanics

The paired sample statistics showed that the mean scores of all the five parts got increased after the E-mail exchange. And the T-test indicated that the differences of all the parts were significant except mechanics. In the parts of content, vocabulary and language, we had full confidence to claim that significant differences were found.

V. DISCUSSION

A. The Improvement of Writing Scores

Significant difference was found in the writing performance of the two groups in post-writing, which means that the E-mail exchange activity contributed to the improvement of writing proficiency of the subjects in EG. In the present study, many factors may contribute to the improvement of the subjects' writing proficiency. The positive attitudes

toward writing via E-mail might be one of the factors, for they can contribute to improving their writing skills by increasing their willingness to write and revise the writings. In the exit interview, many subjects claimed that they enjoyed the E-mail exchange partly because they had a lot in common to share. Another possible factor is the reading of their E-pals' letters. Reading experience may be as beneficial as or more beneficial than writing practice to develop writing ability. The more they read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational flow and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language (Raimes, 1983). Exchanging E-mails with native speakers provided the students opportunities of exposure to authentic language. Many students in the interview admitted that they learned a lot from the foreign partners, including language itself.

In the E-mail exchange activity, students are now actually writing for a real-life audience and not just for the teacher. This has proved to be a huge stimulus for students to make writing a fun rather than a boring activity. Thus, students become more willing to put their heart into writing, ideas spring into their mind, and they are so engrossed in communicating that they focus on the content and organization of their E-mails. Besides, they paid much attention to the content and language because they believed good writing might attract their partners easily. When they write to their partner, they are likely to be very careful because they want to communicate effectively. Maybe these were the reasons for the progress in the parts of content, organization, language and vocabulary. In the exit interview, some subjects mentioned like this: "*she (the partner) is always earnest about my E-mail. And she is happy to point out my mistakes in my E-mail.*" "*I learned a lot from her. I can learn many new words and ...*"

The reason for the non-improvement of mechanics in students' writing possibly lies in the style difference between E-mail language and printing language. Compared with the printing language, the language in E-mail is usually not so formal. The participants, especially American students, usually do not refine on their letters. The writing style of them is relaxed, spontaneous and conversational in nature, with many starts and stops, incomplete sentences. Therefore, the requirement of language accuracy would be played down. The following E-mail from the American student can be taken for example:

American student A's E-mail:

I will definitely ask Ivy tomorrow =)

So, I have a lot of homework to get done, so I cannot type much.

Random questions: do you plan to visit US sometime in the future? And have you been to places outside of China?

Have a wonderful weekend!

Besides the quantitative analysis, EG members' writings were analyzed qualitatively as a supplement to see the changes of their writing performance. Generally speaking, the students' post-writings were more substantive and closely organized. And also there were more complex constructions. Many students' pre-writings were loosely organized, and the expression was not fluent at all. In some students' samples the ideas were even confused or disconnected. Even though some students attempted to use some complex constructions in the writing, they made serious grammatical mistakes and the meanings of sentences were therefore obscured. The following are from the students' pre-writing samples:

- *I can not tell the craze of going abroad to obtain further study is good or bad.*
- *And that there are a few people don't know whether it is better to go abroad or not.*
- *But there are also many people don't think so.*
- *So there are many people have different views.*
- *My idea is that when we get an idea of our own culture, then we'll better to select others.*
- *In my opinion, on one hand, in many aspects, such as learning foreign languages, majoring the good subjects in the best foreign school, you go abroad to get a best environment for you study.*

In the post-writing, the students paid more attention to the text organization and word choice. Therefore, their expressions were much more fluent than in the pre-writing. In addition, they used more effective complex constructions in their writings, which means that they had a better mastery of sentence construction rules. And also, their expressions became more native-like. The following may serve as evidence:

- *As the globalization has been a trend, the world is becoming much more closely related. At the same time, the number of Chinese students going abroad to further their study is multiplying.*
- *Therefore, it's better to make good preparation before you make a decision to go abroad. Otherwise you may fail to achieve your goals.*
- *In my opinion, we should take everything into consideration.*
- *The reason of such phenomenon is that many students believe that studying abroad can make them more popular when they go back China and look for jobs.*
- *Nowadays, there are more and more students going abroad for further study.*
- *However, each coin has two sides. Studying abroad also has some drawbacks.*

To have a better look at the vocabulary using, an analysis was conducted to the two randomly selected students' pre- and post-writings with the tool of Range. The results are as follows¹:

¹ Due to space limit, the result of analysis of student B's writings were not demonstrated in tables here.

TABLE 7
THE RESULT OF THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT A'S PRE-WRITING

WORDLIST	TOKENS/% ²	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	108/87.10	69/86.25	63
two	7/ 5.65	5/ 6.25	5
three	5/ 4.03	2/ 2.50	2
not in the lists	4/ 3.23	4/ 5.00	????
Total	124	80	70

TABLE 7
THE RESULT OF THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT A'S POST-WRITING

WORDLIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	140/86.42	85/85.00	75
two	13/ 8.02	12/12.00	10
three	9/ 5.56	3/ 3.00	3
not in the lists	0/ 0.00	0/ 0.00	????
Total	162	100	88

Comparing the above two tables, we can find that in the later one, student A had more to say and a better use of vocabulary. In the post-writing, the total number is 162 words, while only 124 in the early one. Among all the words used, 8.02% and 5.56% fall into the wordlist two and three in the post-writing, while only 5.65% and 4.03% in the pre-writing. And higher percentage of word types in post-writing fall into wordlist two than that in pre-writing. Table 6 also shows that 3.23% of the vocabulary used in student A's pre-writing falls into the class "not in the lists". Here it should be noted that the four words are not included in the wordlists because they were misspelled. They are: *foergn*, *lifes*, *ourself*, *varities*. Also student B had more to express on the topic in the later writing than the early one. In the pre-writing, the word number is only 109, which is lower than the required. And also the lower percentage of tokens and types in wordlist one and higher percentage in wordlist three in B's post-writing indicate well that the student had a better mastery of vocabulary. (83.11% < 85.32%; 6.76% > 5.50%; 78.79% < 87.50%; 6.06% > 2.78%) Still the percentage of word types in word list two in B's post-writing is much higher than that in pre-writing. (13.13% > 9.72%)

B. Positive Attitude towards E-mail Exchange Activity

It was found that the subjects took a positive attitude towards the E-mail exchange activity. Nearly all the subjects showed great interest in the E-mail exchange. Even most of them would advise their friends to begin this kind of correspondence. As was mentioned in the above, positive attitude towards the activity might partly account for the improvement of the writing proficiency. A Chinese proverb says: Interest is the best teacher. When people are interested in something, they learn it quickly and efficiently.

Students' positive attitudes can also be demonstrated in the numbers of E-mails they wrote. They were expected to write one letter a week in the beginning of the activity; however, many of them wrote more than the expected number. The highest number even amounted to 20. This showed that they were eager to exchange E-mails with the American students. More insight into students' attitudes toward this activity comes from the comments given by the students in the interview. When asked "What do you think of this kind of E-mail exchange activity", "Will you keep the relationship with your E-pal and continue to write to him or her?" Some students gave such general comments as:

- *I feel the E-mail exchange activity is good. It's fun to write with my partner.*
- *I got a lot of fun of writing to my foreign friend, I really enjoy it*
- *I think it is really very interesting to write to a foreign e-pal. I think I will get more and more in the activity, so I will continue to write affirmatively.*
- *The answer is sure. I will keep the relationship with my foreign friend and continue to write to him.*
- *Yes, I can not find a reason why I do not keep a relationship with her.*
- *There is no doubt that it's a lot of fun writing to my E-pal. My E-pal is a very good girl, she had many topics and we chatted happily. I now put her in my list of best friends though I haven't met her.*

Another point deserving noting here is that a number of the subjects continued to write their pen pals when the new semester began even it was no longer required. All these served as good evidence to show that the students were active in communicating with the native speakers.

C. Higher Motivation and More Confidence

Most subjects in EG agreed that the E-mail exchange activity enhanced their autonomy, confidence and motivation. Choi (1998), Jogan et al. (2001), Gu (1998) and Shang (2007) all mentioned in their studies that E-mail increased the students' motivation. This is of great significance for the teaching of English writing, for in the present actual teaching one of the important factors the students lack is high motivation. In the present writing teaching, mainly the students write for exam, and the only reader of their writing is the teacher who will score their writings. Due to these reasons, students take writing as a boring activity. Another factor impeding students learning is their lack of confidence. Many

² Tokens refer to the individual occurrences of words; Types refer to distinct words within a text. For instance, in the sentence "You say either and I say either" there are 7 tokens and 5 types.

students do not have enough confidence to express themselves, to communicate with others. The result of the present study showed us a good way to enhance their confidence. In the exit interview, two subjects stated as follows:

- *My English is so poor, so I always do not speak and write. However, now I have much confidence in English when I found I could understand her and she also could understand me.*
- *Because of her (the E-mail partner) and the American movies I have seen (include "High School Musical"), I am more and more interested in English now. Though my English is still poor, I have confidence in myself.*

D. The Advantages and Problems

Table 5 showed that most students agreed with the statements about the advantages, which means they perceived that E-mail exchange made their writing meaningful; they got a better understanding of the foreign culture; and they felt more relaxed writing with E-mail compared with sitting in the traditional classroom writing on the paper.

Having direct communication with native speakers and letting them, rather than instructors, be the information-givers should be strongly encouraged. Since culture exists in every native speaker's thoughts, conversations, and behaviors, students can learn culture from native speakers directly. While it's impossible for all the learners to communicate with native speakers face to face, E-mail may serve a feasible way to have direct and authentic communication. The students can openly ask native speakers about their values and life styles. Through direct interaction with the native speakers, learners are able to notice the unique characteristics of the target language culture.

Many of the previous studies mentioned that the students in E-mail group gained a deeper understanding about the foreign culture after the E-mail correspondence (Liaw & Johnson, 2001; Jogan et al. 2001; Qi, 2006). Pan and Rong (2000) claimed E-mail exchange was a good way to teach students about culture. In fact, many subjects stated that they had known much more about American culture from their partners. The following statements are found in the interview:

- *The American culture may be the most important thing that I've learnt.*
- *I know more differences between America and China, about education, environment and many other aspects.*
- *From my e-pal, I know some things about their lives and their culture.*
- *By writing to my pen-pal I've known more about America.*

One interesting thing is that after the E-mail exchange a student even changed his opinion on the issue of going abroad. He stated like this: ***"About studying abroad, I change my mind now. Before, I think there is no need and it's just to get a diploma, but after chatting with the little American, I am shocked a lot and feel that there are so much I can't get in China and must go abroad to understand others' life philosophy if I want to contact with them. What's more, studying abroad means one can get a wider filed of vision."***

Teachers are always looking for authentic material and communicative activity to make classroom teaching more real and attractive for their students. But now, when students have E-pals from another country, they feel the need to communicate clearly. E-mail is independent of time and place, which allows the students to communicate with people they like. With E-mail exchange activity, students can extend their learning beyond the four walls of the classroom.

All these advantages may make the students willing to write, and thus contribute to the improvement of their writing proficiency. According to Table 4, the biggest problem encountered by students was deficiency in vocabulary, with the mean as high as 4.42, followed by poor expressing ability, low response, and cultural differences.

The students' statements in the exit interview confirmed the result obtained from the survey questionnaire. The following may be taken for example to support the point:

- *The main problem I came across in this activity is that my English writing ability is really poor, my E-pal's English is much better than mine. I feel guilt.*
- *Waiting the letter in reply is what I like the least. And I can't express myself most of the time.*
- *The problem what I came across is that I don't know many words' meaning.*
- *When we talked to each other I found that my vocabulary is so little that sometimes I can't express myself.*
- *In the activity, the biggest problem is that I can't express my opinions clearly in many times and feel the lack of vocabulary. So I should recite more words and phrases. That's indeed a big problem to me.*

Measures need to be taken to solve the above-mentioned problems. First, it's urgent to enlarge the students' vocabulary. Students should learn to use more strategies in accumulating vocabulary. Also reading may be a good way to enrich students' vocabulary and promote their writing skills. Stotsky (cited in Deng, 2000:28) stated, "Reading experience may be as critical a factor in developing writing ability in that reading enables students engage actively with new language and culture". Second, teachers should include culture into instruction. Cultural difference has become a main barrier impeding the successful communication across nations. Third, low response is another frequent complaint by the students. To overcome this problem, teachers of both sides need to encourage the students very well. And the teachers should be always ready to give the students a hand when they encounter problems.

VI. CONCLUSION

Few studies have been conducted on E-mail and English learning, particularly English writing in China. The present study was one of the few studies to investigate the impact of E-mail on English learning in which the EFL learners communicate with native speakers in the target language. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the

current research. The following are the major findings of the study.

The results of the quantitative data indicated that the students who used E-mail and the students who did not use E-mail significantly differ in their English writing performance. Both quantitative and qualitative data showed that their writing ability got improved in aspects of content, language, vocabulary and organization, except for the mechanics.

According to the analysis of the qualitative data, E-mail was found to be able to motivate students, help in learning culture, involve them in authentic communication, promote the autonomy in learning, and enhance the students' confidence in writing.

Generally, the present study was well perceived by the participants. The results got from the questionnaire and exit interview showed that they were in favor of the E-mail exchange activity. Therefore, it can be concluded that applying E-mail appropriately will undoubtedly contribute a lot to EFL writing teaching.

In summary, the study indicated that E-mail can indeed be a beneficial supplement to the traditional classroom despite a few drawbacks. Roberts claims, "When the E-mail classroom connection processes are truly integrated into the ongoing structure of homework and classroom interaction, then the results can be educationally transforming" (Warschauer 1995:95). Therefore, teachers should attempt to integrate E-mail into the overall English education program in order to make full use of this new technology.

Although the findings of the study are largely positive, several limitations should be noted here. First, the present study was conducted to a small sample over a short period, and the sample was not randomly chosen due to practical difficulties. Second, the difficulty in conducting the study was not fully estimated. The firewall of American side was too picky, which prevented the communication from starting smoothly in the beginning of the study. Third, the discussion on the cooperation in the activity with the American teacher was not detailed enough. This led to the teacher's poor encouragement to the American students in replying letters, which possibly influenced the findings. Last, because the researcher was the students' instructor as well as interviewer, it is possible that they might have been hesitant to criticize the activity.

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A Comparison of Perceived Use of the Metacognitive Reading Strategies by Iranian Master of Science Students for Hypertext and Printed Academic Materials

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Abstract—This study aims at finding out whether there are any significant differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian Master of Science (MSc) students for hypertext and printed academic materials. To this end, fifty four students in total were randomly selected from MSc students of Gonabad University of Medical Sciences in Iran. Having received the research instruments, the subjects completed the demographic information sheet and two other questionnaires, i.e., the survey of reading strategies (SORS) and the online survey of reading strategies (OSORS). The researchers then used the SPSS software for data analysis. The results showed that research subjects reported a moderate perceived use of metacognitive reading strategies while reading academic hypertext and printed materials.

Index Terms—metacognitive reading strategies, hypertext and printed academic materials, master of science students

I. INTRODUCTION

On the one hand, English is the language of science, technology and medicine and on the other language education in many countries including Iran do not have enough time at their disposal to develop learners general proficiency, they focus on reading at the cost of other skills since it has the highest academic use and surrender value in EFL contexts. Despite the exclusive focus on reading, high school and university graduates in Iran do not enjoy a good command of reading. The researchers experience in both high school and university level created the theoretical sensitivity to hypothesize that students deficiency is due to the fact that our language education system makes students and teachers' cover very difficult texts and hypertexts in a very limited time and as such leaves no room for learner training or helping language learners learn how to tackle texts and hypertexts strategically. This study aims to uncover the differences between the metacognitive reading strategies used by learners for hypertext and printed academic materials, especially at the university level.

Review of Related Literature

Reading is a profound state of change and the traditional texts are not the only constructor of meaning. The Internet has reshaped our mode of reading from a linear to a more multimodal approach that requires new kind of competences (Burke & Rowsell, 2008; Coiro & Dobler, 2007). According to Rossman (2005), traditional textbooks are not in line with the future needs of learners; therefore, teachers have used the World Wide Web (WWW) to overcome this shortcoming, the most common hypertext, into their ESL instruction (Liou, 1997 & Kasper, 2000). Similarly, the use of technology which aims at familiarizing learners with the challenge of reading various forms of electronic text is ever increasing (Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005) or hypertext. A hypertext is “a kind of information environment in which textual materials and ideas are linked to one another in multiple ways” (Burbules & Callister, 2000, p. 43).

In Iran where English is used as a foreign language, reading skill plays a vital role for Iranian MSc students in their academic context. They are required to read the MSc textbooks, articles in the international journals, magazines, CDs, eBooks, internet and other online materials in English although the medium of instruction is in Persian except for some limited number of international branches. In addition, most of the new academic knowledge and resources they need to acquire for improving their professional careers is mostly accessible in English.

According to Anderson (1991) in order to help students to handle their difficulties of reading in English, reading researchers and educators pay their attention to their reading process or the strategies they use rather than reading product or what is commonly known as reading comprehension. The term reading strategies is used to refer to conscious or subconscious procedures, actions, techniques that learners use to improve comprehension and interpretation of texts (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Reading strategies indicate how readers conceive of a task, how

they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they don't understand (Singhal, 2001). Oxford (1990) considered metacognitive strategies to be behaviours undertaken by the learners to plan, arrange, and assess their own learning.

Knowing the students' reading process or what reading strategy they use and how they use it when they encounter their reading difficulties can help teachers to know how to assist students to improve their abilities in reading (Aebersold & Field, 1997). Recent research related to reading strategies have shown that depending on their level of proficiency learners use different strategies. Research studies using metacognitive reading strategy questionnaires revealed that there is a relationship between the students' reading proficiency and reading strategy use (Carrell: 1989 & Monteiro, 1992). Carrell (1989) reported that good language learners use reading strategies to make up for lack of proficiency when they read texts.

In printed-text reading research, understanding learners reading strategies has led to the development of effective methods of intervention which aim at improving comprehension (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Jafari & Shokrpour (2012) showed that Iranian ESP students were using a limited number of strategies and their not even aware of this limited range. They suggested that second language reading teachers should instruct strategies explicitly that Iranian ESP students do not know.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no studies that investigate and compare the reading strategies of Iranian MSc students in relation to the type of texts i.e. printed text and hypertext. So while we know the importance of reading strategies, there is still a gap in our knowledge about the differences between the metacognitive reading strategies used by learners for hypertext and printed academic materials, especially at the university level and also the students' mastery level.

Anderson (2003) is one of the few researchers who have scrutinized this area of research. One of the few studies that have focused on this area of research is that conducted by Anderson (2003). He suggests that we gather reading strategies related to printed texts and hypertexts so as to better understand the differences and similarities between the strategy use in these two contexts. As teachers of English who would like to assist students in improving their ability of reading in English, we think that it should be useful to be aware of the reading strategies of students for these two types of texts and learn how to use them while reading to improve reading comprehension.

The current research is therefore conducted with Iranian MSc students to look at the differences and similarities in the perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies used for hypertext and printed academic materials. This comparison may shed light on the influence of the length of the students' preparation program on the acquisition of reading strategies. Also it may propose such a program as a prerequisite for English classes.

This study will provide significant data to fill in this gap in the researches on how the increased application of hypertext and internet in academic settings can be handled and what reading strategies should be taken into consideration when teaching to read online. Also this is an attempt to extend the literature on reading strategies and it is response to the literacy needs of students in the near future.

Research Questions

This quantitative study was designed to investigate the differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies used by Iranian MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials. More specifically, the study addresses the following questions:

1. Are there any significant differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials in English?
2. What metacognitive reading strategies do Iranian MSc students use better when they are reading hypertext and printed academic materials in English?
3. How often do MSc students in different fields use hypertext metacognitive reading strategies and printed metacognitive reading strategies for academic materials in English?
4. Do perceived use of metacognitive reading strategies for printed and hypertext academic materials in English by Iranian MSc students vary due to gender?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the expected relationships among variables in the study, we stated these hypotheses:

- 1- There are not any significant differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies used by Iranian MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials in English
- 2- Perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian MSc students when they are reading hypertext and printed academic materials in English are not different.
- 3- Perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian MSc students in different fields for hypertext and printed academic materials in English are the same.
- 4- There are not any significant differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian male and female MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials in English.

Operational Definition of Variables

Metacognitive reading strategies here are behaviours undertaken by the learners to plan, arrange, and assess their own learning. They are listed for printed and hypertext in appendix I and II. By hypertext/ online text we mean a computer-based text which can be read on the screen like textbooks, articles in the international journals, magazines,

CDs, eBooks, internet and other online materials in English. Printed materials are those traditional materials that are presented by teachers on pages like books or pamphlets.

II. METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Fifty four students, 22 to 38 years old, in total were recruited for this study. The subjects were all MSc students of Gonabad University of Medical Sciences in Iran, and they were studying Emergency Nursing, Surgical Nursing and Health Education. It was voluntary to participate in the study. The students are 18 males and 36 females from different cities of Iran who are studying different MSc fields in Gonabad University of Medical Sciences. Their first language is Persian and they have studied English at high school for six or seven years and have passed one or two English courses at university and they had been engaged in a variety of printed and hypertext reading tasks in English. They are all available cases, so there is no explicit standard for choosing them as subjects for this study.

Data collection and analysis

To determine the kind of strategies used by students who had experiences of reading hypertext and printed academic materials, the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) (Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2001) and the Online Survey of Reading Strategies (OSORS) (Amer, 2010) were adapted for use in the present study. SORS (see appendix I) and OSORS (see appendix II) include three main types of strategies: global reading strategies; problem solving strategies; and support reading strategies.

The researchers translated these instruments into Persian and performed factor analysis. The reliability coefficient of the translated version of the instrument was found to be 0.80. Just like the original version, the Persian SORS instrument includes 30 items and Persian OSORS instrument consists of 34 items, and each item in both questionnaires made the learners specify the frequency which he or she uses that item. Items are rated on a Likert type scale ranging from 5 (always or almost always) to 1 (never or almost never) apply this strategy.

The respondents also filled out a demographic data sheet and SORS and OSORS questionnaires after a short talk about the aims of the research. Students who had experiences in reading passages in print or hypertext entered the study. In each class, after a short brief, students first completed the demographic data sheet and then, during 20 minutes, they completed the two reading strategies questionnaires.

In this study, statistical indices such as mean and standard deviation and statistical tests such as correlation coefficient, paired-samples T-test, independent-samples T-test and one way ANOVA were used.

III. RESULTS

Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) state that the SORS is scored on a fivepoint Likert scale in which scores of 2.4 or below demonstrate low strategy use, 2.5 to 3.4 show moderate strategy use, and 3.5 or above signifies high strategy use. Many scholars have found that learners use the strategies in moderate or high level (Oxford, 1995; Berkowitz and Cicchelli, 2004; Pang, 2008).

To answer the first question of the study, students' perceived use of global strategies, problem-solving strategies and support strategies for printed text were in "moderate level". It was the same for online text except for global strategies that found students as high strategy users. This is summarized in the table 1. It shows that there were no significant differences between these three different strategies for printed and hypertext.

TABLE 1:
MEAN SCORES FOR STUDENTS PERCEIVED USE OF PRINTED AND HYPERTEXT READING STRATEGIES
(USING PAIRED-SAMPLES T- TEST)

Strategies	Texts	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-Value
Global	printed	3.47	0.635	0.120	0.801	0.430
	online	3.52	0.579	0.109		
Problem-solving	printed	3.48	0.719	0.135	0.694	0.494
	online	3.40	0.734	0.138		
Support	printed	3.22	0.756	0.142	0.303	0.764
	online	3.19	0.760	0.143		
Total	printed	3.39	0.628	0.118	0.312	0.758
	online	3.37	0.595	0.112		

The second question aims to find out the most frequently used metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian students. Students selected problem-solving strategies for printed texts as the most used strategies such as re-reading for better understanding and getting back on track to concentrate. As it is shown in table 2, the subjects of this study also reported note-taking as one of the least use strategy. Also read aloud as another effective strategy is one of the least use strategies for both online and printed texts.

TABLE 2:
THREE READING STRATEGIES USED MOST FREQUENTLY AND LEAST FREQUENTLY BY STUDENTS FOR HYPERTEXT AND PRINTED TEXTS

Text	Use	Strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation
Printed	MOST	25. When text becomes difficult, I reread to increase my understanding.	3.82	1.090
		9. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	3.75	0.887
		14. When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading.	3.71	1.117
	LEAST	5. When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	2.67	1.218
		13. I use reference materials such as (e.g. dictionary) to help me understand what I read.	3.03	1.170
		2. I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	3.03	1.290
Hypertext	MOST	1. I have a purpose in mind when I read on line.	3.92	0.899
		29 I scan the on-line text to get a basic idea of whether it will serve my purposes before deciding to read it.	3.89	0.994
		6. I think about whether the content of the on-line text fits my reading purpose.	3.85	0.848
	LEAST	2. I take notes while reading on-line to help me understand what I read.	2.82	1.055
		5. When on-line text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	2.82	1.248
		7. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading on-line.	2.85	1.007

The third question focused on perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian MSc students in different fields. The subjects' perceived use of metacognitive reading strategies in different fields revealed that there were not any significant differences. The data were analyzed by means of one way ANOVA. The results are shown in table 3.

TABLE3:
DIFFERENCES IN MEAN SCORES FOR STUDENTS PERCEIVED USE OF PRINTED AND HYPERTEXT READING STRATEGIES IN DIFFERENT FIELDS

Texts	Strategies	Fields	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	p-Value
Printed	Global	EmerNurs	3.54	0.603	0.213	0.927
		SurgNurs	3.46	0.694	0.168	
		Health	3.38	0.526	0.303	
		Total	3.47	0.635	0.120	
	Problem-solving	EmerNurs	3.53	0.554	0.196	0.691
		SurgNurs	3.31	0.840	0.203	
		Health	3.61	0.577	0.333	
		Total	3.40	0.734	0.138	
	Support	EmerNurs	3.61	0.625	0.221	0.220
		SurgNurs	3.09	0.811	0.196	
		Health	2.92	0.449	0.259	
		Total	3.22	0.756	0.142	
Total	EmerNurs	3.64	0.550	0.194	0.412	
	SurgNurs	3.28	0.670	0.162		
	Health	3.32	0.553	0.319		
	Total	3.39	0.628	0.118		
Online	Global	EmerNurs	3.58	0.433	0.153	0.947
		SurgNurs	3.50	0.637	0.154	
		Health	3.49	0.783	0.452	
		Total	3.52	0.579	0.109	
	Problem-solving	EmerNurs	3.79	0.609	0.215	0.265
		SurgNurs	3.30	0.745	0.180	
		Health	3.66	0.726	0.419	
		Total	3.48	0.719	0.135	
	Support	EmerNurs	3.41	0.704	0.249	0.357
		SurgNurs	3.18	0.818	0.198	
		Health	2.66	0.293	0.169	
		Total	3.19	0.760	0.143	
Total	EmerNurs	3.51	0.497	0.176	0.745	
	SurgNurs	3.33	0.662	0.160		
	Health	3.25	0.539	0.311		
	Total	3.37	0.595	0.112		

For the last question, we tried to find differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies used by Iranian male and female MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials. Using independent-samples T-test in table 4 shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the means of males and females students on the three types of strategies as well as on the overall mean of strategies. Moreover, students' gender in different fields did not affect the perceived use of strategies in our study.

TABLE 4:
MEAN SCORES FOR MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS PERCEIVED USE OF PRINTED AND HYPERTEXT READING STRATEGIES
(USING INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T- TEST)

Strategies	Texts	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	p-Value
Global	Printed	Male	3.21	0.698	0.285	0.426
		Female	3.55	0.614	0.130	
	Online	Male	3.13	0.705	0.288	0.151
		Female	3.63	0.507	0.108	
Problem-solving	Printed	Male	3.33	0.590	0.240	0.397
		Female	3.42	0.779	0.166	
	Online	Male	3.27	0.800	0.326	0.763
		Female	3.53	0.705	0.150	
Support	Printed	Male	3.22	0.916	0.374	0.370
		Female	3.22	0.732	0.156	
	Online	Male	3.11	0.840	0.343	0.552
		Female	3.21	0.756	0.161	
Total	Printed	Male	3.23	0.786	0.321	0.195
		Female	3.43	0.592	0.126	
	Online	Male	3.19	0.686	0.280	0.417
		Female	3.42	0.575	0.122	

IV. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to find the differences between perceived use of the metacognitive reading strategies by Iranian MSc students for hypertext and printed academic materials in English. Oxford (1995) claims that students’ strategies usage increases when they are in upper classes, but the result of this research was different. Quite the opposite of what the researchers expected, there was not a significant difference between lower and upper classes ($p > 0.05$).

It is noteworthy that students’ perceived use of global strategies, problem-solving strategies and support strategies for printed text were in “moderate level”. And it was the same for online text except for global strategies that found students as high strategy users. Their experiences can account for this.

Karbalaei (2010) suggested that students are not well versed in employing various useful and effective strategies for better comprehension such as summarizing, underlining, or note-taking. This is similar to our findings. Note-taking was as one of the least use strategy in this study.

Amer (2010) concluded that there were no statistically significant differences between the means of first and fourth-year males and females on the three types of strategies as well as on the overall mean of strategies that is in accordance to this study. This result is also consistent with the recent researches on gender and reading strategies (Phakiti, 2003; Poole, 2005).

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For meaningful education, it is very important to improve the reading proficiency of learners in English. So it is important to examine developments in the theories and practices for insights that can help us bring about significant changes in reading pedagogy in Iran. As we know metacognitive strategies are necessary for this change. As the results of this study show, Iranian MSc students are moderate users of metacognitive reading strategies so adding reading strategy instruction classes for Iranian students at the beginning of their academic study seems to be necessary. Also students in colleges and universities can be encouraged to attend reading strategy classes.

Statistical analyses revealed that there is not a significant difference in the total number of strategies used by the three groups. Thus, all the students were moderate users of reading strategies except in global strategies for online text that found students as high strategy users. Because one of the necessary techniques which readers should employ to understand the text is using reading strategies, and according to the findings of this research it is suggested that we as teachers should note reading strategy instruction when teaching to read. This may lead to better reading performances, too. Teachers should also give more attention to the least frequently used strategies reported in this study.

The subjects’ level of proficiency in English selected for this research and the numbers of them are the main reasons that make me cautious about the generalizability of the findings. The extent to which these findings can be generalized to all students at different fields and levels is still uncertain. Among other things, the researchers recommend that interested researchers: (1) examine the instructional effectiveness of different printed and online reading strategies used by male or female students who possess different learning styles; (2) work with subjects studying different courses or using different materials i.e. academic and non-academic and comparing the results with their genders or ages.

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APPENDIX I. THE SURVEY OF READING STRATEGIES INVENTORY (SORS)

Directions: Listed below are statements about what people do when they read *academic or school-related materials* such as textbooks or library books. Five numbers follow each statement (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), and each number means the following:

- **1** means “I **never or almost never** do this.”
- **2** means “I do this **only occasionally**.”
- **3** means “I **sometimes** do this” (about **50%** of the time).
- **4** means “I **usually** do this.”
- **5** means “I **always or almost always** do this.”

After reading each statement, **circle the number** (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that applies to you using the scale provided. Please note that there are **no right or wrong answers** to the statements in this inventory.

1. I have a purpose in mind when I read.
2. I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.
3. I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.
4. I take an overall view of the text to see what it is about before reading it.
5. When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.
6. I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.
7. I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I’m reading.
8. I review the text first by noting its characteristics like length and organization.
9. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.
10. I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.
11. I adjust my reading speed according to what I’m reading.
12. When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.
13. I use reference materials such as (e.g. dictionary) to help me understand what I read.
14. When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I’m reading.
15. I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.
16. I stop from time to time and think about what I’m reading.
17. I use context clues to help me better understand what I’m reading.
18. I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.
19. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.
20. I use typographical aids like boldface and italics to identify key information.
21. I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the text.
22. I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.
23. I check my understanding when I come across new information.
24. I try to guess what the material is about when I read.
25. When text becomes difficult, I reread to increase my understanding.
26. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.
27. I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.
28. When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.
29. When reading, I translate from English into my native language.
30. When reading, I think about information in both English and my mother tongue.

APPENDIX II. THE ONLINE SURVEY OF READING STRATEGIES INVENTORY (OSORS)

Directions: Listed below are statements about what people do when they read *online academic or school-related materials* such as ebooks or articles from internet. Five numbers follow each statement (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), and each number means the following:

- **1** means “I **never or almost never** do this.”
- **2** means “I do this **only occasionally**.”
- **3** means “I **sometimes** do this” (about **50%** of the time).
- **4** means “I **usually** do this.”
- **5** means “I **always or almost always** do this.”

After reading each statement, **circle the number** (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that applies to you using the scale provided. Please note that there are **no right or wrong answers** to the statements in this inventory.

Original article at: <http://ijedict.dec.uwi.edu/viewarticle.php?id=1159>

Global Strategies (17)

- 1 I have a purpose in mind when I read on line
- 3 I think about what I know to help me understand what I read on-line
- 4 I take an overall view of the on-line text to see what it is about before reading it
- 6 I think about whether the content of the on-line text fits my reading purpose
- 8 I review the on-line text first by noting its characteristics like length and organization
- 12 When reading on-line, I decide what to read thoroughly and what to ignore

- 14 When on-line text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading
- 15 I use tables, figures, and pictures in the on-line text to increase my understanding
- 17 I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading online
- 20 I use typographical features like bold face and italics to identify key information.
- 21 I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the on-line text.
- 23 When reading on-line, I check my understanding when I come across new information.
- 24 I try to guess what the content of the on-line text is about when I read.
- 27 I check to see if my guesses about the on-line text are right or wrong
- 29 I scan the on-line text to get a basic idea of whether it will serve my purposes before deciding to read it.
- 30 I critically evaluate the on-line text before choosing to use its information
- 32 When reading on-line, I look for sites that cover both sides of an issue.

Problem-solving strategies (8)

- 7 I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading on-line.
- 9 I try to get back on track when I lose concentration
- 11 I adjust my reading speed according to what I am reading on-line
- 16 I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading on-line
- 19 I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read on-line.
- 25 When on-line text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.
- 28 When I read on-line, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases
- 31 I can distinguish between fact and opinion in on-line texts

Support Strategies (9)

- 2 I take notes while reading on-line to help me understand what I read
- 5 When on-line text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read
- 10 I print out a hard copy of the on-line text then underline or circle information to help me remember it.
- 13 I use reference materials (e.g. an on-line dictionary) to help me understand what read on-line.
- 18 I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read on-line.
- 22 I go back and forth in the on-line text to find relationships among ideas in it
- 26 I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the on-line text
- 33 When reading on-line, I translate from English into my native language
- 34 When reading on-line, I think about information in both English and my mother tongue

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Chinese-English Translation Strategies of Public Signs Based on Functional Equivalence Theory

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Abstract—As cross-cultural communication between China and other countries becomes frequent and goes deeper, more and more foreigners have flooded into China. Consequently, as the bridge between the source and the target receptors, Chinese-English public signs, become increasingly important, playing an indispensable role in promoting our cities. Any misuse or misunderstanding of them will undoubtedly result in negative effects. Some mistranslated public signs might even damage the image of a city or the whole country. Unfortunately, many translated public signs we observe are of low quality, full of spelling or grammatical errors or marked by inaccuracy. Based on the above understanding, this paper is intended to explore some effective strategies and techniques for translating public signs in the light of Functional Equivalence Theory. The author expounds some views on C-E public signs translation. To begin with, the paper aims to make a detailed analysis of literature review of the Equivalence. Then the author gives the introduction of the public signs and features of them. After that, the author's analysis is the Chinese-English translation errors and the strategies.

Index Terms—public signs, Chinese-English translation, Functional Equivalence

I. INTRODUCTION

Now let us have a look at the significance and status quo of the related research. Economic and cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world are gaining in momentum with China's economic development and the deepening of its reform and opening up. The country has witnessed a growing influx of foreigners into it for various purposes. Accompanying the inflow, however, some problems occur: how could foreigners get effective guide in a non-English speaking country without bothering to ask others each time when they need such trivial help as finding their way to some places, taking a bus, making reservations, etc. Of course, the most direct, and effective way for them to get such help is to be aided by the translated public signs around them. Considering the reasons mentioned above, any misuse or misunderstanding of them will undoubtedly result in negative effects. Some mistranslated public signs might even damage the image of a city or even the whole country. Unfortunately, many translated public signs we observe are of low quality, which are either full of spelling or grammatical errors or marked by inaccuracy. From this perspective, probing into some effective strategies or techniques in the translation of public signs is of great importance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ranging from mathematics, logic, chemistry, computing to ethics, law, economy and art, the term "equivalence" may refer to different concepts in different disciplines. While in translation studies, equivalence is always a central issue which has caused heated controversy among many scholars and every theory has its historical background and environmental characteristics.

Eugene A. Nida, a renowned American scholar in the fields of translation theory and linguistics, is a key figure in equivalence theory. Talking about equivalence, we cannot overlook Nida's "Dynamic Functional Equivalence" which is his most notable contribution to translation theory. In order to gain a better perception of Nida's functional equivalence theory, it is essential and necessary to review some other discussions upon translation equivalence by the other scholars as the study of translation theories is systematical and expanded.

Susan Bassnett puts it, "equivalence in translation, then, should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version" (Bassnett, 2004, P.36). Equivalence can be considered as the relationship between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). Though the translators want to find a complete equivalence in target-language (TL) to source-language (SL) in both content and form, hardly can this ideal be achieved in reality due to numerous factors, such as the great differences between two languages and cultures, the subjectivity of the source author and so on.

As a famous linguist and one of the most influential translation theorist, Roman Jakobson introduced the notion of "equivalence in difference" and he distinguishes three kinds of translation: intralingual translation, interlingual translation and intersemiotic translation. He believes that any meaning of the signs in a language are the translations of the developed signs which have been change. Based on his semiotic approach to language, as he claims that there is no signatum without signum, he assigns the meaning (signatum) of word to the sign, not to the thing itself.

By introducing four shifts, namely, structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and intra-system shifts, the well-known

theorist, C. Catford, defines the for textual equivalence and views equivalence as a "key term". He insists that the main obstacles of the translation job is that of finding the translation counterpart in the target language and that the main aim of the translation theory is that of finding the characteristic and conditions of the translation counterparts. He also makes a difference between "formal correspondence" and "textual equivalence" within this book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. As for formal correspondence, he defines it as "exist where a target-language category occupies the same position in its language system as the same or some other category in the source language". C. Catford's also believes that "textual equivalence" can be reached by the choice of translation shifts when there stand no formal correspondences between SL and TL.

Mona Baker, a distinguished Egyptian scholar of translation studies did a great work in her book *In Other Words: A Course Book on Translation*. In the book she talked about equivalence at different levels (word, grammar, text, pragmatics). Unlike others theorists who put lots of elaborate analysis of the perspective of equivalence, Baker probes into equivalence at a different level: at word, above-word, grammatical, textual and pragmatic levels. (Baker, 2004) Besides that, she makes a distinction between lexical equivalence, grammatical equivalence textual equivalence and pragmatic equivalence. (Baker, 2004)

Another influential transition theorist Bassett points out that Popovic's four types make a good start and Neubert's three semiotic classifications direct the way of equivalence in translation. (Bassett, 2004) The classification of four categories of equivalence, namely, paradigmatic equivalence, linguistic equivalence, and textural equivalence, and stylistic equivalence were proposed by Popovic and Bassett quite agrees with it. (Bassett, 2004) Neubert assumes that from the perspective of view of a theory of a text, the translation of equivalence should be regarded to be as a semiotic category, including a pragmatic, semantic and syntactic component, following Perice's category and Bassett agrees with it too. (Bassett, 2004) Bassett also believes that equivalence in translation cannot be sought after as the same meaning, because the same meaning cannot be coexistent in the same text, let alone the two different texts both in target language and source language.

Now comes Nida's theory which provides a theoretical framework for this paper. In his great work *Toward a Science of Translating*, Nida distinguished two different types of equivalence-formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Formal correspondence's central study is the message in the form and content, but the dynamic equivalence's source is the effect in the equivalence. At the same time Nida makes it clear that there are not always formal equivalents between language pairs. If the translation aims at achieving formal rather than dynamic equivalence, he suggests that these formal equivalents should be used wherever possible. Nida asserts that the formal correspondence will change the patterns of target language in grammar and style and so it can make the readers misunderstand the meaning. (Nida, 2001)

Dynamic equivalence can be described as a kind of theory that a translator will try to impress the readers in the target language as the original language in the way of translation. They say that although the original text is translated, the translated way or the changing way can be restored by back translation. That is to say the message can be regarded as a faithful translation. (Nida, 1982).

It is widely acknowledged that translation aims to achieve both formal equivalence of (content-oriented and form-oriented) factors and functional equivalence of extratextual (situational and, above all, recipient -oriented) factors. People can learn that Nida is the supporter of the dynamic equivalence theory and thinks it is a quite effective method to translate texts. Nida's idea is easily understood if we understand his translation phenomenon ----- the Bible translation. That is to say, Nida's translation should have the same effect on the target language reader as the Bible does in its original language readers. That is the reason why Nida thinks dynamic equivalence in the translation practice is correct and it is communicative at the same time.

Nida uses the message of the text in his translation, though he uses linguistic method too. What he has done is to ensure the clearness of the message in the target context. Nida's theories of translation are stated in terms of how to produce an acceptable translation. So we can translate according to his principle of functional equivalence.

III. PUBLIC SIGNS

In both work and life public signs provide much convenience to people, however, it remains a question that how many people really know the definitions and meanings of public signs. But what is a sign because the definition of signs in English is different from what we see in China, and the latter has been given more connotations.

First, let us compare the different definitions of public signs: according to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, a sign means a piece of paper, metal, etc. to give information in public or warn people. while in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a sign refers to a board or other device outside a shop, hotel, etc, to distinguish its name or its function.

Then according to *A Chinese-English Dictionary on Signs*, which serves the international tourists in China, it is the first specialized dictionary in China on the standardization of C-E signs, the public signs are classified into the following eleven specific categories according to the needs and behavioral characteristics of the international tourists, the eleven categories are: Part one, Signs and Slogans: signs; business promotion; slogans; place names; weather forecast. Part Two, Traveling: customs immigration quarantine; travel by air; travel by cars and buses; taxi; travel by railway; travel by public transport; car/auto repair; travel by boats. Part Three, Catering: restaurants; menus of Chinese

food; menus of Western food; world famous alcoholic drinks; bars and supplies; terms of alcoholic drink servers; non-alcoholic drinks; desserts, candies and snacks. Part Four, Accommodation: accommodation types; management and staff; services and facilities; Part Five, Visiting: tourist destinations; places of interest in China; dynasties and historical periods of China; medical service; educational institutions; armed forces. Part Six, Recreation: sports and games; holidays and festivals; entertainment; television. Part Seven, Shopping: shops; commodities: financial services. Part Eight, Communicating: post and telecommunications; the press; publications; libraries. Part Nine, Titles and Positions: professional titles; ranks and positions; degrees and honors, military and police ranks. Part Ten, Organizations: The People's Republic of China; Part Eleven, Trades and Professions: companies and factories; manufactures and distributors. construction and decoration. services and products repairs, professionals and engineers, consultants, contractors, brokers and agents, advertising and promotion.

