

# Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 1, Number 1, January 2011

## Contents

---

### REGULAR PAPERS

Strategies to Translate Information Technology (IT) Terms <i>Luu Trong Tuan</i>	1
Speak Out Students! Why Don't You Attend English Classes? <i>Pauline Ghenghesh and Nabila Louis Nakhla</i>	8
Towards Improvement in the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in Primary Schools: The Need to Activate Pupils' Relevant Schema <i>Hanna Yusuf</i>	16
<i>Ulysses</i> : The Novel, the Author and the Translators <i>Qing Wang</i>	21
The Effect of Visual and Textual Accompaniments to Verbal Stimuli on the Listening Comprehension Test Performance of Iranian High and Low Proficient EFL Learners <i>Ataollah Maleki and Masoud Safaee Rad</i>	28
Thinking through Content Instruction: Microteaching Unveils <i>Nor Hashimah Isa and Hj. Kamaruzaman Jusoff</i>	37
Implied Negation in Discourse <i>Yun Ding</i>	44
The Agony and Ecstasy of Being Black and Female: A True Voice of African American Women Poets <i>Vijaya K Raman</i>	52
The Relationship among Listening Performance, Metacognitive Strategy Use and Motivation from a Self-determination Theory Perspective <i>Sasan Baleghizadeh and Amir Hossein Rahimi</i>	61
Metaphor and Metonymy—A Tentative Research into Modern Cognitive Linguistics <i>Shenli Song</i>	68
The Effect of Classical Music on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian Students <i>Nasser Rashidi and Farman Faham</i>	74
Incongruity-resolution in English Humor <i>Yufeng Bai</i>	83

---

---

An Eco-translatological Perspective to Translator: A Case Study of Xu Chi <i>Aihua Liu</i>	87
Meaningful Signs—Emoticons <i>Li Ruan</i>	91
Practice and Consideration on Bilingual Teaching in Basic Course—Advanced Mathematics <i>Xiuqing Yu</i>	95
Action Study of Teacher’s Language on EFL Classroom Interaction <i>Xuemei Meng and Xuesong Wang</i>	98
Working through Falulkner’s <i>A Rose for Emily</i> —On Character and Character Portrayal <i>Jie Fang</i>	105
Comparative Critical Analysis of Discourse Structures <i>Jun Zhao</i>	108
An Insight into the Diversity of Mr. Dick’s Roles in <i>David Copperfield</i> <i>Xiaohua Li</i>	112
An Application of Collaborative Learning in a CALL Website Construction <i>Ji Song</i>	115
Translation as a Key Dimension of Social Life <i>Shuping Xin</i>	119

---

# Strategies to Translate Information Technology (IT) Terms

Luu Trong Tuan  
National University of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Email: luutrongtuan@vnn.vn

**Abstract**—The rendezvous amid translation theories and models is the quest for an approach to translation units, which is especially significant in translating scientific terms outside as well as inside a context. The research seeks to explore two principles of translating terms, “recombination of semantic components” and “functional equivalence”, which helps look through terms outside the context and determine if the translation units in translating the IT terms are morphemes, words, or phrases. Based on these term translation principles and Vinay & Darbelnet’s (1977) translation procedures, six procedures of translating terms—direct borrowing, “calque” or loan translation, literal translation, transposition, modulation, and adaptation—are developed. Besides, Coordinate Translation Model with three axes: X axis—translation unit axis, Y axis—concept equivalent axis, and Z axis—language task schema axis is proposed to locate appropriate translation units for translating IT terms inside the context.

**Index Terms**—scientific term, IT term, recombination of semantic components, functional equivalence, translation unit, Coordinate Translation Model

## I. INTRODUCTION

Scientific language is characterized by specific lexical system. Besides purely technical words, semi-technical words such as hypothesis, experiment, analysis, and description are shared by a variety of disciplines. Neologisms incessantly emerge and penetrate scientific language.

The standardization in translating scientific terms are essential for scientific research as well as academic exchange. Scientific translation differs from the other types of translation primarily in terms of terms in scientific texts (Newmark, 1995, p. 151). While literary translation turns to the authors’ aesthetic intention, scientific translation centers on the accuracy of scientific terms. Translating terms can be a challenge for translators once even certain bilingual dictionaries of a science fail to distinguish academic meaning of a term from its common meaning. For instance, in the bilingual IT dictionary by Quang et al. (2009), the terms “blog” và “diary” are translated as “nhật ký” (“a daily record”) in Vietnamese language.