Since public signs have a wide use in many fields, scholars have assorted the functions of the language of public signs into four categories: directing, prompting, restricting and compelling. The four features of public signs are concerned with diction, grammar, stylistic and cultural features.

A. *Diction*

Public signs should be concise and to the point so there are less descriptive words such as adjectives and adverbs. Nouns and verbs are frequently used. Noun phrases are usually in the form of "Noun+Noun" to indicate the name of a place or a direction. Noun phrases are quite often adopted in public signs because they are direct, simple and informative, and people will get the important information at the first glance.

B. *Grammar*

The first grammatical feature is the using of simple present tense, which can make public signs clear and concise. Another grammatical feature is that public signs are characterized by being striking and impressive as they are required to be concise.

C. *Stylistic Features*

Affected by its functional features, public signs are firstly characterized by conciseness and directness. Another stylistic feature is that translations should be standard, following the international practice and try to avoid any kind of ambiguity.

D. *Cultural Features*

In terms of translation and culture, many theorists have offered us their remarks. Newmark defines culture as a life way to a specific community. According to Nord, cultural translation errors are due to an inadequate decision with regard to reproduction or adaptation of culture-specific conventions. Nord also said "a culture-specific phenomenon is one that is found to exist in a particular form or function in only one of the two cultures being compared. Translating means a kind of cultural comparison. As a translator he or she has to explain the cultural phenomenon in the source language with the cultural knowledge in his or her own culture. (Nord, 2001) Susan Bassnet once compare a translator to a surgeon because when he is doing the operation on the heart, he has to pay attention to the surroundings. That is to say if a translation does not pay attention the cultural background, it is very dangerous. (Bassnet, 1991)."

Generally speaking, in China, cultural features refer to two general types. One is the local characteristics different from various English speaking countries; the other one refers to public signs that bear Chinese characteristics in China. Eugene A Nida puts forward that because the culture can be regarded as the whole thoughts and beliefs of the society, the most important thing is the way of its interaction among the members in the community.

IV. COMMON PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC SIGNS TRANSLATION IN CHINA

Christiane Nord, a famous German theorist, holds that only a translation error can hamper the aim of translation to have a specific function for the readers in the target language. (Nord, 2001) That is to say, translation errors can be classified into four categories, namely, linguistic translation errors, cultural translation errors, pragmatic translation errors and text-specific translation errors."(Nord, 2001) Similarly, the errors of public signs are divided into three major types, namely, linguistic translation errors, cultural translation errors and pragmatic translation errors.

Among them, linguistic errors are often due to deficiencies in the translator's source or target language competence. (Nord, 2001) As for the linguistic translation errors, the first kind is the misspelling Problem. In reality, it is common to witness the misspelled public signs in China. These errors or the typos are due to carelessness of translators or printers. The second kind is the grammatical problems. Grammatical rules, being just the organizers of words, which considered as the foundation of a language, are quite important during the process of translating. Therefore, the translated public signs having grammatical errors usually make foreigners feel perplexed about the intended meaning of them. Besides that some of these linguistic translation problems are restricted to language pairs, as might be the case of cognates or false friends. Nord thinks that contrastive grammar and comparative stylistics can provide valuable help in solving these problems (Nord, 2001).

For a successful translator, being familiar with two cultures is even more important than mastering two languages because language is the carrier of culture and translation is also an exchange of two cultures. Thus words can only be

meaningful in its cultural background. To make accurate and reasonable translation, translator should put language in appropriate cultural background in translation and shift the cultural perspective from their countries to that of the target culture. Only after that the linguistic and cultural barrier can be overcome. Sometimes one may come across the circumstance that during the process of translation practice, namely, the words of the source text don't have their equivalent counterparts in the target text.

V. STRATEGIES

The remaining part of the paper will mainly focus on some strategies for public signs translation from diversified perspectives. After a thorough investigation of the public signs translation and their application status in China, the author thinks that we shall study and improve public signs translation from the following two aspects.

A. *Macroscopic Perspective*

a. Translator's comprehensive quality

For this perspective, the most important one is the translators' comprehensive quality. Translator should be responsible for the quality of translation and set high standards. Bell described translator's competence that a translator masters as knowledge and skills, and he classified competence into knowledge of source language, knowledge of target language, knowledge of text typology, contrastive knowledge and the competence to decode the source language and code the target language. (Bell, 2001)

b. Setting up specific public signs translation supervision departments

Though standardization of public signs translation has aroused widespread concern in all social circles, most of them are intellectuals and the local governments seldom take any practical action to set up specific departments to supervise and offer guidance to these problems. After sorting out so many mistranslated public signs in China, it is suggested that concerned departments shall be responsible for the standardization of Chinese-English public signs, or specific departments be set up to take charge of the supervision, inspection of Chinese-English public signs as well as replace the current public signs according to national public signs compulsory standards.

B. *Microscopic*

As mentioned above, we have made the study of the public sign's problems from many aspects. Hence, under the guidance of Functional Equivalence, we'll try to find out the corresponding strategies on the microscopic level with an intention for improvement during the practice of the C-E public sign translation.

a. Strategies from Linguistic Perspective

Owing to the translator's the casualness and unsoiled theoretical knowledge, the ridiculous linguistic mistakes are quite witnessed even in the big cities. Without the elimination of linguistic errors, the intended meaning of original text of public signs is hard to achieve. As the causes of producing this language error are multifaceted, the linguistic perspective errors are not easy to shake off, but it does not mean that we will allow this absurd mistakes. Instead, much attention should be paid to this kind of mistakes. Here are some methods to avoid these kinds of mistakes such as correcting the spelling mistakes, back translation and following international standard

b. Strategies from purpose Perspective

To Nida, translation composes of producing the closest natural equivalence of the source language in the way of meaning and the next one is in the way of style. (Nida, 1982) As we know, translators are also message senders. Deriving from different intentions, when handling the cultural factors, translators have their own preference. To the overall translation action, the most important principle determining any translation process is the purpose. Holding his own purpose or an imposed one by his patron in translation, a translator hopes that his translation produces certain influence on the target culture. A translator's translation purpose is quite different from the purpose of the ST author is often the case.

c. Strategies from cultural perspective

There are some techniques for the public signs translation in term of the cultural vacuity such as borrowing, the choice of China English, employment of explanation and use of Pinyin plus Free Translation. If he does not have the beliefs and practices of other cultures, a translator's perspective of the world must be tragically restricted. Nida thinks that if it were not for the many misunderstandings about the language and culture, the cross-cultural understanding can be reached without obstacles. Because words are only meaningful in the cultures, the successful translation method should be the biculturalism instead of the bilingualism. (Nida, 2000)

d. Strategies from pragmatic perspective

To be clear about who he is translating for—the target audience ----- is very important for a translator. Nida also thinks that the target readers are the important factor in deciding the translation method (Nida, 1993) In addition to the analysis about the abilities above, such as the basic bilingual skills and the clear understanding of the cultural difference, some strategies should also be accounted from the pragmatic perspective like standardization.

VI. CONCLUSION

Nida, who was greatly influenced by Modern Reception Aesthetics, emphasizes reader response a lot in his

translation practice and translation theory. He asserts that in lexical, grammatical and rhetorical levels, we can compare the validity of the translation. But we cannot stop here. Rather, we should make sure that the receptors understand and appreciate the translation and that is more important. (Nida, 1993) Enlightened by various equivalence theories interpreted by a number of innovative theorists, the author applies Nida's theory to the public signs translation and discusses the public signs translation strategies from the perspective of functional equivalence. With translation theory being the guidance, the translation activity is supposed to conform to the theories and also further develop them. But every theory has its limitations and it is no exception of Functional Equivalence, so it is impossible to apply Functional Equivalence to all the translation of public signs into English. However, Functional Equivalence has helped to bring the target text into focus, which has brought innovation to the translation theory. This will make contribution to the standardization and regulation of translation on public signs.

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The Effect of Focused Meta-linguistic Written Corrective Feedback on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Essay Writing Ability

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Abstract—This study tried to investigate the possible effects of focused Meta-linguistic highlighted error feedback on grammatical accuracy of writing among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. After selecting 60 homogenous participants among 90 university students attending Ghaemshahr University and randomly assigning them to two intact groups of 30 students, the researcher exposed the participants of the experimental group to 12 sessions of the intended treatment. During the treatment sessions, the said individuals were exposed to focused meta-linguistic feedback upon the submission of the drafts of their essays; in comparison, the subjects in the control group, upon the submission of their essays, were corrected using traditional approaches. After the completion of the study and performing the due data analysis on the results, a significant progress was found among the subjects in the experimental group as compared to the control group.

Index Terms—focused meta-linguistic feedback, written corrective feedback, essay writing

I. INTRODUCTION

English language has been valued as one of the most broadly spoken languages. Knowledge of English language has become the basic requirement in most areas of all professions. When people want to learn English, they face various problems in their communication be it written or spoken.

Writing is considered as one of the most significant language skills in second or foreign language teaching and learning contexts. The ability to write proficiency in an academic context is the most important goal to a considerable number of L2 learners. Written texts produced by FL or SL learner contain a whole of array of grammatical and rhetorical errors. Usually, learners give a piece of writing in their instructor to be scored and when the instructor gives it back, it is usually put aside and forgotten as the learners begin a new writing. Should teachers provide some sort of feedback on the writing assignments of the language learners? And if so how, has been a matter of considerable debate in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Any indication to learners by teachers that their use of the target language is incorrect is referred to as “written corrective feedback” (Lightbown & Sapada, 1999).

Zamel (1983, as cited in Naidu, 2007) looks at the importance of feedback from a different perspective remarking that by studying what it is learners do in their writing, teachers can learn what learners still need to be taught”. That is one important reason why the teachers' feedback is crucial in helping to improve learner writings. The teacher gives feedback and the teacher will help the learners see their mistakes and weaknesses and encourage them to overcome the problems in order to produce a more proficient text next time. This process is believed to be more effective in improving the learners' writing proficiency (Muncie, 2000; Myers, 1997).

The most popular way of feedback has been written comments on the student's final draft, pointing out problems and making suggestions for improvement of future papers. More recently, many teachers have started making comments on students' initial drafts, offering suggestions for the future development of the final drafts (Naidu, 2007).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chastain (1988) stated writing is a main communication skill and a unique asset in the process of learning a second language. Both of these aspects are necessary in a common language class, and both can serve to improve the other. Writing may not be included in the goals of all language courses although it is usually included as one of the four language skills taught. In elementary courses, the focus is on writing as a fundamental process in learning the language. However, in advanced composition courses, the emphasis is primarily on writing as communication in addition to the fact that increased knowledge of language system in one of the by-products of writing to express one's ideas (p.244).

Depending upon the teacher, writing's goals may vary. Some teachers focus almost entirely on the language itself, some on communication and others on both the forms and the message. Writers should consider the reader, the effect they want to achieve, and the relationship they wish to establish with the reader. Furthermore, the creation of meaning, and the use of language and the correctness of grammar are to be taken into account. The long-term practical goal must be the ability to use the learned materials to communicate a message that a native speaker can understand. This applies to any course, with the accuracy requirements rising as the student advance in their study and practice with the language.

Short-term goals are the same except that they apply to specific segments of the learning material (Chastain, 1988, p.245).

Considering the works done on the effect of the focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback in relation to writing ability we can see different and inconclusive results. According to Some researchers (e.g. Kepner, 1991; Sheppard, 1992; Truscott, 2007) state grammar correction does not have a positive effect on the improvement of L2 writing accuracy. Krashen (1982) and Truscott (2007) claim that corrective feedback (CF) is seen as not only ineffective but also potentially harmful. In contrast, other researchers (e.g. Bitchener and Knoch, 2008; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2002; Sheen, 2007) claim that CF is valuable in promoting greater grammatical accuracy.

Ellis, Sheen, and Murakami. (2008), for example, addressed the differential effects of focused and unfocused feedback on accuracy improvement of English as Foreign Language student writings. Both feedback methods helped long-term accuracy of EFL learners more than no feedback method. This indicated that CF is effective in itself, at least where English articles are concerned. However difference in the performance of focused and unfocused feedback groups was non-significant.

According to Ellis (2008), there are some theories which offer that focused CF is more successful than other types of feedback since learners are more likely to pay attention to those corrections which focus on specific error types.

Sheen (2007), for example, examined the differential effects of two approaches (direct and meta-linguistic) to focused feedback on the accurate use of English definite and indefinite articles in ESL student writings. This study showed that focused written CF helped improve ESL learners' accuracy, especially when meta-linguistic feedback was provided.

Sheen (2007) investigated the differential effects of the provision of direct focused written CF accompanied by oral meta-linguistic negotiation and mere direct written CF on the accuracy of EFL writing. The erroneous use of the forms in focus for the experimental group was negotiated in addition to CF provided, the erroneous use of the forms in focus was corrected through CF for the contrast group, and some comments on the quality of writings were provided for the control group. Both the experimental and the contrast groups showed improvement over time. The study showed that complementation of direct written CF and meta-linguistic discussion induced positive effects on writing accuracy, and that direct written CF with meta-linguistic discussion was superior to direct CF without such discussion.

III. THE PRESENT STUDY

A. *Statement of Problem*

Having worked as an English instructor for years, the researchers have noticed that in comparison to the other language skills, writing is most neglected by both students and teachers. It is also observed that a considerable number of teachers are not familiar with appropriate techniques to help their students improve their writing ability. In addition, majority of students, including those at higher levels of L2 learning, fail to use accurate grammar needed for acceptable writing. The nature of the procedures adopted by the teachers in grammar correction and giving feedback has constantly been an issue of great concern to the researcher.

According to Allwright (1995), Claudron (1977), and Long (1977) (as cited in Tatawy, 2002), several problems such as inconsistency, ambiguity and ineffectiveness of teachers' correction have been identified by the researchers. They put the lack of the effectiveness of corrective feedback down to the ambiguous and unsystematic approaches adopted by the majority of teachers.

According to Zamel (1985) (as cited in Tatawy, 2002), teachers provide students with contradictory comments on their written work and make arbitrary corrections. Moreover, it is not known to what extent the corrective feedback on linguistic errors determine accurate performance in writing. The most common method for providing corrective feedback on L2 writing in Iranian universities and language institutes is still traditional; language learners are assigned to write a paragraph or an essay on a particular topic. Their writings are then corrected by underlining and circling the errors and writing the correct form above or under the errors. And then they are given back to the learners. We call this kind of error correction direct error correction. What happens when the students receive their written work? Do they make sure that they understand the teacher's comments and objections? Not always. The researcher in this study seeks to explore the most efficient techniques for giving proper feedback to a written product made by L2 learners so as to introduce to the teachers of the most efficient ways of improving the accurate use of linguistic forms and structures in writing.

B. *Purpose and Research Question*

This study seeks to investigate whether focused Meta-linguistic corrective feedback can contribute to reaching the most appropriate ways of giving feedback in writing and to indicate that written corrective feedback can play a role in improving grammatical accuracy of Iranian learner's writing. The researchers correct the correction directed at selected grammatical points (focused feedback), extra forms of focused feedback may include written meta-linguistic explanation (the provision of grammar rules and the example at the end of the student's script with a reference back to places in the text where the error has occurred) and spoken meta-linguistic explanation (e.g., a mini-lesson through which rules and examples are presented, practiced and discussed; conferences between teacher and small groups of students).

The findings of this study can help instructors to provide their students with the most useful type of feedback to ensure their improvement in using accurate grammatical forms in writing. Moreover, these findings may lead to the increase in learner's self-awareness of their own improvement in writing. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the answer to the following research question:

Does focused Meta-linguistic written corrective feedback have any significant effect on the accuracy in the production of specific grammatical forms in writing?

C. Participants

Total number of the participants was 47, selected from among two classes of essay writing who were then studying in Qaemshahr University. Of course, all the participants were majoring in English Translation. They were in two classes randomly assigned as experimental and control groups. 22 participants were chosen for the experimental group and 25 students for the control group. In order to increase the validity and reliability of findings, the study was conducted with the same teacher for both the control and experimental classes.

D. Instruments

In order to have reliable and valid results in this research, these instruments were implemented.

1- A Nelson test (general proficiency test) was used in order to determine the participants' level of proficiency and place the test takers in a single level of proficiency and selecting two nearly homogeneous groups. Experimental and control groups.

2- Since this research involved the writing skill, a writing test was necessarily used as a pre-test, and after the treatment sessions, the same test was used as a post-test. For this part of writing test from Interchange/Passages Placement and Evaluation Package test by Tay Lesely with Christa Hanson and Jean Zokowski/Faust (Cambridge University Press, Third Edition, 2005) was used.

E. Procedure

In order to collect data for this study several steps were taken. At first, the researchers needed to be sure that all the participants were at the intermediate level and the two groups had to be parallel regarding their level of proficiency, so a general proficiency test was administered. In order to choose students, the researcher used Nelson test for 65 students of Qaemshahr University. The research ranged students' scores from highest to the lowest score and from among all the scores 47 students whose scores were in the middle of the whole range were selected. And the rest remained in classes without knowing that their final or post-test papers will not be included in the statistical procedures of the study. They were in two intact classes randomly assigned as experimental and control group. 22 participants were chosen for the experimental group and 25 students for the control group.

On the first session in both classes, the writing section B (appendix 2) of the interchange placement test was administered as the pretest to assess the participants writing ability in order to make sure that there was no statistically significant difference in the essay writing ability of the participants. And then to compare the results of the posttest to see how much progress each group had made. The essay written by the learners were scored by the three raters. And afterward the inter-rater reliability of the scores was calculated in order to determine the consistency of rating. After that, the researcher has twelve sessions between the pre-test and the post-test were divided into four parts. Each four sessions, one specific area of grammar was focused on and the students were given feedback only on that area. Three parts of linguistic errors were selected to be focused on within each four sessions. The researcher chose to be targeted in the research based on the frequency of their occurrence during the first writing task (the pre-test). The instructor chose a topic and participants had 30 minutes to write an essay about the topic, that specific error types were corrected by the teacher and who focused on particular structural errors and then explained the rule to participants. Next, the teacher asked them to produce another text with the same topic as before. He required them to submit their papers in order to receive feedback on their performance based on the specific error types which were targeted. This procedure took place within each four sessions with a different topic of writing and a specific error type to be corrected. On the last session in two classes, the writing section C (appendix 3) of the interchange placement test was administered as the posttest of the learners writing ability in order to see how much progress each group had made. The essay written by the learners were scored by the same three raters. And afterward the inter-rater reliability of the scores was calculated in order to determine the consistency of rating. Then the means of the scores of the control and experimental groups were compared through implementing the paired-sample T-test for determining the statistical significance of the difference between the means on the two sets of scores.

IV. RESULTS

Initially to make sure participants were homogenized, the Nelson proficiency test was given to all of the participants of two classes which were selected for the purpose of this study. The results of this proficiency test are given in the table below.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC FOR HOMOGENIZING TEST

		first group	second group
N	Valid	32	33
	Missing	1	0
Mean		33.2500	29.9394
Std. Error of Mean		1.51205	1.77948
Median		35.0000	31.0000
Mode		35.00	33.00
Std. Deviation		8.55344	10.22234
Variance		73.161	104.496
Skewness		-.007	-.039
Std. Error of Skewness		.414	.409
Kurtosis		-.649	-.743
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.809	.798
Range		33.00	39.00
Minimum		17.00	11.00
Maximum		50.00	50.00
Sum		1064.00	988.00

As indicated in table 1, the mean score of first group was 33.25 and the mean score of second group was 29.93. Descriptive statistics for the two groups in pre-test are displayed in table 2.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC PRE-TEST OF WRITING BY GROUPS

Groups		N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Pretest	Exp	22	14.18	3.59	.44
	Con	25	14.88	3.53	.40

The mean score achieved by participants of the experimental group on the pre-test was 14.18, while their counterparts in the control group achieved a mean score of 14.88.

And in order to see whether the two groups were also homogenous regarding their essay writing ability or not. The means between the pre-tests obtained from the two groups were compared using the paired-samples t-test.

TABLE 3

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	control group in pre test - experimental group in pre test	.46970	4.69769	.57825	-.68514	1.62453	.812	65	.420

The results of the paired-samples t-test shown in table 3 demonstrate that homogeneity of the scores between the two groups. The column labeled *sig. (2-tailed)* is our probability value. If this value is less than .05 (e.g. .04, .01, .001), then it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the two sets of scores (pallant, 2002, p.212). In this table, the probability value is .42. This means that the probability value was more than .05 ($p=.42>.05$) indicating that the control and experimental groups 'scores were not significantly different from each other. Therefore, it was made certain that the groups were actually homogeneous.

The descriptive statistics for the two groups in post-test are displayed in table 4.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS POST-TEST OF WRITING BY GROUPS

Groups		N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Posttest	Exp	22	15.54	3.24	.39
	Con	25	14.40	3.54	.40

This table shows that the mean score achieved by participants of the experimental group on the post-test was 15.54, while in the control group achieved a mean score of 14.40.

Then the means between the post-test obtained from the two groups were compared using the paired-samples t-test in order to see which of the two groups had made more progress in writing skill.

TABLE 5

Paired Samples Test

Pair	CONTROL GROUP - EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
1		-1.50000	4.42458	.54463	-2.58770	-.41230	-2.754	65	.008

The result of comparing the mean performance of the two groups in posttest has been reported. In this table, the probability value is .008. This means that the probability value was less than .05 ($p=.008<.05$) indicating that the mean performance of the two sets of scores in post test are significantly different and the focused meta-linguistic feedback group has outperformed the traditional-based writing group.

V. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The type of the techniques used by the teachers for grammar correction and giving feedback has been a matter of controversy. It is observed that teachers utilize various techniques so as to help their students improve their writing ability. One of the most popular methods is to give relevant feedback based on errors made by a learner.

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of focused meta-linguistic Written Corrective Feedback on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Essay Writing Ability. The result of t-test revealed a significant difference between the performance of the students in the experimental and control groups. Based on the result, it was inferred that the experimental group performed better than the control group due to employing focused meta-linguistic CF as treatment. So it can be concluded that focused meta-linguistic CF can be used for not only revising students writing but also for instructional purposes. Employing focused meta-linguistic CF improves Iranian EFL learners writing ability. In other words, employing focused meta-linguistic feedback led to a significantly fewer errors in writing and helped learners to become aware of their own errors and monitor themselves. The student become more independent learners and develops autonomy.

The results of this study showed that the participants considered focused meta-linguistic CF to be a very effective method because they could learn English grammar rules from their own errors by applying their grammar knowledge in writing, they could become aware of their common mistakes through the teacher's constant error feedback and reduce those errors, and correcting their own errors in their essays helped them improve their writing skills and accuracy. However, the results of this study could not be generalized to all L2 writing contexts because as Ferris (2006) stated, students might make use of the feedback they are provided with in different ways. Nevertheless, based on the findings of this study, we can conclude that focused meta-linguistic CF would most probably be more efficacious in comparison with the traditional based corrective feedback.

The results of the current study can be used in all educational centers. They have direct or indirect implications for and applications to teaching, learning, test development, syllabus design and material development. This study, according to the achieved results, may have some hints for English teachers who might, for sure, pay attention to teaching writing or any other four major skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing because focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback cannot be limited to any skills or subjects in isolation.

The main pedagogical implication of corrective feedback in general has addressed the teachers' role not only in motivating the students to make use of accurate language forms and structures, but also in spotting learners' errors and providing them with the most appropriate kind of feedback in order to confirm their improvement in writing more accurately.

Therefore, language teachers, institutes, universities, and the Ministry of education take an important part in promoting student's understanding of focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback and its application in every field of study and subject, language learning and teaching, etc. university and institute teachers and professors should help each other to enhance and develop focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback for all areas of study.

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Cohesion of EFL Teaching at Chinese High Schools and Universities

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Abstract—Fine cohesion of EFL teaching at high schools (including junior and senior ones) and universities can ensure the consistency of Chinese EFL educational policy, which has been a significant proposition in the field of Chinese EFL education in recent years. This paper, based upon the investigation of *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation)*, employed the method of education policy analysis, examined the cohesion of the three phases (junior high school English, senior high school English and college English) from the perspectives of text and the “standard” implementation. Results indicated that although the “standard” had much room for improvement in the text, the cohesion of EFL teaching at the three phases proved to be good in terms of both theory and practice.

Index Terms—cohesion, EFL teaching, policy analysis, text analysis, implementation effect

I. INTRODUCTION

In China senior high school EFL teaching is a bridge that not only connects compulsory education with college one, but also the extension of English education at the compulsory stage and preparation phase of college English education. Since the Chinese Ministry of Education released *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation)* (*ECSSSE*) in 2003 (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2003), senior high school English teaching reform has gradually been practiced all over China for more than 10 years and significant progress has been made. “In the past decade great changes have taken place in senior English teaching, and students have made prominent progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and ‘dumb English’ previously criticized is gradually disappearing” (Zou, 2012).

In order to verify the implementation effect of *ECSSSE* in an objective and overall way, the Chinese Ministry of Education organized relevant experts to make an investigation all over the country. The investigation employed the method of group sampling, involved 72 senior high schools of different categories and levels from eight provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government with its participants being experts of *ECSSSE* writers, coursebook compliers, English instructors from various districts and cities, teachers and administrators from schools, senior school students and some of the college students. The investigation adopted the main methods applied in educational science research which included questionnaires and interviews. In addition, it combined quantitative analysis with qualitative one to process the data collected so as to examine various issues with regard to the implementation of *ECSSSE* in an all-around way. The research questions consisted of several categories, including objective and value orientation, contents and structure, implementation effect and the text of *ECSSSE* itself. Among them the cohesion of *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation)* was one of the focuses, belonging to the dimension of “contents and structure” and simultaneously an important factor to be considered in the dimension of implementation effect. To be more specific, it refers to whether senior English under the guidance of *ECSSSE* can serve as a connecting link between compulsory education (junior English) and college education (college English) at both theoretical and practical levels.

II. THEORETICAL BASIS

ECSSSE as policy text of Chinese foreign language education plays a crucial role in the guidance of senior high school EFL teaching. Any policy made by the authorities will aim to ensure the unanimous adoption and implementation of authoritative standard and value in different groups, and policy of foreign language education is no exception (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Policy research may explore the nature of policy and its existing problems, look for practical replacement project and predicts its implementation effect (Goertz, 2006). Education policy can be either material or symbolic. The former is practical and evaluative while the latter advocates a sort of idea. Hence the object of such researches may include both implementation effect and policy text itself. In other words, there are three categories of policy researches: social background of a policy, policy and text, policy implementation and effect, and each of the categories is composed of various specific research questions (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). For example, the first category includes the source of a policy, reasons for its implementation, its relations to the preceding policy, policy ensemble and relevant aspects of policy implementation. Rizvi & Lingard (2010) listed in details the crucial issues on policy analysis. There are many issues to be taken into account, but education policy analysis need not be made in an all-around way.

Researchers may simply discuss about some of the issues according to their own research purpose and standpoint.

Foreign education policy research belongs to public policy domain within social science category, with the characteristics of public policy and the issues it focuses upon prove to be almost the same in nature as public policy research. It is worth noting that this category of research has become a new focus in the foreign education world. Zou ((2011) analyzed the characteristics of policy research in foreign language education and based upon this, he proposed three relevant essential issues and specific research questions that derived from them.

In addition, “policy ensemble” is an important concept with respect to education policy research, consisting of a set of policies that are closely associated with each other, either one being succeeded by another or simply having a progressive relationship. There exists intertextuality among the policies that form “policy ensemble”. In other words, between the policy texts there is implicit or explicit concrete cross-referencing in terms of wording or idea (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The introduction of the notion “policy ensemble” makes it possible for policy analysis to avoid the predicament of having one’s view of the important overshadowed by the trivial and the arrival of one-sided conclusion. As far as researches on foreign language education policy are concerned, when a policy is analyzed, it is required to be taken into account whether the policy is simply one of the “policy ensemble” so that the policy itself can be better understood.

At the same time, research methods are also to be considered. For different questions, education policy research employs different methods, including both qualitative analysis and quantitative one. Maguire & Ball divided qualitative methods of education policy into *elite studies*, *trajectory studies* and *implementation studies* (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Elite studies, by means of interview with the main policy makers, interpret policy text and policy construction process, and show concern for the political factors that cause policy text to come into being. Trajectory studies discuss the whole process of a policy emergence, its implementation and even its backwash effect. Implementation studies pay special attention to the social environment of policy implementation and use the methods of interview, observation, text analysis and even portfolio. Rizvi & Lingard (2010) believed that qualitative studies of education policy were supposed to include policy text analysis, use critical discourse analysis, deconstruct the components of the text, discourse features and the environment in which the text was created, and even predict the possible effects of the text from the above. In addition, quantitative study is an important part of the policy research methods and quantitative analysis is usually combined with qualitative one to verify the effectiveness of an education policy.

ECSSSE as a programmatic policy document has to be examined its its cohesion at both theoretical and practical levels. Hence the researcher of this paper determined the research questions as the implementation and effect, policy and text questions, employed the methods of implementation research and text analysis, discussing about *ECSSSE* within “policy ensemble” in an all-around way and from different perspectives.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Questions

This research takes the cohesion of *ECSSSE* as object from the aspects of theory and practice, focuses on whether the policy document plays the role of a bridge. The following questions are to be answered:

- (1) At the practice level, whether *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation) (ECSSSE)* can effectively carry on the EFL education at the compulsory phase and meet the needs of higher education?
- (2) At the policy text level, whether *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation) (ECSSSE)*, *English Curriculum Standard of Compulsory Education (2011 Edition) (ECSCCE)* and *College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation) (CECR)* can constitute the “policy ensemble” (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2000, 2012)? To what extent are the three policy documents cohesive in terms of both form and contents?
- (3) Whether the three documents have continuous and progressive relations to each other?

B. Methods and Materials

As this research aims to examine the cohesive traits of *ECSSSE* at theoretical and practice levels, it belongs to text and implementation research among policy studies. The researcher combined qualitative analysis with quantitative one, using the methods of questionnaire, interview and discourse analysis. For the research methods and materials, see table 1.

TABLE 1
METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Level	Methods	Materials
Practice Level	Quantitative	Scales for Self-evaluation of EFL Competence
	Qualitative	Interview
Text level	Qualitative	Three Documents (<i>ECSSSE</i> , <i>ECSCCE</i> & <i>CECR</i>)

At practice level, this research investigated the cohesion of *ECSSSE* from two aspects. Firstly, the researcher used questionnaire to test high school students’ (grade two and three) English competence. The questionnaire consisted of 56 items which were categorized into four levels, covering the competence levels described in *ECSSSE*, namely levels of 5-6, 7-8, 8-9 and elective level. Test method involved students’ own judgment of whether they were capable of “doing

something in English". The highest score for each item was 4, and the reliability coefficient for the four levels were all above 0.85, indicating that this instrument was reliable enough. 3780 high school students participated in the investigation and all of the questionnaires were returned (100%) and proved to be valid (100%). The instrument turned out to be able to objectively describe participants' real English competence and of great help to explain whether the EFL teaching at the phase of compulsory education could transit smoothly and high school EFL teaching was able to meet the needs of Chinese higher education. In addition, This research also attempted to discuss the cohesion of *ECSSE* from the angles of high school teachers and university students. In the course of investigation, more than 230 high school teachers, administrators and 30 college students participated in the interview, the focus of which was cohesion of EFL teaching at the three phases. Analysis of the interview contents made it possible for the researcher to obtain first-hand information on participants' answers to the research questions.

Text analysis is a method frequently used for education policy research and so it was in foreign language education policy. Zou (2011) pointed out that the text of foreign language education policy was supposed to be the main research object of relevant researches. Accordingly this research paid close attention to the three policy documents: *English Curriculum Standard of Senior English (For Trial Implementation) (ECSSE)*, *English Curriculum Standard of Compulsory Education (2011 Edition) (ECSCCE)* and *College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation) (CECR)*, aiming to analyze the interrelations between them, wonder about whether they belonged to the same "policy ensemble" and focus upon whether *ECSSE* possessed the cohesive traits at text level or continued from the above and introduced the following. In the course of text analysis, the researcher employed part of Zhang & Zou's framework designed for the contrastive study of international English curriculum standard (Zhang & Zou, 2010), and examined the three policy documents in terms of form and contents. As for the contents analysis, the researcher paid close attention to its scientificity or interpreted it from the perspective of education and whether it could meet the needs of learners and the society, proposed reasonable teaching purposes, objectives, process and evaluation measurement. As far as form was concerned, the researcher examined the formulation of the three texts, which mainly referred to the detail level of formulation for language learning or teaching objectives, since objectives with detailed formulation tended to be more practical. In addition, as the focus of this paper was on the cohesion of *ECSSE*, and the three policy documents involved junior high schools, senior high schools and universities, horizontal contrast had to be made for part of the teaching objectives in the documents so as to discuss the issue of cohesion at the text level.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation

The implementation of policy means the process that policy resolution is determined and practiced by local authorities in the form of government project until expected effect is achieved. Accordingly Berman divided policy implementation into macro-implementation process and micro-implementation process (Berman, 1978). Text itself pays attention to micro-implementation process, discusses the issue of implementation effect for *ECSSE* and whether it is capable of playing the role of transition from compulsory education to college education. Besides, in the evaluation of a standard, content alignment is an important notion which refers to the consistent level of intended curriculum and enacted curriculum and is usually used to assess the implementation effect of a standard (Porter, 2006).

Since the publication of *ECSSE* in 2003, it has been implemented all over China and prominent achievements have been made (Zou, 2012). The objectives of *ECSSE* are based upon the objectives of 1-5 levels for compulsory education and divided into four levels (6-9) of requirements. Among them level 6 is the transition level from junior to senior high school, level 7 tends to be the graduation level of senior high school and level 8 is usually regarded as the requirement for the National Entrance Examination or the admission level of college freshmen. Hence since the implementation of *ECSSE*, if senior high school EFL education has good effect of cohesion, senior high school students' EFL competence and skills should not only smoothly achieve the objective of level 5 required by *ECSCCE*, but also meet the needs of higher education or achieve level 8. Therefore the researcher investigated the senior high school students' actual English competence.

As the above mentioned (see "3. Research design"), there were 3780 high school students as participants. The full mark for each item was 4 and the reliability coefficient of questionnaire was above 0.85. Scores for the 4 categories of language evaluation scales of *ECSSE* were respectively 2.9 for level 5-6, 2.6 for level 7-8, 2.4 for 8-9 and 2.3 for selective course. On the whole, senior high school students' EFL competence accorded with the objective level required by *ECSSE*. At the same time, as the data collected merely involved the relationship between policy objective and students' learning result (there are the stages of teaching and testing to be considered), they were not able to directly indicate the content alignment in the course of *ECSSE* implementation, but well accounted for the success of textbook compilation instead. Textbooks turned out to have implemented the spirit of *ECSSE* and had become the "embodiment of *ECSSE*" (Zou, 2013). In addition, senior high school students got the highest scores for their EFL competence at the level of 5-6, revealing that their EFL competence and skills could smoothly transit from level 5 required by *ECSCCE* to the higher level and that students well adjusted themselves to the senior high school EFL learning. The level of practice revealed that the junior and senior English guided by *ECSSE* were well cohesive and smoothly transit. Simultaneously the data indicated that after senior high school EFL education, learners in general had achieved the objective of level 7 or 8 required by *ECSSE*. Once they began to communicate in English, their language knowledge and basic

communicative competence were sufficient for them to meet the needs of communication. Based upon this, the researcher believes that since students are able to achieve the objectives required by *CECR* and even more than *CECR*, they are capable enough to face the college EFL learning so as to meet the needs of Chinese higher education.

In addition, records of interviews with senior school teachers and administrators indicated that most of the participants observed that transition of EFL teaching for both junior and senior high school proved to be smooth and that senior high school students of grade one could well adapt themselves to senior high school EFL teaching guided by *ECSSSE*, which had been recognized in secondary and above schools. Nevertheless, in some regions, especially in some poor schools, the cohesion of EFL teaching between senior high school and compulsory education was not smooth enough, mainly in that some students found it difficult to catch up with the teaching schedule. In the researcher's view, the problem was merely local and the main reason was that *ECSSSE* was not completely practiced in some areas and test evaluation system had been separated from curriculum standard. Due to the pressure of examination and entrance of a higher school, teachers from some poor schools did not teach according to *ECSSSE*, but regarded examination as direction, knowledge as teaching objective and neglected the development of specific EFL skills. On the whole, the cohesion of both junior and senior high school EFL teaching was fine and the transition proved to be smooth. Among the participants, the senior high school teachers and administrators revealed sufficient self-confidence in the effect of senior high school EFL teaching. They unanimously agreed that since the implementation of *ECSSSE*, senior high school students had made significant greater progress in their EFL skills than a decade ago. The English language skills of some distinguished students even reached or surpassed college English level 4, which once again verified the fact that the implementation of *ECSSSE* might help supply qualified senior high school graduates for colleges and universities and lay solid foundation for college English teaching.

In addition, the researcher randomly interviewed about 30 college students with the intention to examine their attitude and viewpoints with respect to senior high school EFL teaching and differences between it and college English teaching. Records of interviews indicated that participants' views tended to be unanimous. Most of them were not satisfied with the examination-oriented component at senior high schools, but they still recognized the guiding principles, methods and teaching effects in senior EFL teaching. They all believed that they did lay a good foundation for EFL education which might ensure their college English learning.

At the practice level, *ECSSSE* was well practiced, and students in general achieved the skill objectives required by *ECSSSE*, which meant that the teaching objectives required by *ECSSSE* did not build a castle in the air, instead they consulted the objective of level 5 for junior high school graduation requirements demanded by *ECSSSE* and also took into account the needs of going to a school of a higher grade and employment. Hence *ECSSSE* had a realistic solid foundation. In the course of implementation, *ECSSSE* was sufficiently able to inherit EFL education at compulsory phase and meet the needs of higher education.

B. Text Analysis

1. Scientificity of text

The setting of aims and specific objectives in foreign language curriculum standard reflects perceptions of education, curriculum and values. To be more specific, the perceptions mainly include academic idealism, the idea that education serves the social culture and economic development, the concepts of learner-centeredness, social reconstruction and multi-dimensional culture (Richards, 2002). The three documents that this research focuses upon all reflect the above perceptions and conform to the development tendency of curriculum theory in the field of international basic education (Zou, 2013). Scientific foreign language curriculum standard has to reflect social reality so as to meet the social needs. As far as Chinese foreign language education is concerned, there is a tremendously wide gap either between different regions or learner individuals. The three documents do reveal the Chinese social reality. The three standards consider all the above factors when setting the different levels. For example, *ECSSSE* requires that level 7 should be for senior high school graduates, level 8 and 9 are above that and fit for top students. Similarly, *CECR* also sets three levels, namely average requirement, comparatively high requirement and higher requirement, which may meet the needs of different regions and different universities of different levels as much as possible. On this point, the three documents echo each other, have strong intertextuality, form a "policy ensemble" with organic unity and achieve the effect of inseparable cohesion.

At the same time, scientificity of foreign language curriculum standard is also reflected in the definition of language competence. Zhang (2010) pointed out that language competence consisted of language knowledge, discourse knowledge, pragmatic and stylistic knowledge, strategy knowledge and learners' affections. Nevertheless, in both *ECSSSE* and *ECSSCE*, the connotation of language competence is defined as language knowledge and skills, learning strategies, affections and attitudes, cultural awareness, etc. Pragmatic and stylistic knowledge are not mentioned in the three texts, which has something to do with policy-makers' interpretation of language competence. As for the research questions of this paper, *ECSSSE* and *ECSSCE* give exactly the same definition to language competence and set the same models of teaching objectives so that they have ensured the smooth transition of junior high school EFL teaching to senior high school one. On the other hand, however, *CECR* defines language competence as linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation and part of language knowledge, e.g. vocabulary). Hence a gap seems to have been formed between the first two standards (*ECSSSE* & *ECSSCE*) and *CECR*. However, linguistic skills and knowledge compose the essence of language competence, other non-linguistic components are based upon them. *CECR* refers to

the international common practice for its standard of language curriculum, seizes the core of language competence, achieves the effect of clearness and conciseness and realizes the coherence between it and the first two texts at this level so as to ensure the cohesion of EFL teaching in China.

2. Text formulation or description

In the education science field the so-called “objectives movement” makes it possible for education objective to be described in terms of behaviour change. In foreign language education it is usually believed that teaching objectives are supposed to precisely describe observable learner behaviours. The description is usually composed of task-statement, conditions statement and criterion statement (Nunan, 2007). Precisely described objectives are able to strengthen the practicality of a standard, facilitate the measurement of teaching effect and promote the implementation of the standard (Richards, 2002). Comparing the objective formulation of the three standards, the researcher found that most of the formulation included task statement and criterion statement but lacked conditions statement, which coincided with the result from Zhang & Zou (Zhang & Zou, 2010). In addition, when stating a task, general wording instead of specific one is used on most occasions. For example, in *ECSSE* the objective of reading skill level 6 is described as “being able to obtain the main information from ordinary written materials”. What sort of written material is ordinary? Inexplicit wording makes it difficult for the objective to be implemented in the teaching practice, and most probably the “standard” will accordingly lose its value of guidance and reference. Nevertheless, although their practicality decreases, they conform to each other in their descriptions and objectively ensure the cohesion of curriculum standards due to the similarities of description in the three texts.

3. Standard of contents

The objectives of curriculums aim to better meet the needs of learners and the society so as to promote learning and teaching. When setting the objectives, both *ECSSE* and *ECSCCE* chose the language competence, language knowledge, affections and attitudes, learning strategies and cultural awareness together as the general objectives of English curriculum. Later they stipulated the specific objectives of the five aspects at each level, increased their practicality in actual teaching, which accords with the characteristics of Chinese basic education. The two texts completely conform to each other in terms of contents standard and turn out to be closely cohesive. However, *CECR* simply consists of linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation) and part of language knowledge (vocabulary). The contents of *CECR* appear to be simple, but in reality reveal the nature traits of higher education and the core concept of foreign language curriculum standard. At present in China, college education still belongs to elite education which aims at adult learners with sound cognitive abilities. In addition, the nature of foreign language curriculum standard is to define language skills and knowledge objectives. Hence *CERE* abandons various notions and compacts the core of foreign language curriculum, highlights the two aspects of skills and knowledge and achieves cohesiveness to *ECSSE*, which appears to be scientific.

From the angle of “policy ensemble”, there is strong intertextuality between the three standards, which especially embodies the notion of foreign language education, language skills and knowledge objectives, etc. This means that the three come from the same “policy ensemble” and at the level of macro education policy ensure the coherence and hierarchy of EFL learning at the three stages.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON BETWEEN OBJECTIVE OF LEVEL 5 AND OBJECTIVE OF LEVEL 7

Objective of Level 5	Objective of Level 7
Having fairly explicit EFL learning motivation and active learning attitude and self-confidence; being able to listen and understand the statements on relevant familiar topics and participate in the discussion; being able to exchange information with others in terms of everyday English and express one's own ideas; being able to read and understand the materials, newspapers and magazines of corresponding level, overcome the difficulties of new words and obtain the main idea; being able to use appropriate reading strategies according to reading purposes; being able to independently draft and revise short compositions according to hints; being able to cooperate with others, solve the problems, report the result and finish the learning tasks together with others; being able to evaluate one's own learning and summarize one's learning methods; being able to learn by making use of various educational resources; being able to further strengthen the understanding and knowledge of cultural differences.	Having explicit and continuous learning motivation and autonomous-learning awareness; being able to exchange information, ask questions and state one's own ideas and proposals on familiar topics; being able to understand simplified stories of English novels and magazines in English; having basic practical writing ability; for example, being able to write announcement and inviting letters; being able to actively participate in planning, organizing and implementing language practice activities under the guidance of teachers; being able to actively extend and make use of learning resources, obtain information through various means; being able to clearly and systematically express the information obtained; having strong competence of self-evaluation and self-regulation and generally form one's own learning strategies; being able to understand the cultural differences in communication and by and large form the awareness of intercultural communication.

In addition, in order to better examine the cohesion of the three standards, the researcher divided the cohesion into that of junior high school and senior high school, and the cohesion of senior high school and university. The differences can be distinguished by comparing the objective of level 5 (graduation level at the stage of compulsory education) in *ECSCCE* and the objective of level 7 (senior high school graduation level) in *ECSSE*. As for the detailed description of the two levels, see table 2.

It can be seen from table two that both the objectives level 5 and 7 define curriculum teaching objectives in terms of five dimensions, the two documents (*ECSSE* & *ECSCCE*) accurately conform to each other on this point. At the same

time, it is found that there is certain declivity between the two levels and the difficulty level of contents in level 7 is appropriately elevated. For example, writing ability in level 5 is described as “being able to independently draft and revise short compositions according to hints” and objective of this ability requires comparatively low cognitive effort and language proficiency while writing ability in level 7 is described as “having basic practical writing ability, for example, being able to write announcement and inviting letters”. The expression appears to be more concrete, the difficulty level of tasks is increased and the objective ability therefore requires more language knowledge and cognitive effort. It is these differences that compose the contents of senior high school EFL teaching, which makes junior and senior high school English teaching coherent with traits of progressing step by step.

As *CECR* simply proposes concrete objectives of linguistic ability and vocabulary knowledge, horizontal contrast could be made between skill objective and vocabulary knowledge objective to examine the connection of senior high school English with college English teaching. However, the choice of levels as contrast is of great significance. After three years of study, senior high school students passed the national entrance examination and entered universities and colleges, and most of them ought to have reached the objective of level 8 required by *ECSSE*. Hence linguistic skill objective of level 8 automatically has become the objective level of text analysis. In addition, it is explicitly required in *CECR* that undergraduates ought to be able to reach the general requirements after two years of college English education (there are no English classes in the third and fourth year). Accordingly, the researcher chose the general requirements in the text as contrastive analysis.

Result of comparison and contrast indicated the following three points.

Firstly, in terms of linguistic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, the objectives set in the two documents are very much close to each other with regard to contents and difficulty level and level 8 required by *ECSSE* is even higher than the general requirements in *CECR*. For example, when describing listening ability, *ECSSE* states “being able to roughly understand the main idea of English broadcast and TV English news ” while *CECR* merely requires students to “be able to understand English broadcast and TV programs (130-150 words per minute), grasp the main idea and the key points”. In the description of oral competence, *ECSSE* requires that “being able to use appropriate intonation, tone and rhythm to express one’s own intention and feelings, etc.” while *CECR* accordingly proposes higher requirements. Therefore, Cai (2004) believed that it did not accord with regular pattern of learning and violated the basic principles of step-by-step educational progress. The researcher of this paper observes that *CERE* moderately lessens the competence objective of general requirements (between level 7 and level 8 in *ECSSE*) for the sake of significant regional differences in foreign language education in China and to ensure the smooth transition from senior high school English to college English teaching, indicating that it turns out to be a flexible move.

Secondly, although the two documents are fairly close to each other in terms of contents and difficulty level, their teaching focuses are completely different, indicating the respective characteristics and differences of senior high school and college English teaching. For example, the reading ability objective of *ECSSE* is to emphasize students’ “learning to read” and amount of reading while *CERE* lays stress on “what to read” and students’ reading speed. In the respect of writing ability objective, *ECSSE* stresses the development of comprehensive “writing” ability while *CECR* requires students to “write well” and lays particular stress on the use of writing skills.

Thirdly, as far as vocabulary learning is concerned, most of the college freshmen still believe that vocabulary is the difficult point in college English learning (Zou, 2011, 2012). The researcher of this paper suggests that the vocabulary size required by general requirements is reasonable and connected well with *ECSSE*, covering all the vocabulary in senior high school English teaching and providing high school graduates with buffer space for their adaptation to college EFL learning. In addition, there is a difference of the amount of 1495 words and phrases between *CECR* and *ECSSE* (level 8 requires 3300 words and general requirements demand 4795 words). According to college students’ cognitive level, it is not difficult to master these words within two years, which conforms to EFL learning regularity. Besides, vocabulary size stipulated by *CECR* makes full preparations for college English to be transitted from ordinary English to academic English.

Based upon the above text analysis, it can be concluded that the three standards or documents prove to be well cohesive, reveal the traits of mutual reference and thus constitute a “policy ensemble” for Chinese foreign language education. They present a sort of progressive relationship in terms of content objective and difficulty level and supply references and policy support for the gradual development of Chinese EFL teaching practice. It can not be neglected that there is still some room for improvement with respect to the three documents’ scientificity and text formulation or description.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Foreign language education research aims to analyse policy text, find out the effect of policy implementation and problems to be solved, provide foundation for other possible practical projects. This research discussed the cohesion of Chinese EFL teaching at three stages (junior high school, senior high school and university) guided by curriculum standards from the angles of policy text and policy implementation. Result indicated that at the level of policy implementation, after the implementation of *ECSSE*, senior high school students’ EFL proficiency has revealed good tendency of development, which means that the transition of EFL learning from junior to senior high school is smooth, the cohesion of the two is sufficiently close and paves the way for college English teaching and meet the needs of

higher education. At the theoretical level, although there appears to be some drawbacks in the three documents in terms of scientificity and text formulation or description from the comparative perspectives of international curriculum standard, they conform to each other to a great extent and compose the policy ensemble of Chinese foreign language education. In the aspect of content standard description, the three documents take Chinese reality into account, present a reasonable gradients in the competence objective, which accords with the progress-step-by-step principle of foreign language education. The documents organically combine the three stages of EFL education and have achieved a fine cohesion.

The conclusion of this research may provide references for the text reformulation of *ECSSE* and its actual practice. Firstly, the competence objective description in *ECSSE* may refer to common description frame, and makes it more meticulous so as to increase its practicality and reference value for actual teaching. In addition, it is of necessity to appropriately supplement the definition of language competence in order to increase its scientificity. Finally it is also a must to moderately cut down the levels of non-linguistic competence and avoid ambiguous formulation caused by too fine segmentation which may affect the interpretation and operation of standard users. At the practice level, the starting level of senior high school EFL teaching ought to be appropriately lowered so as to ensure its cohesion to junior one. And teachers are supposed to teach according to students' actual level of English and make every effort to avoid doing everything precisely as required by *ECSSE*.

Nevertheless, the issue of cohesion could be gone into further details. At the practice level, it may be explored by integrating the implementation effect of *ECSSE* with that of *CECR*. At the text level *ECSSE* might be examined within a greater discourse framework with regard to text traits, policy issues, policy structure and resources, etc.

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Normalization of CALL and TPACK: Discovering Teachers' Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract—The present study aims at investigating the effect of technology integration in general and normalization of CALL in particular on Iranian teachers' technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (TPACK). It also examines teachers' main opportunities and challenges with normalization of CALL. In this regard, 16 teachers taught a course with the goal to integrate computer technology fully. The researchers implemented a TPACK questionnaire before and after the course and a semi-structured interview after the course. Observations also helped the researchers to gain a complementary understanding of the process of CALL normalization and how teachers deal with their new roles. The results revealed that technology-related knowledge domains developed significantly. The results also showed that Iranian educational society is highly sensitive to instructional technology and its use in education.

Index Terms—normalization, technology integration, TPACK

I. INTRODUCTION

The full integration of computers into language pedagogy raises the need for a conceptual framework that theorizes the underlying teachers' knowledge. Activities embedded within CALL practice must be built upon a framework of knowledge to result in normalization. Teachers need to grasp the theoretical framework of CALL practice. Regarding the foreign language teaching and learning, CALL research focuses on the ways by which technology shapes learners and helps them move forward in taking hold of the content knowledge. As a leading article, Chambers and Bax (2006) indicated the obstacles to normalization and ways of overcoming them. They clustered those factors into four groups: logistics, stakeholders' conceptions, syllabus and software integration, and training, development and support. Van Olphen (2008) argued for extension of CALL research findings to developing technological content knowledge. In fact, teachers should begin to figure out the great potential of technology to enhance language teaching. Therefore, the present study is focused on an area which is mostly within the domain of teacher's knowledge and practice and aims at finding the relationship between CALL and TPACK development making an attempt to discover teachers' opportunities and challenges. The present study tends to answer the following questions:

1. What is the effect of Normalization of CALL on TPACK and its subdomains including TK, PK, CK, TCK, TPK?
2. What are teachers' opportunities and challenges with technology integration?

A historical portrait of CALL and TPACK research

Technology and its effect on learning has been long matter of debates. Burstson (2006) and Mustafa (2001) claimed that there is not enough evidence to prove the efficacy of technology use in learning. On the contrary, many other researchers (Pusack & Otto, 1997; Alessi & Trollip, 2001; Dexter, 2002) argued against such statements and supported the use of technology in developing learning processes. But evidently the accelerating pace of technology integration in general and CALL in particular, support their magnificent role in educational context.

To promote the knowledge bases of CALL, it is necessary to reveal the historical background of CALL which goes back about half a century. There are several classifications of CALL, each having special views toward CALL typology, phases of CALL and approaches to CALL (Davies & Higgins, 1985; Jones & Fortescue, 1987; Hardisty & Windeatt, 1989; Warschauer, 1996; Levy, 1997; Warschauer & Healey 1998; Delcloque, 2000; Warschauer 2000; Jung 2005; and Bax, 2003). Published histories of CALL follow particular lines. Delcloque (2000, p.96) asserts that histories of CALL belong to one of these two categories:

1. "The properly researched, objective historical accounts which attempt to summarize the progression and might include precise dates and a comprehensive list of sources.

2. The interpretative type which tends to draw more subjective conclusions about advances and trends in the field, thus analyzing its progression in a less objective manner."

Approaches to CALL research

Generally CALL research is carried out within a polar system; *Impact* and *effectiveness* of CALL. Effectiveness focuses on the influence of ICT on improving the approaches and methods of foreign language education in comparison to traditional methods; while impact corresponds with CALL infrastructures, fundamental applications and theoretical bases of use, uptake, access, etc. (Felix, 2005; EACEA, 2009).

CALL impact

CALL impact measures the broad ideas of CALL in qualitative or quantitative manners. The significance of ICT use and the changes it will add to pedagogy also is covered in this approach. As a good instance of CALL impact, Warschauer and Matuchniak (2010) reviewed studies of the equity in access, use and outcomes of new technologies in U.S society. They found substantial gaps, inequalities and challenges in internet access and claimed that measures of statistical analysis should change. Chapelle (2004, 2005) who has a great influence on constructing the underlying concepts of technology use, discussed the impact of technology on posing theoretical, empirical and ethical challenges. He explored the technology-based roles of learner language, interaction, individual differences, linguistic analysis, and language learning and teaching. He concluded in the end that any attempts to research on the use of technology in second language research should consider such crucial challenges (Chapelle, 2004). Elsewhere, he expressed the importance of research into issues of technology implementation in the classroom, students' characteristics that cater to such technologies, and the effectiveness of specific technology-focused or enhanced approaches (Chapelle, 2005). In this case, Kern (2006) also discussed the whys and hows of technology use.

Teacher-related issues are also covered in CALL research domain. Kessler (2007) criticized the lack of formal CALL preparation programs. He stated that many teachers obtain majority of their CALL knowledge via informal channels. In another research on teachers' attitudes toward CALL, surveys and interviews of 83 Iranian high school teachers revealed that lack of time, support, and resources can prevent the use of CALL activities in classrooms (Bordbar, 2010).

CALL effectiveness

CALL effectiveness has been extensively researched worldwide. Since research design and implementation with this focus are not so tedious, many researchers tend to evaluate the role of computer applications and programs in changing the static conditions of language skills in traditional settings. In a thoroughly organized study, Rezaee and Ahmadzadeh (2012) compared integrated CMC (ICMC), CMC and face-to-face communication on vocabulary improvement among 88 EFL learners. The results showed that ICMC and CMC groups had better performance. It was also implied that ICMC group outperformed CMC. But the important point is that the literature on reading, writing, and spelling is much richer than that of speaking, especially online speaking (Felix, 2008).

Normalization of CALL

Integrating new technologies into pedagogy has received growing attentions by many researchers and education specialists (Jang, 2008). Two main characteristics of the state of normalization (the ultimate goal of technology integration) which can be figured out in Bax's (2003, 2011) arguments are as follows:

1. The *invisibility* of technology, especially computer technology, in language classrooms in such a manner that computers are used as inseparable parts of language learning process, like any other regular learning tools, such as pens or books.

2. The *decentralization* of computers as the only focus of learning. First needs analysis is implemented, and then using –not merely focusing on- computers, needs are met. Computers should place secondary to learning itself.

In addition to what was mentioned, some advantages are considered for the practice of normalization. The most distinguished advantage is the act of clarifying practitioners' goals of CALL integration and obstacles to normalization (Chambers & Bax, 2006). Other advantages are concerned with researchers. These include the expansion of educational literature and providing space for educational development under the influence of modern innovations.

Chambers and Bax (2006) identified the inhibitive factors to full integration of computers into pedagogy. With the emphasis on sociocultural effects, they clustered them into four sketches as follows:

- Logistics
- Stakeholders' conceptions, knowledge and abilities
- Syllabus and software integration
- Training, development and support

Each of the above issues is subcategorized into a variety of detailed obstacles; though they also claim that some of the obstacles can have local impacts and some can be generalized into any educational environment.

Maftoon and Shahini (2012) in a significant study explored the inhibitive factors to normalization in Iranian contexts. They conducted a survey of 50 in-service teachers and founded that of discouraging factors are ranked as follows:

1. lack of enough facilities
2. lack of administrative support
3. lack of time
4. perceived ease of use
5. low mastery

6. others' attitude
7. perceived usefulness

The growing desire for integrating new technologies, such as laptops, tablets, cell phones, interactive whiteboard etc. into pedagogy and research into web-based distance learning and virtual learning, extend the domain of CALL dimensions to future world. Cutrim Schmid (2008) studied the potential of interactive whiteboard (IWB) technology for facilitating the normalization of CALL. Emphasizing on teachers' magnificent roles in the process of technology integrating, the findings showed that in spite of the IWB potentials to be integrated into language curriculum, normalization didn't happen successfully, since teachers had misconceptions about the applications of computers.

TPACK research

The pivotal role of teachers in education and the significance of their knowledge of technology, pedagogy and content gave rise to the notion of teachers' Technological pedagogical and content knowledge known widely as TPACK. On the one hand, considering the new concept of *CALL normalization* and also other activities within the domain of integrative CALL, a conceptualized framework must theorize the knowledge base used in this cycle. On the other, teaching with educational technology requires that teachers implement complicated knowledge systems. TPACK framework is a response to the lack of theoretical basis for supporting the knowledge for integrating technology into pedagogical content knowledge.

Most of what exist on TPACK results from the analyses and criticisms of Koehler and Mishra's TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Koehler & Mishra, 2008, 2009). Building on Schulman's (1986, 1987) concept of *pedagogical content knowledge*, a framework for teacher knowledge for technology integration was introduced (Koehler, Mishra, & Yahya, 2004; Niess, 2005; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Mishra, Peruski, & Koehler, 2007; Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Technological pedagogical and content knowledge abbreviated to TPCK and afterwards to TPACK (Thompson & Mishra, 2007) comprises of fundamental knowledge systems. Knowledge of subject matter, general pedagogical strategies and knowledge of technology are the backbones of TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

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Harris, Mishra and Koehler (2009) analyzed the approaches to technology integration and recommended the flexible and inclusive TPACK framework for technology integration process as the most adequate approach. They also provided evidence that concentrating on TPACK-based activity types develop teachers' effort for technology integration. Harris et al. (2010) described an approach to curriculum-based technology integration namely *Grounded technology integration*. Using learning activity taxonomies and their subsets (K-6 literacy, mathematics, science, secondary English language arts, social studies, and world languages) they suggested that technology integration is facilitated when teacher knowledge and instructional planning are understood.

Validating, testing and designing statistical instruments to assess the level of TPACK and its components have contributed to a large body of research in many human sciences. Some attempts were made to measure teachers' PCK. Janik, Najvar, Slavic and Trna (2009) aimed at finding the nature of physics teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. Eight lower-secondary school teachers participated in the study. *Dynamicity* and *flexibility* were salient characteristics of teachers' emerged PCK. Swan and Hofer (2011) in a study of eight teachers' efforts to integrate podcasting in order to build economic concepts and skills in students reported that through the project teachers developed strong TPK but weak TCK. They concluded that such lacks are rooted in the nature of some digital technologies.

It is worth noting that investigation through the effects of technology integration courses on developing teachers' TPACK provides a suitable ground for teachers to identify the potential challenges in tackling both their professional development issues and the practice of teaching. Although the present study pursues such effects, certainly the results will also reveal parts of the weaknesses and strengths of integration projects.

II. THE CURRENT STUDY

A. Participants

Among the total 30 language teachers at the language center, 16 teachers were recruited, including 7 men and 9 women, aged from 21 to 39, who were teaching to kids, teenagers and adults.

B. Settings and Instrumentation

In order to gain an adequate control over the process of Normalization, the researchers located a relatively well-equipped language center. The site was equipped with networked computers and a data-projector. 15 computer sets in a

U-shape layout, connected to a local area network (LAN), the Internet and a data-projector, provided an appropriate condition of physical necessities for moving from CALL activities to non-CALL activities and vice versa (Chambers and Bax, 2006). All computers had appropriate hardware technology, such as a DVD writer, USB ports and earphones. They were customized for high performance. The institution itself exploited necessary equipments like DVD players and televisions. In order to answer the research questions, both qualitative and quantitative instruments were used.

Quantitative instrument

In order to assess teachers' technological pedagogical and content knowledge, a self-reporting survey which measures teachers TPACK was adopted. Sahin's (2011) Survey of teachers' technological pedagogical and content knowledge is derived from his work with many other researchers to design a survey which is not linked to specific subject area. His survey has many advantages for the present research. The first merit is the process of validity and reliability check. Since the survey items pass clear and precise steps, the results are so trustworthy. The second advantage relates to this point that other questionnaires such as Schmidt et al, (2009) are designed to measure TPACK in *specific subject areas* and demand a great effort to fit within the framework of other subject areas, which in this regard Sahin's survey excels.

Qualitative instruments

To monitor the process of normalization and to detect possible deficiencies and obstacles to the process of CALL normalization and also to identify teachers' opportunities and challenges with technology integration, a semi-structured interview was designed. Interviews are often adjoined with survey-based research. They are interactive and allow the researchers to obtain unobservable phenomena (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Since the present study seeks for teacher-related issues of CALL normalization; such a flexible data eliciting instrument would help the researchers collect the necessary data. Accordingly, deriving from the results of normalization studies conducted by Chambers and Bax's (2006) four sets of normalization issues and Maftoon and Shahini's (2012) inhibitive factors, the researchers designed a semi-structured interview consisting of 11 guided questions: 3 questions of logistics (No. 1-3), 3 questions of stakeholders' conceptions and support (No. 4-6), 2 questions of syllabus and software integration (No. 7-8), 2 questions of training and ability (No. 9-10) and a question of ranking the most challenging elements (No. 11) (see Appendix A).

Observation

Due to the vast applications of observation techniques and to provide a complementary attribute to the semi-structured interview (Mackey & Gass, 2005); observation sessions were conducted to monitor students' actions, interactions and teachers' possible challenges during the course.

C. Method

Since the process of normalization needs a precise consideration of all related issues, *paired sample t-test* can show the results accurately. In order to analyze teachers' development of TPACK, a paired sample t-test was conducted. "Paired-sample t-test (also referred to as repeated measures) is used when you have only one group of people (or companies, or machines etc.) and you collect data from them on two different occasions or under two different conditions" (Pallant, 2005, p.209). In order to interpret the effect size for the paired-samples t-test, the *eta-squared* of the test was calculated using the following formula: $\text{Eta squared} = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + N - 1}$

Scripts from semi-structures interviews were analyzed through *thematic analysis*. The most frequent and similar words and expressions revealed teachers' challenges and opportunities in such courses. Direct observations of these classes helped the researchers scrutinize the contextual issues, mostly student-related issues, for perfect balanced results.

III. RESULTS

On the whole, results obtained from the analyses of interviews together with the complementary factors of the observation courses comprised the qualitative analysis. The results of both questionnaire forms and the interviews for TPACK and its subdomains are shown below:

TABLE 1
RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS AND THE INTERVIEWS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Eta squared
Pair 1	Time 2 TK	4.7537	16	.12858	.03214	0.93
	Time 1 TK	4.5338	16	.08342	.02085	
Pair 2	Time 2 PK	4.1825	16	.10286	.02571	0.18
	Time 1 PK	4.1519	16	.11197	.02799	
Pair 3	Time 2 CK	3.9250	16	.22429	.05607	0.03
	Time 1 CK	3.9125	16	.20260	.05065	
Pair 4	Time 2 TPK	4.2969	16	.30576	.07644	0.72
	Time 1 TPK	4.0156	16	.17002	.04250	
Pair 5	Time 2 PCK	3.8813	16	.27861	.06965	0.12
	Time 1 PCK	3.8638	16	.27978	.06995	
Pair 6	Time 2 TCK	4.4375	16	.21409	.05352	0.96
	Time 1 TCK	3.3281	16	.41552	.10388	
Pair 7	Time 2 TPACK	4.1250	16	.28166	.07042	0.84
	Time 1 TPACK	3.3625	16	.38101	.09525	

Based on the sections of the interview sections, the qualitative results are divided into five sections as well. Each section follows a special objective around the normalization issues. The first four sections seek to investigate participants' opportunities and challenges during the course. The fifth section ranks the most challenging issues.

Logistics

Three guided questions (questions no.1 to 3) elicited interviewees' attitudes toward the equipments, practical arrangements, time management and preparations for the course.

Q1: How did you see the facilities of the classroom?

On the one hand, 4 participants claimed that the equipments for such courses should be *much more developed*. They stated that although they have not been teaching the courses ever before, they feel that running such classrooms demands hi-tech conditions. They talked about utilizing *i-cam* over the projection equipments, through which they could maximize applications of data projectors. They claimed that such technologies can bring the classroom a great deal of *change* which could undoubtedly lead to *students' motivation and success*. On the other hand 10 participants asserted that as *CALL initiators*, but not *CALL normalizers*, they were *satisfied* with the equipments and facilities. They added that in spite of the fact that what is really meant by Normalization of CALL, beginning to teach English with available computer technologies can be so remarkable which will consequently found the basis for further facility improvements.

Q2: Did you have enough time to implement what you planned in advance?

Half of the interviewees claimed that in the beginning sessions it was *difficult* to *adjust* the lesson and the content within the required time; but gradually after nearly 5 sessions they could manage the content. Others stated that they had no problem with time adjustment.

Q3: How did you prepare yourself for the classroom?

It was also announced that such classes demand *higher preparation* than ordinary classes. Eleven teachers stated that they had *daily schedules* for next day teaching including *content review, material preparation, reviewing necessary techniques* and sometimes *writing a lesson plan*. Others told us that they needed no special *out-of-the-classroom* preparation for teaching; recesses and break times provided the ideal preparation opportunities for them. Our observations revealed that normally those who had scheduled preparation before the classes could better manage the time and the content. Almost all those who had scheduled preparation had *fewer problems* with class arrangement and time management. Although it's clear that programming teaching materials in advance helps teachers run the classroom more easily; sometimes even such a commonplace situation is forgotten. We also found out that U-shaped arrangement for CALL courses could be highly beneficial; since it provides teachers and students with more space for actions and interactions.

Stakeholders' Conceptions and Support

Four guided questions (questions no.4 to 6) elicited interviewees' attitudes toward stakeholders' conceptions of the course.

Q4: How do you think of integrating technology in teaching English and of your new role?

All of the participants strongly *advocated* for continuance of the course in next semesters. This showed their *eagerness* to work in CALL classrooms. They all claimed that computer integration must be an *essential part* of the syllabus and all other classrooms could be held in the site too; though they would not concealed their *disappointment* over the development of CALL in *public schools*. 10 participants were official teachers of the ministry of education and had complaints against the policies of public schools.

In spite of some problems of *time adjustment, preparation, technical and general integration issues* which were salient in the observations, all of the participants stated that they had *no major problem* with their new role. They added that such problems are really *inevitable* and *commonplace*. Moreover if students are *well justified* about the problems, no "*inconvenience*" will occur.

Q5: Did the administration support you with the course in any aspects? If yes; how?

Our observations showed that the administrator of the institute was eagerly trying to assist teachers with their problems as far as he could. Almost all of the participants confirmed the observations and claimed that they could insert their problems with the administrator whenever they wanted. They asserted that overlooking issues of *training and ability* and *logistics*, administration challenges would be of *highest significance* in such situations. In this respect just one of the participants stated that the administration cannot have a remarkable influence on the process of normalization. He added that only in situations where the administrator is *more experienced* and has a *general acceptance* among the teachers, his role is magnified.

Q6: Did students welcome technology integration?

As we entered the domain of questions about the level of students' willingness toward technology integration, there appeared a *consensus* of opinions. Participants claimed that students' *involvement* and *participation* in classroom activities, especially in the sessions where *conversation activities* was targeted, were surprising. Eleven participants asserted that students' *low anxiety* and *growing self confidence* is greatly due to the effect of technology integration tasks.

Syllabus and Software Integration

Two guided questions (questions no.7 to 8) elicited interviewees' attitudes toward syllabus and software integration.

Q7: How did you benefit from the Internet and English training software programs?

Although it took some time to start to relatively integrate software programs and especially internet tasks, the process indicated acceptable development which seems to be satisfactory for the course. A couple of ELT software programs and internet complementary tasks were available for teachers to benefit from. It was common in the institution that *New Interchange* and *Learn to Speak English* software programs were used for listening and conversation tasks. But participants stated that they aimed at utilizing the *available software* and the internet fully with higher concentration on *interactive dimensions*. The internet texts and exercises were utilized as *complementary sources*, especially where textbook topics would not satisfy expected needs. Through the course 3 teachers utilized the *online exercises* of *Learn to Speak English* program. They claimed that it was quite odd for students in the beginning but gradually they accustomed to these exercises and in the end a part of the final exam was designed based on them.

Q8: How do you think of the course syllabus design?

Some stated that comparing to the regular syllabus of the institution, the present syllabus *changed* a lot. Some others had no special attitude toward the syllabus. On the whole, participants expressed a *relative satisfaction* with the syllabus integration and rubrics for the course.

Training and Ability

Two guided questions (questions no. 9 and 10) elicited interviewees' attitudes toward training and ability issues.

Q9: Have you ever attended any professional development course of instructional technology? If not, how did you obtain required knowledge for teaching the course?

Professional courses of instructional technology seem to be new specified courses for the field of teaching. Though recent technology courses in our country are directly connected with computer technology. Most of the participants (14) claimed that they had passed *formal* technology courses. But they claimed that these formal courses at the university *wouldn't fulfill* the requirements for what they tackle with in today's growing technological developments. Consequently this gap made them attain a great deal of their knowledge of instructional technology through *teaching experience, informal conditions and personal interests*.

Q10: Did you have any technical issues? If yes, how did you cope with them?

Technical issues were of the most pervasive challenges that participants had through the course. Interviewees stated that they have faced technical problems through the course. For instance one of the teachers stated:

I wanted to play a short movie for the students. I arranged everything in advance and saved the movie on a flash memory. But the next day I couldn't play the movie. I didn't call for assistance since I thought that it would harm my authority in front of the class. That day my schedule was ruined. Afterward I found out that the flash memory was malfunctioned.

A similar problem happened to another teacher. It coincided with the observation session. She had an audiovisual story on her laptop and wanted to connect it to the data projector. But she couldn't connect it since the laptop and the data projector were incompatible. They stressed that most of these challenges were related to *software issues* not hardware ones and troubleshooting them requires *experience*. Our observations also confirmed that *Technical issues* were the trouble spot. As mentioned earlier, all of the participants had at least one problem with software or hardware. But they agreed that the matter of *time* or in other words the matter of *experience* would solve the technical issues.

Ranking the Most Challenging issues

Q11: How do you rank the above mentioned issues regarding their effect? Why?

Twelve participants ranked *technical issues* (among *training and ability*) as it became partly obvious through the discussions, higher than other issues. They announced that since integrating technologies into teaching is a really *difficult job*, tackling technical issues demand much more *profession and energy*. Issues of *training, ability* placed higher than other issues. Other challenges such as *administrators' attitudes in stakeholders' conceptions and support* (selected by 2 teachers as the most challenging issue) toward technology use and issues of *logistics* (selected by 2 teachers as the most challenging issue) also were discussed greatly by teachers. The ranking of the most challenging issues and related discussions are provided in table 2.

TABLE 2
RANKS OF THE ISSUES OF NORMALIZATION

ISSUE	RANK	
	equipments	3
Logistics	Time management	4
	preparation	5
Stakeholders' Conceptions and Support	Administrators	3
	Teachers attitudes	3
Syllabus and Software Integration	Learners' attitudes	4
	Software/Internet integration	6
Training and Ability	Syllabus integration	7
	Technical issues	1
	Training issues	2

IV. DISCUSSION

The nature of TPACK and its subcategories is truly evident in teaching with technology. The present study aimed at discovering the extent of interactivity between these phenomena under the very special condition of CALL normalization. The results of the TPACK questionnaire and the semi-structured interview are concluded as follows:

Regarding the increase of participants' score from time 1 to time 2 in technological, technological pedagogical, technological content and technological pedagogical content knowledge, it is obvious that the knowledge of technology has a great influence on developing teachers' knowledge in other domains. The results indicated that when technology is integrated into content and pedagogy, it will even make greater progress too. Although other subdomains had progressed, analyses proved that they were not developed significantly. In the present study the extent to which technological knowledge may contribute to push other domains forward is much higher than the effect of other subcategories of TPACK. The reason seems to be connected to the *efficiency* and the *extent* of technological supplies in comparison to non-CALL classrooms. This is concordant with participants' dominant view toward the efficiency of technological facilities and the fact that many of the participants had taught integrative courses scarcely ever.

In spite of the extent of participants and administrator's familiarity with the new instructional technology and how they welcomed CALL activities during the course, the results showed that a particular view toward using computers exists among teachers and administrators. Some responses to three questions of the interview (no 4, 10 and 12) included some good evidence for the existence of this view. Responding to question number 4, one of the experienced participants stated:

When computers are not integrated into language teaching process, there is always a pessimistic view toward using computers in language classroom for both sides including administrators and teachers. But when you perform something well enough with computers, ideas change rapidly... and everybody starts talking of computer advantages.

Another participant answered question number 10 in this way:

I have attended some computer-related course outside and I've learned so many things. But colleagues say that these classes cannot provide you with what you wanted. They say that it's waste of money. I think the atmosphere is not really good.

The same participant responded to question no. 12 as follows:

It's really important to know that teachers' performance in such classes is so remarkable. Definitely regarding this project, normalization had a great effect on at least my own knowledge and skills. But I think these classes are not supported well elsewhere; since the view toward technology, its expansion in educational affairs and the effect on learning is not trusted, especially in relation to teachers' performance.

Through selecting the participants for the project, 14 out of total 30 teachers at the institute did not participate in the course. Shortly thereafter it was heard that some anticipated the course being useless. From the above statements and the general view toward technology use in classrooms, it can be argued that there exist partly- but not totally- a *pessimistic view* toward the effects and results of normalization activities generally and technology use specifically among groups of teachers and administrators which hinders the rapid development of CALL. This is partly because of the influence of *cultural stands*. Looking at what and how the procedures of official affairs in our country are progressed, discussions over the use of Internet and filtrations, challenges with satellite receivers/programs and limited services on cell phones and the paradoxes between the present conditions and the real capacity of the society of education to welcome new technologies, it can be concluded that such *gaps* or *sensitivities* are rooted in *cultural differences*. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) provided a definition of culture and recounted some of the total seven dichotomies of cultural approaches (such as universalism and collectivism) in different nations and groups. Likewise in this regard it can be argued that the sensitivity toward the effect of technology is a cultural situation rather than merely educational problems. Therefore cultures may be dichotomized (but with some overlapping zones) to *low technology sensitive* and *high technology sensitive*. Here the researchers exclusively enter the area where cultural issues are raised in educational conceptions since this is not a general cultural discussion. Cultures which are low sensitive to technologies may come across fewer culture-dependant technological problems. Of course the point should not be overlooked that one cannot confirm a hundred percent that Iranian culture is highly sensitive to technology use; since the present research study is not so wide to be generalized respecting its cultural findings. But it reveals part of the true that technology use is somehow ill-considered in our country.

One of the main concerns of the present research study was to discover teachers' opportunities and challenges with CALL normalization. According to the results of the subcategories of the questionnaire, the responses to the interview and complementary observations, the following findings are listed:

Technology use in general and Normalization of CALL or computer integration in particular, provide teachers with fresh *opportunities* for:

- Developing their knowledge bases especially technological knowledge (TK) for optimal utilization of instructional technologies;
- Developing new technology integration techniques;
- Increasing the speed of learning process;
- Evaluating the appropriateness of new technologies to support students' learning;
- Developing class activities and projects involving use of instructional technologies to reach course objectives easily;
- Teaching a subject with different instructional strategies and computer applications and

- Teaching successfully by combining content, pedagogy, and technology knowledge.

Technology use in general and Normalization of CALL or computer integration in particular, provide teacher with fresh *challenges* of:

- Preparation for teaching in computer technology integration courses
- Time adjustment
- Changing administration and students' conception of technology integration
- Cultural sensitivities over the utility of new technologies in classroom;
- Professional courses of instructional technology;
- Technical issues respecting software problems and
- The matter of transient policies for technology integration which is due to economical conditions.

The success or failure of normalization projects highly depends on the congruity of all involved elements including teachers' appropriate level of knowledge and abilities in all aspects of technology, pedagogy and content, developed knowledge of integrative knowledge of TPACK, students developing knowledge of technology use and high motivation; administrators support and cooperation where needed, economical and cultural considerations, the presence of new technological facilities, etc.

Generally what Chambers and Bax (2006) stated about the function of normalization in very specific situations, is to some extent in line with what the present project posed. Observations indicated that students and teachers had still problems with some integrative activities. Through observations and interview sessions, teachers implied that the success of the process of normalization was relatively hopeful but not fully accomplished. Although the course met conditions for normalization well, it seems to be far from the ideal situation of CALL classrooms which is depicted in Bax (2003). However considering the local perspectives and parameters, it is obvious that the process was generally successful.

According to observed limitations of the study and the process of research implementation, future researchers can benefit from the recommendations suggested below:

1. Implementing large-scale studies, certainly builds more replicable results. Since applying the process of normalization demands a huge investment, such large scale studies can be merely conducted by the government sector or powerful private sectors.

2. As Pallant (2005) points, considering a control group along with the participants, will definitely remedy the possible deficiencies of paired sample t-test. This kind of improvement to the study also needs more time and effort.

3. Based on the approaches and types of questions of the study, research studies which exclusively focus on some other factors, e.g. demographic feature of the participants, the analysis of variables effect on each other etc are needed.

4. The final recommendation lies with the fact that in addition to many available surveys of TPACK, there exist other forms of instruments including rubrics of lesson plans, interviews, observation protocols; measurements of artifacts and discourse analysis, which if applied together can give more accurate results. The underlying conceptions and methods for each instrument are elaborated in Abbitt's (2011) *Measuring Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Preservice Teacher Education: A Review of Current Methods and Instruments*.

TPACK framework and its underlying concepts are fully characterizes through situations where the practice of technology integration can reach the ideal position of normalization. In this regard, although Iranian educational society lacks some infrastructures to develop the integration of instructional technology into pedagogy, teachers warmly welcome the change. Yet some sensitivity toward technology use still exists within the educational society. Therefore removing such barriers would definitely provide the educational strand with necessary motives to mutate at higher rates.

APPENDIX. THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. How did you see the facilities of the classroom?
2. Did you have enough time to implement what you planned in advance?
3. How did you prepare yourself for the classroom?
4. How do think of integrating technology in teaching English and your new role in CALL courses?
5. Did the administration support you with the course in any aspects? If yes, how?
6. Did students welcome technology integration?
7. How did you benefit from the Internet and English training software programs?
8. How do you think of the course syllabus design?
9. Have you ever attended any professional development course of instructional technology? If not, how did you obtain required knowledge for teaching the course?
10. Did you have any technical issues? If yes, how did you cope with them?
11. How do you rank the above mentioned issues regarding their effect? Why?

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Subtitle Translation of Foreign Movies and TV Series under Skopos Theory*

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Abstract—The wide spread of foreign movies and TV series has brought upon the heat of the subtitle translation. This paper describes different subtitle translation principles and styles under the skopos theory using the example of English-Chinese translation. While purpose principle plays the main decisive role in the translation process as the primary principle, loyalty and consistency principle should be observed in the translation process as well. Besides, translators tend to apply different translation styles when they handle different types of movies, which is determined by the degree of adequacy, the reception of target audience under the skopos theory.

Index Terms—translation, skopos theory, subtitle, foreign movies and TV series

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Chinese audience have greatly changed their taste in foreign movies appreciation as to how they're presented, which is shown through their preference nowadays to original sound of the movie instead of the dubbed one. (Zhang, 1998, p.50-53) As a result, the subtitle translation is of even greater importance than ever. Excellent subtitle can not only bring the truest language features to Chinese audience, which can also help them learn a bit of foreign language, but also it can bring the audience closer to foreign cultural circumstances, making them feel less distanced.

As a matter of fact, subtitle fan clubs are now pervasive on the internet in China, especially those set up for popular American movies and TV series. They are absolutely helpful to Chinese audience, despite the fact that they are made up with voluntary movie enthusiasts, who offer to make subtitles out of nothing more than their fancy for foreign television work. Thanks to them, Chinese audience can enjoy more of the original TV series from overseas, and intercultural communications are moving to a whole new level.

The Greek word "skopos" is a technique term for the goal or purpose of a translation. So it's pretty much safe to say that skopos theory employed in translation means the purpose of the translation action determines the target text. This paper aims to analyze subtitle translation based on this theory, which helps in enhance the quality of translation on account of different types of TV work. (The English-Chinese subtitles mentioned below are all from YYeTs Group over the Internet.)

II. MAIN VIEWPOINTS IN SKOPOS THEORY

The skopos theory was developed in Germany in the late 1970s. Since it reflects a general shift from linguistic and formal translation theories to a more functionally and socio-culturally oriented concept of translation, it has become "a welcome addition to translation studies" (Gentzler, 2001, p.71). Initially formulated by Reiss in the 1970s, the theory was enunciated by Vermeer in the 1980s, and was further developed in the 1990s by Nord, one of its most important second-generation scholars. Vermeer's theoretical framework of skopos will be applied to explain the role that the purpose plays in the process of translation in the followings.

Hans Vermeer argued that translation is a purposeful action of consequence based on the original text, which should be accomplished through negotiation and determined by the purpose of translation. He thought that the highest principle in the process of translation should be "the skopos rule", and he also put forward the concept of translation commission, which means that translators got to decide whether, when and how to do the translation job. (Ma & Miao, 2009)

In Vermeer's skopos theoretical framework, one of the most important factors that influenced translation purpose is the target audiences, who have got their own cultural backgrounds, translation expectations and communicative needs. Later, Christiane Nord combed through all the functionalist school theories and further perfected the theory by putting

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forward her own functional model, i.e. functionality plus loyalty, which means apart from conforming to the requirements of the translation skopos, the translator should also respect the legitimate interests of both the author of the original and the readers of the translation. Therefore, translators should bear in mind what the function of translation text is, what the target readers' demand is and even what communicative situation is. Consequently, the choice of translation strategies is decided by the purpose of the translation text, in order to achieve a better functioning text.

Under skopos, the Chinese subtitles for foreign TV work can be seen as specific Chinese discourse aiming at the total comprehension and understanding of alien culture for Chinese audience. While the show's type varies, the translators tend to reach different goals, thus having multiple translation strategies. For instance, *The Big Bang Theory*, *2 Broken Girls*, *How I Met Your Mother*, namely the American TV comedies popular here in China, attract mostly young audience groups with their goal of being hilarious and entertaining. Consequently, the translation of corresponding subtitles is mainly referring to the most "in" words at present, making the audience feel the humor and relaxation while watching the show. On the other hand, for western history dramas, like *Tudors*, *Camelot*, *Downton Abbey*, historical accuracy surely comes before oral humor concerning the subtitle translation.

III. TRANSLATION PRINCIPLES UNDER SKOPOS THEORY

The top-ranking rule for any translation is thus the skopos rule, which means that a translation action is determined by its skopos, which means "the end justifies the means" put forward by Reiss and Vermeer. Vermeer (Vermeer, 1989, p.112) also stresses on many occasions that the skopos rule is a general rule, and translation strategies and methods are determined by the purpose and the intended function of the target text. Apart from the primary purpose rule, there are also coherence & fidelity and loyalty rules under the skopos theoretical framework.

Generally speaking, "purpose" refers to the communicative purpose of the target text, which is the communicative function the target text imposes to the target audience in the target environment. As a result, translators get to define their specific purpose in the given translation context, and decide the translation method, including literal translation, free translation and the one caught in between in accordance with the purpose. So it is totally understandable for translators to try different translation approaches when it comes to different types of TV series to achieve their particular goal. Naturally, comedies want to make audience laugh while horror movies want them scared out of wits. To accomplish such "ideal" effects, translators are doing their best to make the target audience feel the same way the foreign audiences do. Here are the examples from *The Big Bang Theory*.

In the Fourth Episode of Season Three, Sheldon thought that when Penny called him sweetie, she didn't actually mean it by intimacy but euphemistic sarcasm. However, sometimes, she meant it without trying to hide it at all.

Although, sometimes, she omits the veil entirely
但有时候她就是赤裸裸的讽刺。

Here, the translator used free translation, rendering "omit the veil" as "赤裸裸的讽刺", which means blank and utter sarcasm, showing the implied meaning by Penny in a funny way. The Chinese adjective "赤裸裸的" here means the most obvious presentation of the sarcastic sensation. It also appeals to the mentality of Chinese audience since the euphemism has been exposed in such an ironic way.

Also in this episode, Raj was depressed and anxious about his about-to-be-cancelled visa, so he was rather anxious when he said:

--"Sorry, I lost my cool."

--"对不起，我失态了。"

The phrase "lost my cool" was a colloquial expression, which means "我失了冷静" if translated literally. But the translator used "我失态了" instead, more conforming to the Chinese speaking habit, also making the Chinese audience feel hilarious.

Later in this episode when Sheldon and Raj were working on solving a scientific problem together, they couldn't find the solution even though they have been racking their brains for days and nights. Raj said: "I need an aspirin", which is translated into "我需要一片脑残片". The original meaning of "aspirin" is a pain-killer while the newly-coined Chinese word "脑残片" means "cure for doofus". So the translated subtitle shows the baffled and challenged image of Raj to target audience like a comedian. And based on the reception degree of Chinese audience, they are practically laughing their tears out when they see the subtitle.