A questionnaire survey conducted among the IT students at University of Natural Sciences, Ho Chi Minh City (UNS-HCMC) revealed learners’ incapacity to explore the semantics of words, especially scientific terms. The data from the survey demonstrated that 76.29% of the students resorted to English-Vietnamese dictionaries upon the encounter with new IT terms, and a high rate of the students (79.38%) who did not developed the habit of visiting monolingual IT dictionaries. They, in addition, were not accustomed to strategies to analyze roots of words (84.54%) or infer their meanings from their contexts (82.47%).

From the significance of accurately translating terms in scientific texts in general and in IT texts in particular, the article seeks to explore principles as well as procedures of term translation, contributing to the accuracy of scientific translation.

## II. PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATING TERMS

Term translation can be guided by the two subsequent principles.

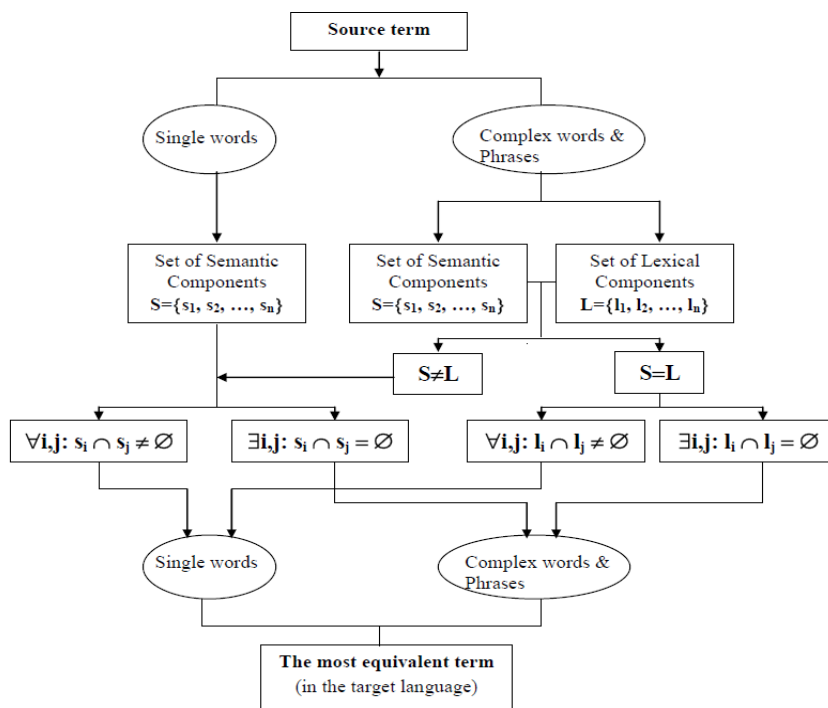
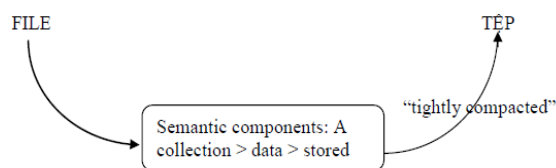


Figure 1. Recombination of semantic components in term translation

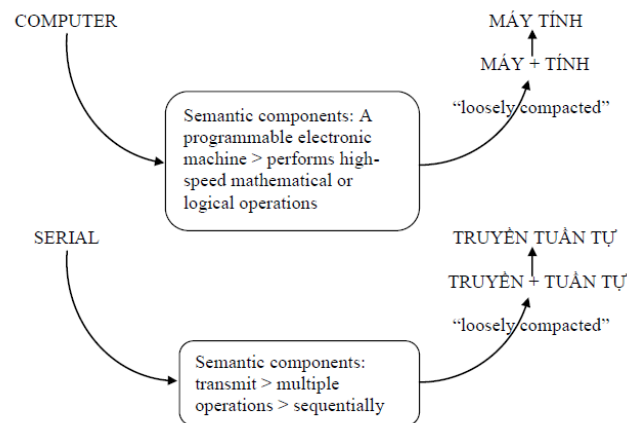
#### A. Recombination of Semantic Components

Even though English terms and Vietnamese terms represent three formations: single word, complex word, and phrase, translating English terms into Vietnamese language is not always a bijective mapping in formation, i.e. English single words, complex words, and phrases are translated as Vietnamese single words, complex words, and phrases respectively, but may display the recombination of the semantic components of the terms in the target language. If the semantic components in the target language are tightly compacted, the translated terms will be single words, and if the semantic components in the target language are loosely compacted, the translated terms will be complex words or phrases. Principle of recombining semantic components can be summarized in the Figure 1.