Coherence rule means that the translation must observe the standard of intra-textual coherence, which would make the translated text readable and acceptable for target audience in an actual communicative context. It states that the target text must be interpretable as coherent with the target text in receiver's situation. In other words, the target text must be translated in such a way that it is coherent for the target text receivers given their circumstances and knowledge. In terms of coherence rule, the source text is no longer of most authority but only part of the translation belief. It is only an offer of information for the translator, who in turn picks out what he considers to be meaningful in the receiver's situation.

Meanwhile, fidelity rule states that inter-textual coherence should be complied between the original and target text, which requires the translator to be loyal to the original text and also produce a text at the same time. The degree of faithfulness depends on the purpose of the target text and the translators' understanding of the source text. Applying this

rule in translation, the translated subtitles should not only express the intended meaning, but also convey the most coded implications in a fluent and accurate way. Since the majority of the words in TV shows are dialogues, translators are required to use brief and concise words to render the conversations or narrations from the video. In the movie *Letter to Juliet*, the heroine Sophie is a truth investigator and she has been looking for a witness, who saw the classic picture Victory Kiss in Time Square back in 1940s. She asked:

--“The kiss was it spontaneous or was it staged?”

--“那个吻，是情不自禁，还是事先安排的？”

The translator used free translation paraphrasing the word “spontaneous” as “情不自禁”, which means “improvised, can't help oneself”, communicating the heartfelt emotion burst from the soldier, who's just got back from the battlefield in World War II. Naturally and for grant, they were caught in the moment and kissed right in the middle of Time Square, where was filled with happy and exciting crowds celebrating the great victory. The word “情不自禁” just happens to bring back all that commotion and crazed atmosphere in the front of all the audience, which is both loyal to the original line and also contrary to the concept of “staged” as well.

This rule was prompted by Nord, who discovered the shortcomings of skopos. She found out the problems caused by radical functionalism, namely, a translation purpose as specified by the translation brief is at variance with the original author's intentions. So she put forward the “functionality plus loyalty” model, fixing the deficiency of skopos theory by coordinating the intentions of the original author and translator. Also in the movie *Letter to Juliet*, Sophie visited the former residence of Juliet (Casa di Guilietta) in Verona, where she met the “secretaries” of Juliet who have been responsible for responding letters to those wrote to Juliet. One of the secretaries is an old lady, who has been married to her husband for over 51 years, as a result of which she has been covering various letters complaining about marriage. She said:

--“Husbands are like wine. They took a long time to mature.”

--“丈夫就像是红酒，需要久酿才能使之香醇。”

The translation of simile here is quite literal, loyal to the original line, mostly because there is similar usage of the word “mature” in English countries and China. The word “mature” has two levels of meaning, one being the fermentation of wine, the other being the growing of personality of men, while in this circumstance, the husbands. Apart from the universal usage of words, there is shared mentality here by female audience, which is the desired effect of a functional translation, while at the same time, reserving the exact meaning of the original expression.

IV. TRANSLATION APPROACHES TO MOVIES AND TV SERIES

As we all know, different types of movies and TV series intend for the audience to have different feelings with various information. So under skopos, translators usually apply different styles when it comes to different kinds of movies or different personalities of characters from the movies. The following part lists three types of movies or TV series and introduces respectively their corresponding translation approach.

As the increasingly deepened communication between cultures, foreign history drama has also become quite popular in China, like *Troy*, *Brave Heart*, *Tudors* and *Camelot*. *Downton Abbey* is also a popular British period drama at present. The series, set in the Yorkshire county estate of Downton Abbey, depicts the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants in the post-Edwardian era—with the great events in history having an effect on their lives and on the British social hierarchy. The following dialogue is taken from the first episode of season two, Lord Grantham said:

--“Churchill went back to the front after the Gallipoli business. If he could, why shouldn't I?”

--“加利波利战役后丘吉尔不也返回前线了，如果他都可以，凭什么我不能？”

[加利波利战役：一战中，英军伤亡惨重的一场战役]

Besides the translation of his words, the translator also added comment statement after the translation, explaining the Gallipoli battle so that the Chinese audience know the reason why Lord Grantham compared himself to Churchill. To translate period drama like *Downton Abbey*, it is quite essential for the translators to pay absolute attention to the accuracy in terms of historic details, which can also instill some information to Chinese audiences.

Also in this episode, the footman William asked:

--“What is it?”

--“A white feather, of course. Coward.”

--“这是什么？”

--“当然是白羽毛了。懦夫。”[一战前，“白羽会”在英国成立，其成员向平民分发象征懦弱的白羽，敦促公民参军。]

The additional remarks here also help popularize some history common sense among Chinese audience, accounting for the insinuation of “white feather”, which shows the irony of the fund-raising concert. People sitting in the concert would rather talk and socialize than go to the battlefield fighting for their own country.

Romantic stories are always popular among audiences whether they are domestic or foreign. The well-known *Jane Eyre* is one of the most popular stories in China. Adapted from Bronte's novel of the same name, *Jane Eyre* has been made into different versions of movies and TV series. Translators are keen on making the translated subtitle equally literary and aesthetic. Here's the dialogue from the movie *Jane Eyre* made in 2011. Rochester said to Jane:

“But you might suit, by distracting me from the mire of my thoughts.”

“把我从我思绪的泥潭中拽出来。”

Rochester said that Jane could save him from the myriad of thoughts. The translator here used literal translation, reflecting the troubled status of Rochester by rendering the word “拽” and “泥潭”, which is a perfectly vivid combination of phrases. It conveys the motion of salvation Jane offers to Rochester. Despite the different expression from the original line, the translated line does a good job of delivering the right spirit.

Later in their conversation, Rochester found that Jane was very nervous with a stiff face, so he said:

--“But you are not naturally austere, any more than I’m naturally vicious.”

--“但你并非生来就如此严肃，就像我并非天生就是个恶棍。”

The adjective “vicious” is translated into a noun “恶棍”, which means a villain, or a bad guy, instead of literal translation complying with the language habit of Chinese. In this way, it shows the self-mockery of Rochester for his aggression. Also, the expression helps build the image of Rochester as a tough-looking man with poison words.

There’s no doubt that the comedy is the most loved and popular TV series among youngsters, especially the sitcoms. The following part describes the funny style of translation taking the example of Sheldon’s words from *The Big Bang Theory*. After all, his words have always been the highlight of the whole show.

Please reserve that butch spirit for the lanes.

请把这纯爷们儿的气场发挥在赛场上吧。

Here, from Sheldon’s point of view, Penny is a “纯爷们儿”, which is a network hot word in China meaning a real macho man unlike the sissies, who can help him win the bowling match. Obviously, we have to admit compared to the indoors nerds like Leonard and Sheldon, Penny does stand out looking like a bigger shot at the bowling game.

This has to be the worst day of my life.

今天真是我一生中最扯淡的一天。

In the sentence, “the worst” is translated into “扯淡”. Only the Chinese audience can taste the hilarity of the word “扯淡” in the context, especially when it’s used to translate Sheldon’s words because he is apparently the mocking type who can bitch about almost everything.

The only flaw in the otherwise perfect plan

智者千虑，必有一失

It’s quite a convincing idiom in Chinese and it perfectly expresses the exact meaning of the original sentence. Also, it shows Sheldon’s overrated confidence about his competence.

Conclusive proof that I’m absolutely worthless after 9 o’clock

事实证明，我九点过后就是一条废柴。

The translator used the word “废柴” to render Sheldon’s self-joking about being completely incompetent when working late hours, which is also a classic example of combination of Chinese buzzword and Sheldonian ridicule.

Looks like the ruffled chicken’s come home to roost

看来现在有人要自食恶果了吧。

The one thing about Sheldon, which would drive anyone into insanity, is that although you would hate to admit it, he is always right. The English adage “ruffled chicken come home to roost” is translated into a Chinese idiom “自食恶果”, which seems appropriate and acceptable rendering the audience to laugh about Sheldon’s mocking object.

One thing about Sheldon, which would make you laugh, is that he doesn’t know or care what other people might think of him. Despite the fact that he often carelessly makes others hit the ceiling, he thinks of himself as a “delight”. To achieve that effect, the subtitles for his lines focus on such contrast by means of ironic exaggeration. In one episode, Sheldon commented himself as a “delight”, which is translated into “我超萌超可爱的”. Chinese audience could hardly resist bursting into laughs because “萌” and “可爱” seem to be the last words Alex would use to describe Sheldon.

Certainly, besides Sheldon, other stars from the show also help bring the laughing element to the audience, especially the female roles. Penny, for instance, is really good at making her boyfriend Leonard’s nerd nature stick. Here is her proof when Leonard got a paper cut.

Of course you did. Your hands are softer than veal.

完全不意外，你的芊芊玉手比小牛肉还嫩呢。

For comments like “芊芊玉手”, there is one thing you should be certain about, which is that they are for young, well-protected girls to describe their beautiful and well-shaped soft hands. So you can totally understand Penny’s mocking. Later in the show, when Penny found out that Sheldon’s assistant Alex hit on Leonard and he actually loved such admiration from other women. And when she confronted Leonard and he wouldn’t admit it, she broke out and said:

--“Don’t play dumb with me, Ricardo Shilly-Shally.”

--“别跟老娘装傻，里卡多 谢利沙力。”

Although the word “老娘” is a little bit rude Chinese slang, it does show that she is really pissed after she found out Leonard is also a discontented man, who is not satisfied with her being his girlfriend, instead, like all other men, enjoying all kinds of female attention. Chinese viewers, especially female audience could really have the same

sympathetic reaction here. And the vulgar word “老娘” nowadays is also used by many Chinese girls to refer to themselves, particularly when they are angry and upset.

Also in this episode, Penny, Bernadette and Amy are helping Raj find girls who might be interested in him in a club, and they found a girl who just got dumped by her boyfriend, and her favorite movie was *Slum Dog Millionaire*. So Amy said:

--“That is some low-hanging fruit.”

--“必须手到擒来啊。”

The expression “low-hanging fruit” is intended to describe how easy it should be for Raj to pick up that girl, while the Chinese idiom “手到擒来” vividly paints the picture. Unfortunately, Raj failed to pick the fruit even though it’s already hanging pretty low. So the “hard truth” helps make the expression create a funny yet sad environment around Raj.

V. CONCLUSION

The translation rules in skopos theory play an instructive role in the guidance of subtitle translation with different rules targeting varied types of movies and TV shows. With the target audience’s language habit being their priority concern, the subtitle fan club does a better job of attracting more viewers of the foreign drama. Despite that the subtitle fan club can only represent one school of opinion, their work has undoubtedly brought great convenience for Chinese audience, which not only let audiences learn about foreign culture visually, but also build a communication bridge between Chinese audience and foreign viewers.

The practice of skopos theory has been proved effective as to the reception of translated subtitles among Chinese viewers, which can be seen from the prevalent foreign TV series and the ever-increasing fan groups. This paper only gives a brief introduction of the subtitle translation practice here in China, in a broader sense, which can only represent a relatively small part of the inter-cultural communication process. And hopefully, the popularity of those fan clubs can go better and further way in the cause. As far as it goes, it serves the goal of synchronizing the viewing experience between foreign and home audience, which in a way, helps bring people around the world closer and enhance the sense of approval.

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Overt-correction vs. Recasts and Grammar Performance of Iranian Male Learners of English

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Abstract—Although a large body of research examined the effectiveness of certain types of error treatment methods, there has been little research done to investigate the efficacy of various kinds of corrective feedback on EFL students' grammar knowledge through eliciting repeated performances. The main purpose of the study was to find out whether recasts helped the Iranian EFL students at intermediate level improve their grammar knowledge better than overt correction. In addition, two methods of recast, declarative and interrogative, were under investigation to figure out which method of recast Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level preferred to be used by the instructor. To this end, fifty male EFL students studying at the intermediate level took part in this study at the Iran Language Institute, Yazd branch, Iran. They were divided into two groups, overt correction and recast. A pre-test was administered before the consecutive process of corrective feedback provision started, and a post-test was given at the end. The participants in both groups enjoyed the same tests, however, the treatment was different. While in one group, the errors were corrected overtly, for the recast group, they were corrected implicitly. The results indicated that both overt correction and recast groups improved in their grammar performances. Between-groups comparison revealed that there was not a significant difference between the learners' grammar performance in overt correction and recast groups. A careful consideration of percentages of declarative and interrogative recasts showed a clear preference for interrogative recasts by the group receiving recasts in their class.

Index Terms—corrective feedback, declarative recasts, grammar knowledge, interrogative recasts, overt correction, recasts

I. INTRODUCTION

Error correction of both oral and written mistakes occupies a prominent place in English Language Teaching (ELT) literature, and continues to be a divisive issue. In the past, the consensus was that errors of any kind were a bad thing. While reading aloud in class, the student would have every pronunciation mistake corrected on the spot. In written work, all mistakes would be shown, very seriously put in red ink. Offering an answer in class often risked losing face and sometimes being reprimanded for being lazy if the answer was incorrect. More recently, however, in the English language classroom, there has been a shift in attitude to errors. Errors are regarded as indicators that the learner is experimenting with language, or testing out a new language hypothesis, or progressing, in general.

Error correction is deemed essential in ELT classes, for students regard correction as a source of improvement (Chaudron, 1988, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001), but teachers take a key role in deciding how much to correct, or how to go about it. Teachers can exploit the errors that a learner makes to show him the current state of his English and to determine the content of future practice. In Brown's (2007) words, "corrective feedback includes responses to learners' produced utterances which repair or call attention to their errors" (p. 379). Lyster and Ranta (1997) categorized six corrective feedback types. They include: explicit (overt) correction, metalinguistic clues, recast, repetition, clarification requests, and elicitation.

Considering two different types of feedback, recast and overt correction, the current study aimed at exploring which one would help the Iranian EFL students improve their grammar performance. In addition, two types of recasts, i.e. declarative and interrogative, will be examined to see which one students prefer to be used by their grammar teachers in the language classroom.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

From the historical stand point, it is obvious that the provision of corrective feedback is a recurrent practice in the field of education in general, and in language learning and teaching in particular. Generally, it includes providing either formal or informal feedback for learners on their performance by their teacher or peer(s) on different tasks. The most common terms used in the second language acquisition (SLA) field that refer to corrective feedback are negative evidence, negative feedback, and corrective feedback. Owing to possible perplexity arising out of the use of these terms, a concise review of their definitions by some researchers in the field is presented below.

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) define feedback as the listener or reader's response provided to the learners' spoken or written production. Chaudron (1986) explains that the concept of correction is "any reaction by the teacher which transforms, refers to, or demands improvement of a student's behavior or utterance" (p. 66). According to Chaudron (1988), corrective feedback denotes different meanings. In his words, the term "treatment of error" refers to "any teacher behavior following an error that minimally attempts to inform the learner of the fact of error" (p. 150). Keh (1990) defines feedback as "input from a reader to a writer with the effect for providing information to the writer for revision" (p. 294).

Schachter (1991) states that, corrective feedback can be typically found in language learning and teaching. She mentions 'negative data' or 'negative evidence' as its counterpart in the linguistic field of acquisition. Long (1996) believes that input can be offered to learners in the form of negative and positive evidence. Negative evidence is defined by Long as supplying the direct or indirect information to the students about what is not appropriate and positive evidence as supplying the appropriate and grammatical models in the target language to the students. This information might be provided in the form of what is called explicit and implicit corrective feedback.

Corrective feedback is defined by Lightbown and Spada (1999) as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect. This includes various responses that the learners receive after making errors. When a language learner says, (*He go to school every day*'), corrective feedback can be explicit (for example, *'no, you should say goes, not go'*) or implicit (*'yes he goes to school every day'*), and may or may not include metalinguistic information, for example, (*'don't forget to make the verb agree with the subject'*)" (p. 171-2).

In Suzuki's (2005) words, corrective feedback is regarded as a pedagogical means of supplying the learners with modified input, which can cause the learners to produce modified output. Ellis (2009) views corrective feedback as one type of negative feedback. According to him, it is for any form of response a learner's utterance including a linguistic error. The response comprises any indication that an utterance contains errors, provision of the metalinguistic information or the appropriate target form or any combination of them. Corrective feedback research "constitutes an area of inquiry that can connect theory, research and practice" (Sheen, 2010, p.177).

It has been suggested that certain corrective feedback types can assist grammar improvement, thanks to the type of information supplied to the students by corrective feedback and the depth of processing it can develop (Panova & Lyster, 2002). In Ranta and Lyster's (2007) words, corrective feedback falls into two main categories: prompts and reformulations. Prompts consist of clarification requests, repetition, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation. Reformulations consist of overt correction and recasts.

Overt correction happens when the teacher intervenes by pointing out where and how learners are wrong. It can also entail asking a student to repeat the corrected version of an utterance. A compelling reason and justification for sometimes giving overt correction is simply that many learners expect or want their errors to be corrected in this way. Maybe this is because it reflects the traditional view of what a teacher does. These days, students often complain about not being corrected enough rarely about being corrected too much.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) believe that overt correction unlike recasts, "clearly indicates what the student had said was incorrect" (p. 46). They claim that overt correction is one of the least ambiguous forms of correction; yet, in their study, this technique did not show to be very effective. Kim and Mathes (2001) regard overt correction as providing the correct form overtly which contains specific grammatical information. Learners can refer to this information when their utterances are wrong. Moreover, In Brown's (2007) view, overt/ direct correction occurs when the instructor points out an error and provides the accurate form. In overt correction, there will be an overt indicator that an error has been arisen; by contrast, in implicit correction, there will not be (Yang & Lyster, 2010). In her paper, Hinkel (2011) stated that overt correction occurs "when the teacher directly corrects the learner and/or provides some kind of metalinguistic explanation of the error" (p. 593). This is illustrated in the following example.

S (student): Yesterday Joe and Bill (ah) went to (ah) Bill's grandmother and visit their grandmother

T (teacher): and visit—you need past tense

S: Visited, yes.

(Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006)

There are some studies in the literature which support the efficacy of overt correction. Semke (1984) pointed out that implicit methods of corrective feedback are less useful than explicit ones and lead to less achievement; besides, learners do not have a positive view regarding this type of error treatment. Edge (1989) stated that the teacher should provide directly the learners with the correct grammatical structures in writing process where they think that their performance is wrong and the existing errors cause some sort of misunderstanding or ambiguity in their flow of communication. He confirmed that particularly with certain types of error, explicit (overt) corrective feedback is significantly more effective than implicit type.

In the studies by Herron and Tomasello (1988), Tomasello and Herron (1989), Herron (1991), and Ellis, Rosszell, and Takashima (1994), overt correction occurred through so-called garden-path techniques that persuaded students to commit errors while using the target forms. Their errors provoked a response from their teacher. The teacher wrote the inaccurate form on the board, drew a line through it, wrote the proper form, and then stated it out loud before offering a concise explanation. By the same token, Bartram and Walton (1994) found that overt correction is the most commonly

used type of feedback in communicative activities. Nevertheless, it causes a breakdown in communication and makes the students feel uncomfortable, and reluctant to communicate in the target language.

A body of research, carried out by Leow (1998) and Scott (1989, 1990) revealed that overt correction is more fruitful than implicit corrective feedback. Ferris (1999) classified errors into treatable and untreatable errors. By treatable errors, she referred to rule-governed errors such as those in subject-verb agreement, comma, missing articles and verb form errors. She defined untreatable errors as lexical, wrong sentence construction, missing words, unnecessary words and wrong word order errors. She stated that teachers should not provide implicit corrective feedback (such as underlining, abbreviation, etc.) for untreatable errors because these errors have no rules. Thus, overt corrective feedback is suggested for errors which are not rule-governed.

Nassaji and Swain (2000) highlighted the point that “there was a tendency for more direct and explicit prompts to be more useful than less direct implicit prompts”. In the same way, Norris and Ortega’s (2000) meta-analysis of L2 instructional interventions suggested that the outcome measures utilized by a great number of studies bore out the efficacy of overt correction for the reason that these measures demanded “the application of explicit declarative knowledge under controlled conditions, without much requirement for fluent, spontaneous use of contextualized language” (p. 486).

In the same fashion, Ferris and Roberts (2001) discovered that low proficiency students gained advantage from having their teacher correct their errors. Lack of feedback prevented students from noticing their errors. As a result, students felt a sense of frustration. They suggested that implicit correction enhances the students’ reflection and attention to their errors, and in the same way, it gets the students involved in guided learning, which results in long-term retention.

In an empirical study, Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) investigated learners’ use of the English past tense marker –*ed* following exposure to either metalinguistic clues or recasts. The Results revealed that students receiving metalinguistic clues in their group surpassed both the recast and control groups on tests of both oral elicited information and grammaticality judgments L2 knowledge. According to Ellis et al. (2006), “explicit feedback seems more likely to promote cognitive comparison that aids learning” (p. 364). Additionally, it is in line with the findings of Carroll’s (2001) study concluding that metalinguistic clues and not recasts appear to promote generalization of the –*ed* form to new contexts.

In Mackey and Goo’s (2007) study, eleven L2 learners of Arabic and their two teachers watched videotaped corrective feedback (CF) episodes from the interactions in their classes. Results showed that, on the whole, the perception of the CF was just 36% which was not the teachers’ original intention. For instance, CF targeted a morphosyntactic error was quite identified as morphosyntactic CF by the students. Overt correction (either including metalinguistic clues or elicitation) was understood more than implicit CF such as negotiations for meaning and recasts. In her study, Sheen (2007) examined the efficacy of implicit feedback (recasts) and overt correction together with metalinguistic comments on adult ESL learners’ acquisition of definite and indefinite articles. The results revealed that overt correction group outperformed the implicit group in learning in both immediate and post-tests. She concluded that overt correction is more helpful than implicit correction in a classroom context.

Regarding the benefits of overt correction, Ortega (2009, p. 75) assumed that “when two or more implementations of negative feedback are compared, the more explicit one leads to larger gains” and continued to declare that this result “is hardly illuminating” since it reflects Norris and Ortega’s (2000) meta-analysis results regarding the dominance of overt (explicit) CF types over more implicit ones (see also Spada & Tomita, 2010). A large number of studies bore a crucial role of explicit written corrective feedback on learners’ linguistic errors (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Sheen, 2010). These studies informed of the short-term efficacy of written corrective feedback.

Recasts are an attempt to imitate the way in which real-life correction happens. Typically, it is the way people in the street or in shops react to learners’ errors, and it is generally how parents correct their children. Recasts are an indirect and gentle way of giving feedback, in which the teacher reformulates all or part of an utterance into a correct or more appropriate version of what a learner is trying to say. Recasts are defined as “utterances that rephrase a child’s utterance by changing one or more sentence components, subject, verb or object, while still referring to its central meaning” (Long, 1996, p. 434). According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), recasting is “the teacher’s reformulation of all or part of a student’s utterance, minus the error” (p. 46). In Sheen’s (2006) view, a recast is “The teacher’s reformulation of all or part of a student’s utterance that contains at least one error within the context of a communicative activity in the classroom” (p. 365).

A recast occurs in episodes such as the following examples:

(4) T: When you were in school?

L: Yes, I stand in the first row.

T: You *stood* in the first row?

L: Yes, in the first row, and sit, ah, sat the first row.

(Ellis & Sheen, 2006, p. 576)

In Line 1, a learner’s utterance containing an error (Line 2) triggers the recast (Line 3), which reformulates the utterance and corrects the error.

In their study, Loewen and Philp (2006) explained the features of recasts as follows:

“1) Recasts are generally provided incidentally in the course of focus-on-meaning interaction in response to nontarget-like utterances;

2) Recasts retain the central meaning of the learner’s utterance while changing the lexical, morphosyntactic, or phonological form;

3) Recasts provide positive evidence and negative feedback rather than providing overt correction” (p. 537).

A large number of researchers distinguished various types of CF in relation to explicitness, but it has turned out to be highly problematic.

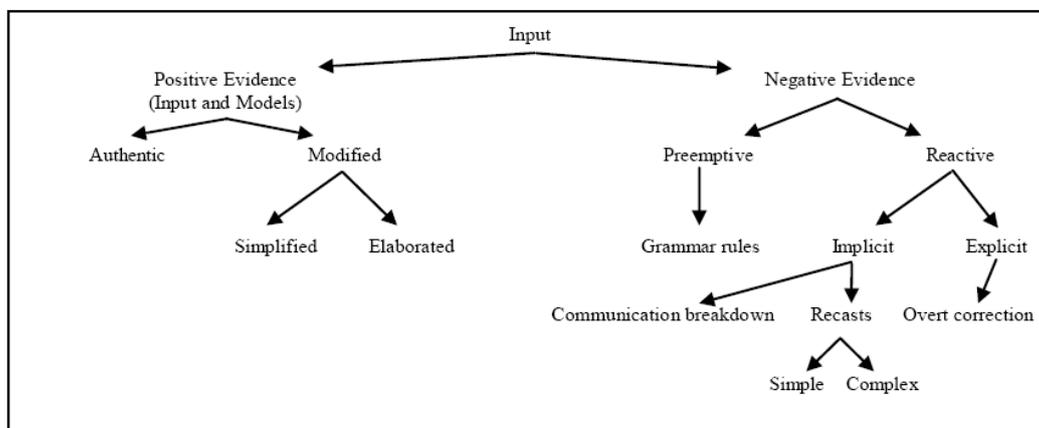


Figure 1. From “Focus on Form: Theory, Research and Practice” by M. Long and P. Robinson (1998).

As Figure 1 shows, recasts, for instance, are widely regarded as implicit (Long, 1996, 2006; Long & Robinson, 1998), yet research indicates that, recasts can also be quite explicit, depending on learner orientation, instructional setting, and discourse context in addition to formal characteristics such as number of changes, length, and linguistic targets (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001; Sheen, 2004, 2006; Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Sato, 2011). Loewen and Philp (2006) admitted that recasts fluctuate from more implicit to more explicit. Farrar (1990, 1992) endorsed the provision of recasts, claiming that they provide positive evidence, i.e. the grammatical forms in the target language, and also negative evidence, i.e. the ungrammatical ones in the target language.

There is also some evidence in the literature which supports the use of recasts in a foreign language context. Long and Robinson (1998) suggested that recasts are highly beneficial to show learners the difference between their interlanguage and target language. Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada (2001) consider recasts as a corrective feedback type to language learners, that is a review on the usefulness of recasts, coming to the conclusion that “recasts appear to be the most effective in the contexts where it is clear to learners that the recast is a reaction to the accuracy of the form, not the content, of the original utterance” (p. 720). Another example of research done on recasting is Lyster’s (2001) investigating specific patterns of a reactive approach to form-focused instruction that could be named corrective feedback. It was found that phonological and grammatical errors had a tendency towards recasts whereas lexical errors attracted more negotiation of form than recasts.

Han (2002) carried out a study to investigate the effect of recasts on tense consistency in L2 output. She designed a pretest, posttest, and a delayed posttest. The participants were randomly divided into a recast group and a non-recast group. The database was composed of written and oral narratives from both groups collected during eleven sessions. The statistical analysis showed that owing to their finely tuned awareness, the recast group outperformed the non-recast group in showing a much greater control of tense consistency in both oral and written tests. Moreover, Mackey and Oliver (2002) found that children are more sensitive to recasts owing to the fact that recasts bear a striking similarity to first language (L1) feedback given by caregivers.

In the same fashion, Leeman (2003) carried out a study with 74 freshmen learners of Spanish employing Spanish noun-adjective agreement at a university. Four groups performed communicative tasks one-on-one with the researcher. They include: negative evidence group, enhanced salience with no feedback group, recast group, and control group. The findings from a posttest and delayed posttest with picture description tasks revealed that only recast group and enhanced salience with no feedback group surpassed the control group on any measure.

Regarding the short-term benefits of recasts, Iwashita (2003) conducted a study with the focus on two grammatical structures in the task-based conversational interactions occurring between adult learners of Japanese and NSs. The statistical analysis showed the short-term effect of recasts compared with other conversational moves.

For the same reason, Ishida (2004) studied the impacts of recasting on the acquisition of Japanese aspectual form –te i (ru), leading to the significantly increased overall accuracy in connection with the number of recasts which was given throughout the treatment period, and the accuracy rate was sustained. Ellis and sheen (2006) in their research entitled “*Reexamining the role of recasts in second language acquisition*” argued the probability of overestimation about acquisition usefulness of recasts compared with other corrective feedback types.

In addition, McDonough (2007) examined the effectiveness of clarification requests and recasts, either of them opened up opportunities for immediate repair, and detected no crucial distinction between clarification requests and recasts, even though these two kinds of CF turned out to be more fruitful than no CF. To take this idea one step further, Perdomo (2008) investigated the efficacy of explicit negative feedback and recasts on the right use of the auxiliary verb “to have”, and the use of past participles in the present perfect tense. Thirty-eight students were randomly divided into two groups, namely explicit negative feedback and recast groups. Findings lead support to the efficacy of recasts over explicit negative feedback.

Likewise, Sheen (2008) examined the impacts of language anxiety on the efficacy of recasts, concluding that recasts had a positive effect on low-anxiety learners compared with both high-anxiety learners who received recasts and low-anxiety learners for whom recasts were not provided as a control group. Findings did not show a difference between the high-anxiety learners and the control group. In a recent study, Révész, Sachs, and Mackey (2011) investigated whether the task design variable \pm *visual support* had an effect on the amount of students’ responses to recasts and the correlation between uptake and L2 development. Fifty four EFL learners from a high school took part in the study in Hungary. The findings of the study indicated that immediate repair following recasts of past progressive forms could be a good predictor of improvement when learners performed less complicated tasks.

Lyster (1998b) classified recasts into two major types: declarative and interrogative recasts. Declarative recast states that something is incorrect in the learners’ utterance through statements and the repetition of the same sentence produced by a student. Interrogative recast points out that something is incorrect in the learners’ utterance through asking a question directly or restating the sentence as a question. Lyster (1998a) states that “interrogative recasts often serve as conformation checks” (P. 201).

Sheen (2006) stated that students are most likely to repair their errors following declarative recasts. She also pointed out that interrogative recasts did not lead to a high level of repair declaring that “uptake and subsequent repair are more likely when the linguistic focus of recasts is on pronunciation and when the type of change involved substitution because these characteristics are linked with length, word or short phrase, and a single change” (P. 386). In a word, interrogative recasts were not beneficial to repair.

Loewen and Philp (2006) concluded that “stress, declarative intonation, one change, and multiple feedback moves were predictive of successful uptake” (p. 540). They identified that “interrogative intonation, shortened length, and one change were predictive of the accuracy of the test scores” (p. 540). Results of their study revealed that interrogative recasts have the effect of developing learners’ accuracy. Additionally, they mentioned that “an interrogative recast is ambiguous as corrective feedback because the learner may interpret it either as corrective or as a request to confirm the intended meaning” (p. 540). On the contrary, in Mackey and Goo’s (2007) study, eleven L2 learners of Arabic and their two teachers watched videotaped CF episodes from the interactions in their classes. Results indicated that the perception of the CF was just 36% which was not the teachers’ original intention. Regarding the types of recasts, students identified interrogative recasts more than declarative recasts.

More recently, Erlam and Loewen (2010) distinguished between implicit and explicit recasts depending on the number of moves and the intonation of the CF. The operationalization of a recast may verify the degree of its implicitness or explicitness, for example in Erlam and Loewen (2010), the implicit recasts (interrogative) -- including correction of the error made, with rising intonation -- is in contrast with explicit recast, declarative, which consists of two uninterrupted feedback moves. In the first, the student’s error was repeated with rising intonation. In the second, a correction was provided in declarative form (p.886).

Following the literature on the role of feedback in grammar performance of language learners, the following research questions were posed:

1. Does recast help Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level improve their grammar knowledge better than overt-correction?
2. Which methods of recast, declarative or interrogative, do Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level prefer their instructors use as a feedback to their grammar performances?

Based on the above-mentioned research questions, two null hypotheses were made.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants of this study were 50 male EFL students studying at the Iran Language Institute, Yazd branch, Iran. The students were at the intermediate level in the 15-25 age range. All participants had taken the placement test required for being accepted to study English in the institute; therefore, they were assumed to enjoy the same language knowledge. They were native speakers of Persian studying English in the foreign language setting.

B. Instruments

The research instrument used in the study involved a number of 30 multiple-choice questions derived from the book “Progress toward ILI Examinations: Pre 3 Intermediate” (Lotfian, 2009). Prior to the actual test administration, this test was piloted for its reliability, and also content validity; it was examined by two faculty members of Islamic Azad

University of Abadeh, Iran, who agreed that the test enjoyed a high level of content validity. The piloted test data was entered into a computer and analyzed. The result of the analysis indicated an approximate reliability of 0.71. In addition, to answer the second research question, a survey was carried out to find the learners' preference for declarative or interrogative recasts.

C. Procedures

This study aimed at comparing two different corrective treatments, overt-correction and recast to see which one was more effective for the Iranian learners' grammar improvement by giving consecutive treatments and administering tests. Permission to conduct the research was sought and obtained from the central office in Tehran, Iran. The current study used an experimental method, yielded quantitative data and provided statistical analysis.

To fulfill this aim, a pre-test of grammar was given to the students at the beginning before the process of corrective feedback provision started. The purpose of giving this test was first for homogeneity purposes and then, for later comparison between the performance of students at the end and that of the beginning to see if there was any significant difference in the grammar performances of the two groups receiving recast and over-correction or not. The test which was used both the pre- and post-test consisted of a number of multiple-choice questions. The allotted time to answer the items of the test was nearly 20 minutes. Then, the students were divided into two groups of about 30 students. Because of institutional constraints, it was not possible to have a control group to compare with the experimental groups receiving overt-correction and recast as the students' mistakes were supposed to be corrected one way or another in all classes. The test was the same for both groups in which the teacher used overt-correction and recast.

Then the next phase of the study was the treatment. The researcher, who was a teacher at the Iran Language Institute, Yazd branch, Iran, instructed the classes. Both groups received the same instruction. The only difference lay in the process of corrective feedback used during the instruction, overt-correction for one group and recast for another. The difference is illustrated in the following examples which are the actual data collected in the present study.

(1) S (student): I go to the movies yesterday afternoon.

T (teacher): You went to the movies.
What did you see?

S: 'Scandal'.

In the above-mentioned example, the teacher supplies the correct form (*went*) without interrupting the flow of speech, thus maintaining a focus on meaning.

(2) S: Several years ago, Masaru Ibuka, the chairman of Sony, remove the recording function and speaker.

T: No, not remove -- removed. The verb must be in the past tense.

In this example, the teacher directly corrects the learner's erroneous utterance.

As the educational sessions of the Iran Language Institute were held 105 minutes twice a week during an eleven-week period, the process of corrective feedback provision took a total of twenty sessions. At the end of the instruction, the participants took their final test, post-test, which was administered in the last session of the term. Next, the group receiving recast were surveyed to see which method of recast Iranian EFL students at intermediate levels preferred their teachers to use to give feedback to their students, declarative or interrogative.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to compare the participants' performances in the pre- and post-test for both groups, those receiving overt correction and those receiving declarative and interrogative recast, independent samples and paired samples *t*-tests were applied. Paired samples *t*-tests were carried out on the performances of both overt correction and recast groups before and after the instruction separately to find out whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the learners' performances in the grammar test constructed to assess their knowledge of English grammar in the pre- and post-test. Then, in order to compare the gain scores of the participants in the overt correction and recast group, an independent sample *t*-test was performed. To answer the second research question, the percentages were obtained to show which type of recast, declarative or interrogative, was preferred by the learners who received recast in their class.

The results of paired sample *t*-tests for overt correction group shows that the mean scores of the group in pre- and post-test were 18.24 and 25.52, respectively (see Table I). This means that the learners improved their grammar performance in post-test.

TABLE I.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR OVERT CORRECTION GROUP

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 pre-test (Overt Correction)	18.24	25	2.919	.584
post-test (Overt Correction)	22.52	25	2.584	.517

In order to see if the observed difference was statistically significant, a paired sample *t*-test was applied. The results are presented in Table II as follows:

TABLE II.
 PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR OVERT CORRECTION GROUP

	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 pre-test (Overt Correction) - post-test (Overt Correction)	-4.280	2.807	.561	-5.438	-3.122	-7.625	24	.000

The results of the paired samples *t*-test for this group presented in Table II indicate that the observed difference between the mean score of pre- and post-test was significant ($t=-7.625$, $df=24$, $p=0$) at the significance level of 0.000 as the observed *t* exceeds the significance level.

Table II reveals that the participants' scores in post-test in the overt correction group are significantly higher than the scores in pre-test, and this difference can be attributed to the helpful role of the treatment particularly overt correction feedback. Higher scores mean a higher level of learners' awareness of English grammar. Then, a sample paired statistics was used for the recast group (Table III):

TABLE III.
 PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR RECAST GROUP

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 pre-test (Recast)	18.96	25	2.746	.549
post-test (Recast)	23.00	25	3.227	.645

The results of the paired samples statistics for the recast group, presented in Table III indicate that the mean scores of the group in pre- and post-test were 18.96 and 23 respectively. This means that they increased their accuracy in post-test. If this difference is statistically significant, one can conclude that they have improved in their grammar performance, and higher accuracy in these tests implies a higher level of their awareness of English grammar.

In order to see whether the difference was significant, a paired sample *t*-test was applied. The results are tabulated as follows:

TABLE IV.
 PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR RECAST GROUP

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 pre-test (Recast) - post-test (Recast)	-4.040	2.541	.508	-5.089	-2.991	-7.950	24	.000

The results of the paired samples *t*-test for this group presented in Table IV indicate that the observed difference between the mean score of the learners in pre- and post-test was significant ($t=-7.950$, $df=24$, $p=0$) as the significance level is 0.000 and *t* exceeds the significance level. This means that their scores in post-test are significantly higher than their scores in pre-test and this difference can be attributed to the effective role of recast.

Table V below indicates the results of group statistics for the grammar gain scores of both recast and overt correction groups. The mean of the participants' gain scores in these groups are 4.04 and 4.28 respectively.

TABLE V.
 GROUP STATISTICS FOR RECAST AND OVERT CORRECTION GROUPS

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Recast	25	4.04	2.541	.508
Overt Correction	25	4.28	2.807	.561

To see if the observed difference is significant or not, an independent sample *t*-test was performed, the results of which are presented in Table VI.

TABLE VI.
 INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR OVERT CORRECTION AND RECAST GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.021	.886	-.317	48	.753	-.240	.757	-1.762	1.282
Equal variances not assumed			-.317	47.5	.753	-.240	.757	-1.763	1.283

As Table VI indicates, the difference is not significant ($t=-.317, df=48, p>0.05$). This means that the learners' grammar performance in overt correction and recast groups is not significantly different. In other words, while giving feedback helps the learners improve their grammar knowledge of English grammar, the type of feedback, overt correction or recast, cannot be a determining factor.

In the preset study, the first research question investigated whether recast helps Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level improve their grammar knowledge better than overt correction. The results of group statistics and independent samples *t*-test presented in Tables V and VI indicated that there was not a significant difference between the learners' grammar performance in overt correction and recast groups. Therefore, the first research hypothesis stating that recast does not help Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level improve their grammar knowledge better than overt correction is retained. Accordingly, the type of feedback is not a determining factor in the improvement of the students' grammar.

Regarding the second research question, the students' preferences to be notified through declarative or interrogative recasts, percentages were obtained. The results, presented in Table VII, indicate that 64 percent of Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level prefer their instructor use interrogative recasts as a feedback to their grammar performances compared with 36 percent who preferred declarative recasts.

TABLE VII.
THE PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Declarative	9	36.0	36.0
Interrogative	16	64.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	

The second research question attempted to examine which methods of recast, declarative or interrogative, Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level prefer their instructors use as a feedback to their grammar performances. By referring to Table VII, one gets a quick impression about the percentage of the responses given by the learners in the recast group. 64 percent of the learners have a preference for interrogative recasts, whereas 36 percent of them preferred declarative recasts. Therefore, the second research hypothesis stating that Iranian EFL learners do not have any special preference for declarative or interrogative recasts is rejected.

The purpose of the current study was to discover which method of corrective feedback, overt correction or recast, is an effective means of improving the Iranian EFL learner's grammar knowledge at intermediate level. In addition, it was aimed at investigating which method of recast Iranian EFL students prefer to be used by their teachers, declarative or interrogative. The study findings are in agreement with the view of second language acquisition as 'cognitive skill' acquisition, according to which corrective feedback is an essential element in the complex process of language learning. On the other hand, the findings of this study are in contrast to nativism, according to which negative evidence does not cause any permanent change in the learners' grammar accuracy of target language, and if there is a change, it is a temporary one.

Furthermore, the study findings contradict Krashen's (1985) belief, according to which subconscious acquisition is dominant over conscious learning and corrective feedback does not play an important role in second language acquisition. The findings of the current study reveal that both overt correction and recast strategies have beneficial effects on learners' improvement in the process of English language learning and the learners' English grammar performance, in contrast to some previous research which reported negative or no effect for corrective feedback on learners' improvement (Krashen, 1985; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Truscott, 1996; Fazio, 2001; Rahimi, 2009).

The findings of the study are consistent with Ashwell (2000) and Ferris and Roberts' (2001) claim that corrective feedback has some beneficial effects on learners' improvement in writing. Some other researchers believed that significantly those who received corrective feedback outperformed their counterparts who did not receive any feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Leeman, 2003; Abadikhah & Ashoori, 2012; Shirazi & Sadighi, 2012).

They are also in contrast with the findings of Bitcher, Young, and Cameron (2005) as they did not find a positive effect for corrective feedback in general. Likewise, Ferris (2006) stated, "the research based on the questions of whether error feedback helps students to improve their accuracy in the short run or overtime is inadequate as to number of studies and inconsistent as to research design" (p. 81). The study results also contradict the findings of Rahimi's (2009) study, according to which there is no significant effect for the teacher's corrective feedback.

Language teaching methodologists in favor of overt correction suggested that it is more useful to learners since it lessens the perplexity that students may undergo when they do not succeed in identifying or recalling the meaning of teachers' error codes and fully inform them about their errors (Chandler, 2003; Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006; Dabaghi & Basturkmen, 2009). A number of researchers distinguished between the effects of different error treatment methods such as overt correction and recasts and found that overt correction group outperformed the recast group (Lyster, 2004; Rosa & Leow, 2004; Ellis, 2006; Spada & Tomita, 2010).

The studies supporting recasts suggested that this approach is better than overt correction since it gets learners involved in guided learning and problem solving. In addition, recasts promote the kind of reflection that leads to long-term acquisition and are student-centered, i.e. they are dependent upon what the student attempts to convey, and are inconspicuous, i.e. they indicate that an error occurs without leading to a breakdown in communication (Leeman, 2003;

Long, 2006; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Trofimovich, Ammar, & Gatbonton, 2007; Perdomo, 2008; Lyster, Saito, & Sato, 2013).

Although corrective feedback as an effective form of interaction has been validated by a large number of studies (Carroll & Swain, 1993; Nagata, 1993; Muranoi, 2000; Carroll, 2001; Havranek & Cesnik, 2001; Lyster, 2004), research showed that little or no significant difference can occur between implicit feedback (recasts) and overt corrective feedback (DeKeyser, 1993; Kim & Mathes, 2001). These studies are in agreement with the findings of the present study in which no significant difference was found between the performances of both overt correction and recast groups.