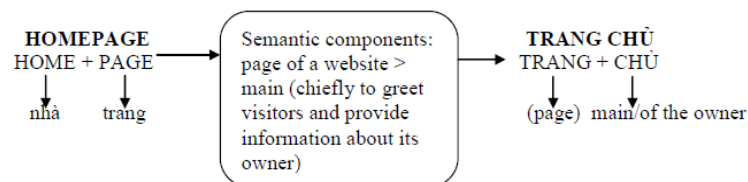
Figure 1 shows that if a term is a single word, the translator will analyze its set of semantic components  $S=\{s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n\}$  ( $S$ =semantic component) (the set of semantic components is explored through its definition). In case its semantic components are tightly compacted, i.e. subsets of every semantic component are joint, or their intersection is not the empty set ( $\forall i,j: s_i \cap s_j \neq \emptyset$ ), term translation in the target language will be a single word as “file” is translated as “tệp” in Vietnamese language.



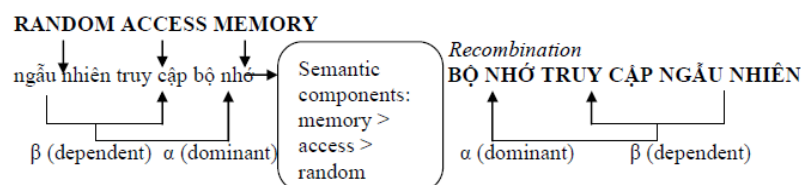
Nonetheless, if the semantic components of a single word are not tightly joint, i.e. there exist at least two disjoint subsets of semantic components, or their intersection is the empty set ( $\exists i,j: s_i \cap s_j = \emptyset$ ), term translation in the target language will be a complex word or phrase as “computer” is translated as “máy tính” and “serial” is translated as “truyền tuần tự” in Vietnamese language.



In case the term is a complex word or phrase, the translator has to analyze its set of semantic components  $S=\{s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n\}$  ( $S$ =semantic component) and its set of lexical components ( $L=\{l_1, l_2, \dots, l_n\}$ ) ( $L$ =lexical component). If its set of lexical components does not reflect its set of semantic components ( $S \neq C$ ), then its set of semantic components should be analyzed, like the case of the term as a single word; for instance, “homepage” is translated as “trang chủ” in Vietnamese language.



Nevertheless, if the lexical components of a complex word or phrase are not tightly joint, i.e. there exist at least two disjoint subsets of lexical components, or their intersection is the empty set ( $\exists i, j: l_i \cap l_j = \emptyset$ ), term translation in the target language will be a complex word or phrase as “random access memory” is translated as “bộ nhớ truy cập ngẫu nhiên” in Vietnamese language, a recombination of disjoint translated lexical components.



### B. Functional Equivalence Principle

When a term is translated, the equivalence between the term in the source language and its translation in the target language seeks to be attained. However, this does not imply a word-for-word translation, but the content of the term should be transferred so as to achieve functional equivalence. According to Arntz & Picht (1991, p. 160), there are four degrees of functional equivalence:

#### 1) Complete conceptual equivalence

This degree of functional equivalence can be found in the case of “artificial intelligence” to be translated as “trí tuệ nhân tạo” (trí tuệ: intelligence; nhân tạo: artificial), and “polymorphism” (poly-: multiple; -morphism: form) to be translated as “đa hình” (đa: multiple; hình: form).

#### 2) Partial equivalence, overlapping

This degree of functional equivalence can be found in translating the term “online”. The intersection between the term “online” and its translated term “trực tuyến” is the component “line” (“tuyến” implying “line”), whereas the other component of the term “on” is not equivalent to the component “trực” (straight) of the translated term.