In contrast to Sheen's (2006) view regarding the beneficial effect of declarative recasts which lead to a high level of repair compared with interrogative one, the findings of the current study support Mackey and Goo's (2007) study in which interrogative recasts were more accurately perceived than declarative recasts. The students' preference for interrogative recasts in the present study reveal that an interrogative recast is not ambiguous as corrective feedback and students are fully aware of the types of error corrections employed by their instructor, which is in contrast to Loewen and Philp's (2006) findings pertaining to the ambiguity of interrogative recasts.

V. CONCLUSION

This study was intended to examine which correction method, overt correction or recast, was more fruitful for Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level to show an improvement in their grammar performance. Moreover, it shed light on the students' preference to be notified through declarative or interrogative recasts. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners of English at intermediate level improved their grammar performance as a result of receiving corrective feedback. Therefore, corrective feedback provision resulted in an ascending pattern of improvement in learners' performance over time. These findings give emphasis to the significance of supplying corrective feedback in EFL settings where teachers' instruction and feedback are the most important ways through which learners can improve their language proficiency.

It should be notified that error making is an inevitable component of language learning, but one can reduce the number of these errors through providing the learners with corrective feedback. According to the findings of this study, it seems that learners give their undivided attention to the kind of corrective feedback provided by their teachers and use them to make positive changes in their performances. Briefly speaking, corrective feedback facilitates language learning process.

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The Concept of Love in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*

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Abstract—The present paper probes into the concept of love revealed in the Dark Lady group in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. In these poems, the poet depicts a kind of obsession, bitter, hopeless and degenerating, which is totally different from that sweet and ennobling love Shakespeare always pursues in his early works. It is argued that the conflict between the ideal of love and the sensual obsession with the Dark Lady may well be a manifestation of the change in the poet's mood, namely, from optimism to pessimism.

Index Terms—the concept of love, Dark Lady, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*

I. INTRODUCTION

Since there are more legends than documented facts about Shakespeare's life, his life, in a sense, remains a mystery. Just for this reason, there were plenty of scholars who read Shakespeare's sonnets as his autobiography. In "Scorn Not the Sonnet", for instance, Wordsworth wrote, "with this Key/ Shakespeare unlocked his heart..." (Gill, 2000, p.356). Although this argument is still open to discussion, many scholars seem to believe that sonnets, as lyrical poems, tend to convey more personal implications than other literary forms. Therefore, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* bears a special meaning to his whole career of literary creation. These 154 sonnets, with their profound thought, luxuriant images, sincere and oceanic emotion, as well as artistic fascination, can by all means draw a parallel to his enduring plays.

In the past four hundred years, considerable research effort has been made to unravel the mystery of this sonnet sequence. Amid the numerous and diverse research concerning the sonnets, there are three major areas of debate: the date of their composition; the possible real-life identities of Mr. W. H. to whom they are dedicated and of the friend, the rival poet, and the dark lady who appear in the poems; and the extent to which the sonnets, either in their traditional sequence or in some rearrangement, tell a unified story that may be rooted in Shakespeare's personal experience (Zesmer, 1976, p.76-77).

Let there be various means to divide Shakespeare's career, it may be safe to proclaim that the great change in Shakespeare's literary creation, namely, the change from comedies to tragedies, in all probability, was brewed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This change may likewise reveal the turn in Shakespeare's world view and his outlook on life. He became less optimistic, if not pessimistic. Despite the fact that the exact date of its composition is still unavailable, it is comparatively easy to prove that *Shakespeare's Sonnets* was started in the early years of the 1590s, and the bulk of them had been completed by the end of the sixteenth century. Since the years spent on the composition of the sonnets, coincide with the several years that witnessed Shakespeare's great change in literary creation, is it likely that the poet's attitude in the sonnets, for example, his attitude to love, undergoes a similar change?

No matter how dense the debate on identity, date, and order may be, critics who differ on various interpretive problems are likely to agree that the direction of address of these poems can be established with certainty: the first 126 sonnets refer to and are generally addressed to the Fair Friend, while the succeeding ones concern the Dark Lady (Dubrow, 1998, p.238). The Dark Lady group will be the focus of the present paper. By comparing the "love" described in this group of poems with the concept of love reflected in Shakespeare's early works and that prevailed in the Renaissance, this paper endeavors to investigate into the change in the poet's attitude to love.

II. THE RENAISSANCE CONCEPT OF LOVE

The concept of love that prevailed over the Renaissance period was the so-called Courtly Love. Courtly Love (known in medieval France as "fine love" or fin amour) is "an example of an idea about heterosexual relationships" (Cuddon, 1977, p.165). Though it is susceptible to interpretations or expressions of various kinds, "there appear to be some fundamental elements which are fairly universal: (a) the four marks of courtly love are humility, courtesy, adultery and the religion of love; (b) the love is desire; (c) it is an ennobling and dynamic force; (d) it generates a cult of the beloved" (Cuddon, 1977, p.165). In the brilliant sonnet sequences of Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser in the sixteenth century, this tradition finds its full expression in England. Most of these sequences follow the ancient tradition: women are idealized; the lover, stricken by both spiritual and personal beauty of his lady, owes her obedience and submission; the love the lover pursues has the power to purify his souls and ennobles him; and the lover longs for union with his lady in order to attain moral excellence.

Nevertheless, the courtly love in England has features of its own. In the time of Renaissance, most of the English poets tended to believe that the sensual love was a kind of desire; however, not every desire could be regarded as love (Hu, 2001, p.135). Accordingly, they neither idealized love to a purely spiritual being, nor rendered a total repudiation

to the sensual love. Generally speaking, what characterized the English courtly love were its concerns, which attached importance both to the earthly (sensual) and to the heavenly (spiritual) aspects of love, with an obvious preference for the spiritual. In their opinion, the spiritual love which was lofty and sacred was naturally superior to the sensual one. John Donne, one of the greatest metaphysical poets, in his renowned "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning", says,

Dull sublunary lovers' love
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
 Absence, because it doth remove
 Those things which elemented it.
 But we, by a love so much refined
 That our selves know not what it is
 Inter-assured of the mind,
 Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss. (Abrams, 1988, p.1070)

Here the poet tolerates the sensual or earthly love, but a favor and cult towards the spiritual one is easy to discern. However, sensual love does not equal lust. The poets of the present age made an extremely clear distinction between lust and true love. To them, lust results in sensual sloth while love leads to heroic action. Spenser, for example, in his *Amoretti*, a sonnet sequence concerns the relationship between the spiritual love and the sensual one, expresses his attitude towards lust and true love in plain words:

Such loue not lyke to lusts of baser kynd,
 The harder wonne, the firmer will abide.
 The durefull Oake, whose sap is not yet dride,
 Is long ere it conceiue the kindling fyre:
 But when it once doth burne, it doth diuide
 Great heat, and makes his flames to heauen aspire.
 (Sonnet 6) (Spenser & Larsen, 1997, p.71)

He thinks that lust is base, while true love is faithful and persistent, and bears something divine that is connected with the kingdom of heaven. His point of view represents the prevailing attitudes to love of the time.

III. THE CONCEPT OF LOVE IN SHAKESPEARE'S EARLY WORKS

Love is, more often than not, a major theme of Shakespeare's early works, for example, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594), *Love's Labor's Lost* (1594), *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1596), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1598) and *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* (1600). Despite the fact that he expresses deep concern about the theme of love in every single play, Shakespeare never tries to make a tidy definition of it. However, from these plays, it is comparatively easy to detect what on earth love means in the mind of Shakespeare.

To begin with, in *Love's Labor's Lost* (1594), King Ferdinand of Navarre and his friends Longaville, Dumain, and Berowne take an oath to overcome the frailties of the flesh and spend three years in scholarly seclusion. Almost immediately their absurd vows are assaulted by the diplomatic visit of the Princess of France and her three beautiful attendants. The four would-be scholars in quick turn fall in love, forswear their vows, and are conquered by the overwhelming power of love. Through Berowne,

As true we are as flesh and blood can be:
 The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
 Young blood doth not obey an old decree:
 We cannot cross the cause why we were born;
 Therefore of all hands must we be forsworn.
 (Act 4, Scene 3) (Wilson, 1962, p.53)

Shakespeare argues that love is, in words of the Countess in *All's Well that Ends Well* (1602), "the show and seal of nature's truth" (Act 1, Scene 3) (Wilson, 1968, p.17). To love is but human nature. And the power of love is encompassing and invincible.

Furthermore, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594), *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1596), and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1598), love manifests itself in a loftier way. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594), probably Shakespeare's earliest romantic comedy, when Silvia, the female protagonist, is in the apparently hopeless plight of the Proteus' violent court, she still turns him down without any hesitation and professes bravely,

Had I been seized by a hungry lion,
 I would have been a breakfast to the beast,
 Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.
 O, Heaven be judge how I love Valentine,
 Whose life's as tender to me as my soul!
 (Act 5, Scene 4) (Wilson, 1955a, p. 71)

The single word "soul" indicates the pureness and sacredness of true love, and sublimates love to the spiritual highness. Then in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1596), once again, Shakespeare reveals his understanding of love in Helena's bitter monologue:

And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
 So I, admiring of his qualities:
 Things base and vile, folding no quantity,
 Love can transpose to form and dignity:
 Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
 And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
 (Act 1, Scene 1) (Wilson, 1969, p.10)

Love is blind. It does not care appearances, social status, financial conditions, and things like this. It seems to be quite irrational, but from another perspective, this kind of love reflects that Shakespeare, as a humanist, gives higher regard to the communication of minds or spirits between lovers. Another instance may be *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1598). Although Falstaff is the leading figure, one cannot help being fascinated by the secondary plot: the elaborate deception whereby Anne Page marries her true love Fenton, while her father has promised her to the well-off Slender and her mother prefers Dr. Caius, a French physician, who not only is well-moneyed but also has a friend at court. At the very beginning, Fenton proposes to Anne Page with the purpose of obtaining her father's considerable wealth, but when he really falls in love with her, he confesses:

No, heaven so speed me in my time to come!
 Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth
 Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne:
 Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
 Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags;
 And 'tis the very riches of thyself
 That now I aim at.
 (Act 3, Scene 4) (Wilson, 1954, p.55)

Here Fenton beholds the look of true love. He comes to realize that Anne is what he desires, and she, herself, is the very thing that he wants to cherish for his life time. His soul is purified by the power of love.

In addition, love, in *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), becomes a strong might that encourages the lovers to thread their way through obstacles set up by middle aged vanity and impercipience, and even to sacrifice their precious lives without wavering. From these examples, it may be safe to believe that though he is not against the sensual love, Shakespeare pays much more attention to the spiritual power of true love, in other words, in his opinion, compared with the sensual love, the spiritual one is of greater worth. Like his contemporaries, Shakespeare also feels contempt for lust, Adonis' comparison of love and lust may be a fine instance:

"Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
 But Lust's effect is tempest after sun;
 Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,
 Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done;
 Love surfeits not, Lust like a glutton dies;
 Love is all truth, Lust full of forged lies."
 ("Venus and Adonis", Lines 799-804) (Wilson, 1966a, p.31)

To sum up, in these early works, Shakespeare's concept of love enjoys great similarities with those of his contemporaries—a preference for the spiritual love and scorn for lust. The love appears in Shakespeare's early works takes on a bright and optimistic look. It acts as a positive power that contains inexhaustible potentials.

IV. THE TRAGIC LOVE WITH THE DARK LADY

It is a common belief that Sonnets 127-54 shift the poetic focus away from the Fair Friend to the notorious Dark Lady. It is a tradition for the Renaissance poets to experience and incarnate the sum of life's power and perfections in the beauty of their chaste and elegant ladies, such as Sidney's Stella, Daniel's Delia and Constable's Diana. Unlike his contemporaries, Shakespeare's sonnets to the Dark Lady dwell on her imperfections and falsehoods. Seldom does the enthusiastic praise of the beloved one, which frequents most the Shakespeare's early works, appear in this group of poems dedicated to his mistress. Furthermore nearly every sonnet of this group involves some accusation against her. In Sonnet 131 the Dark Lady is condemned as "tyrannous" (Wilson, 1966b, p.68), in Sonnet 133, as faithless, in Sonnet 134 as "covetous" (Wilson, 1966b, p.69); in Sonnet 137 she is "the bay where all men ride...the wide world's common place" (Wilson, 1966b, p.71); in Sonnet 138 she is described as "false" (Wilson, 1966b, p.71), in Sonnet 139 as "unkind" (Wilson, 1966b, p.72), in Sonnet 140 as "proud" (Wilson, 1966b, p.73), in Sonnet 142 as "false to the bonds of love" (Wilson, 1966b, p.73); in Sonnet 147, she is "black as hell, dark as night" both in appearance and in character (Wilson, 1966b, p.76); in Sonnet 148 she is considered to be full of "foul faults" (Wilson, 1966b, p.76); in Sonnet 149, she is "cruel" (Wilson, 1966b, p.77); in Sonnet 150, she is described as "unworthy" but of "a powerful" might to seduce the poet (Wilson, 1966b, p.77); and then in Sonnet 152, she is inconsistent as well as unfaithful. The poet knows only too well his mistress' defects,

In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
 And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.

(Sonnet 131) (Wilson, 1966b, p.68)

Here black has not remained a color; it has “become synonymous with evil, moral corruption, perhaps unbridled sexuality” (Smith, 1981, p.50). However he cannot do anything but devote himself to the obsession with her. And thus infatuation for an unworthy woman becomes the main theme of the Dark Lady poems.

As far as the poet is concerned, the power of the Dark Lady is mesmerizing, enslaving as well as corrupting. She “appears to be the archetypal ‘belle dame sans merci’, the literary precursor of Keat’s ‘Belle Dame’ and Coleridge’s Geraldine, with power to captivate and to corrupt” (Sarkar, 2000, p.348). The poet’s relationship with the Dark Lady is a relationship of enchantment and enchainment of a soul-destroying intensity. The poet expresses his chaotic emotion through the conflict between eye and heart, which is the theme of many sonnets:

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
 For they in thee a thousand errors note;
 But ’tis my heart that loves what they despise,
 Who in despite of view is pleased to dote.
 Nor are mine ears with thy tongue’s tune delighted,
 Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
 Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
 To any sensual feast with thee alone.
 But my five wits nor my five senses can
 Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
 Who leaves unswayed the likeness of a man,
 Thy proud heart’s slave and vassal wretch to be:

(Sonnet 141) (Wilson, 1966b, p.73)

As a matter of fact, both the five wits (intellectual faculties) and the five senses combat the poet’s enthrallment to the mistress; it comes entirely from the foolish heart. Sonnet 137 and Sonnet 152 deal with the similar theme of the corruption of the eye. Eyes are supposed to collect all kinds of images and transmit them to the brain. They should do their utmost to see the truth, the fact, and then report it, but in the situation of Sonnet 137,

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes
 That they behold and see not what they see?
 They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
 Yet what the best is take the worst to be.
 If eyes corrupt by over-partial looks
 Be anchored in the bay where all men ride,
 Why of eyes’ falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
 Whereto the judgment of my heart is tied?
 Why should my heart think that a several plot
 Which my heart knows the wide world’s common place?
 Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
 To put fair truth upon so foul a face?
 In things right true my heart and eyes have erred,
 And to this false plague are they now transferred. (Wilson, 1966b, p.71)

The very perjury of the eye forces the poet into a pathetic corner. And the vehement clash between the sense and sensibility gives rise to the poet’s pessimistic moods which permeate the Dark Lady series.

The poet’s sense of despair and bondage in the relationship with the Dark Lady is acknowledged in sonnet after sonnet. Some time ago, in Shakespeare’s early works, love is bright and, to some extent, an ennobling force; the beloved are lovely and fair, pure and true. They are compared to “bright angel” (*Romeo and Juliet*) (Wilson, 1955b, p.32), “the sun that maketh all things shine” (*Love’s Labor’s Lost*) (Wilson, 1962, p.54) and things alike, which obviously shed some light on the optimistic attitudes of the writer. Nevertheless, in these sonnets devoted to his mistress, the poet draws the comparisons of his infatuation or love to something unpleasant, which conveys anything but optimistic implications. For instance,

My love is as a fever, longing still
 For that which longer nurseth the disease,
 Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
 Th’uncertain sickly appetite to please.

(Sonnet 147) (Wilson, 1966b, p.76)

Here love is a fever. Then in Sonnet 137 and Sonnet 141, it is a “plague” (Wilson, 1966b, p.71, p.73). It is also “madness” in Sonnet 140 (Wilson, 1966b, p.72). But what pushes the poet into a more despairing situation is that sometimes he finds that his relationship with the Dark Lady turns out to be mere lust, for which he always feels contempt. As some critics argue, the sonnets to or about the Dark Lady are sometimes adulatory, sometimes analytical, sometimes frivolous; they reflect submission, evasion, and sometimes disgust; they are “poems of lust” (Smith, 1981, p.60). The sexual implications of “will” (Sonnets 135-36) and the pun of “lie” (Sonnet 138) have often been pointed out

and are undeniably there. Take the famous Sonnet 129 as an example, which is probably one of the most violent sonnets of the entire sonnet sequence. It is in some sense a kind of definition or analysis of Lust.

Th'expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight,
Past reason hunted and no sooner had,
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so,
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme,
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe,
Before, a joy proposed, behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows, yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell. (Wilson, 1966b, p.67)

The poet attacks strongly upon lust in this poem. He elaborates on it through the images of war, murder, savagery, cruelty, hunting, and baiting. However, all these severe criticisms end with a hopeless couplet—everybody knows this perfectly well, but nobody is wise enough to escape from it, with the poet himself included. Despite the very fact that the poet despises erotic love, he cannot resist the temptation from his mistress. Sonnet 151 is a clear example:

For, thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler part to my gross body's treason:
My soul doth tell my body that he may
Triumph in love; flesh stays no farther reason... (Wilson, 1966b, p.78)

In short, the poet's situation is tragic, in which he suffers, struggles, and despairs. He loves a woman he really has every reason to despise. He knows that the Dark Lady is only a "bad angel", "the worsen spirit" (Sonnet 144) (Wilson, 1966b, p.74), and repeatedly he indicates that his love towards the woman is sinful, disfiguring as well as defiling, but he just has no way out. Hence, from all perspectives, this kind of love is hopeless, and may well turn out to be a failure or tragedy. As a matter of fact, through some hints revealed in the sonnet sequence, for example,

So, now I have confessed that he is thine,
And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
Myself I'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore to be my comfort still.
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous and he is kind;
(Sonnet 134) (Wilson, 1966b, p.69)

it is a tradition to believe that the Dark Lady really betrays the poet by seducing the Fair Friend. The betrayals of both his Fair Youth and his beloved mistress throw the poet into an agony of pain.

V. CONCLUSION

It was the courtly love that enjoyed great popularity in the Renaissance. It advocated the spiritual love which was sacred and ennobling. Although the English poets did not repudiate to the sensual love totally, they took a disgust at lust. In his early works, like his contemporaries, Shakespeare expressed a similar insight of love. He also spared no pains to pursue a love with a lofty and pure nature. But in the Dark Lady poems a love for an unworthy object becomes a dominant theme. The poet's so-called love or uncontrollable passion for a woman he really despises pushes him into an extremely desperate situation. He knows each and every defect of the Dark Lady; he knows this kind of blind and foolish love for her is, to a great extent, similar to lust in nature; he knows he should in all senses disdain this wanton mistress; however, he just can find no way to get rid of this stupid and desperate obsession for her. Hence the tragic vision reveals itself. The conflict between the ideal of love and the sensual obsession with the contemptible Dark Lady may well offer testimony to the poet's change from optimism to melancholy.

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EAP Needs Analysis in Iran: The Case of University Students in Chemistry Department

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Abstract—Needs specification and analysis are important factors that need to be explored and discussed in language teaching program. Regarding this, an EAP program should be built on both investigating learners' purposes and assessing their needs. The objective of this study was to investigate chemistry students' and instructors' perceptions of the English language needs of these chemistry students. 90 chemistry students and 20 instructors at the Chemistry Colleges of Guilan and Tehran, Iran, were selected. They were asked to fill questionnaires which aimed to tap these participants' views on (a) the prominent statuses of English language usage in learners' studies and their upcoming professions; (b) fundamental English abilities required in English educational course; and (c) propositions for improvement of an English language program. Findings obtained from all respondents showed that in terms of academic studies and future works, English is perceived as very important. Similar to their instructors, the students asserted reading in place of the highest skill. They also rated vocabulary and reading speed as the main and writing and reading skills as the slightest importance areas required for their studies. Regarding the third query of the study, the majority of respondents suggested the curriculum that postulates general English in first term heading for three years of particular selective English. The study has implications for improvement of EAP language courses in upper instruction and progress students' English ability for their academic and specialized needs.

Index Terms—English for specific purpose, English for academic purpose, need analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current era of science and technology expansion, increasing demands for international communication, exchanging, and progress have made English language learning an essential tool required by many people around the world in general and students of universities in particular. For example using different websites, sending formal, educational emails and reading many scientific papers as sources. Such needs basically impressed the content matter, the skills and strategies which are enclosed in English for academic purpose (EAP) or English for specific purpose (ESP). Widdowson (1981) describes the overall idea of ESP by declaring that "if a group of learners' needs for a language can be accurately specified, then this specification can be used to determine the content of a language program that will meet these needs."

In fact there are differences between ESP and general English which lies on "awareness" of needs not "existence" of needs. Awareness about why learners need English will have an influence on the selection and inclusion of the reasonable content of these courses as well as on the exploitation of the course potentials (Hutchinson and Waters, 1992).

Therefore, giving such emphasis for the language needs of learners based on the analysis of the linguistic characteristics of their specific area of learning and occupational language purposes gained broader acceptance that mostly focus more on learners; i.e. "taking the various needs, interests and attitudes of the learner in the teaching learning process and these will have a paramount significance in motivation of learners" (Rodgers, 1969, as cited in Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 8).

However, one common way for practicing English in most of these courses/classes is grammar translation method which has gained some part of its popularity from rote memorization to master grammatical structure. In fact, the more reliance upon the rote memorization, the less attention is needed to be paid to the oral skills of language needed for the job condition in that the students will need their learning to function effectively (e.g. *target needs* (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987); *communication needs* (Richards, 1990)).

As Richterich (1984, p.29) comments: "... a need does not exist independent of a person. It is people who build their images of their needs on the basis of data relating to themselves and their environment". Moreover, an ignorance of speaking and listening skills within the EAP/ESP courses is partly associated with the least rate to which these skills are concerned by the EAP/ESP exam. as a result, the learners do not spend much more time and energy on oral based skills like speaking and listening. Nowadays, ESP students in Iran experience a rather traditional, form-focused L2 instruction which, in turn, provides students with little opportunity to use English communicatively (Farhady and Hedayati, 2009).

ESP programs specifically EAP as a branch of it concentrate on the use of language in context rather than mere teaching of grammatical structures of language varying from accounting, computer or chemical sciences to business and management. EAP classes vary in their form as well as their length of instruction (Jordan, 1997). Thus, the type of skill most needed and the extent to which they are covered in the EAP/ESP courses can be determined through need analysis carried out in these courses/classes than practicing equally on four language skills as a general background for English and this can help practitioners design a suitable syllabus for students.

Robinson (1991) believes that “the concept of learners’ needs is one of the essential criteria which is adopted and validated in ESP” (P. 3). Hence, the subject matter should be based on students’ needs, and course organizers should recognize the ways in which ESP fits the ESP learners’ needs. Purpura and King (2003), and Santopietro and Peyton (1991) argue that ESP needs analysis must be taken as a procedure of collecting and analyzing the required data about the ‘target language needs’ of the students. This paves the way for the learners to apply the terminology and grammars that they have learned in a significant situation, also leads them to improve their acquired English needs in specific context.

Identification and analysis of learners’ needs, interests, and their purpose for EAP/ESP learning will facilitate setting learning objectives, and goals, setting up a positive language learning environment, enhancing learners’ motivation, and evaluating their progress in specific ESP skill such as reading and writing.

Need analysis has been the focus of a number of recent studies though there are few research carried out in this area (see for example, Atai, 2000; Khajeie, 1993; Gooniband, 1988; Eslami-Rasekh and Valizadeh, 2004; and Mazdayasna and Tahriian, 2008). While these studies highlight the significance of considering not only the learners’ perspectives but also their instructors’ perspectives, they raised lack of needs-based course design, instruction time, materials and methods, and evaluation of learning, “the challenges will necessarily involve developing true specific-purpose curricula based on learners’ needs which would provide the appropriate context for sustainable language programs”. (Eslami-Rasekh, 2010)

In this study, the English language needs of Iranian university students of chemistry were assessed in order to increase teaching and learning effectiveness for students of this field. Understanding of such needs is seriously needed in order to aid EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers to make decisions about what to teach and how best they can implement the educational driven choices in ESP/EAP contexts. In this study we have chosen chemistry area as an important academic discipline whose students are in great needs of different English skills and subject knowledge not only for their courses and learning objectives at BA levels but also for the number of academic international papers they are supposed to develop from their research studies carried out in different ESP/EAP contexts.

More specifically, the aim of the study was (a) to designate and explain the perception that chemistry university students and the instructors perceive about students’ English language needs and (b) to offer some suggestions for English language curricula based on the survey results. For such a purpose, the Iranian EAP chemistry learners’ perceptions of their needs were first examined, and then compared to their instructors’ perceptions. More precisely, this study aimed to find the answers for the following research queries:

- 1) What are the EAP professors’ opinions of English language needs in EAP courses?
- 2) What are the EAP learners’ views of the English language needs in EAP courses?

II. ESP/EAP STATUS

When talking about the ESP, the most primary and fundamental issue to raise is the issue of needs analysis that Hutchinson and Waters (1987) acknowledged to be very necessary when designing ESP courses. They also believe that the main assumption underlying need analysis is to relate English course to learners’ needs that might improve their motivation and make learning easier and sooner. Since the goal of an ESP course is to allow students to perform effectively in target situation (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.12). Moreover, as long as the ESP courses are set up in order to do particular things (Chamber, 1986, p.45), identifying the target situation, then analyzing the needs related to target situation is really essential. Regarding to this Hutchinson and Waters (1987) believe that

“A truly valid approach to ESP must be based on an understanding of the process of language learning.” actually in ESP courses, there specific vocabulary and structure that traditionally will be learned, but it is possible never used in target situation when the learners really need to use their learning language. Also it is clear that language really vary from one situation to another situation) we should “determine the features of specific situation and make these features the basis of learners’ course.” (p. 7).

There are some researches which have been conducted to highlight the ESP features. As an example according to Gatehouse (2001), ESP developers need to make sure that three skills are integrated in the ESP curricula to make them effective and facilitative to communicative functions within the occupational settings. They are the ability to use a) specific jargon of such occupational settings; b) a more comprehensive set of academic skills (e.g., carrying out research).

It can be concluded ESP should consider as an “approach” rather than “product”, it has been teaching language through students’ needs, it should be taught language for communicating objectives, it should include learners’ characteristic, it should be implemented by teachers.

A. Need Analysis

Needs assessment is required means of conducting research before outlining and determining Lessons/materials/curriculum and it aids draw a profile of learners/classes in order to decide and prioritize the needs for which learners necessitate English (L2). (Richards et al, 1992, cited in Jordan, 1997, P.20)

Brown (1995) defines needs assessment as a process of gathering information through various activities and from different groups of informants to determine their particular learning needs. Such an important process gives the way for defining the objectives and goals of a course, which is the first step for developing an appropriate curriculum for the ESP courses. Having emphasized needs assessment, Robinson declares that a need analysis tends to identify what exactly students have to do through the medium of English.

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) point out that needs assessment can be considered as the cornerstone of ESP program. Various definitions of language needs have been suggested by researchers. Some of them have centered upon the language requirements of the students in terms of the 'target situation', in which students will need the language to function effectively (e.g. Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Richards, 1990). Others have focused on needs that the learners require while they are in the process of learning the language (e.g. 'learning needs' referred to by Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; and 'Situation needs' defined by Richards, 1990).

Still others have focused on the students' own perceptions of their needs. Berwick (1989) called this 'learners' felt needs'. Finally, some other researchers have concentrated on the various perceptions of the learners' needs from the perspectives of teachers and graduates of the discipline or institution. Berwick (1989) called this 'learners' perceived needs. Several researchers have directed needs analyses to determine students' English language use requirements (e.g. Aguilar, 1999; Arik, 2002; Basturkmen, 1998; Braine, 2001; Boran, 1994).

Also the term of need help to cover a wide scope of desires, wants and lacks of something: 'It is palpable that "need" as a term is both unclear and inexact, This terminological inaccuracy has allowed a large amount of related but not equal items being commonly referred to as "needs", requests, or purposes and being subjected as if they were approximately alike.' (Chambers, 1980, P. 26). Arik (2002), for example, pointed to classify the academic needs of the students attending various faculty and college programs from the perspectives of the discipline teachers. Taillefer(2007) cited by Atai (2011) evaluated the occupational language needs of economics graduates in a French milieu. The findings of study revealed that former students perceived the upper intermediate or advanced levels of all language skills were important in the work-related setting.

Consequently, students' awareness of their language abilities and capabilities, in fact, help them to feel successful or not. In this study university students of chemistry were selected because they have appeared not only to obtain their information from the original sources but also to present and publish considerable number of papers which necessitates good command of English for communicating in chemistry discourse community.

Accordingly, they should be able to tackle their present situation in order to deal with the necessity of what will be raised in future situations. It is significant that the learners of this discipline realize the importance of learning English at academic levels also the areas they are weak at.

B. EAP in Iran

The history of EAP (English for academic purposes), which is concerned with communication skills required for study purposes, in Iran traced back to more than thirty years ago, in 1984 with the establishment of the SAMT (the Organization for Researching and Composing University Text books in the Humanities) The main purpose of EAP has been to *enable the students to study their specific academic reference materials and text books to get familiar with scientific and technological advances in their field of study*, (Soleimani, 2003).

The main goal of the EAP programs at Iranian universities is to fill the imperfection between the learners' overall English knowledge and their capacity to read the specific texts in their own fields. Since in Iran English is for the most parts applied for educational aims, the EAP has a favorably significant role for Iranian students. After revolution in Iran either in order to avoid attaching to western culture or to get benefit of international language in science, teaching English was limited to EAP. EAP is considered as a kind of English that is used for academic purposes. However, teaching ESP has a marginal status in Iranian education In addition to this general requirement, depending on the needs of the students, they could take up to 4 units of EAP courses. (Atai 2002; Atai & Tahririan, 2003).

From the time when the Islamic Revolution (1978) occurred, an effort has been to find a unity in discipline-based EAP courses for colleges. Iranian Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology (MSRT) publish about 200 EAP book for different disciplines with the aim of providing EFL instruction wisely near to the students' wants in their own discipline. However, the presentation of materials is absolutely traditional and these books contained exercises and activities for all academic disciplines, each text followed by true-false, multiple-choice, comprehension and translation exercises. These books which are used for undergraduate students are based on a strict format assigned by SAMT, and basically focus on reading comprehension skill. But as a matter of fact, EAP courses should provide materials connected to the learners' requests in particular fields of study, and as a result improve the learners' level of language and the related content knowledge.

Furthermore, for the reason that the classes were not planned based on any methodical needs analysis, the EAP designer's aims do not appear to have been achieved (Tahririan, 1990; Atai, 2000; Eslami et al., 2007;

Mazdayasna and Tahririan, 2008; Farhady and Hedayati, 2009). In addition, the reading selections of these EAP textbooks are provided by technical and highly specialized language without providing any opportunities for students to use these technical words in the real life tasks (Atai, 2000; Faharzadeh, 2000; Mazdayasna, 2008; Mazdayasna and Tahririan, 2008). Meanwhile, one of the common classroom activities is translating texts from English to Persian. The way English is taught at the universities is usually translation oriented because the main objective is to enable learner in different majors to read and understand materials written in English in their own fields. Based on the research in this a common issue about the characteristic of EAP in Iranian universities is that it is absolutely traditional lacking systematic course design, the dominant teaching method is Grammar-Translation Method with importance of language rules and translation without any chance to use English for communicative purposes, and the instruction time and proper evaluation are not sufficient. (Farhady & Hedayati, 2009; Eslami-Rasekh, 2010).

Although many efforts by the government and course designers have put forward, EAP courses lack uniform course design and organized needs assessment from the perception of the program stakeholders and also systematic research on the programs itself. (Eslami-Rasekh, 2010). Students' requirements in different settings are varied and the analysis of requirements can be influential if the academic language needs are exactly defined and seek ultimate specificity within the specific target use (Deutch, 2003). The study fulfilled in order to identify Iranian EAP students' and instructors' perspectives of their English language learning requirements. Moreover, the study aimed to explore whether these two groups differed in the areas they perceived as the basic needs of Iranian EAP students of chemistry.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

As an important academic university discipline whose students have proven to be in great needs of English for their EAP studies, two available universities carefully chosen. This sample were randomly selected from the chemistry department of Guilan and Tehran Universities. The participants were 90 Students of chemistry department. This sample included 66 (73.3%) BA students and 24 (18.9%) MA and PHD 7 (7.8%) students of chemistry that 76.7% (69 students) of these participants were female, and 22.2% (20 students) were 17-20 years old, 62.2% (56) were 21-25, and 15.6% (14) were above 25.

In addition, 20 faculty members who has been teaching ESP/EAP were selected as well: 6 instructors were females and 14 males, 8 instructors with 1-5 years of experience in teaching, 11 instructors with 6-8 years of experience in teaching, and one with 11-15 years of experience in teaching.

B. Data Collection Instruments

In order to collect the data for needs assessment, the Questionnaire of Needs analysis adapted and employed by Chia, Johnson, Chia and Olive (1999) was used. Chia et al (1999). Developed this questionnaire based on two former study instruments that had been used by Zughoul and Hussein (1985) and Guo (1989). The adapted questionnaire was translated, conducted, and revised by chia et al (1999). According to the feedback giving by ten participants: six medical learners and four instructors from Chung Shan Medical College context in order to get assure of the validity and reliability of the instrument. This questionnaire finally consisted of 20 items making five sections that measure 'the prominence of English in university and professional professions', 'perception of language skill needs', 'the activities required in a language course', and 'propositions for development of course content and materials' as well as 'demographic information'. Chia et al (1999) used a united form of the questionnaire with questions marked at students *only* or *faculty only*. In this study, after translation and checking for both face and content validity, the questionnaire items were assigned into two relevant instruments. In other word, for letting participants feel easy in answering the questions, also for the point of more clarity, the initial Questionnaire of Need Analysis (QNA) was splitted into two halves: Students' version(16 items) and Professor version(14items) (see appendix A for the original questionnaire). It should be mentioned that modifications were done in order to change any word or phrases to suit the Chemistry context since the original questionnaire was used for Medical students by Chia et al. in 1999.

In this study the questionnaire was piloted with 30 representatives of final samples of the study, the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of scales were 0.80 to permit the researcher to run the relevant subsequent statistical analyses of the study. The instruments were distributed among the participants who were finally 20 instructors and 90 students (which were included two groups of BA students and MA and PHD students) showing their content to take part in the survey rounds of the study.

C. Data Analysis

In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to describe and interpret the results related to the reported skills and components. The data were analyzed by computer using an SPSS (version 18). Students and instructors' responses were computed based on the survey data, measurements were calculated for all questions. Chi-Square and T-tests and ANOVA analyses were done in order to analyze the data of English language needs of chemistry university students and their instructors and to equate the perceptions across two groups.

IV. RESULT

4.1. The two research questions were to explore how the EAP instructors and students perceived the English language in EAP context. The results are presented through the following five important themes emphasized by these two EAP stakeholder groups.

The prominent statuses of English for EAP studies and future job position

Regarding the items asking about the importance of English and its role in future career (English importance in current studies and future jobs Q1 and Q2), from the instructors revealed that English is very important for students of chemistry. Almost all of them (95%) rated them as the most important. Regarding the importance of the English ability for the future jobs / career, it was found that more than two thirds of the instructors (67%) considered it important and less than one-third perceived it as less importance. From students' point of view almost all students (99%) considered it 'important' and 'most important'. One-third of students 33.35% of the students thought English is important for their future jobs, and 62.2% considered it the most important similar to their instructors' view. This shows they are cognizant of the importance of English abilities for their future life. Only 4.4% of them did not perceive English important for their future jobs.

The scope to which the English is applied in courses/classes

In this theme these questions (the percent of the English written texts necessary for students Q3, concerning reports and research papers written in English Q4, In reply to Q5 writing test answers by students, language teaching in the class (Q6), and the percent of the reading coursework in the chemistry classes(Q7) were asked.

According to the instructors in answer to question 3, 50% of the books are written in English. The data showed that two-third of instructors only sometimes ask students write their projects in English but not always. 15% of them often make students to write in English, and the rest (15%) never ask students English writing. Out of the total instructors, one-fourth never ask their students to answer their tests in English modes but the rest of them sometimes (45% of the instructors) or often (30%) ask for English performance on tests. More than two-third (80%) of instructors present lecture in Persian but they use the English equivalent of chemistry items peculiar to the field. Less than one-fourth of them lecture in English.

More than half of the Instructors rated below 50% when they asked for the amount of English homework they assign to their students (question 4). 35% said they assign more English works to their students.

Results for item 7, regarding English reading course work, showed major differences among the groups (Table 1 & 2).

According to students' idea one-third of students thought that less than half of their Reading assignment is in English, another one-third of them thought two-thirds of their assignments in English, and the next one-third reported that most of their assignments are in English language.

15% of the instructors stated they did not specified the learners' reading course work should be in English necessarily.

TABLE 1.
MEANS OF READING COURSE WORK IN ENGLISH

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
BA student	66	1.7576	.80500	.09909	1.5597	1.9555
Instructors	20	1.6500	1.08942	.24360	1.1401	2.1599
MA & PHD	24	3.0000	1.06322	.21703	2.5510	3.4490
Total	110	2.0091	1.05357	.10045	1.8100	2.2082

In order to compare the ideas of each groups regarding reading assignments in English (which have divided into BA students, MA& PHD students, and instructors) one way ANOVA test was run.

The result showed that there were significant differences between groups ($p < 0.005$), $F(17.8, 2) = 0.00$). In response to this question MA and PHD students (mean=3.000), BA students mean=1.757), and instructors (mean=1.650) revealed that the PHD and MA students ideas were different from BA students and instructors regarding item 7.

TABLE 2:
RESULTS OF ANOVA FOR 'READING ASSIGNMENTS'

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	30.320	2	15.160	17.890	.000
Within Groups	90.671	107	.847		
Total	120.991	109			

Basic English Language Skills perceived to be as EAP course requirements

Qs 8-13 in original questionnaire elicited opinions about goals of the English language courses and the skills needed by the students. From instructors' views, 'reading chemistry texts' is 'the most important' and required ability for the students of chemistry. 85% of them rated it as the most important skill, and the rest (15%) rated it as important. Writing was the second 'important' skill they perceived necessary for students. More than two-third (70% of them) felt this skill as fundamental for students.

However, regarding ‘speaking’ and ‘listening’ skills, almost two-third of these instructors did not perceive them as necessary as the two skills of ‘reading’ and ‘writing’. These oral skills (i.e. listening and speaking) were rated as ‘unimportant’ or ‘least important’ by instructors. In a similar vein, the student respondents also rated ‘reading’ as the most important and necessary skill. But regarding ‘listening’ skill, the ratings of two groups were not consistent. Unlike their instructors who considered writing as the second important skill, more than half of the BA students considered speaking as the second important skill to be acquired (Table 3). At the same time they regarded speaking as an important skill too.

Although ‘listening’ was not felt by the instructors as a necessary skill for EAP program, it was rated to be important by the BA students and almost important by MA and PHD students. Therefore, when the students were asked to show the reasons behind acquiring this skill, more than half of them believed they need this skill in order to make understanding of the ‘Daily conversation’ they encounter in the English contexts.

When the reasons for a higher rate of ‘reading’ skill perceived as necessary for EAP learning, reading and understanding their English course books as well as reading for obtaining information from their ‘discipline-specific journals’ were reported by majority of the students as the two essential reasons.

The reasons behind the acquiring ‘speaking’ skill seemed to be similar to the ones reported for ‘listening’. In other words, More than half of the students feel they need this oral skill for successful practices of ‘Daily conversation’, oral presentation’, and ‘class reports’. Contrary to their professors’ serious consideration of ‘writing’ skill, the students did not perceived this skill as a very basic skill to be acquired during EAP learning program. Only one-fourth (20%) of the students felt writing is basically needed for the development of ‘research report’. To produce ‘correct sentence/s’ or ‘discourse/s’ was rated, by them, as the least important reason behind acquisition of writing skill.

TABLE 3.
STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE BASIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Grade		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q4.Listening	BA student	66	3.0000	1.00766	.12403
	MA & PHD	23	2.7391	1.05388	.21975
Q4.Speaking	BA student	66	2.8636	1.16205	.14304
	MA & PHD	24	2.5417	1.10253	.22505
Q4.Reading	BA student	66	3.3788	.81835	.10073
	MA & PHD	23	3.3913	.98807	.20603
Q4.Writing	BA student	66	2.2424	1.06786	.13144
	MA & PHD	23	2.8261	1.11405	.23230

English Language proficiency needs observed in EAP courses

In addition to eliciting the perception data regarding the type of and the extent to which the English language skills should be included in English language courses, students’ needs were also tapped from the two groups’ perspectives. In response to questionnaire item 14 about which English languages skills are more important than the others for students chemistry studies that elicited this information from all three groups of participants (BA, MA,PHD students and instructors), a majority of the students (85%) rated ‘reading’ a the most important need that was succeeded by ‘listening’, ‘writing’ and ‘speaking’ as secondary(Table4).

Since the observed frequency did not seem to be sufficient for judging the differences between the participants ratings, the chi-square test of difference was run. The results (Table4) showed no important difference in the perceptions of the above mentioned groups ($\chi^2=2.24$; $df=2$; $P>0.05$).

TABLE 4.
PERCEPTION OF SIGNIFICANCE OF ENGLISH SKILLS FOR CHEMISTRY STUDIES

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Q10.Listening	BA student	66	2.7273	1.04580	.12873
	Instructors	20	2.1500	.93330	.20869
	MA & PHD	23	2.3913	.98807	.20603
	Total	109	2.5505	1.03178	.09883
Q10.Speaking	BA student	66	2.6515	1.03020	.12681
	Instructors	20	2.0500	1.23438	.27601
	MA & PHD	24	2.7917	.93153	.19015
	Total	110	2.5727	1.07053	.10207
Q10.Reading	BA student	66	3.4848	.76946	.09471
	Instructors	20	3.8500	.36635	.08192
	MA & PHD	23	3.5652	.94514	.19707
	Total	109	3.5688	.76215	.07300
Q10.Writing	BA student	66	2.2879	1.09214	.13443
	Instructors	20	3.2000	.89443	.20000
	MA & PHD	23	2.9565	1.18622	.24734
	Total	109	2.5963	1.13952	.10915

*For every ability, in ranking, 4 is most important, 1 is least important, so that the greater the mean, the more essential the skill.

TABLE 5.
CHI-SQUARE TESTS FOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RATINGS OF IMPORTANCE OF 'READING' SKILL

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.246 ^a	2	.523
Likelihood Ratio	2.510	2	.474
Linear-by-Linear Association	.542	1	.461
N of Valid Cases	83		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

When asked which language areas are more problematic (item15) for their students, the respondents asserted 'vocabulary' and 'reading speed' as the two important areas causing problems for students' studies and 'writing' as the least important areas. The instructors believed in the limited vocabularies (or the limited lexicon knowledge) as well as the lower speed of reading as the two areas they perceived most difficult. Only 15% of them considered listening and writing as important as the vocabularies and reading speed, thus, they did not rate these two as significantly as they rated the two former.

About the significance of English skills for gaining achievement in the chemistry program (item16), more than two-thirds (75.6%) of students considered 'reading comprehension of their course book' and 'field-related articles' very helpful for their success. This result is consistent with the results found from their views on basic skills to be included in their EAP courses. When instructors were asked which skills they thought would bring success to the students when they study English for their specific purposes, almost all instructors (90%) believed that 'reading comprehension of their course books' and their 'field articles' are important, and 10% thought that oral presentations are useful as well.

English Language Course, Course Content, and Materials

The relevance of English materials used in the EAP classes with the topics and content of the students' domain-specific discipline was appointed through (item 17 of questionnaire). More than two-thirds of the students believed in relevance and the rest did not believe so.

In this regard, 85% of the instructors also thought that the course materials must be related to chemistry in terms of the content, and the rest did not believe consequently.

Regarding the extent and degree to which this relevance should be observed in their EAP classes, more than half of the students rated almost 70% of the materials be written in English and used in their classes (item 18), however, one-fourth of them rated around half of their material be written in English. Similarly, 75% of the instructors believed that more than 50% of the materials should be based on chemistry issues and content, and 35% believed in less degree.

Both groups suggested that the EAP/ESP courses be obligatory, not optional (item 19). They thought this obligatory program with its relevant curriculum is effective for the department of English language skills and competencies.

In other words, when their ideas about a useful and effective alternative program were asked, almost half of the instructors believed that EAP should be started from the second semester of the first year, and one-fourth of them thought it better if EAP starts from the second year (the first semester of the second year).

However, students' responses to this question were consistent. One-fourth believed EAP/ESP courses should be started from the second year, another one-fourth suggested second semester (first year), and still another one-fourth suggested a particular curriculum which is called 'English for Iranian university students' that is a curriculum in which all courses/classes in any major should be thought in English to Iranian university students. (see table6)

TABLE 6.
PERCEIVED BEST ENGLISH CURRICULA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English for Iranian Students	22	24.4	24.4	24.4
	General English in first year	3	3.3	3.3	27.8
	General English first year & Specific English the following years	23	25.6	25.6	53.3
	Specific English only	16	17.8	17.8	71.1
	General English first term & Specific English other terms	24	26.7	26.7	97.8
6.00		2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total		90	100.0	100.0	

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Since learners' needs are very essential in the EAP courses, their identification and analysis become very ultimate to EAP course design. In this way, the EAP required strategies and skills can be resolute by analyzing the learners' needs. Therefore, "an ESP course should be based on a needs assessment of the learners" (Dudley-Evans and John, 1998). In addition, the instructor should be aware of learners' needs in order to identify them rather than sticking to grasp them by their intuition feelings which are traditional and cannot meet several needs of learners. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) add to that a needs-based curriculum in which the content of the course is chosen to meet the needs of the learners can most appropriately serve the educational objectives of the particular learners. Taking these into account, the present study aimed to identify and analyze the English language EAP needs of the chemistry students at the university levels to outline the perceptions that chemistry college students and instructors have of the English language needs of the students.

The findings obtained through the present needs analysis clearly showed that the participants, both students and instructors, considered English quite important for 'academic studies' in chemistry Discipline and important for 'future career' as well. Students had similar perceptions that were held by their instructors regarding 'Reading' as the most important skill for their studies. This finding is similar to the relevant findings of Atai (2011) in which knowledge of reading skill, knowledge of field-related vocabularies and terminologies, and understanding meaning of the main texts were perceived important for students' academic studies. The findings however revealed that unlike their instructors who thought 'Writing' as the second important skill, the participating students experienced another skill, i.e., 'Speaking' as the second important skill which should be developed. Thus findings are consistent with Eslami-Rasekh' (2010), Ferris' (1998), and Robinson's (1991) results that have shown discrepancies among instructors' perceptions and students' perceptions and indicated that instructors might not be the best judges for students' needs.

Moreover, students reported they had lower rate of 'vocabulary knowledge' as well as low abilities in 'listening', also they reported that speaking should be acquired and developed during their English language learning. Although commonalities were observed regarding the 'role of vocabulary' and 'speed of reading' between the two groups, instructors valued 'writing' more than 'speaking' however they did not ignore the integration of speaking and listening practices besides the two other skills (reading and writing). These findings are also similar to Eslami-Rasekh (2010) in terms of limited vocabulary, slow reading speed, need for increasing students' ability in 'speaking' and 'listening comprehension'.

Participants declared 'vocabulary' and 'reading speed' as the two important areas causing problems for students' studies, and 'writing' as the least important area. Also, students asserted 'reading comprehension of their course book' and 'field-related articles' were very helpful for their success. Moreover, majority of instructors and students believed that the course materials must be related to chemistry in terms of the *content* and the *topic* of students' specific discipline. Correspondingly, both groups recommended that the EAP/ESP courses be obligatory not optional and EAP should be started from the second semester of the first year. Based on majority of instructors and the steady opinion of students it should be started from the first year (the second semester), and the second year (the first semester) with constant English language learning at university levels. Furthermore, as needs analysis is by definition context-specific (Ferris, 1998: 314), in this study students believed in improving general and ESP English courses which it can be developed by skillful ESP instructors and English teachers who are familiar with both the subject and English rather than the subject or English language lonely.

As Hutchinson and Waters (1987) discuss, the statistics acquired from needs assessment studies should suggest the basis for curriculum developers, syllabus designers, materials writers, methodologists, and assessors. Regarding the importance of EAP courses, the findings of this study presents implications for renewing the EAP course for Iranian chemistry students and improving their efficiency in terms of reading, speaking and listening comprehension instruction that is needed for understanding their text book, Daily conversation, oral presentation and their research reports. The present findings have, also, practical implications for conducting complementary courses in English for chemistry students who feel that their English preparation was not sufficient by considering to set English proficiency levels for them while entering to EAP courses.

All in all, the present findings shed light on the effectiveness and value of exploring EAP language learners' needs and draw attention to the perceptions made by the learners and their instructors who are aware of the immediate needs and required skills in EAP courses. Bearing in mind the fact that English as an international language has great influence on transferring knowledge in any scientific field, also the fact that the chemist are the scholars who are supposed to introduce innovative ideas such as Nanotechnology or innovative substances such leather industries and color into the world through their written or oral records, double attention should be paid to the status of EAP learning context in our country. The present study has shed light on all these important issues.

APPENDIX. STUDENT/MEDICAL FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Directions: Please check the appropriate response.

1. How important do you think English language is to your/your students' current medical studies?

very important somewhat important unimportant 118 H.-U. Chia et al.

2. How important do you think English language is to your/your students' future careers?
very important important somewhat important unimportant
3. *Faculty Only*: What percentage of the textbooks for your course are in English?
90–100% 70–89% 50–69% less than 50%
4. *Faculty Only*: Do you ask your students to write reports and research papers in English?
always often occasionally never
5. *Faculty Only*: Do you ask your students to write test answers in English?
always often occasionally never
6. *Faculty Only*: How do you write reports and research papers? (select one.)
in English in Chinese, but medical terms in English in Chinese other (specify)
7. What percentage of the reading assignments in your medical classes/for your students are in English?
90–100% 70–89% 50–69% less than 50%
8. *Students Only*: Which of the following English language skills do you feel are more important than the others for freshmen to improve? (Rank them this way: 1 = most important, 4 = least important. Rank all.) listening speaking reading writing
9. *Students only*: What is the most important reason to include listening comprehension activities in the freshman English language course? (Select one.)
to understand daily conversation to follow short lectures to understand radio and TV programs other (specify)
10. *Students Only*: What is the most important reason to include reading activities in the freshman English language course? (Select one.)
to read English newspapers and magazines to read textbooks to read professional journals other (specify)
11. *Students Only*: What is the most important reason to include speaking activities in the freshman English language course? (Select one.)
to carry on daily conversation to present classroom oral reports to deliver a speech other (specify)
12. *Students Only*: What is the most important reason to include writing activities in the freshman English language course? (Select one.)
to write correct sentences to write different discourse types to write for practical purposes to write research reports other (specify)
13. *Students Only*: What English problems are you currently facing in your academic studies? (You may check whatever is appropriate.)
limited vocabulary poor grammar poor listening comprehension poor speaking skill slow reading speed poor writing skill poor reading comprehension other (specify)
14. Which of the following English languages skills do you think are more important than the others for your/your students' medical studies? (Rank them this way: 1 = most important, 4 = least important. Rank all.) listening speaking reading writing
15. What English problems are you/do you perceive that your students are currently facing in your/their academic studies?
limited vocabulary poor grammar poor listening comprehension poor speaking skill slow reading speed poor reading comprehension poor writing no idea other (specify)
16. Which of the following English skills are important for your/your students' success in medical studies? (You may check whatever is appropriate.)
reading to understand English textbooks and medical journal articles presenting oral reports understanding class lectures carrying on conversations writing test answers writing research papers other (specify)
17. Should the materials in the freshman English course be relevant to the medical field?
yes no (If no, skip to Question 18.)
18. What percentage of English materials in a freshman course should be relevant to the medical field?
90–100% 70–89% 50–69% 30–49% less than 40%
19. Should the current optional English language course be a requirement?
yes no
20. Which of the following English curricula do you perceive is the best one for you/your students?
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general English in the first year, no need for specific English for students
general English in the first year, specific elective English in the second, third and fourth years
specific English from the first through the fourth years, no general English
general English in the first semester of the first year, specific English in the second semester
general English in the first semester of the first year, specific English from the second semester of the first year to the second, third, and fourth years
other (specify)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Note : in this study the way of ranking the Qs 8&14 have changed because of preventing students to make mistakes so the least important=1 , the most important=4

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An Empirical Study on Chinese EFL Learners' Processing of English Animal Idioms*

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Abstract—The present article reports on the effect of various animal idiom types and that of both proficiency levels on animal idiom comprehension. Based on the different match of equivalence/similarity and difference between surface linguistic forms and their underlying cultural connotations, a contrastive model for English and Chinese animal idioms is built, each distinguishing four possible combinations. Results of participants' performance on an English animal idioms comprehension test revealed that (a) The effects of English animal idiom types on idiom interpretation are significant. (b) The effects of English proficiency level on the comprehension of English animal idioms are significant, too. (c) During the processing of English animal idioms, L2 proficiency level and animal idiom types interact with each other and the interaction reached the level of significance.

Index Terms—idioms, cultural connotations, transparency, cultural transfer

I. INTRODUCTION

Idioms are beautiful gems of a language. It has been estimated that about 7,000 idioms are used by native speakers per week (Cooper, 1999). Thus, to master idioms is one of the most important aspects of using more authentic English. To judge a learner's mastery of English may depend partially on how well this learner can initially comprehend and eventually produce the idioms encountered in everyday language (Cooper, 1999). At the same time "grasping idioms' can be a great asset to learners in acquiring a new language" (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p.36).

They are "notoriously difficult" for "its rigid structure and quite unpredictable meaning" (Liu, 2003, p.45). Despite the difficulties involved in acquiring L2 idioms, every L2 learner must be prepared for speaking and meeting this challenge because idioms occur so frequently in both spoken and written language. Many of them pack a lot of information, especially cultural information. Animal images are much more popular in idioms which are full of cultural connotations, that's to say, many idioms bear proper animal images and have strong cultural flavors. Making use of idioms is a method of expressing oneself more quickly and concisely than in any other way.

A. Animal Idiom Words and Cultural Connotations

Making use of idioms is a method of expressing oneself more quickly and concisely than in any other way. Many idioms are truth tested in practice and have been regarded very important and pack a lot of information, especially cultural information. Animal images are much more popular in idioms which are full of cultural connotations.

Culturally-loaded vocabulary plays an important role in a language. Different social backgrounds, history, and national culture have a great effect on cultural connotations. As to animal idioms, culture exerts an important influence on these expressions, such as geographical culture, historical culture, customary culture, religious culture, literary works, myth, legends, and fables. With comparison, the same animal words may bear the same and different cultural meanings. And different animal words may convey the similar or even same meaning. Chinese and English idioms carved with cultural characteristics account for a great part in English learning. Cultural similarities and differences may have a positive or negative effect on English idiom comprehension.

All in all, animal idiom words, abundant with associated meanings and cultural connotations, have become the focus of many scholars. It is of great significance to make researches on animal idioms which shine with cultural flavor and cultural connotations from L2 acquisition perspective.

B. Idiom Transparency

Idioms range along a continuum of compositionality or analyzability. In line of this view, Nunberg, Sag & Wasow (1994) identified 3 groups subsets of idioms: decomposable idioms (the constituents contribute to the idiom's figurative meaning i.e. break the ice; pop the question); abnormally decomposable (a subgroup of decomposable idioms, whose individual components have some metaphorical relation to their idiomatic referents (spill the beans, carry a torch, bury the hatchet); nondecomposable idioms are those in which the literal meaning offers no clue for the construction on the figurative meaning, e.g. *kick the bucket*, *chew the fat* .

However, some researchers (Yorio, 2003; Fernando & Flavell, 1981; Gibbs, 1986; Cacciari & Glucksberg, 1991)

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later noted an important distinction between opaque (e.g., *keep one's shirt on*) and transparent (e.g., *go by the book*) idioms. With opaque idioms, the figurative meaning of this idiom has little to do with the literal meaning; with transparent idioms, the figurative meaning is closely related to the literal meaning. For example, the expression "*go by the book*" is highly transparent because its literal meaning — to follow directions in a cookbook exactly is closely linked to its nonliteral meaning — to follow rules and regulations exactly. In contrast, the expression "*keep one's shirt on*" is highly opaque because its literal meaning — to continue wearing one's shirt is not related to its nonliteral meaning — to remain calm and not overreact. Generally speaking, most of the idioms are not transparent or lack transparency. The stronger the idiomaticity is, the weaker the transparency is, and vice versa.

In section 2.2 a good many of idiomaticities have been described. If analyzing by these idiomaticities, we can find that not all idioms possess all of these characteristics. Actually, some idioms have some of these characteristics, while some have others; some idioms bear more idiomaticities, nevertheless some have less; some idiom structure is steady, but some structure is flexible. All in all, different idioms have different idiomaticities. From the perspective of idiom comprehension, transparency should be taken into consideration. It mainly lies in the fact that idioms, which have been accepted widely and gradually, are formed through a long history by specific group, community or trade. During this period, idioms breathe into specific cultural connotations and become conventional.

If idiom can be divided into various degrees, these degrees can be used as criteria to measure the difficulty of idioms. The transparency of an idiom, however, is relative but not absolute, that's to say, maybe for a L2 learner an idiom is hard nut to crack, but it is not definitely a hot potato for another learner. The reason is that the processing of an idiom is affected by such factors as intuition, L2 proficiency level, world knowledge including specific cultural connotations, and so on.

C. Proficiency Level and Idiom Comprehension

There is considerable evidence to support a link between learners' proficiency level and idiom comprehension. The literature is replete with studies suggesting that higher-proficiency learners use more strategies than lower-proficiency learners—usually indicating that the better learners use more strategies and can perform better in L2 idiom comprehension (Ehrman, 1990). Green & Oxford (1995), in a study of 374 college students at three different course levels at the University of Puerto Rico, found that learners varied considerably in both the overall frequencies with which they transfer from their L1 to L2 idiom comprehension and the particular types of strategies they used. Students who were better in their language performance generally reported better scores and frequent use of a greater number of strategy categories in employing their L1 knowledge. Dreyer & Oxford (1996), in a study of 305 first-year Afrikaans-speaking students at the Potchefstroom University in South Africa, found that correlations between students' idiom comprehension and EFL proficiency were positive and highly significant.

The link between L2 proficiency level and different idiom types which are classified according to the combination of linguistic forms and underlying cultural connotations, however, is not very clear. The aim of the present study is to investigate the processing of English animal idioms that are divided in four types by Chinese EFL learners, that's to say, to determine the effect of English animal idiom types and English proficiency level on the idiom comprehension by Chinese EFL learners.

D. Cultural Transfer

"Transfer" is originally an important notion in "Learning Psychology". It is regarded as the result of what is called proactive inhibition. This is concerned with the way in which the learning of task A prevents or inhibits the learning of task B. According to James (1980), if we change task A and task B in the above definition into L1 and L2, it is language transfer. Put it another way, language transfer is the learning psychology in Second Language Acquisition.

What is the dynamic relationship between second culture knowledge and second language acquisition? Humboldt (Yao Xiaoping, 1995) proposed that each language is composed of a distinctive philosophy of world and values, implying that language is culture-specific. Meanwhile Sapir & Whorf (1956) also regarded that to learn a foreign language, first of all, it is necessary to change the cultural perspective.

As early as 1957, Lado has already noted that in order to acquire a foreign language, we should compare cultures between different nations. However, it is a pity that for a relatively long time, it has not been taken up. Recently, with more comprehensive views towards transfer, more and more linguists began to concentrate their focus on cultural transfer. The representatives in this field are pragmatic study in Britain, JIC study in Former Soviet Union and Intercultural communication study in the United States.

The aim of the present paper is to investigate the effects of animal idiom types and Chinese EFL learners' proficiency levels on idiom processing. Hence the following research questions will be addressed in the present study:

Based on the research aims of this study, the specific research questions addressed in the study are:

1. What is the effect of English animal idiom types on the comprehension of English animal idioms by Chinese EFL learners of different proficiency levels?

2. What is the effect of proficiency levels on the comprehension of English animal idioms?

3. Dose language transfer take place when Chinese EFL learners process and comprehend English animal idioms?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

A total of 60 undergraduates and postgraduates majored in English were chosen from Foreign Languages Department of Sichuan University of Science and Arts and College of Foreign Language in Chongqing university. According to the aim of this study, they are divided into two groups according to their English vocabulary test which is closely related with their English proficiency levels: the intermediate-level and the high-level. The intermediate group comprises 30 third-year undergraduate majoring in English, who have an average 8 years of English learning experience and, at the present, all have passed the TEM 4 (Test of English for English Majors Band 4). The advanced group consists of 30 second-year postgraduates majoring in English who have an average of about 12-15 years of English study. The 30 postgraduates selected as high level learners have all passed TEM 8 (Test of English for English Majors Band 8).

B. Material Preparation

The study material was English animal idioms chosen from the Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, a Dictionary of English Idioms with Chinese Translation, A Chinese-English Idiom Dictionary, American English Idioms, English and Chinese Idioms, English Allusions, A Dictionary of American Idioms. Only 20 English animal idioms were chosen as target words.

The choice of the 20 English animal idioms as target idioms was based on the following reasons. Firstly, the 20 animal idioms used in the study were with typical animal images and rich cultural connotations in both Chinese and English. Secondly, a former test showed that most students were unfamiliar to these idioms. Thirdly, some of the surface linguistic forms in the 20 animal idioms were unfamiliar or unknown to the subjects. Thus, the chosen 20 English animal idioms were likely to represent a favorable condition for the investigation of idiom processing.

Since one purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of idiom types on subjects' processing of English animal idioms, the target idioms should contain four types according to the match of linguistic forms and cultural connotations. That's to say, based on the equivalence/similarity and difference between surface linguistic forms and their underlying cultural connotations, a contrastive model for English and Chinese animal idioms should be built, which distinguishing four possible combinations, namely: Part/Types I (the type that is same as Chinese expressions in terms of linguistic forms and cultural connotation); Part/Type II (the English animal idioms that are same as Chinese expressions in cultural connotations but different in linguistic forms); Part/Type III (the type that is different in cultural connotation but is the same as Chinese expression in linguistic forms); Part/Type IV (the English animal idioms that are totally different in linguistic and cultural connotations from that of Chinese expressions).

C. Scoring

In the phase of idiom processing, the participants' interpretation of the 20 English animal idioms was operationalized by the scores they achieved in the test: 1 point or 0, depending on how close their comprehension was to the meaning of the target idioms. Zero was given for an answer of "I don't know" or an absolute wrong translation. Meanwhile, answers indicated a marginal sense or a vague sense of the given animal idiom meaning were scored zero, too. For example, set the wolf to keep the sheep (引狼入室) would be given zero if it was translated as 让狼去守羊. 1 point was given to the correct meanings or responses. For example drink like a fish—牛饮. Besides, one point also means a good sense of the animal idiom meaning including the implied cultural connotations, for example, help a dog over a stile—to be ready to help the others (乐于助人).

The total score of the English animal idioms comprehension test was 20, and the subscore for each animal idiom type was 5. The scoring criterion was based on some authoritative dictionaries, such as Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, a Dictionary of English Idioms with Chinese Translation, A Chinese-English Idiom Dictionary, etc. The grading work was cooperated with consensus after repeated discussions with several college English teachers.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

According to the research design, two-way ANOVA using a 2(Level: high vs. intermediate) \times 4 (Anima idiom type: Type I, Type II, Type III and Type IV) mixed design repeated measures were conducted.

Table 1 informed us a general description. In Part I, Part II, Part III and Part IV the Mean scores of intermediate-level EFL learners were 3.47, 2.30, .8, and .70 respectively, while that of the high-level learners were 4.00, 2.73, 1.00, and .83. From table 4.7 we got 4 2-tailed Sig, which were .004 ($p=.004 < .05$) in Part I, .023 ($p=.023 < .05$) in Part II, .155 ($p=.155 > .05$) in Part III and .229 ($p=.229 > .05$) in Part IV.

TABLE 1
GROUP STATISTICS

Idiom types	Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PART I	1	30	3.47	.57	.10
	2	30	4.00	.79	.14
PART II	1	30	2.30	.65	.12
	2	30	2.73	.78	.14
PART III	1	30	.80	.61	.11
	2	30	1.00	.45	8.30E-02
PART IV	1	30	.70	.47	8.51E-02
	2	30	.83	.38	6.92E-02

Note: Part I : English animal idioms with the same linguistic forms and cultural connotation as that of Chinese animal idioms
 Part II : English animal idioms with the same cultural connotation but different linguistic forms as that of Chinese animal idioms
 Part III: English animal idioms with different cultural connotations but same linguistic forms to that of Chinese idioms
 Part IV: English animal idioms with different cultural connotations and linguistic forms to that of Chinese idioms
 Level 1= high-level group; Level 2= intermediate-level group

The results of two-way ANONA were reported in Table 2 and Table 3. Table 2 shows a general description of four types of English animal idioms’ processing by two English proficiency groups. As shown in Table 3, the Mean score of intermediate-level was 3.47 in Part I , 2.30 in Part II, 0.80 in Part III and 0.70 in Part IV, while the Mean of high-level was 4.00 in Part I , 2.73 in Part II, 1.00 in Part III and 0.83 in Part IV. For the four types of animal idioms, the Mean of all these participations in Part I , Part II , Part III, Part IV were 3.73, 2.52, 0.90, and 0.77 respectively.

Table 3 gives us a more detailed view of the effects of both idiom types and English proficiency levels on animal idiom comprehension. In other words, except for the effect of language proficiency, idiom types which were distinguished according to the different match of their surface linguistic form and the implied cultural connotations affect animal idiom comprehension, too. Meanwhile, the English proficiency × animal idiom type approached significance ($F=6.267$; $p=.020 < .05$), that’s to say, the effect of idiom type on idiom processing is related to English proficiency level in animal idiom processing.

TABLE 2
GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FOUR TYPES OF ENGLISH ANIMAL IDIOMS’ PROCESSING BY TWO ENGLISH PROFICIENCY-LEVEL GROUPS

	Items	Part I	Part II	Part III	Part IV	Total
Intermediate-level	Number of subjects	30	30	30	30	30
	Sum of score	104	69	24	21	218
	Mean	3.47	2.30	0.80	0.70	1.82
	Std. Deviation	0.33	0.42	0.37	0.22	1.65
High-level	Number of subjects	30	30	30	30	120
	Sum of score	120	82	30	25	257
	Mean	4.00	2.73	1.00	0.83	2.14
	Std. Deviation	0.62	0.62	0.21	0.14	2.11
Total	Sum of score	224	151	54	46	
	Mean	3.73	2.52	0.90	0.77	
	Std. Deviation	0.54	0.56	0.29	0.18	

Note: Part I = English animal idioms with the same linguistic form and cultural connotation as that of Chinese animal idioms
 Part II =English animal idioms with different linguistic form but same cultural connotations as that of Chinese idioms.
 Part III=English animal idioms with same linguistic form but different cultural connotations from that of Chinese idioms.
 Part IV=English animal idioms that are completely different from that of Chinese counterpart in both linguistic form and cultural connotations

TABLE 3
TWO-WAY ANOVA TEST: IMPACT OF ANIMAL IDIOM TYPES AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVELS ON IDIOM PROCESSING

Source	df	SS	MS	F	Sig.
Within-Subjects					
English animal idiom types	3	354.78	118.26	323.202	.000***
English proficiency	3	6.88	2.29	6.267	.000***
English animal idiom types × English proficiency					
Between-Subjects					
English proficiency	1	6.34	6.34	17.320	.000***
Error	232	84.90	0.37		

Note: ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .0001$.

As the repeated measures two-way ANOVA yielded the notable effects generated by the two main factors, an independent-samples t-tests was performed to provide detailed information on between-group differences.

Table 4 reports that English proficiency affected the four types of English animal idiom interpretation differently. From Table 4.3 we have known that among the four idiom types, type I was the simplest one for the subjects, type II was easier, and type III and type IV were the most difficult parts for them. EFL learners with higher proficiency level in this study did not significantly perform better in all the four types of animal idioms than those with lower proficiency. They only scored higher significantly in Part I and Part II (English animal idioms which are different from or similar to Chinese animal idioms in linguistic forms while their cultural connotations are the same). In comprehension of

PartIII and PartIV, however, the idiom comprehension didn't reached significance, that's to say, the scores of the two groups, no matter its English proficiency level was high or intermediate, didn't different significantly.

TABLE 4
ILLUSTRATION OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL & ANIMAL IDIOM TYPE INTERACTION INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PART I	Equal variances assumed	.475	.493	-3.002	58	.004	-.53	.18	-.89	-.18
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.002	52.895	.004	-.53	.18	-.89	-.18
PART II	Equal variances assumed	.953	.333	-2.327	58	.023	-.43	.19	-.81	-6.06E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.327	56.090	.024	-.43	.19	-.81	-6.03E-02
PARTIII	Equal variances assumed	7.851	.007	-1.439	58	.155	-.20	.14	-.48	7.82E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.439	53.623	.156	-.20	.14	-.48	7.86E-02
PARTIV	Equal variances assumed	6.153	.016	-1.21	58	.229	-.13	.11	-.35	8.62E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.21	55.687	.229	-.13	.11	-.35	8.64E-02

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

A. Impact of Idiom Types on Animal Idiom Processing

The first goal of the present study is to explore the effects of English animal idiom types on idiom processing by Chinese EFL learners. English animal idioms in this research were distinguished into four types according to the different matches of their surface linguistic forms and underlying cultural connotations. Part I is the type with linguistic form and cultural connotation being the same as that of Chinese animal expressions. Part II are animal idioms with different linguistic forms but same cultural connotations as that of Chinese idioms. Contrarily, PartIII are the ones with same linguistic forms but different cultural connotations from that of Chinese idioms. PartIV, however, are completely different from their Chinese counterparts in both surface linguistic forms and underlying cultural connotations. The effect of animal idiom types on idiom interpretation was significant ($p=.000 < .05$) according to the test of two-way ANOVA.

To give explanation to this finding, first of all, it's necessary to review the nature of L2 idiom comprehension. In other words, what if a L2 learner encounters an idiom he/she does not know? When facing a L2 idiom unknown, foreign language learners tend to seek help from the meaning of constituent parts for the overall meaning. Idioms, however, are "notoriously difficult" for "its rigid structure and quite unpredictable meaning" (Liu, 2003, p.671). For example, to pull one's leg has nothing to do with "pull" and "leg" but means to fool somebody. From the surface or literal meaning of this idiom we can hardly tell its meaning as an L2 learner. That's to say, some idioms are semantically opaque, namely, the figurative meaning of an idiom, in most cases, not easy to be derived from the literal interpretation, because idioms, although it is a common phenomenon of all the languages known to mankind, it is deeply rooted in life of different races in different countries, thus most of the idioms are cultural and informal. For example, both English and Chinese idioms are large in quantity, long in history, rich in cultural information and deeply rooted in life. If we compare their underlying cultural information, some are completely or partially equivalent while some others have nothing in common at all. Therefore, to figure out the meaning of a L2 idiom, we need to depend on its underlying cultural connotations as well as its literal meaning. If the cultural connotations and linguistic forms are the same, then it is of great transparent to the L2 learners, and vice versa.

The processing of L2 idiom can also be explained by the phenomenon of language transfer which was first based on the behaviorist view that the main impediment to learning was interference from prior knowledge (Elks, 1994). Language researchers divided transfer into positive transfer and negative transfer. When first and second languages have

certain patterns that are identical, positive transfer occurs, which facilitates the language learning. However, if the patterns between first and second languages are different, negative transfer is likely resulting in interference. Second language acquisition research shows that L1 transfer is one of the important factors that influence second language acquisition (SLA), and this influence can occur in the course of learning all the subsystems of the second language such as phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax and discourse, and experimental results did unanimously show such an effect of L1 on understanding L2 idioms, that is, transfer from L1 to the target language can speed up the learning process at least when the two languages share many features. Meanwhile, cultural connotations tend to transfer from L1 to L2, too.

B. Impact of L2 Proficiency Level on Animal Idiom Processing

In the processing of English animal idiom comprehension, cultural transfer occurred. For an EFL learner, he or she has formed a complete system of his or her native language and cultural connotations. When processing an unfamiliar L2 idiom, they firstly turn to their native language and then to their L1 cultural knowledge, and it was embodied in this study. In the interpretation of Part I (English animal idioms with the same linguistic forms and cultural connotation as that of Chinese expressions) and Part II (English animal idioms with the same linguistic forms but different cultural connotation from that of Chinese expressions), the language and cultural knowledge of EFL learners was activated through their native language system, so the participants performed best in Part I, and then in Part II. While in Part III (English animal idioms with different cultural connotations but same linguistic forms as that of Chinese expressions) and Part IV (English animal idioms with different cultural connotations and linguistic forms from that of Chinese expressions), the participants could only guess the overall meaning from the surface linguistic forms because of the different cultural connotations of English animal idiom or, in Part IV, even completely guess on no ground, so the Chinese EFL learners didn't performed well in the comprehension of two parts compared with Part I and Part II.

In the process of L2 animal idiom comprehension, therefore, the high-level L2 learners didn't definitely outperform the intermediate-level ones in some types of animal idioms which are lack of transparency mainly because of their different cultural connotations from that of their L1. This finding in the study can be explained in terms of the cultural transfer as well as language transfer. We can conclude that cultural connotation's transfer does exist. Learners either use their L1 knowledge to deem the English connotation of the words or literally translate the Chinese words into English. Meanwhile, we can conclude that the cultural connotation's transfer is at least influenced by three factors. They are the perceived markedness of L1 by L2 learners, L2 learners' language proficiency, and the L2 learners' intercultural awareness. Therefore, in the learning of L2 words, the important thing is to handle these three factors correctly. When emphasizing the distance between the Chinese and English, the similarities should not be ignored either; when developing the learners' language proficiency, learners' intercultural awareness should also be strengthened.

All in all, L2 idiom comprehension needs not only L2 knowledge such as vocabulary, grammar, but also L2 cultural knowledge, and all these can be transferred from L1 to L2.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of the study reinforce the fact that both L2 idiom type and L2 proficiency level affect the acquisition of L2 idioms. Advanced English learners can't outperform the intermediate-level learners in all types of L2 idiom translation because L2 idioms, as a special phenomenon in L2 vocabulary, involve pure foreign language knowledge as well as the knowledge of L2 culture.

Language meaning is closely related to culture, as it is the primary means by which a culture transmits its values, beliefs, concepts, customs and social norms and habits. So we may say that a language, to some extent, is the symbolic representation of a particular culture. Culture, on the other hand, imposes considerable influence on language and the use of language as well. So languages in the world vary from culture to culture not only in the symbols they use, the diversities of structure at various levels, and the grammatical rules they have formed, but also in how they are appropriately used in communication. Since the knowledge, values and beliefs that constitute a people's culture are habitually encoded and transmitted in the language of people, it is of great importance for L2 learners not only to learn the linguistic knowledge of the target language, but also to pay much attention to the development of his cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and cultural competence in their study of the target language.

Therefore, learning an L2 means more than merely mastering the pronunciation, words and grammar. It also means learning to see the world as native speakers of that language see it, learning the ways in which their language reflects the ideas, customs, and behavior of their society, learning to understand their "language of the mind". Learning a language, in fact, is inseparable from learning its culture.

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Towards the Critical Discourse Analysis of Imam Khomeini's Will: Determining Ideological Discourse toward EFL Learning

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Abstract—It is an accepted truth that Discourse Analysis is the analysis of language in use. The results of the study showed how discourse analysis can be used in decoding facts and fore-grounded information in Imam Khomeini's will. The discourse description strategy was used to bring out the messages, patterns and themes. This study aims to discuss the realization of Islam and Islamic thought by means of language use in a political discourse that is primarily stranded in Norman Fairclough's tristratal framework in critical discourse analysis. For this, the discursive strategies of the Imam Khomeini the founder of Islamic republic of Iran were examined. In conclusion, the researcher showed that Imam Khomeini's will had a significant inclination toward applying verb tense as a means for ideological act in the text as well as action sentences and passive sentences. Moreover, Imam Khomeini enhanced pluralism against individualism. It seems that the contribution of critical discourse analysis in EFL refers to text appreciation, text critics, as well as enhancement of language competence in political and religious fields.

Index Terms—Imam Khomeini's will, discourse strategy, Islamic thought, political discourse, ideological act, EFL learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, several studies have been conducted in the field of discourse analysis with various definitions given to it. Discourse analysis has been applied to the analysis of many literary works by scholars. This investigation is an attempt to take discourse analysis some steps further, using its basic elements such as description to make explicit the implicit aspect of Imam Khomeini's messages. Language plays a critical role in politics for gaining power. It is crucial to decode ideological features typical for Imam Khomeini appeared in his last will. Imam Khomeini's will present policies of the new presupposition of a leader toward Islam and its general significance is enhanced pluralism against individualism. The aim of this paper is to examine the messages, elements and themes of Imam Khomeini's will and its ideological elements. The methods applied in this thesis include the discussion and critical analysis of Imam's will at level of description. The data used in this research are the text in the form of written; the data for analysis are English translation of Imam Khomeini's will by groups of translators. Imam Khomeini's will is one of the most sought books in the world today, Imam Khomeini who has his name as the central subject of discourse for Islamic revolution is possibly the most mentioned name in the universe. However, the interpretation of many of the teachings, messages and events he partook in, are being subjected to diverse meaning explication by several people both in the field of religion and outside religion. A discourse analysis of Imam Khomeini's will attempts to show how elements of discourse analysis can be used in decoding facts and fore-grounded information from the will.

Considering the role played by discourse analysis in pedagogical issues, as noted in Wodak (2002) the roots of CDA lies in classical rhetoric, text linguistic, and sociolinguistic, as well as applied linguistic and pragmatics. The notions of ideology, power, hierarchy and gender together with sociological variables were all seen as relevant for an interpretation and explanation of text. The rhetoric, pragmatics and syntax contribute to teaching English. DA's contribution to teaching refers to text analysis and translation studies; that is text analysis and translation studies are production of DA. In the present study researcher analyze the political and divine will of Imam Khomeini to obtain patterns; the analysis that identify which patterns exist in Imam Khomeini's speech. The identification of the patterns contributes to the ESP studies of the studies; for instance, English for peace, English for diplomats, English for preaches.

The present study is an attempt to analyze Imam Khomeini's speech, the speech that is peaceful, penetrate, the speech that have been stated by politicians such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela. It seems that diplomats, preaches and clergymen benefit from the patterns that researcher would obtain in this study.

The analysis of Imam Khomeini's will was a tool to facilitate understanding the comprehensibility of political texts. In fact comprehensible input improves proficiency level of students in learning. Also the analysis and conclusions from this study can be helpful in reading comprehension of students who are learning English for religious purpose. Not only the patterns and dimensions of Imam Khomeini's will contribute to better understanding of Imam Khomeini's political thought, but also the findings of the study contribute better understanding of reading comprehension of political texts. This article attempted to critically investigate the relationship between language and ideology. Critical Discourse Analysis attempts to reveal hidden meanings, which are ideologically prone in a discourse. This work in other words reflected on insights in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that is uncovering of implicit ideologies in texts. It reveals the underlying ideological prejudices and therefore the exercise of power in texts. (Ebunoluma, 2011) The aim of this thesis is to examine Imam Khomeini's will especially its ideological component using the tools of Critical Discourse Analysis texts.

II. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Discourse

Discourse is an extensive term that has various definitions, ranging from linguistics, through sociology, philosophy and other discipline Van Dijk (1988) pointed out that discourse in a wider sense, is a complex unit of language form, meaning and action that might be captured under the notion of communicative events or communicative act. According to Johnston "discourse means actual instances of communication in the medium of language, while discourses in plural, are conventional ways of talking that create and perpetuate systems of ideology, sets of beliefs about how the world works and what is.

Ruiz Ruiz (2009) based on sociological perspective defined discourse as follow: From a sociological point of view, *discourse* is defined as any practice by which individuals fill reality with meaning. When defined in these terms, discourse is found in a wide range of forms. Certainly, any social practice from a dance, ritual or a piece of music to a job agreement, myth or cookery custom can be analyzed discursively. Yet the discourse of greatest interest to sociologists is that which takes a verbal form, be it written or spoken. The reason for this special interest in verbal discourse is twofold: a practical one and a theoretical one. In practice, verbal discourse is discourse that can be accessed and examined by the analyst.

Bloor and Bloor (2007) provide six distinctions in definition of discourse:

Discourse-1 is the highest unit of linguistic description; phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and texts are below; - discourse-2 is a sample of language usage, generally written to be spoken, that is, a speech; - discourse-3 refers to the communication expected in one situation context, alongside one field and register, such as the discourse of law or medicine; - discourse-4 is human interaction through any means, verbal and non-verbal; - discourse-5 is spoken interaction only; - discourse-6 stands for the whole communicative event.

Van Dijk (1997) associates discourse with linguistic, cognitive and socio-cultural definitions. He first argues that discourse is described at the syntactic, semantic, stylistic and rhetorical levels. Secondly, he adds that it needs to be understood in terms of the interlocutors' processes of production, reception and understanding. And, thirdly, he points to the social dimension of discourse, which he understands as a sequence of contextualized, controlled and purposeful acts accomplished in society, namely, a form of social action taking place in a context (i.e. physical setting, temporal space plus participants). Since context is mostly cognition, that is, it has to do with our knowledge of social situations and institutions, and of how to use language in them, van Dijk claims that each context controls a specific type of discourse and each discourse depends on a specific type of context.

According to Wodak and Meyer (2001) different definitions of discourse refers to three different trends: The German and Central European tradition, in which the term discourse draws on text linguistics; the Anglo-American tradition, in which discourse refers to written and oral texts; and the Foucauldian tradition, in which discourse is an abstract form of knowledge, understood as cognition and emotions.

According to Widdowson's perspective (2007) texts can be written or spoken, and must be described in linguistic terms and in terms of their intended meaning. Discourse, on the other hand, as text in context, is defined by its effect. In his words, discourse "is the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation", and text, its product. Co-textual relations are concerned with text and contextual relations with discourse; that is, text cohesion depends on discourse coherence.

Based on Fairclough and Wodak 1997, cited in Van Dijk (2000) discourse refers to following senses: Language use in speech and writing, meaning-making in the social process, and a form of social action that is "socially constitutive" and "socially shaped". Fairclough and Wodak add that discourses "are partly realized in ways of using language, but partly in other ways", for example visual semiosis. (p.162) Texts are the only evidence for the existence of discourses, one kind of concrete realization of abstract forms of knowledge; at the same time, they are interactive and influenced by sociolinguistic factors. In the process of constructing themselves in society, individuals internalise discourses that comprise the core of a community of practice, in the sense that such discourses control and organise what can be talked about, how it can be talked about and by whom. Social practices are meaningful and coherent in that they conform to discourse principles. As manifestations of ideologies, discourses form individual and collective consciousness, and consciousness influences people's actions; that is, through the repetition of ideas and statements, discourse solidifies knowledge and reflects shapes and enables social reality.

According to Andrew Cifford (2009) interpreters in discourse do need to be concerned with lexicon, but it is only apart of their work. Furthermore, interpreters need to be concerned with

From all the above definitions, it is clear that discourse is any writing or spoken speech or text which passes or transmits information from one person to the other. It is symbolic and meaningful, that is it impacts some measures of knowledge and information to the participants taking the context into play.

III. METHODOLOGY

Data for study

The present study is an attempt to analyze Imam Khomeini's Will, under the model of Fairclough in CDA (Fairclough, 1995, 2010). Imam Khomeini's will is significant in that his will is one of the most sought books in the world today, Imam Khomeini who has his name as the central subject of discourse for Islamic revolution is possibly the most mentioned name in the universe.

Procedure

In this study vocabulary, grammar, and ideological features of Imam Khomeini's will critically analyzed according to Fairclough's model. The following elements of Fairclough's framework were considered to function as the criteria for the analysis: description (texture, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, text structure), interpretation (intertextuality, intentionality, speech acts), explanation (relationship between discourse, social and cultural reality). All definitions were briefly presented based on Fairclough's elaboration in theoretical framework section.

The study was a corpus based analysis of Imam Khomeini's will conducted on a descriptive which was carried out on English translation of Imam Khomeini's will. The corpus (Imam Khomeini's will) comprised 10000 words in English which whole text was selected for analysis. The data were gathered by analyzing the vocabulary features, themes, topics and classification of Imam Khomeini's will.

IV. ANALYSIS

The analysis of the will at the level of description

The data of this thesis consist of Imam Khomeini's speech. The reason of choosing this Will refers to application of Imam Khomeini's authoritative language in legitimizing government in his leadership in order to establish social and discourse order. The analysis of Imam Khomeini's Will at the level of description we face with the meaningful and exact application of lexicon, usage of pronouns, adverbs and verbs. Proper selection of lexicon in two different ideological positions (Republic VS. Pahlavi), application of pronouns appropriate with discourses and also application of active and passive sentences showed Imam Khomeini's ideological aims in text. Ideological struggles and power relations exercised through lexis and grammatical structure in Imam's will. The CDA research in this thesis was based on analysis of lexical and grammatical structure and their role in the analysis of the will. The researcher attempted to detect the underlying ideological patterns and possible lexical element. The analysis of Imam's wills is important as 1) he was specialist in Islamic pure thought and in the fields of philosophy, Quran and Fig h.2) Imam Khomeini in his will addresses prophets, philosophers, and scientist. He addresses not only Iranian nations but also point out the other nations. 3) Imam's will consist of Islamic beliefs, the position of Thaqalien. That is a valuable source for Islamic nations. the political school thoughts of Imam Khomeini's are :1) integration of religious and politics 2) Firm belief to role of citizens 3) international and global view 4) protection of values and Velayat Faghih 5) Justice.