Similarly, “homepage” is translated as “trang chủ” in Vietnamese language; nonetheless, their mere intersection is “page” (“trang” meaning “page”), and the other component of the term “home” and that of its translated term “chủ” (owner) are unequivalent, so the term and its translated term are partially equivalent.

The interface between the term “webhard” and its translated term “ổ đĩa cứng trực tuyến” – the component “hard” (“cứng” meaning “hard”) – is even narrower. In the translated term, the component “trực tuyến” (online) is unequivalent to the component “web” of the source term, and the component “ổ đĩa” (disk) is added.

### 3) Inclusion, a term merges into another

The term “computer” is translated as “máy tính” in Vietnamese language, which means “a device that calculates or computes”, so its translation “máy tính” is a hypernym embracing the hyponyms “computer” and “calculator”.

On the contrary, the hypernym “ring” in IT terminology does not have the equivalent hypernym in Vietnamese language. Thus, it tends to be translated through the hyponyms of the term “ring” as:

- + “vành” (a circular band): ring function → hàm vành
- + “vòng” (a circular line): ring counter → bộ đếm vòng

### 4) No conceptual equivalence

The term “debug” is literally translated as “khử côn trùng” (remove insects); however, its common translation “gỡ rối” (shoot troubles) is entirely unequivalent to the term.

## III. TERM TRANSLATION PROCEDURES

The two term translation principles “recombination of semantic components” and “functional equivalence” can be developed into six term translation procedures, corresponding to six out of Vinay & Darbelnet’s (1977) translation procedures, which are direct borrowing, “calque” or loan translation, literal translation, transposition, modulation, and adaptation.

### A. Direct Borrowing

Borrowing is categorized into direct and indirect borrowing. Direct borrowing consists of native words in donor language, whereas indirect borrowing comprises words borrowed through donor language. According to Fromkin (2000, p. 512), native words are those which can be etymologically traced back to the most primitive phase of that language. A number of English IT terms such as *bus*, *avatar*, *outlook express* have penetrated IT jargon in Vietnam. Even though direct borrowing is becoming the increasingly common terminology translation procedure, this should be the last resort as suggested by Ohly (1987). Thus, “e-mail” and “download” should be translated as “thư điện tử” and “tải xuống” respectively, rather than being retained in the target language.

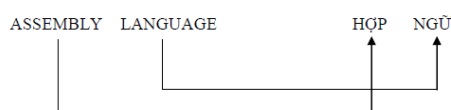
### B. Calque/Loan Translation

In calque or loan translation procedure, the lexical components of the source term is translated, then arranged in the target language in an order similar or nearly similar to that of the lexical components of the source term:

analogue + signal  
tương tự      tín hiệu      =      tín hiệu tương tự

### C. Literal Translation

Literal translation tends to occur when the set of semantic components and the set of lexical components coincide. This especially takes place when the source term consists of Latin lexical components queuing in an order similar to that of the lexical components of the Vietnamese term:



The above instance illustrates the coincidence of loan translation and literal translation. However, literal translation tends to entail the semantic relationship among the components, whereas loan translation involves the syntax of the components. For instance,

Loan translation: data + structure  
dữ liệu      cấu trúc      =      cấu trúc dữ liệu

Literal translation: loop + structure  
vòng      cấu trúc      =      cấu trúc vòng lặp

Literal translation elucidates the semantic relationship between the two components “loop” and “structure”, so “loop structure” is translated as “cấu trúc vòng lặp” (instead of “cấu trúc vòng”) highlighting the iteration (which “lặp” means) of this structure.

### D. Transposition

Transposition entails the grammatical changes but no semantic changes. The following examples denote the change in syntax from the source term to its translation:

Ring main (ring: dependent—main: dominant) → mạch vành chính (mạch vành (= ring): dominant—chính (= main): dependent)

### E. Modulation

Van Hoof describes modulation as a type of transposition at the global level, applying to categories of thought, not grammatical categories (1989, p. 126).

In the IT English, the adjective “online” composed of the preposition “on” and the noun “line” is defined as “connected to a computer or the Internet”. However, it is not translated as “nối mạng”, the equivalent of this definition, but translated as “trực tuyến” composed of the verb “trực” (i.e. move straight) and the noun “tuyến” (i.e. line). “Trực tuyến”, which implies “move straight through the line to” and so, implies “connected”, is a transposition of thought or modulation.