Values in Imam Khomeini's thought

A word in the text that ideologically contested is 'Thaqalain'. Thaqalain Hadith is unbroken chain of recorded traditions, dominations a proof positive for all mankind, especially for Muslims in all sects and branches. (Imam Khomeini's will) It appears that this proof is binding on all Muslims who are accountable for it. It is man's guide to moral and material life to the last day. Taghoot and Islam are ideologically different and contested. Taghoot occurs 33 times in the will, whereas Islam is used 60 times. It is clear that Taghoot is represented in a negative way and Islam is demonstrated positively. (Atkins, 2002) Followings are collocations of two contested words.

Taghoot collocation: Bankrupt economy, bribery and dishonesty, followers of Taghoot,

Islamic collocation: Islamic culture, Islamic justice, Islamic economy, Islamic society, Islamic university and school, Islamic unity,

Words with expressive values can be classified in two main ways, those that are positive and associated with Islam and those which are negative and related to Taghooaian and satanic powers. (Atkins, 2002)

Positive connotations: render unity, claim the sanctity, path of god, Divine justice, infallible Imam, blessing of heaven,

Negative connotations: blood thirsty colonialist, exploiting perverts and hypocrites , consumer nations , isolate the clergy , satanic plots , create animosity , criminals of history

Focal lexicon

Focal lexicon is another aspect of description level in which lexicons play a crucial ideological role. Lexicons carry ideology because they show writers attitude. Following are some focal lexicons.

invitation to Islam, revival of Islam, identity, the relationship between religious and politics, justice, freedom, independence, conformity to law, unity, culture, democracy, foreign policy, Islamic ummah, divine trust, satanic powers, meek and oppression, sovereignty, exploitation, trumpet, colonialisation, rumor, animosity, Islamize, Sepah and Basij (recruits and volunteer), isolate the clergy, consumer nations,

The analysis shows, the lexicon Islam, Muslim, and Quran have high frequency. The high percentage indicates that Imam Khomeini led Iranian nation toward Islam by inspiring Quranic rules, and he gave a new meaning to the life in the framework of Islamic rules.

On the other hand, the high percentage for lexicon, Imam, and religious, sovereignty shows that Imam Khomeini had more inclination toward God's divine and Islamic laws.

Overall, It can be inferred that Imam Khomeini in his will addressed all nations especially Muslims to fight against satanic powers by trusting to Islamic rules to gain their spiritual life needs.

Application of pronouns

Pronouns are another important factor that constitutes the ideology of writer. Using plural or singular pronouns identify writer's perspective toward collectivism or individualism. Imam Khomeini's will vary from applications of pronouns; but the frequency of plural pronouns is more. The high frequency range of the first person pronouns has several aspect of consideration. Third person plural high frequency usage signal the overcome of collectivism to individualism. Frequency of singular pronouns shows the language intimacy of Imam Khomeini and is a plan to get nearer to reader to events of the will. Imam Khomeini use 'we' because of his position and noble Iranian nation to show his honor to Iranian nation. Therefore Imam Khomeini applied 'we, you, they' in the most sections (B, C, E, G) of the will; he use pronouns 'you', and 'they', mean Iranian nations, and use plural pronouns to signify collectivism to audiences. Following are some examples of pronouns in Imam's will. (Dorodgarian&Ghorji, 2012)

The analysis showed that Imam Khomeini use pronoun 'We' as ideological acts. With high percentage of using 'we', it can be claimed the overcoming of collectivism to individualism. Also high frequency of pronoun 'we' in Imam's will shows his position and his honor to Iranian nation.

On the other hand, the normal percentage of for pronoun 'I' shows the intimacy of Imam Khomeini's language and to get reader nearer to events of the will. Also Imam showed his responsibility toward Iranian nation.

Application of verb

This category involves the application of various tenses. Present and past tenses are used in Imam Khomeini's will to signify his attempt in modernizing the past events and making events believable. Integration of present and past shows the integration of symbolic history with social events of present time. (Ghorji&Ghasemzadeh, 2011)

The analysis showed the cases of present and past tense as an ideological act. As it is shown, there are 30% case of present verbs, while the Will by having 21% past tense, shows less ideological act.

The percentage of 30% for present tense indicates that Imam Khomeini attempt to modernize the past events. Also he conveys certainty.

With 21% of using past tense, it can be claimed that Imam Khomeini made events more believable, integration of present and past tense, with percentage of 10% shows the integration of symbolic history with social events of present time.

Application of active and passive sentences (passivisation)

The passive voice is often used to portray the agents of an action as unknown, obvious, or unimportant. The passive can also be used to hide an agent who is known, or down play the fact that an agent was involved. The choice between passive and active voice is one of a set of choices which speakers inevitably make in representing actions and events having to do with how semantic roles are mapped onto grammatical structure. (Jonstone, 2000)

Imam Khomeini wanted to convey the messages lies in the hearts of the events through the use of active verbs. Known subjects increase the decision making power of audiences in concluding provide a basic understanding of the text. In different sections of the Will nearly all the sentences are active, that is, actions and subjects are clear. The sentences are active because Imam Khomeini describes the role of each and there is no need to hide different factors in getting results. (Ghorji&Ghasemzadeh, 2011).

The analysis showed the case of passivisation as an ideological act in Imam Khomeini's will. There are three cases of active sentences, with frequency of 160 in entire text, and four examples of passive verbs with frequency of 40 in entire text.

Having percentage of 80% for active verbs, it is claimed that Imam Khomeini stressed on known subjects which they increase decision making power of readers. With 20% of using passive verbs it can be inferred that Imam Khomeini focused on the importance of object in social and political application and abolishment of subject.

Grammatical aspect (imperatives, affirmatives, question forms)

In section D, and L, Imam used question form to attract audiences and show the dominance of his discourse. Therefore, most of the sentences in different sections have statement (affirmative) aspects that present Imams claim as universally and in convertibly true (Jonstone, 2000), but Imam Khomeini imperatively advised all institutes to fulfill their responsibility, also in section L he advised to officials especially foreign policy to use divine laws to control society. In other sections Imam demanded nations and government to obey divine rules and their leaders

The analysis cleared that affirmatives can be considered as significant and common strategy for ideological acts to present Imam Khomeini's claims as universally and convertibly true. The analysis showed, there were the lower instances of question form and imperatives. With the low percentage for question form and imperatives, it can be concluded that Imam applied these strategies to show his power in guiding Iranian and attract readers.

Application of action sentences:

Extensive use of action verbs in Imam's speech is thoughtful. Action sentences are agreement, disagreement, pleasant, and unpleasant sentences (Yarmohamadi, 2004, p.33). the verbs such as 'promise', 'state', 'say', 'honor', 'proud', 'recommend', are action verbs. Action sentences are reasonable points of Imam's will, because by application of action verb Imam attend readers toward the text and events of the text.

The high percentage of action verbs, they can be considered as important and more common strategies of writer for ideological act. The ideological act that action verbs carry referred to attract readers toward the text and events of the text.

The analysis showed that among action verbs 'proud, and advice with normal percentage have significant inclination toward applying as a means of ideological acts. Generally action verbs with high percentage considered as a more significant strategy in description level.

Synonyms, antonyms, semantic inclusion:

Over wording refers to the use of many different synonyms or near synonyms. The use of many words for something suggests its ideological significance.

Imam Khomeini in his will in introduction section use God's divine trust synonymous with leader of Islamic sovereignty. In the all sections of the will Taqoot is synonymous with illegitimate and anti-Islamic sovereignty. He also used slinking (Satan) synonym with enemies of religion and truth. The application of the institutions has semantic inclusion that consists of all institutions and organs that exist in Islamic republic of Iran. Imam Khomeini in different sections of the will used Taqootian synonymous with Satan also in introduction Malk synonym with the world of nature, Malakoot-e-Aala synonym with the world of divinity, Thqle-Akbar synonym with holly Quran, Theqle-Kabir synonym with infallible imams. he also used the lexicon Taqootian antonyms with lexicon such as illegitimacy, divine legitimacy, and law sovereignty.

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Nominalization:

Nominalization is another way in which the representation of events, actions, and actors, can be manipulated. Nominalization means using as nouns words that can also be used as verbs, adjectives, or adverbs, either with or without the addition of noun makers like the English -tion. (Johnstone, 2000)

In Imam Khomeini's will the nominalization have not highly formed because he intended to unite audience with his thoughts, divine legitimacy, and acceptable Islamic republic sovereignty through description, interpretation and explanation. Following are some examples of nominalization in Imam Khomeini's will.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

To reach to a general conclusion for the ideological act of strategies in description level, the researcher found it necessary to analyze and calculate all the obtained data. According to analysis, Imam Khomeini's will had a significant inclination toward applying verb tense as a means for ideological act in the text. Then action sentences with a major distance are the second most frequent strategy of description level. Passivization is the third strategy which carries ideological acts. Moreover, other strategies with minor distances to each other have equivalent role in constructing ideological acts of Imam's will. The high percentage of verb tense, it can be inferred that Imam Khomeini attempt to modernize the past events with using present tense and also conveys certainty of his speech. Using past tense, it can be claimed that Imam Khomeini made events more believable, integration of present and past tense, shows the integration of symbolic history with social events of present time. The rather low percentage of passivization revealed that the will have inclination to use passive sentences to show the importance role of objects in the social and political application and abolishment of subject. Imam Khomeini used passive verbs to despise the opposition and show more power. On the other hand, high percentage of active sentences showed that the messages lie in the hearts of the events through the use of active verbs. Known subjects increase the decision making power of audiences in concluding and provide a basic understanding of the text. The sentences are active because Imam Khomeini describes the role of each and there is no

need to hide different factors in getting results. The essential ideological elements of Imam Khomeini's will can be summarized in the following concepts:

Integration of religious and politics, Firm belief to role of citizens, Protection of values and Velayat Faghih, Justice, Unity and divine motivation Commitment to Islam and country. The most prominent words utilized by Imam Khomeini are: Taqoot, Anti-Qurann, Muslim, Divine trust, The book of the God (Quran), Islam. Dominance of the personal pronoun "we", shows Imam Khomeini's honor to Iranian nation. Imam Khomeini's choice of lexicalization strengthen the notion of unity and brotherly among the members of Iranian society. The theme of the speech is the need to be performed and extended Islamic roles which should be used as divine trust to rebuild the Iranian nation in the time of crisis. That the discursive event shaped the text – Imam Khomeini cleared out the obsolescence of Quran and Thqalain in pahlavi's regime, and pointed out oppressions that these two have received and guided nations towards Islam as ideal religion. The will is designed for Muslim and non Muslim nations.

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Transforming EFL Classes from Lecturing to Cooperative Learning

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Abstract—It has long been acknowledged in China that the traditional frontal-lecturing approach in EFL classes prevents learners from developing their language competence because of the limited dynamic movements among students. The large size of classes makes classroom interactions and active learning extremely difficult. This paper integrates cooperative learning with EFL teaching with an attempt to explore why cooperative learning is effective to enhancing learners' academic achievement, and discuss its potential cumulative effects on students' moral growth as well as challenges in its implementation.

Index Terms—EFL, cooperative learning, language competence, moral growth

I. INTRODUCTION

Transforming EFL Classes from Lecturing to Cooperative Learning English has been offered as a mandated course for non-English majors at colleges all across China since the 1980s. The primary aim is to develop students' abilities to use English in an all-round way, and improving their cultural and moral qualities. The prevalence of teacher-centered approach in class, however, seems to draw us further away from this goal. Teachers dominate class by lecturing ceaselessly to seemingly quiet yet inwardly recalcitrant pupils who are seated in neat rows. Student learning is planned, supervised, and eventually graded by teachers. This spoon-feeding way of teaching severely dampens students' enthusiasm in learning, and fails to guarantee their communicative abilities. The mass-produced students are unsurprisingly "deaf and dumb" even after several years of intensive exposure to the target language. What's worse, this examination-oriented method restrains the development of student potentials, creativity and moral growth. The "assembly line" in schools produces batches of knowledge holders who routinely obey and do but cannot independently think and create. The introduction of the "magic box" under the name of "computer" does not change the nature of the old paradigm of educational practice: lecturing still predominates the class with occasional student engagement and contribution.

The increasing size of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes makes educational "ecosystem" worse as a result of continuous enrollment in colleges since the beginning of the new millennium. Teachers in large classes are confronted with more problems than before, such as stratified academic abilities across students, and minimized "Thou-Thou" and "I-Thou" (Hawkins, 1974) interactions. Communicatively demanding activities are purposefully avoided for fear of losing control. Teachers' authoritarian role becomes helplessly fossilized. Take the college I once worked at. There were on average at least seventy students in one class, which was not uncommon in colleges throughout the country. I could only match several names with faces at the end of the first semester. My poor memory was in part responsible for that, but much would be attributed to the unusual size of class and limited interactions between us. I always felt it intimidating to address a large class, especially when I did not have much idea who my students were and what they were expecting of me. It is embarrassing for me to have come to realize that hundreds of students have come into and out of my career without direct contact with me in the seven years of teaching. I have been struggling in vain for years to provide an answer to the question: How should teachers provide and organize an authentic and dynamic environment which encourages students to get actively involved and construct their own knowledge?

Cooperative Learning (CL) can be a way out in that it can bring forth students' academic achievement, improved problem-solving strategies, critical faculties and moral growth by facilitating dynamic interactions among teachers, students and subject matter. This paper integrates CL with college English teaching with an attempt to explore why CL is effective to enhancing learner's language competence in the context of China, and discuss its potential cumulative effects on students' moral growth and challenges in its implementation.

II. TRANSFORMED ROLE OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

CL is a task-based and group-structured instructional method in which members in heterogeneous groups collaborate instead of competing with each other to seek attainments that are beneficial to each member with the teacher's academic and moral guidance. Both of them share the responsibility for education: teachers are no longer the authoritarians who control students' learning behaviors but perceived as knowledge promoters; students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge and skills but active discoverers and constructors of knowledge.

I shall make a comparison between traditional EFL teaching and CL in terms of teachers' role, students' role, and view of knowledge and curriculum. Firstly, teachers, as the absolute center of the traditional regime, control all communication channels and impart linguistic and social knowledge to the subjects. Teachers, in contrast, become knowledge facilitators in CL setting responsible for offering intervention and assistance to develop students' language competence and social skills that prepare them for active contribution to society as responsible and democratized citizens. Secondly, students in traditional settings are passive knowledge consignees and mechanical users in the whole process of knowledge relay. Students within CL groups, however, take great initiatives and responsibilities for their own learning fulfilling various roles as group leaders, participants and mediators. They construct knowledge directly by investigating, negotiating and engaging. Finally, language knowledge, concepts and skills, in the traditional paradigm, are presented as something "static" to students in a fragmented and isolated manner. Students take a "bottom-up" approach to learning: they first grasp grammatical, lexical and morphological rules through rote learning and mechanical drilling, and then try to produce rule-governed English. Student-centered pedagogy emphasizes students' agency in identifying and analyzing problems, and establishing personal connections with subject matter in group dynamics. Students take a "top-down" approach to learning: they comprehend language rules and master language use through group socialization. What matters is not how much linguistic knowledge the instructors can narrate, but how the students learn and use language as a functional tool of communication.

A. Dewey's *Interactive Naturalism and Humanism*

The idea that people working collaboratively towards group goals are more likely to perform better academically and socially than those working in isolation is a well-established principle of Dewey's interactive naturalism and humanism.

One of Dewey's (1915) widely acknowledged ideas is that children's innate curiosity, the basis of learning experiences, enables them to be natural learners and that "the fundamental necessity is leading the child to realize a problem as his own, so that he is self-induced to attend to it in order to find out its answer" (p. 151). In his words, students naturally construct their multiple knowledge networks on the basis of their life trajectory, knowledge repertoire and mental structures of reality. Schools should create opportunities for students to be engaged in their own learning. CL ideally provides learners a collaborative and democratic setting where students in groups discover and interpret language rules, structures, and knowledge they are directly exposed to. Concepts beyond their current stages of competence can be translated into those comprehensible to them by other group members. Learning is eventually activated, reconstructed and expanded through dialogues among students in a social setting.

Sadly, the traditional way of instruction I am familiar with destroys students' curiosity: students walked into schools craving for the unknown found themselves in the end to be molded into industrialized "puppets" who feared and hated learning whatever came out of teachers' mouth. They were worn out by the old-fashioned manner of learning in which they were compelled to mimic a single and predetermined way of thinking and believing by knowledge providers and those in authority. I believed in my teens that I did everything in school for my parents and teachers. I was so anxious to finish school and make my own way into the world. It was until graduation from school that I realized that I had to relearn in my own way to be a liberated thinker and doer.

Dewey's humanism focuses on the nature of humans, giving priority to issues involving value of life, human needs, and potential abilities. Dewey (1902) declared that authentic learning will not take place unless "it must be restored to the experience from which it has been abstracted" (p. 117). His humanism suggests that learning occurs when the subject matter is adapted to be of personal relevance to learners and when it involves active participation by the learners. The traditional teaching practice is contrary to the spirit of humanism: students are forced to learn and memorize knowledge that has lost all relevance to their personal and social needs.

Education is viciously used by those privileged to maintain the status quo, to ensure that the masses think and believe in an officially authorized way. I vividly remember that my classmates and I were filled with righteous indignation when reading about established allegations about "exploitation of workers," "evil capitalism" and low efficiency of "tripartite political system" of capitalist countries in middle schools. Unfortunately, we knew from unofficial sources that these "evil capitalists" were leading the world in economy, politics, and social welfare. We painfully felt ambivalent about the gulf between the oversimplified printed knowledge and diversified reality. I never felt that detachment in the world like this before when one of my American classmates unintentionally mistook Singapore as part of China and when a seven-year-old boy told me the only thing he knew about China was dictatorships. I felt sad about that not because they knew little about my country but because that bit of knowledge came from those propagandized materials compiled by those in power who were obviously prejudiced against China. If learners, east or west, were denied the right to a comprehensive vision of the world, their knowledge acquired must be distorted from reality.

If educating is utilized deliberately as a tool of social manipulation and brainwashing, learners' daring imagination, empathy and agency for progressive changes will be unmercifully killed. Learning should be a process in which learners are exposed to all the objectivity and emancipated to "name and transform the world" (Freire, 1972) in their own discourses. Students should be sensitized to the self-evident truth that the understandings and voices of the subservient are as privileged and validated as those in power.

B. *Positive Effects of CL in EFL Classes*

I envision three benefits from transformation of EFL Classes from lecturing to CL. First, it provides supportive and

expanded opportunities for learners to use the target language. Second, it contributes to students' psychological health. Finally, it promotes the democratic climate of the classroom and students' critical thinking and democratic consciousness.

CL produces high language proficiency in students. Face-to-face group work provides abundant opportunities for them to converse in language they can understand and hear language modified to meet their needs. Sometimes information coming from the teachers is very technical, but the students try to decode it to a level appropriate to their understanding. Group members, for example, when assigned a reading task, collaborate with one another towards a group goal. They read, translate and review the work together; they analyze, sift, and examine their comprehension of the materials. Students are directly exposed to both the teachers' input and different ideas, beliefs, and expressions from their peers. Their willingness to express themselves in the target language optimizes their language skills. Ironically, the only mutual interlocution between my students and I was question-and-answer in class which typically turned out to be monologues in that students were either too shy to respond in public or afraid to "stand out" among their peers. What struck me most as a student in America was that it indeed required pains-taking courage and self-confidence to engage myself in interactions in front of the whole class. In contrast, group work could make me feel less nervous and more willing to get involved and contribute. Students engagement and engrossment in group activities, be it drawing a map of nucleus or interpreting a poem, make real learning highly possible.

Psychological health derives from two-way interactions within groups. Disease has spread into the vital "organs" of the outdated way of instruction: students' indifferent observation of teachers' lecturing is kind of psychological torture to both. Students are disempowered to resist or change, while teachers feel powerless too as they can find no way out of that overwhelming climate. In some respects, I could sense my vulnerability: a feeling of helplessness and guilt constantly struck me at the thought of the lectures I would give that day. Whenever I felt bored with my own hammering of knowledge into my audience, I would inwardly take it as a crime committed against those who should have been endowed the capacities for active learning and critical thinking. Literally, I was worn out in the mist of deepest despair. Group-structured learning may be an anecdote to that despair: peer interactions, modeling and "scaffolding" promote students' emotional maturity, social relations skills and self-esteem by encouraging respect of differences, trust, love and appropriate concessions among students. It is not only a form of class dynamism, but also a way to building life-long interactions and communicative abilities for coping with more complex challenging situations in the world. Psychological balance virtually correlates to the cultivation of a free and democratic society.

Cooperative endeavors are the pedagogy for democracy. Democracy is not an ideal, but a way of life involving socializing and learning together. Dewey believed that if children are to learn to live in thriving democracy, they must experience the process of democracy in classroom life—a process which includes substantive opportunities to make meaningful choices and build productive relationships based on genuine interpersonal respect and empathy (Dewey, 1915). In his words, students can acquire skills that qualify them for citizenship in a democracy classroom setting by undertaking projects collaboratively and work out solutions in a respectful yet critical way. In student-centered discourses, teachers' power and authority are equitably shared with students. Students correspondingly have many opportunities to share, argue and test various ideas by and for themselves. This process fosters students' self-identity which is considered indispensable for a democratic society.

Self-identity, however, is a taboo that never appears in the "dictionary" of Chinese collectivism-centered culture. Collectivism, on one hand, really helped the whole nation and individuals achieve a lot economically, politically and socially. It, however, deprived us of the freedom to think by and for ourselves, challenge those in dominance, and revolutionize the "limit-situations" (Freire, 1972). It was a frequent occurrence that collective decisions were placed above individual opinions so that individuals even did not get a chance to say "yes" to an alleged collective decision made by the privileged few. The worse part of collective norms in culture, I believe, is self-denial: we are indoctrinated to subordinate our personal ideas and interest to those of the collective. People's voices are devalued and personal wills are kidnapped by collectivism. This invisible violence is an insult to our intelligence and consciousness, and unfortunately destroys our physical and psychological well-being. Blind self-denial and excessive craze for charisma always go hand in hand, which is manifested in the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s: a reckless decision made by a person of supreme power caused inestimable financial and humane damages to the whole nation. The traditional paradigm of teaching nefariously solidifies that social inequality and powerlessness in beings. Students passively receive whatever is imparted from the teachers without real understanding and critical judgment.

Collaborative learning, in contrast, prioritizes the shaping of students' self-identity which emerges from contributing whatever resources one has to the joint efforts and common goals. Positive assessment from the teachers and peers maximizes students' participation in dialogues with others to construct their knowledge networks and endow new dimensions to their prior experiences. Cooperation experiences produce in individuals faith in their own power and elevated self-worth; it invests power in people rather than in authoritarian figures; it encourages the development of civic skills such as dialogues, equity, and negotiation. Social topics such as public welfare, official corruption, social unrest, and environmental pollution would be brought up naturally in group discussion, which helps students take a holistic approach to these issues. Mutilating truth and dwelling on "utopia" (escaping from the reality into dreams) would only breed people's doubt, distrust and even rejection of all that is inculcated to them. People's serious reflections and empathetic understanding of self and others in this complex world help them transcend the local

“limit-situations” (Freire, 1972), which inevitably accelerates the social progress towards political impartiality, social mobility and democracy.

It is what students are exposed to in class that they project into larger context. Individual classes, despite a weak force to help transform the way students perceive themselves and the world around them, may gather momentum in the process of students’ active engagement in dialogues and periodical reflections. The process is full of new unconstructed collision and fusion of beliefs and convictions. It does not matter how that change happens, but it matters in what direction that change happens. We recognize that efforts to democratizing schools can be part of a long-term struggle, and that teachers and students must be part of it rather than isolated nodes in a dehumanizing process. Hopefully, students’ preliminary awareness of individual accountability helps cultivate a stance of readiness in them to engage the surrounding world.

More strikingly, teachers are democratized in their interchanges with students and subject matter. Authoritarian teachers, in most cases, exercise their powers by disempowering their students. It is no surprise that when people suppress and stigmatize others’ creativity and agency they will find their soul shrunk and moral growth stagnated. Teachers can liberate themselves by ripping off their “masks” of supreme authority and dropping that intimidating mental burden. They can achieve more by freeing students from total obedience and inner barrenness in that sharing power and authority with students fuels the same qualities in teachers as in students, namely, initiatives, independent thinking and democratic awareness.

III. CHALLENGES: AUTHORITY SHIFT AND CONTEXTUALIZED FACTORS

Though CL always produces academic and social gains, it represents a host of challenges to educators in terms of authority shift within the classroom and contextualized factors.

Authority shift in classroom can be disconcerting for many teachers. Many people go to extremes in teaching practice: either as an authoritarian or a permissive. I used to be a dominator in class most of the time and habitually imposed my dispositions, perceptions, and judgment on my students who were treated as objects; in other cases, I completely handed over power to them without any intervention or attention. In both cases, the communication channels between us were kept shut. I talked, if I did, to students in a condescending manner in that I have been helplessly “socialized” into the hierarchical relations I was previously exposed to as a student at school. Questions and challenges from the students alerted me to possible indications of disrespect and defiance. My several months of learning experience in this core course gives me a new insight into the perception of “inquiry and challenges”: students’ capacity to question and challenge is respected and encouraged; their probe and inquiry are the very indication of active involvement in and contribution to their own process of knowledge constructing.

Only those determined to make progressive transformation from unidirectional lecturing into student-engaged pedagogy that seeks to enlighten students’ imagination and democratic responsibilities are courageous enough to transgress the socially established rules by sharing power with the disempowered. But that does not follow that teachers give up their control totally but that they exercise their control in an carefully planned manner. Teachers take on more responsibilities in establishing engaged pedagogy in class: they have to ensure that the groups are well structured, tasks are properly assigned, and updated assessments are provided to ensure students can benefit from group learning. Success also depends on whether teachers could “talk with” (Freire, 2005) their students and inspire in them the longing for justice, liberty, and personal rights.

Contextualized factors should be taken into serious consideration if any student-centered teaching innovation is to be effective and sustainable. The factors mainly refer to the local context and larger context, with the former specifying the classroom and school organizational structures, and the latter specifying national policies about standardized tests, collective norms in Chinese culture, and hierarchical social structuring.

Classroom and school organizational structures can be further divided into teacher beliefs, former experiences or training, student differences in academic levels, curriculum, and school cultures. How CL is implemented in class is significantly influenced by how teachers have been exposed to and perceived it. Any attempts without enough knowledge or training in this innovation may end up in failure. Students bring to class not only prior experiences, knowledge repertoire, but also individualized values and beliefs enabling them to construct meaning in spontaneous classroom discourses. In an authoritarian school setting like my college where most EFL teachers adopt the “standardized” instructional method, we are expected to follow the prescribed curriculum and “cover” certain academic materials in a given period. The power relationships could strangle any serious attempts of innovation in education. Weekly faculty meeting in my department is a case in point: the dean seated in the front of meeting room never failed to squander hours of meeting time by “engaging” everyone present in his world-for-word interpretation of written instructions of high up with his harsh voice from the microphone. The meetings were unanimously labeled by my colleagues as “a typically bureaucratic exercise of power”. I painfully came to realize that I had been treating my students unfairly. Intrinsically, my daily exposure to bureaucracy and hierarchy has blunted my awareness of freedom, autonomy and openness so that I might feel legitimated and even compensated in my abused use of authority and power in my students.

Larger context also exerts a profound influence on what happens in classroom. Standardized tests become a measuring rod for assessing student performance. The qualities of humanistic education, namely inquiry for truth,

freedom of expression and critical thinking, are too intangible to be tested quantitatively for the stakeholders. Any progressive educational attempts to reconstructing the traditional educational regime, if failed in test payoff, will be condemned by the mainstream viewpoints as an act of rebellion against orthodoxy. Few people want to take that risk by taking a different “track”. To make things worse, we are all governed by some conception of cultural identity. The colonized concept of “hierarchy”, core of Chinese culture, is noticeably apparent in what Confucius stated in *Confucian Analects*, “There is government, when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son”. In his words, unconditional subservience to the superior governs social order. This inherited cultural identity hijacks everyone’s social behaviors. It made me feel guilt when one of my former colleagues told me that I changed a lot after I was transferred from a teaching position to an administrative one. Her comments indicated the slight trace of bureaucracy in my behaviors which I myself was totally unaware of. It brought home to me that nothing came clean out of dying vat. Collectivism in cultures is characterized by one faith in and one voice from the authoritarian. Alternative voices, insight, and feelings, if any, would be “harmonized” physically (imprisonment at the worst) or mentally (abridged speech freedom). Teachers and students in school discourses, consciously and unconsciously, are fettered by this collectivism-centered outlook, rendering it hard to bring forth significant changes to present teacher-centered education.

The rising expectations of progressive education, however, spur educators to effect transformation in class. What students and parents expect of education is not merely knowledge and skills as a key to economic self-advancement and social mobility, but accessibility to free thinking and democratic empowerment. Education should be a set of democracy-oriented endeavors which produce thinking beings with cultural awareness, political agency, and democratic sensibilities.

IV. CONCLUSION

It has long been acknowledged in China that the traditional knowledge-transmission approach to EFL teaching minimizes interactions between teachers and students, and fails to develop students’ language skills. The large size of EFL classes makes classroom management and active learning extremely difficult. CL approach can create a student-centered and liberal environment for learners to construct their learning and develop their moral qualities. Teachers act not only as monitors and evaluators, but also knowledge facilitators. Group members’ trust and encouragement create a low-anxiety environment for students’ comprehensible input and productive output. The involvement and connectedness with subject matter help reinforce their critical thinking and democratic awareness. We should make tenacious efforts to craft a democratic and open environment to ensure education is a happy, lively, and worthwhile experience. We should protect our students from attempts to paralyze our consciousness of progress and transformation. When the students feel empowered and able to engage, we win.

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The Impact of Task-based Approach on Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation in Writing Research Abstracts

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Abstract—Writing as a complex activity requires systematic attention to motivational conditions (Bruning and Horn, 2000). This study aimed at examining whether there is a relationship between EFL learners' motivation and their performance in writing research abstracts as well as the impact of task-based approach on the participants' motivation. For these aims, sixty-eight EFL university students at intermediate level of proficiency participated in this study. Thirty-two of the participating students were involved in the class based on Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) where three phases of pre-task, task-cycle and post-task as suggested by Swan (2005) were used and students had the opportunity to do tasks in groups. Thirty-six of them participated in Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) approach where the teaching was divided into presentation, practice and production phases and students had to do the activities individually. After receiving treatment for eight sessions, students were asked to write an abstract for a research article. Furthermore, a motivation questionnaire adopted from Lam and Law (2007) was distributed among the participants which included the following motivational constructs: challenge, real life significance, curiosity, autonomy, recognition and evaluation. The findings demonstrated that students' motivation is positively related to their abstract writing performance. Moreover, results of Independent-Sample T- Test showed that Task-based approach was motivating for the students. Therefore, the data suggested that students with higher motivation can have better performance in writing abstracts and students' motivation can be enhanced by the teaching approach in use. Finally, several implications that may help guide future research are offered.

Index Terms—TBLT approach, PPP approach, motivation, motivational constructs, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Abstract as the first subgenre of a research article gives a concise summary of the whole paper. In order to publish research paper in journals or present it in conferences, students need to send the research abstract. As a result, writing research article abstracts is of relevance to the learners' real world academic needs. However, still many students have difficulty in writing research abstracts.

According to Dörnyei (1998) even individuals with remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals without sufficient motivation. Since motivation is one of the key factors in language learning, in this study relationship between students' motivation and performance in writing of abstract was explored. Moreover, it is attempted to investigate the impact of task-based approach on the participants' motivation and see whether the task-based approach is a motivating approach for the students. By a 'motivating approach' we mean an approach in which teachers provided students with tasks which are challenging, used activities which are related to the real world, made them curious in learning new things, gave them enough autonomy, praised their efforts and gave them useful feedbacks (Lam and Law, 2007). Among the teaching approaches available, we decided to focus on TBLT because it is a new approach in Iran and needs more investigations. The participants were two groups of University students enrolled in research course at Guilan University. The experimental group received teaching based on TBLT where the teaching was divided to pre-task, task-cycle and post-task phases and students had the opportunity to do tasks in groups and the control group received teaching based on Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) where the teaching was divided into presentation, practice and production phases and students had to do the activities individually. During the classes it was attempted to introduce Hyland's (2000) five abstract moves to the students which were namely introduction, purpose, method, result and conclusion. Finally, students were asked to write an abstract for a research article and complete a questionnaire about their motivation towards the teaching approach they had received.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. TBLT and PPP Approaches

Proponent of TBLT varies in their beliefs about TBLT. However, Swan (2005) has mentioned some of the key principles in TBLT. He stated that the meaning-driven language learning happens in TBLT approach. It means that the main focus of learners should be on the meaning of the language. However; by emphasizing the meaning he did not neglect the importance of the form of language and its learning. He believed that peripherally learners should also pay attention to the form in order to understand the meaning better. For this aim he mentioned that in pre- or post-task phases the formal features of language should be worked on. He also emphasized the necessity of intervention for the purpose of fostering the acquisition of formal linguistic elements, and at the same time retaining the advantages of an approach which is 'natural'. Moreover, he mentioned that learners have an important role in the TBLT approach and the teacher is not the whole authority in the classroom. He also emphasized the usage of communicative tasks. Swan (2005) also indicated that, the strength of TBLT approach, comparing to the traditional approaches, is on its focus on communication. Furthermore, the common design of a task-based lesson according to him is consisted of three principal phases namely pre-task phase, task- cycle phase and post-task phase.

Since the term 'task' is the main concept in TBLT, it is better to define it first. Different scholars have given different definitions of this term. According to Nunan (2006), it is a part of classroom procedure to convey meaning. Moreover, Skehan(1996) defined task as an activity in which meaning, task completion, the real-world and outcome are focused. Willis defines task as an activity which has a central goal and a real outcome (as cited in Murad, 2009). In this article what we mean by the term task is more closed to the definition given by Prabhu as "An activity which requires learners to arrive to an outcome from given information through some processes of thought and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process" (1987, as cited in Murad, 2009, p.37).

Since in this research in one of the classes tasks were used and in another one traditional activities were focused, it is better to distinguish tasks from the traditional activities. Ellis (2009) mentioned that a task must have these criteria: the main focus of it should be on meaning, some kind of gap should exist, for completing an activity learners should basically rely on their own knowledge and rather than relying on the use of language, the task has a clearly defined outcome. And based on such criteria, he made a distinction between a 'task' and a 'traditional activity'. Whereas an activity may satisfy the second and the third criteria, it does not satisfy the first one.

Willis (1996, in Murad, 2009, p. 40-41) listed the following types of tasks in TBLT:

- listing tasks: these types of task include brainstorming and fact-finding, the outcome is a completed list or draft mind map.
- ordering, sorting tasks: these types of task include sequencing, ranking and classifying. The outcome is a set of information ordered and sorted according to specific criteria.
- comparing tasks: these types of task include matching, finding similarities, or differences.
- problem solving tasks: this type of task includes analyzing real situations, reasoning, and decision-making.
- sharing experience tasks: these types of tasks include narrating, describing, exploring and explaining attitudes, opinions and reaction.
- Creative tasks: these types of task include brainstorming, fact finding, ordering and sorting, comparing and many other activities. The outcome is an end product that can be appreciated by a wider audience.

Since it was not possible to work on all types of available tasks, in this study we focused on problem- solving tasks.

The steps of the PPP model can be summarized as follows: presenting new language item by the teacher, practicing the items by the learners through some kinds of activities such as drills, individual and choral repetition, and at last producing the language for themselves (Byrne,1986, as cited in Carless, 2009,).

TBLT has its own pros and cons. Canilao (2009) who is a follower of this approach stated that "Writing becomes a more essential learning experience and a fulfilling pedagogical undertaking through activities designed on TBLT principles" (p.2). He also mentioned that one of the advantages of TBLT is that it prepares the ground for designing tasks in which process writing and group work can be incorporated.

However, there are some scholars who have criticized task-based approaches. For instance, Swan (2005) argued that in case of having a limited classroom time and minimal out-of-class exposure, task-based approaches are not appropriate. Moreover, according to an article written by Adams and Newton (2009) there are some challenges that language educators may face in implementing TBLT in Asian contexts.

According to Vystavđoà (2009) PPP model provided a clear and simple structure of the lesson, the lesson is easy to prepare, the materials used for it are ordered from simplest to the most difficult, the activities are arranged from the most controlled to the least controlled and also the teacher can see the progress of the students. Moreover, Skehan (2003, in Carless, 2009) stated that one of the strong points of this model is providing a clear teacher role. Moreover, considering the EFL context, still many Asian school teachers prefer using PPP approaches (Tang, 2004, Tong, 2005, as cited in Carless, 2009).

However, the PPP approach has its own skeptics. Willis (1996, in Izadpanah, 2010) pointed out that the learners often fail when communicating. Skehan (1996, as cited in Izadpanah,2010)also argued that the Presentation, Practice, Production of material do not always line up because the students do not learn the new items in the same order in which they were presented to them. Moreover, Vystavđoà (2009) mentioned that the disadvantages of this approach are as

follows: students tend to be passive quite a large part of the lesson, the lessons are predisposed to be teacher-centered and the lesson structure is predictable. Also, it was assumed that in PPP approach the main focus is often on accuracy rather than fluency (Thornbury, 1999, as cited in Carless, 2009).

B. Previous Studies on Motivation

Although the word motivation is commonly used in everyday language, in scientific context it is not easily defined. In spite of the existence of various definitions of the term motivation, in this paper it is defined generally as “the preference to do certain things and to avoid doing others” (Hannula, 2006, as cited in Waege and Pantziara, 2010). The word motivation derives from the Latin *movere*, “to move” (Hidi and Boscolo, 2007). Therefore, it can be said that writers are moved to write, and they attempt through their writing to move their audiences.

Starting from the late 1980s, researchers focused on the role of motivation in learning specific domains, including writing (Hidi and Boscolo, 2007). Many researchers have emphasized the importance of motivation in learning. With regard to the status of language teaching in Iran, Bakhshi (1997) noted: “one of the problems is an old belief that just knowing about language and its grammatical patterns suffice teaching English, so there is no room left for advancement through insight of linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, methodology, and pedagogy” (p.14, as cited in Keihanyan, 2009). Therefore, motivation in language learning as one of the psychological elements should be more investigated in Iran. According to Dweck (1986) “It has long been known that factors other than ability influence whether learners seek or avoid challenges, whether they persist or withdraw in the face of difficulty, and whether they use and develop their skills effectively” (p.1040). Gold (1959, as cited in Ripple, 1965) also mentioned that the student’s position in socio-emotional structure of the classroom, the relationship of student with his teacher and classmates, can influence his motivation. Boekaerts (2002) stated that the students try to make sense of novel learning situation by referring to their motivational beliefs. He defined motivational beliefs as “opinions, judgments and values that students hold about objects, events or subject matter areas” (p.8). He explained that these opinions can be about the effectiveness of learning and teaching method.

Several studies about motivation and its effect on students’ learning have been conducted. Boekaerts (2002) stated that what differentiated successful students from less successful ones is having a clear idea about their goals. He explained that these students perceive some learning settings as supportive for teaching them. A research which was done by Schmidt and Frota (1989, as cited in Kassabgy, Boraie and Schmidt, 2001) can support this claim. According to their study it was found out that while teachers accepted the value of communicatively oriented activities, the learners placed a greater value for traditional ways of teaching which supports traditional, teacher-centered, grammar focused class. The reason was that the learners who were motivated to learn English only to pass a state exam may regard communicatively oriented classes as an inappropriate approach for reaching their goals.

Former studies have revealed that a meaningful relationship exists between motivation and students’ performance. Juvonen and Wentzel (1996, as cited in Wentzel and Wigfield, 1998) asserted that “recent evidence suggests that students’ social motivations influence their academic performance” (p.156). Some researchers have studied the influence of Students’ motivation on their performance in learning different parts of language. Schmidt (1993, as cited in Keihanyan, 2009) argued that students who are motivated pay more attention to the language input compared to the less motivated students. Moreover, Niezgodna and Röver (2001, as cited in Keihanyan, 2009) mentioned that motivated learners are more sensitive to grammatical errors. Cook (2001, as cited in Takahashi, 2005) also pointed out that learners who are more motivated can notice pragmatic functions of language. Moreover, Tateyama (2001, as cited in Takahashi, 2005) found that learners who are highly motivated demonstrated better performance in role plays.

Some researchers also have studied how different teaching practices influence Students’ motivation. Rosenholtz and Simpson (1984, as cited in Wentzel and Wigfield, 1998) reported that the kind of instructional practices affect Students’ motivations. Since some practices can increase the salience of extrinsic motivators and ego-focused learning goals or can lead students to focus more on their perceived competence rather than an incremental condition and therefore reduce the quality of academic motivation. McClintic (1989) attempted to document motivational differences that may be associated with two approaches to classroom writing instruction namely process-oriented approach and product-oriented approach. Motivational constructs considered in the study included: 1) entity (ability is stable) versus incremental (ability increases with effort) theories of writing ability; 2) initial importance of mechanics versus content; 3) confidence; 4) intrinsic motivation; 5) utility value; and 6) perceived competence. According to the results, it was concluded that motivational factors may be instrumental in mediating students’ actual performance of writing tasks in the classroom, and motivational consequences may differ as a result of process and product oriented approaches in writing instruction. Lam and Law (2007) explored the roles of instructional practices on motivation. The teachers taught the students how to write an expository essay during three sessions. After the students completed the essay, a questionnaire was distributed to investigate their motivation in the task and how they perceived the instruction. The findings indicated that more motivating teaching strategies leads to more motivated students.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Context and Research Questions

In this study, it was attempted to shed some light on the following questions:

Research Question 1) What is the relationship between the students' motivation and their performance in writing research article abstract?

Research Question 2) What is the effect of TBLT on students' motivation in writing research article abstract?

Accordingly, the following null hypotheses were formulated for the research questions:

H1) No relationship exists between the students' motivation and their performance in writing research article abstract.

H2) TBLT has no effect on students' motivation in writing research article abstract.

B. Research Participants

Sixty-eight students participated in this study. They were studying English Language and Literature at University of Guilan. They participated in the classes for ten sessions. They were enrolled in the research class and met once a week. Since abstract writing is related to research writing, with the permission of the professor, in the last 45 minutes of the class the students received instruction about abstract writing for ten sessions. They were all at intermediate proficiency level and were divided into two classes. The first class, consisting of 36 students (20 female students and 16 male students), received the instruction based on the PPP approach. The second class, consisting of 32 students (19 female students and 13 male students) received the instruction based on the TBLT approach.

C. Instruments

The instruments used for this study consisted of a proficiency test, a pre-test, a post-test, two types of tasks, three types of activities and a motivation questionnaire.

a) Nelson Proficiency Test (B) at intermediate level was employed to estimate the homogeneity of students regarding their knowledge of general English. We used the test at intermediate level because this was the level suggested by the students' professors.

b) A research article named "EFL teachers' perceptions of Task-based language teaching: with a focus on Korean secondary classroom practice", Jong (2006) was utilized for the post-test. The students were required to read the whole paper and write an abstract for it.

c) Two types of tasks, which were checked by two university professors, were used in the class which was taught based on TBLT. In one of the tasks, students were asked to find the extra information in abstracts. In the other one, they were asked to find mistakes such as not having one of the moves of abstracts.

d) Three types of activities were used in classes based on PPP approach. The activities were also checked by two university professors. In the first one students were asked to find different moves in the abstract. In the second one they were asked to put abstract moves in correct order. In the last type they were asked to different moves for an abstract, this was used in the production phase of the classes.

e) A questionnaire adopted from a recent research by Lam and Law (2007) was used for the purpose of finding out which of the two approaches is more motivating for students in each class. The questionnaire consisted of 18 items aimed at measuring the students' perception of the extent to which their teacher provided them with tasks that are challenging, used activities which are related to the real world, made learners curious in learning new things, gave them enough autonomy, praised their efforts and gave them useful feedbacks. The students were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed to the 18 statements of the questionnaire. 6-point Likert scale was used for the questionnaire with number 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and number 6 implying "strongly agree".

D. Procedures

Having gathered the necessary data, we took several steps to analyze the data, reach the goals of the study and find the answers to the posed questions. Following is the description of data collection procedure in each class.

Session one: In order to check whether the students were at the same level of proficiency or not, the Nelson Proficiency Test at the intermediate level was used in the first session of each class.

Session two: From this session the teacher started to teach each class, one based on the principles of TBLT and the other one on the basis of the PPP approach. The session was devoted to make students familiar with the aims of classes, make them interested in the subject matter and answer students' questions. In TBLT class, the students had a lot of opportunity to express their ideas and ask their questions. The teacher tried to guide their speech through some questions and helped them to conclude about different lesson parts.

However, in the class based on PPP approach students had a limited role. They could participate by the allowance of the teacher who was the whole authority in the class. The teacher used some abstracts in order to explain the aims of the classes and exemplify her speech, and wrote the important points on the board such as students' responsibilities.

Sessions three to seven: These five sessions in each class were devoted to teach the five abstract moves. It means that each session was devoted to teach one of the moves. In both classes the class time was devoted to three phases. In TBLT class, these phases were pre-task, task-cycle and post-task. In the first phase the teacher tried to introduce the move, explain its place and role. The students could participate in this phase and through some questions the teacher tried to increase their participation in the class. In the next phase, the students were asked to complete tasks in groups. The teacher tried to check students' participation and answer students' questions. During the last phase, students could

ask their questions and they were asked to read their answers and teacher tried to encourage different groups to participate in this phase.

The three phases of the class based on PPP approach were presentation, practice and production. The first phase was the teaching phase in which the students received teaching on different abstract moves. The students had a limited role and mostly were trying to take notes about the important information such as the name, place and sequence of the moves. After her explanation, the teacher gave students some examples and put them on the board. After teaching the teacher gave students the opportunity to ask their questions. The students could raise their hands and whenever the teacher allowed them they could ask their questions. Moreover, since the students had a limited role and did not participate a lot during the teaching phase, the teacher asked them several questions at the end of this phase to check whether the students comprehended the lesson well or not. In the practice phase, the students were given an activity to do individually. After completing the activity, the teacher asked them to read their answers .It was the teacher who chose students to answer the activity. If the answers were not correct, other students were chosen .The last phase was the production phase in which the students were required to write the move that was taught to them for a research article.

Session eight: All the moves were reviewed in both classes in this session and students asked their questions.

Session nine: The post-test was taken and motivation questionnaire were distributed among the students of both classes.

E. Measurement

Hyland’s (2007) abstract moves analysis was used in this study for checking the results of post-test. According to him, abstracts have five moves namely: Introduction, purpose, method, result and conclusion. Since the total number of moves considered in writing an abstract was 5, students were given scores according to these 5 moves. Three criteria considered in checking the students’ writings were as follows: identification and use of the moves, putting them in right places and putting them in correct sequences. The first criterion is for checking the ability of students in using the moves and since there were totally five moves, 5 scores were considered for this criterion. The aim of the second criterion was to check whether the moves are put in the right place or not. Since there were five moves and they should be placed in five places, 5 scores are considered for this criterion. The last criterion was meant to check whether the moves which are used in the writing of abstract are in correct sequence .Since there were five moves, 4 scores were considered for the correct sequence of the moves. Therefore, by applying these three criteria, students were given scores out of 14 for their writing of abstracts. Then SPSS software version 19 was used to measure the correlation between the scores the students have gained in the post-test and the scores they have been given for their motivation on the basis of the results of the completed questionnaires.

The Motivation questionnaire, we adopted from a research done by Lam and Law (2007) had 18 items which were divided into six subcategories namely, challenge, real life significance, curiosity, autonomy, recognition, and evaluation. Three items were included in each subcategory. In the questionnaire the students were asked to indicate how much they agreed that the 18 statements truly described the practices of their teachers in the writing classrooms through a 6 -point likert scale with number 1 standing for strongly disagree and number 6 indicating strongly agree. The average score of the items was used as an index of the students’ perceptions of their teachers’ instructional practices. High scores were an indication that the students agreed that their teacher adopted motivating instructional practices and low scores indicated that they did not believe so. After giving scores to the students based on the completed questionnaire, SPSS software was used in order to analyze the Independent-Sample T- Test.

F. Design of the Study

This research was quasi-experimental in nature because as Hatch and Farhadi (1981) explicated “the concept of experimental design is an idealized abstraction... in our field, it is not realistic to limit our research to true experimental design only” (p.23).In more details, it was a post-test non-equivalent-groups design (Best and Kahn, 2006, p.183) since there was no random assignment of the participants to experimental and control groups and the groups were naturally assembled as intact classes.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 and 2 represent the results of Pearson Correlation between the scores which students have gained in writing research abstracts and the scores which they have been given according to their answer to the questionnaire. As it is clear from the table 4, the correlation is 0 and it is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was also rejected since there is a significant positive relationship between students’ motivation and their performance in writing abstracts.

TABLE1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR CORRELATION

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
motivation	55.09	13.858	68
score	8.44	3.405	68

TABLE2.
THE RESULTS OF PEARSON CORRELATION

		motivation	score
motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.783**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	68	68
score	Pearson Correlation	.783**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	68	68

Tables 3 and 4 show the results of the Independent Sample T-Test of the students based on the post-test. As the significance of Levene's Test is equal to .05 we cannot assume equal variances between groups. Therefore, considering the second row of the table it can be concluded that the difference between the two groups is significant at the level of .05. Therefore our null hypothesis which was "there is not a significant difference between the two groups regarding their role in helping students to write better abstracts" is rejected. As is indicated in the table, it is evident that the group of students which was taught based on TBLT principle, which comprise the experimental group, were more successful in post-test.

TABLE3.
GROUP STATISTICS FOR THE POST-TEST

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
control	36	7.58	3.138	.523
experimental	32	9.25	3.654	.646

TABLE4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE POST-TEST

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
score	Equal variances assumed	3.689	.059	-2.02	66	.047	-1.667	.824	-3.311	-.022
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.00	61.54	.049	-1.667	.831	-3.329	-.005

The results showed a significant relationship between scores of students on post-test and their motivation. It can be concluded that motivated students can have better performance in writing. Moreover, it was found out that the students of the class based on TBLT approach gained higher scores both on the post-test and motivation. It can be implied that TBLT approach was more successful in terms of motivating students and this resulted in better performance of the students in the post-test.

The teachers, as controllers and facilitators of the activity of learners in the classroom, should have enough knowledge about TBLT in order to successfully implement it. Teachers need to know how to rely on their knowledge about motivation when dealing with issues that involve motivational concerns and when making instructional decisions. Teacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as focal to teaching effectiveness since motivation is an important factor in learning. When deciding to use TBLT, instructors have to be seen as motivators and facilitators of the learning process since the idea is to make learners responsible for their own learning. According to this research, the following suggestions can be given to the teachers:

-It was reported that students display greater enthusiasm when they can relate the content and course activities or tasks to their daily lives because they see the value of what they are learning. Therefore, it can be suggested to the teachers to use some techniques such as giving clear examples from real life to make a connection between what students are learning and real world activities.

-A major task in teaching is to nurture student curiosity and use it as a motive for learning. Teachers should provide students with stimuli that are new but not much different from what they already know so as to stimulate curiosity. Therefore, there should be a kind of balance between complexity and clarity.

-Teachers should try to design assignments at a right difficulty level and at the same time challenging for the students in order to increase students' motivation in learning.

-Teachers should give students options in the classroom and empower them by giving a sense of autonomy which can increase students' motivation.

-Teachers should not create a situation in which the students compete with one another for grades.

The extremely competitive types of classroom settings can induce performance anxiety which can interfere with learning and thereby counteracting the goal of motivation. Students want to be recognized for the hard work and effort they put into their classes. Therefore, an approach which pays attention to the process of learning and pays attention to the effort of students can be more effective than an approach which pays more attention to the product.

-Teachers should provide students with useful feedbacks which can motivate students during the learning process.

Finally, it should be noted that although there is a limit to the extent to which we can actually motivate students, we should not stop trying.

V. CONCLUSION

The present article aimed at examining the relationship between EFL learners' motivation and their performance in writing research abstracts as well as the impact of task-based approach on the participants' motivation. For these aims, two classes based on PPP and TBLT approaches were held. Results showed that students will be motivated when their teachers provide them with tasks which are challenging, used activities which are related to the real world, made them curious in learning new things, gave them enough autonomy, praised their efforts and gave them useful feedbacks (Lam and Law, 2007) .and TBLT approach was more successful in this regard.

The results showed a significant relationship between scores of students on post-test and their motivation. It can be concluded that motivated students can have better performance in writing research abstracts. Moreover, , it was found out that the students of the class based on TBLT approach gained higher scores both on the post-test and motivation. It can be implied that TBLT approach was more successful in terms of motivating students and this resulted in better performance of the students in the post-test. The results are useful for teacher educators who are interested in finding approaches which are motivating for the students and can help them to have a better writing performance. According to Cochran-Smith (2004, as cited in Lam and Law, 2007) one of the main problems in teacher education is its over-emphasis on teachers' knowledge, skills, and beliefs but lack of enough attention to students' learning. The present study attempted to respond to the need of investigating teachers' behaviors in classrooms as related to students' learning outcome. The research showed that although the motivation is a personal matter, it can be influenced by external factors such as the approach of teaching in use. Therefore, teachers should do their best to make students motivated in language learning. Moreover, educators must keep the principles of motivation at the fore front of all instructional design.

Finally, it should be mentioned that no study is complete by itself and cannot take all details into consideration. Therefore, there are always aspects which are not accounted for. This research is no exception. There are some issues which were not considered in this study and can be topics for further research by other researchers. At first, the data for understanding students' motivations in writing was only collected through a questionnaire; some other studies can be carried out to incorporate interviews with students as well. Furthermore, the participants were adult learners; in other studies language learners in other ages can be the focus of attention to see whether similar results will be obtained. Moreover, due to the time limitation a few number of tasks and activities were used in this study, other studies can be done with the focus on different types of tasks and activities. To further investigate the relationship among teaching approaches and students' motivation, more studies should be conducted.

APPENDIX

A. *The Questionnaire*

How much do you agree that the following statements accurately describe the practices of your teacher in the writing lesson?

Challenge

1. Our teacher started with the easy concepts and progressively guided us through the difficult ones when teaching us how to write.

2. Our teacher gave us writing assignments at the right level, neither too difficult nor too easy.

3. Our teacher, noting our failure to comprehend a subject, tried alternative teaching approaches until we understood.

Real life significance

1. Our teacher pointed out the relation between this genre of writing and our everyday life.

2. Our teacher pointed out the advantages of learning this genre of writing.

3. Our teacher helped us to understand that learning this genre of writing is not just for meeting course requirements but also for practical use.

Curiosity

1. Our teacher aroused our curiosity and interest before teaching us how to write.

2. Our teacher raised some difficult questions in discussion and asked us to think them over.

3. Our teacher encouraged us to sort out the content on our own and did not provide a model answer.

Autonomy

1. Our teacher let us write freely with our own ideas.

2. Our teacher allowed us freedom to choose subject for our writing.

3. Our teacher encouraged us to write with our favorite approach.

Recognition

1. Our teacher praised not only the most successful students but also those who tried hard.

2. Our teacher encouraged us to make self-improvements and showed us that we did not need to win over others.

3. Our teacher gave recognition to students who had made progress despite the fact that they were not the best.

Evaluation

1. Our teacher pointed out those areas that needed improvement when marking the writings.
2. Our teacher made comments or suggestions when marking the writings, rather than merely giving the grade.
3. Our teacher evaluated our achievement by how well we had written rather than how we compared with other students.

B. Samples of Tasks Used in Classes Based on Task-based Approach

1) Which of the following sentences are true about the following abstract? Why?

- a) Having extra information
- b) Not having some parts of information
- c) Having problem in the form of writing
- d) Having no problem

This study compares the performance of the same writing task by groups of four learners, pairs and individual learners. We analyzed the written texts produced and the oral interactions between the groups and the pairs as they collaborated to write their texts, in order to find an answer to the following two questions:

- 1) Does the number of participants in a writing task affect the accuracy, fluency, and complexity of the written texts produced?
- 2) Does the number of participants in the collaborative version of the writing task affect the frequency and nature of language-related episodes (LREs)?

The results showed that the text written by the groups were more accurate not only than those written individually, but also than those written in pairs.

2) Find the extra information in the following abstract:

The majority of research to date on pre-task planning has investigated the impact of planning time on L2 learners' oral production, and has generally reported its positive effects on their task performance. However, little research on planning has been conducted in writing contexts, and there is no firm evidence to demonstrate that pre-task planning promotes L2 learners' written production in the ways that many researchers have reported for L2 speaking context. What can be said from the research to date is that advance planning time itself does not seem to have much effect on L2 learners' output in writing. This is different from the research on speaking, which generally shows that learners' oral production may improve by simply allowing them time to plan before speaking. In this paper, I have explored whether and how concept mapping as a form of pre-task planning could benefit the writing performance of three Japanese ESL learners. Concept mapping was first developed by Hanf(1971). I analyzed four compositions from each of the learners, written with and without concept mapping; using measures of accuracy, complexity, fluency and [Hamp-Lyons, L., 1991. Reconstructing "academic writing proficiency". In: Hamp-Lyons L. (Ed.), *Assessing second language writing in academic contexts*. Ablex, Norwood, NJ, PP.127-153.] holistic measures of global quality, communicative quality, organization, argumentation, linguistic accuracy, and linguistic appropriacy. I also examined through a questionnaire, retrospective interview, and logs, the learners' applications of the strategy in their writing processes.

B. SAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES USED IN CLASSES BASED ON PRESENTATION-PRACTICE-PRODUCTION APPROACH

1) Find the abstract's moves in the following text and write their names above them:

Previous research from the perspective of the sociocultural theory of mind suggests that writing tasks completed in pairs offer learners an opportunity to collaborate in the solution of their language-related problems, co-construct new language knowledge, and produce linguistically more accurate written texts. Building on this research, the present study compares the performance of the same writing task by groups of four learners (n=15), pairs (n=15), and individual learners(n=21).It examines the effect of the number of participants on the fluency ,complexity, and accuracy of the written texts produced, as well as the nature of the oral interaction between the pairs and the groups as they collaborate throughout the writing process. The analysis of interaction focused on language-related episodes (LREs) reveals that although both groups and pairs focused their attention on language relatively often, groups produced more LREs and a higher percentage of correctly resolved LREs than pairs. As a result, the texts written by the groups were more accurate not only than those written individually, but also than those written in pairs. The implications of these results for the understanding of both collaborative writing tasks and collaborative problem solving activity are discussed.

2) Find different parts of moves in the following sentences and order them.

I analyzed four compositions from each of the learners, written with and without concept mapping; using measures of accuracy, complexity, fluency and [Hamp-Lyons, L., 1991. Reconstructing "academic writing proficiency". In: Hamp-Lyons L. (Ed.), *Assessing second language writing in academic contexts*. Ablex, Norwood, NJ, PP.127-153.] holistic measures of global quality, communicative quality, organization, argumentation, linguistic accuracy, and linguistic appropriacy.

However, little research on planning has been conducted in writing contexts, and there is no firm evidence to demonstrate that pre-task planning promotes L2 learners' written production in the ways that many researchers have reported for L2 speaking context.

The majority of research to date on pre-task planning has investigated the impact of planning time on L2 learners' oral production, and has generally reported its positive effects on their task performance.

In this paper, I have explored whether and how concept mapping as a form of pre-task planning could benefit the writing performance of three Japanese ESL learners.

Moreover, each learner made unique applications of the concept mapping strategy in their writing processes, suggesting that concept mapping may help ESL learners improve their composing but in ways unique to individual experience, motivation, and task conditions.

I also examined through a questionnaire, retrospective interview, and logs, the learners' applications of the strategy in their writing processes.

Pre-task planning was associated positively with the overall measures of the learners' written production during in-class compositions, with the exception of accuracy.

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A Study of the Teacher's Interactive Decision Making in English Classes of Primary Schools

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Abstract—With the development of society, the spirit of creativity is becoming more and more important and should be developed from elementary schools. However, for teachers, some traditional teaching modes still prevail and hinder such progress, and one of them is the rigid implementation of the teaching plan without making interactive decisions in the real class; whereas, making such interactive decisions poses a demanding requirement for the teachers. Therefore, the research intends to explore some strategies to make interactive decisions, and further study the present situation concerning the interactive decision making in the English classes of primary schools. This paper consists of four sections. The first section is the introduction and the second is the literature review, the third section elaborates the research design, the next is the data collection and analysis, which presents and analyzes the representative examples to have a better understanding of interactive decisions, deducing some useful strategies in making interactive decisions as well as summarizing the observation focuses for the next class observation; further gradually reveals the present situation in primary schools through the class observations and interviews of four teachers from different level schools; and the last section concludes the findings and puts forward some suggestions on teachers and schools.

Index Terms—interactive decision, primary school, English teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

To comply with progress of the society, the new round of curriculum reform was implemented in 2001 in China, which aims against some traditional teaching problems. One of the problems is that for a long time, the teachers are accustomed to teaching in a dominant way while the students are used to learning in a passive way; in the course of time, the students are inclined to become introverted and unconfident, let alone being creative. However, the spirit of creativity is one of the most indispensable demands in modern society and should be developed from the elementary education phase (Liu, 2008). Therefore, education for every student in more perspectives should be concerned, not just their final scores but also their interests and motivations, which are crucial to learning effect but are always ignored in the traditional classes.

In the decade from the curriculum reform, a great deal of achievement has been acquired. However, still a long way to go from the teacher-centered instruction to the student-centered instruction because there are many conflicts between them, and one of them is rigid implementation of the teaching plan. In fact, for teachers, making interactive decisions (short for ID) in class is a good way to help teachers to change the traditional teaching mode; therefore, the researcher intends to carry out an investigation into the present situation involved with interactive decision making in the primary schools in Beijing and further advance some suggestions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Relevant Literature about Interactive Decisions

1. Definition of the interactive decisions

Lessons are dynamic in nature, to some extent unpredictable, and characterized by constant change. Teachers therefore have to continuously make decisions that are appropriate to the specific dynamics of the lesson they are teaching. These kinds of decisions are called interactive decisions. (Richards, 1996)

2. Type of the interactive decisions

From the definition, it can be inferred that ID are dynamic in different situations. Therefore, the type of ID is of great significance for the further study. Johnson (1992b) found that ID are related to different aspects of teaching, including student motivation and involvement, students' language skill and ability, students' affective needs, student understanding, subject matter content, curriculum integration, instructional management, etc. From Zhu's research (2008), interactive decisions are mainly made from the unexpected answers or behaviors from students as well as some unexpected incidents. In this paper, the researcher will adopt Zhu's type in that it is clearer for the later case analysis.

B. Previous Findings about the Interactive Decision Making

1. Findings from the Western Countries: the Reggio Emilia Approach

The Reggio Emilia Approach puts the natural development of children at the center and is adopted by many preschool programs around the world. In this approach, unlike North American predetermined thematic projects, the

topic of the project may derive directly from teacher observations of children's spontaneous play and exploration, selected on the basis of an academic curiosity or social concern on the part of teachers or parents, or serendipitous events that direct the attention of the children and teachers. What's more, Reggio teachers place a high value on their ability to improvise and respond to children's predisposition to enjoy the unexpected. Projects begin with teachers observing and questioning children about the topic of interest. Based on children's responses, teachers introduce materials, questions, and opportunities that provoke children to further explore the topic (Wikipedia, 2009).

We can see that the Reggio Approach gives a great deal of prominence to the unanticipated resources, which undoubtedly poses a fairly demanding requirement for the teachers.

2. Findings in China: the findings from Ye Lan

With the publishing of the works of "To make the Classroom More Vibrant", Professor Ye Lan criticizes the present situation of the pursuit of the traditional teaching modes and then proposes a new concept of teaching, that is, building a dynamic teaching process. She points out that the teaching and learning reform is not implemented very well due to one of many reasons, that is, long periods of misconception of teaching process. From her stand, the value of the classroom teaching in elementary education lies in the interactive process between teacher and students (Ye, 1997). Therefore, in the dynamic process of the interaction in class, the interactive decision making for the teachers is becoming more and more important.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. The Research Questions

Considering that the systematic researches on ID on the subject of English in primary schools in China are few, the researcher will study the present situation of ID in primary schools in the following 3 perspectives, that is:

- 1) What are some strategies in the successful interactive decision making cases in English classes of primary schools?
- 2) What is the present situation of interactive decision making in different level schools, an ordinary one and a key one? What are the similarities between them in interactive decision making? What are the differences between them in interactive decision making?
- 3) Are there any differences between the teachers with different teaching years in interactive decision making?

B. The Research Participants

To have a general investigation into the present situation in interactive decision making in primary schools, the researcher chooses schools in different levels to study, thereby, two primary schools in Haidian District, Beijing, one is an ordinary school and the other is a key school, are selected as the main research fields for the present research. Both of the two schools selected have a comparatively open teaching and learning environment.

Four female English teachers who taught the students in the fourth grade are chosen as the main participants in this paper in that these students have a better command of English than those in the lower grades while they have less exam burden than those in the higher grades. Considering the demanding requirements for the successful interactive decision making, all the four teachers selected are excellent teachers at the two schools and their teaching are relatively flexible in their own schools. From every school, two teachers, one having taught for about 20 years and the other about 10 years, are chosen respectively, that is, teacher A in the ordinary school with the teaching years of 23, teacher B in the same ordinary school with the teaching years of 12, teacher C in the key school with the teaching years of 21, teacher D in the same ordinary school with the teaching years of 10.

C. The Research Instruments

Two instruments of classroom observation and interview are employed in the study.

1. Class Observation

In order to explore the present situation in interactive decision making, the researcher first presents and analyzes some representative successful examples of ID, collected both from the journals in CNKI and from the researcher's own class observations, to elicit some useful strategies and further, the observation focuses for the phase of open class observation.

The open class observation of the 4 teachers starts from the beginning of April to the end of June, 2011, nearly 3 months, and averagely 2 classes of each teacher in ordinary school while averagely 1 class of each teacher in key school every week, the total number of the classes which are observed for teacher A, B, C, and D is 20, 21, 12, and 11 respectively. The researcher also videotapes all the classes for being re-watched to obtain every possible ID.

Before class, the researcher reads the teacher's teaching plans and discusses with the teachers to know their original teaching design. In class, the researcher takes notes of the significant points concerned with every ID; after class, the researcher re-watches the video of the class to ensure ID and analyzes the notes, and when necessary, interviews the teachers timely on some doubtful points of certain ID.

2. Interview

In order to reveal the teacher's own reflection over ID, in the later phase of the class observation, approximately in the middle of June, the researcher takes semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the 4 teachers concerned with three

aspects of interactive decision making, that is, their attitudes towards interactive decision making, their real use of interactive decision making and the possible factors influencing interactive decision making from their stands.

Before the final semi-structured interviews, in the nearly three months, the researcher has gradually been familiar with the four teachers and had some informal conversations with them, therefore, when taking the final formal interviews, all the teachers express their ideas quite freely.

IV. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the research will first present the representative examples of ID with the analysis of every example to summarize some strategies, and then present a table and the analysis of the class observations of the four teachers; and at last, present the summaries of the interviews of the four teachers.

A. Class Observation

1. The Representative Examples of the Successful Interactive Decision Making

1) The topic of the class was season. The teacher designed such a question.

T: What color is summer? (The students all raised their hands to answer the question.)

S1: I think summer is red, because summer is hot. In summer, the sun is red.

S2: I think summer is blue, because in summer the sky is blue, the sea is blue, too. I can swim in the sea...

S3: ...

(Fewer and fewer students raised their hands but a girl still raised her hand highly.)

T: Tell us your opinion, Nancy.

N (Nancy): Summer is colorful.

(All the other students felt very surprised when hearing this unexpected answer. The teacher also was surprised but continued the exploration of the unexpected answer by asking the other students to guess the reason. Then the whole class started heated discussion.)

S1: Maybe she can wear a colorful dress in summer.

S2: Maybe she has a colorful umbrella.

S3: Maybe she can pick up colorful shells at the beach.

S4: Maybe she likes the colorful flowers in summer.

(The students all tried but no one was correct. At last, Nancy gave her answer.)

N: Because I like beautiful rainbows. I can see a colorful rainbow in summer.

(After hearing Nancy's unexpected but reasonable answer, all the students clapped their hands for her.) (Chen, 2007)

Analysis: The student's special answer triggers the teacher's interactive decision. To answer teacher's question, the students with different characteristics and backgrounds will give quite different answers, which can provide the teacher with a large amount of information. This teacher is a good listener, captures the student's special and meaningful answer and uses it as a new teaching resource to further guide the students to find out the reason; consequently, he stimulates students' logic and practise their language, making the whole classroom energetic. At the same time, the student who gave this special answer also felt very satisfied to get the confirmation from both the teacher and other students.

What's more, we can see the special answer is elicited by the teacher's figurative and open question, which stimulates the students' imagination and provide a wide space for the students to have free expression based on their special and distinctive experience. Therefore, such open questions or activities are quite significant for the generation of the students' different and imaginative answers and should be designed more in the English classes.

2) The topic of the class was number. The teacher designed an activity in which she asked a student to go to the teacher's desk with the back facing the other students and to count the number of the boys or girls by listening to their expression of "I'm a boy" or "I'm a girl" to practise the sentence pattern of "how many". At the beginning, the students were very interested and everything was in order. But after several times, they gradually lost their interest and a boy spread his arms to pretend to fly and said "I'm a bird." All the class burst out a great laughter. Instead of criticizing him, the teacher praised the student: "Oh! What wonderful imagination!" and even added "how many birds..." into the question list. It was unexpected that the students' interest was stimulated again and the newly adapted activity attained better effect in an active environment. (Feng, 2006)

Analysis: The student's unexpected answer triggers the teacher's interactive decision. Children have quite different thinking mode with the adults and sometimes are more imaginative than adults. The child in the example is so naughty that gives such an unexpected answer, which is probably ignored or even criticized by the teachers in the traditional classes, whereas, the teachers in the example did not criticize the student but adjusted the original activity a little by connecting the unexpected answer with the planned content, not only reinforcing the learning effect but also maintaining the student's valuable imagination.

3) T: What do you have, Sam?

S: (Pointing at the cap on his head) I have a cup. (The teacher heard his mistake but didn't point it out directly.)

T: Show me your cup, please.

S:(raising his cap) ok. This is my cup.

T: Boys and girls, what does Sam have?

Ss: Sam has a cap.

T: Very good. Does Sam have a cup?

Ss: No.

T: Can he put a cup on his head?

Ss: No.

T: So, this is a cap, not a cup. Sam, what do you have?

S: I have a cap. (Zhang, 2007)

Analysis: The student's unexpected mistake answer triggers the teacher's interactive decision. The teacher didn't point out the mistake directly but guided him and the other students to realize the mistake in a situational way, which on the one hand helps them acquire the language point, on the other hand, maintains the student's self-esteem.

4) In one English class of Teacher A, she was teaching the students three new words of "doctor", "nurse" and "dentist" by presenting them through different behaviors. When presenting "dentist", the teacher acted as a patient whose teeth hurt, when presenting "nurse", the teacher behaved like a nurse to give the patient an injection, just at this time, a naughty boy was "shouting" as if he was really injected, and the whole class burst into a great laughter. The teacher "punished" him by asking the boy to go to the front to do the different actions again and again to help the other students to know the three words better. As a result, the boy acted quite vividly and the whole class acquired the three words in the laughter.

Analysis: In the primary school, TPR are used a lot in the English classes, and the students at this phase are naughty and active by nature, therefore, some unexpected behavior will often happen in the class. In our traditional teaching, such behavior is probably regarded as "discipline violation" and the student will be criticized but in this example, the teacher tactfully used the student's behavior to help the students learn better; at the same time, "punish" the particular student in a special way.

5) A teacher was teaching "the present continuous tense". But just when everything went well, students' attention was caught by noises from the playground — some students were playing on the playground. The teacher felt very annoyed and wanted to criticize them but had another thought in his mind:

T: What a fine day! And there are so many students on the playground. Can you tell me what they are doing?

S1: They are playing basketball.

S2: They are running.

S3: They are playing ballgames.

...

(The students raised their hands actively, much beyond the teacher's anticipation.) (Wang, 2011)

Analysis: In this example, the change of the learning atmosphere because of the students' interest triggers the teacher's interactive decision. The primary school students are active by nature and have a relatively short attention span, which usually interrupts the teacher's teaching plan. Yet this teacher perceived the students' interest, changed part of the original teaching plan and used the playground as a real context for the students to practise the tense, still meeting the original teaching objective with a better effect.

6) This is a 6th-grade English class with a revision of the "the simple past tense", the teacher first asked the students to say the tense's characteristics and then to make some sentences. Suddenly, an old woman walked straightly towards one student and said something to her. At last she turned around to say sorry to the teacher and went away. Having seen this, the whole class was in chaos and some students were laughing while the others were whispering with one another. At this point, instead of criticizing them, she asked the students to describe what the old woman said and did just now with "the simple past tense".

S1: She came to our classroom and saw her granddaughter just now.

S2: She gave her the medicine for cough.

S3: She said sorry to us a moment ago.

(Some even asked the girl: did your grandmother ...or what did your grandmother tell you? The students answered their questions one by one and the real interaction between the students began and the whole class became extremely active.) (Ding, 2010)

Analysis: The incident seems unrelated to the teaching content, even can be regarded as "accidents", which easily makes the whole class in chaos. Some of the teachers may criticize the students and force them to concentrate their attention, however, if so, the classroom atmosphere may become tense and the students will not practise English in an active way. Tactfully, the teacher in the example subtly transforms the "accidents" to real contexts for the students to practise English, even makes the students start real communication with each other, successfully changing teaching regrets to teaching shining points.

B. Class Observations of the Four Teachers

After the analysis of ID, some key points for the class observation can be deduced. They are as follows: 1) How many open questions or activities are there in the class? 2) How many ID related with unexpected answers are there in the class? 3) How many ID related with unexpected behavior are there in the class? 4) How many ID related with unexpected incidents are there in the class? 5) What are the teachers' reactions and solutions towards the unexpected

resources?

Since ID observed from every teacher can not be presented one by one, the researcher will first present a table of the number of ID in different aspects used by every teacher and then give the detailed descriptions of their individual interactive decision making.

The following is the table. C for the total number of the classes of every teacher; T for the total number of ID for every teacher, O for the number of the open questions or activities for every teacher; A for the number of ID related with unexpected answers for every teacher, B for the number of ID related with unexpected behavior for every teacher; I for the number of ID related with unexpected incidents for every teacher.

	C	T	O	A	B	I
A	20	30	7	8	8	7
B	21	21	5	10	2	4
C	12	32	10	8	5	9
D	10	32	10	10	4	8

1. Teacher A:

In the 20 classes observed, generally speaking, the atmosphere of her classes is comparatively democratic and relaxed. She is very good at making ID related with unexpected behavior. Similarly, she has experience to use incidents as the real context. She also has some experience to make ID related with unexpected answer. Whereas, the interesting and open questions or activities are just a few in her class, and she doesn't make good use of the students' unexpected mistakes to help the students to have a better understanding of the language points. What's more, her teaching objectives are mainly in the knowledge part. Besides, the textbook she used is conversation-oriented, which contains fewer contexts than the story-oriented textbook used by the key school teachers.

2. Teacher B:

In her 21 classes observed, generally speaking, the atmosphere of her classes is not very democratic and quite intense for the students and even for the researcher. However, she is supportive for the students' unexpected answers and sometimes makes such ID to promote more language practice. Nevertheless, her teaching is comparatively traditional, more drill on reading, translation, doing writing exercises in the textbooks while fewer open and interesting questions and activities. She is not patient with the students' mistakes, especially the unexpected mistakes. Moreover, she deals with the students' unexpected behavior and unexpected incidents in a traditional way. Her teaching objectives are mainly in the knowledge part.

3. Teacher C:

In her 12 classes observed, the atmosphere of her classes is very democratic and interesting. She has a good relationship with her students. There are some open questions and activities that are close to her students' life, some of which are adapted from the textbook, the others are designed beyond the textbooks. She welcomes the unexpected answers from the students. She uses the indirect way to deal with the unexpected behavior to save certain students' face. She is also good at using the incidents in her class. However, she doesn't do very well in dealing with the unexpected mistakes from the students. The textbook she uses is story-oriented, which contains more contexts than the conversation-oriented textbook used by the teachers from the ordinary school. Her teaching objectives are both in the knowledge part and in the emotional part.

4. Teacher D:

Her classes are democratic and extremely active compared with the other three teachers. The relationship between the teacher and the students are very close. She often spontaneously asks some questions which are very close to her students' life. Some of the questions she designed are also very open and help to stimulate the students' imagination. She tries her best to make ID to help the students to practise their oral English. She knows her students quite well and specially gets to know the students' interests and needs before class. She also encourages student's unique ideas. But she is not good at dealing with the unexpected behavior, that is, she didn't give the naughty boys opportunities to answer any questions in one whole class as the punishment. She is not very good at using some incidents to make interactive decision. Her teaching objectives are both in the knowledge part and in the emotional part.

C. Interviews of the Four Teachers

1. Teacher A:

She doesn't welcome the unexpected resources because she thinks they interrupt the teaching plan and it is quite difficult for her to keep the children in order and the children learn little from it. After all, the exam burden is still quite heavy for such ordinary school because of the general low level of the students. But when the unexpected resources really happen, if time permits, she will make some necessary changes to both explore the value and meet the teaching objectives. Moreover, from her point of view, the teacher's questions, especially the open questions can elicit students' unexpected answers. The teacher's own language proficiency and teaching experience also matter.

2. Teacher B:

The teacher thinks interactive decision making is not significant, especially in the exam-oriented society. If time permits, she sometimes will adapt the teaching to make ID on the condition that she still can meet the original teaching objectives, which is the most important standards of a good class from her point of view. She also thinks her oral

English is not very good and sometimes it's not easy for her to speak some English in an improvised manner, which is another reason against her flexible interactive decision making. The teacher regards the unexpected behavior and incidents as "violating the discipline" and her solution is criticism of related students. Since she doesn't value interactive decision making, she doesn't say too much about the factors influencing interactive decision making.

3. Teacher C:

The teacher values interactive decision making because the improvised communication between her students and her is quite crucial in her consideration. Moreover, she thinks the logic development of the students also counts a lot, thus, she values the unexpected and meaningful resources from the students and will try her best to find their value and use it in a positive way, even if she has to change the teaching content and objective, because she thinks in English classes, the teaching content should not be fixed and can be changed within a unit or even units. If the students' interest or curiosity is gone, it's lost forever. She thinks the unexpected resources can help her know better about children's thinking, further help her motivate their learning interest and improve their learning efficiency. Most importantly, the teacher highlights the use of language, which is a key to the positive attitudes towards interactive decision making. However, she thinks she still needs to reflect more and deeper about her success and failure in using the unexpected resources after class in order to do better next time.

4. Teacher D:

She thinks that to make ID can always give her a good opportunity to create a real communication context for the students. She knows unexpected resource is a challenge for her but in her nature, she likes challenges very much. Thus, when the unexpected resources happen, she will try her best to find its value and make the necessary changes of the teaching plan to use it. She thinks the flexible interactive decision making needs long time of teaching practice while she is still very young. She will give the chances to different level students and encourages them to say whatever they want to say, so it's quite often for her to have improvised conversation with them. She likes speaking English herself and is also proficient in it. Besides, she thinks the paramount goal of the language teaching in the elementary school is the development of the children's interests in English; consequently, she puts great emphasis on the design of some open questions and activities. Since she thinks the flexible interactive decision making needs long time of accumulation while she is still very young, she wants to receive more related training and have more learning from the experienced teachers through more communication with them or watches more of their live classes.

V. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, the researcher will first reveal the findings from the representative examples, the findings from class observations and interviews of the four teachers and then advance some suggestions both on the teachers and the schools.

A. Findings

1. Findings from representative examples of the successful interactive decision making

- a. The teachers should design more open questions or activities which are close to the student's life and can elicit distinctive answers from different students.
- b. When facing the unexpected resources, the teachers can make good use of them to guide the students to continue exploring, like the activity of guessing, with the aim of more language practice in a certain context.
- c. When facing the unexpected resources, the teachers can adjust the original activities by using some element of the unexpected resources and still can meet the teaching objective, even with better effect.
- d. The unexpected mistake resource is a good opportunity for the teacher to use to help the student and even other students. The teachers should guide the students to realize their mistakes in an indirect way in the given situation.
- e. The unexpected behavior of some students, the underlying interests and needs of the students and some incidents in class can be tactfully used by teachers to create a real context for the students to practise their oral English, which is always a crucial goal in English classes, especially in the primary schools.
- f. Judging from all the examples, it can be concluded that the key to the successful interactive decision making is tactful association of the unexpected resources with the teaching content in that class and the prerequisite is the teacher's open minds towards them.

2. Findings from the Class Observations of the Four Teachers

- a. The general findings about interactive decision making
 - 1) When the class atmosphere is relaxed and democratic, teachers tend to make ID.
 - 2) When the teacher makes good use of unexpected resources, the whole class, including both the teacher and the students, are very happy and relaxed. The students are more willing to express their feelings and various ideas and not nervous any more.
 - 3) The textbooks the teachers from the key school use are story-oriented, which contain more contexts than the conversation-oriented textbooks the ordinary school teachers use. More contexts may be much more beneficial for the generation of students' answers in that they provide various contexts for the language learning.
- b. The similarities in interactive decision making between the key school and the ordinary school
 - 1) All of the four teachers can make different types of ID appropriately sometimes.

2) Interactive decision making related with unexpected mistakes is rarely appropriately made in all the four teachers' classes.

c. The differences in interactive decision making between the key School and the ordinary School

1) There is more interactive decision making in the classes of the key school than the ordinary school.

2) The teachers in the key school design more open, interesting questions and activities for the students than the teachers in the ordinary school.

3) The teachers in the key school are more improvised to interactive with the students than the teachers in the ordinary school while the teachers in the ordinary school still adopt more drilling than real communication.

4) The teaching objectives in the ordinary school principally focus on the knowledge dimension, while the teaching objectives in the key school focus on both the knowledge dimension and the emotional dimension.

5) The teachers in the key school are concerned much more with the students' interests and needs than those in the ordinary school.

3. Findings from the Interviews of the Four Teachers

a. The similarities in interactive decision making between the key School and the ordinary School

1) All the teachers realize the value of interactive decision making.

2) All the teachers account teacher's own language proficiency as an important factor in interactive decision making successfully.

b. The differences in interactive decision making between the key school and the ordinary school

1) The teachers from the ordinary school don't hold a positive attitude towards ID while the teachers from the key school welcome ID.

2) The teachers from the key school will find the value of ID and try to use them in a positive way while the teachers from the ordinary school will use them if time permits, otherwise, they will skip them and just continue the lesson.

3) The teachers from the ordinary school think of the result of the learning as their main consideration while the teachers from the key school regard the development of children the most important.

4) The teachers from the key school regard the interest for English as the ultimate goal for the primary education while the teachers from the ordinary school mention little.

5) The teachers from the key school consider teacher's reflection ability after class as a crucial factor in making interactive decision successfully while the teachers from the ordinary school mention little.

4. Findings about the relationship between the teaching years and the interactive decision making

1) The teachers with more teaching years tend to be more experienced in coping with students' unexpected behavior and incidents.

2) Among all the four teachers, teacher A is relatively better than the other three teachers, perhaps because of her 20 years of the management of the naughty students in the ordinary school, and such students are more difficult to manipulate than those in the key school.

B. Suggestions

1. Suggestions on the Teachers

1) Teachers should change their traditional concepts about teaching.

Firstly, they should have a comprehensive understanding of the teaching plan, that is, just a guideline for the teachers since the real teaching is changing all the time.

Secondly, some teachers' teaching objectives are still mainly in the knowledge part, which is not helpful for interactive decision making because they focus more on the knowledge accumulation not on children's full development. In fact, if the students' emotional needs are fully met, their learning will accordingly be greatly improved.

2) Teachers should improve their ability to make interactive decisions tactfully.

Firstly, teachers should create a democratic and relaxed class environment, where the students incline to produce unique even creative ideas and the whole classroom will be more energetic and the teachers should be supportive and encouraging towards these ideas, even some absurd ones because they are the valuable reflection of the students' own thinking. If the teacher ignores them, they will be gone forever. Gradually, the student's curiosity and exploration will also be gone.

Secondly, teachers should design more open and interesting questions and activities, which can activate the students' thinking, especially their imagination.

Thirdly, teachers should pay more attention on the interactive decision making. The teacher should first judge its value to see which resources can still meet the teaching objectives and which can promote the students' other development and then try to integrate it into the teaching plan before class. Sometimes, the teacher even can adjust the teaching objective to the later classes. The teacher can use one student's unexpected answer or his initiative question as a trigger to encourage the other students to think and communicate with each other to help students practise more English. As for the student's unexpected mistakes, the teacher can use them as teaching resources to help the students learn English better. The unexpected behavior and incidents, traditionally classified as "the discipline violation" and usually ending up with criticism by the teacher, can be tactfully used by the teacher to create a real context for the students to practise their English, and the effect is always better than the cold scene after the criticism.

3) The teachers should attach more importance to the teaching content and the students.

Firstly, the teacher should know the teaching content very well. The analysis of the textbooks is the most important, including the different sections within a unit and all the units within a book with the aim of the flexible adjustment of the teaching content and objectives in the real class. Besides, the teacher should also appropriately adapt the textbook to the characteristics of the target students.

Secondly, the teachers should know the students better, not only the current knowledge structure and level of the students, but also the interests of the students, the physical and emotional states of the students at the class time, their learning style and habits, so that they can deal with unexpected resources more confidently and more efficiently in the real teaching.

2. Suggestions on the Schools

Firstly, from the interviews, we can see the school atmosphere influences the teachers to a large extent. A more democratic school is more likely to help the interactive decision making and the development of the students.

Secondly, the evaluation for the teachers can be diverse, not just the scores, but also the emotional aspects of the students.

Thirdly, the school can invite some experts in the field to give some training to the teachers and also organize the teachers to watch more live classes of the experienced teachers and have more communication among the teachers themselves.

Fourthly, the communication between the schools should also be promoted to help teachers to learn from each other.

Last but not the least, schools can also encourage their teachers to read more literature concerned with interactive decision making, especially the learning from the successful cases.

VI. LIMITATION

The choice of the teachers in the two schools representative for two different level schools may just reflect some characteristics, therefore, the findings may not so applicable for other teachers and other schools; that's to say, the findings based on more teachers and more schools in the participants may be more valid in the future studies. Besides, every category of interactive decisions are worthy of closer examination.

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Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
- Curriculum development and teaching methods
- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
- Language education
- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills
- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
- Language and culture, cognition, and pragmatics
- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 10 to 15 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
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- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
 - Submission of extended version
 - Notification of acceptance
 - Final submission due
 - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

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- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
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- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

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