Likewise, the adjective “offline” composed of the preposition “off” and the noun “line” is defined as “disconnected from a computer system or the Internet”. It, nonetheless, is not translated as “ngắt mạng”, the equivalent of the aforementioned definition, but translated as “ngoại tuyến” composed of the preposition “ngoại” (i.e. outside) and the noun “tuyến” (i.e. line). “Ngoại tuyến”, which implies “outside the line” and so, implies “not connected”, is another transposition of thought or modulation.

#### F. Adaptation

Adaptation is the search for the term’s equivalent in the target language based on its set of semantic component as a whole, rather than translating each semantic or lexical component of the term.

The term “algorithm” originates from the name of the mathematician Al-Khawarizmi, so its translation, “thuật toán/giải thuật”, is predicated on its definition: “a set of precise rules or instructions for solving a problem”.

Analogously, the set of semantic components of “debug”  $S = \{\text{de- (i.e. remove), bug (i.e. insects)}\}$  does not help find the equivalent of this term in the target language, so its definition “to search for and eliminate malfunctioning elements or errors in” is relied on to produce its translation “gỡ rối” with “gỡ” implying “eliminate” and “rối” referring to malfunctioning elements”.

### IV. TRANSLATING TERMS IN THE CONTEXT

#### A. Coordinate Translation Model

The rendezvous among translation theories and models is the quest for the equivalents in the target language, the first step of which is to identify the translation units defined by Zhu (1999) as:

The smallest segment[s] of an SL text which can be translated as an independent and integrated meaning entity in relation to other segments of the text. Its formal realization, if viewed in isolation, is analyzable on levels ranging from the morpheme to the sentence; its textual potential, however, is based on the completeness of its information structure, and is normally realized when it performs textual functions in the SL text. These textual functions are to be matched in the construction of a TL text.

The journey to translation units is portrayed by Walter Benjamin as reaching the tryst where the translation and the source text echo the same pitch (see Cao, 2005).

Thus, a translation model should have two axes: translation unit axis and concept equivalent axis. The translator will move along translation unit axis to locate the translation unit, then project to concept equivalent axis to see if the equivalent exists in the target language. Moreover, language task schema axis which scans along the source text is needed. Language task schema, one of the three basic loci of control in the Inhibitory Control (IC) model of Green (1998a, b), is established by the translator to translate between languages.

Therefore, **Coordinate Translation Model** is proposed to be built upon three axes: X axis – translation unit axis, Y axis – concept equivalent axis, and Z axis – language task schema axis as illustrated in Figure 2 (In Euclidean geometry, a translation is moving every point a constant distance in a specified direction).

In order to locate the translation unit  $x_i$ , the translator tends to move from the start of a sentence searching phrases. For instance, as the translator reaches a noun phrase and find it a term, she or he decomposes it into words and consider words as translation units ( $x_i = \text{word}$ ). However, in case the translator projects to the concept equivalent axis, i.e. project to the target language, and find no  $T_i(x_i, y_i, -z_i)$  ( $T = \text{target}$ ) ( $-z_i$  in the target language is symmetrical to  $z_i$  in the source language) equivalent to  $S_i(x_i, y_i, z_i)$  ( $S = \text{source}$ ). Then, the translator will move from  $S_i$  to  $S_{i+1}(x_{i+1}, y_{i+1}, z_i)$  ( $S_{i+1}$  has the coordinate  $z_i$  since it remains on the same language task schema plane as  $S_i$ ), i.e. move from  $x_i$  (word)  $\rightarrow x_{i+1}$  (phrase), and in this case, encounter its equivalent  $T_{i+1}(x_{i+1}, y_{i+1}, -z_i)$  in the target language. For instance, at the point  $S_i$  of the source text, the translator comes across the noun phrase “last mile”. If the translator chooses word as the translation unit:  $x_i = \text{word} = \{\text{[last][mile]}\}$ , then she or he is unable to find the equivalent  $T_i(x_i, y_i, -z_i)$  in the IT target jargon; nonetheless, if the translator moves from  $x_i \rightarrow x_{i+1} = \text{word} \rightarrow \text{phrase}$ , then she or he will find the equivalent in the target language, which involves the relationship between [last] and [mile] = [last] **R** [mile] = {The connection between the customer and the telephone company, cable company or ISP }.

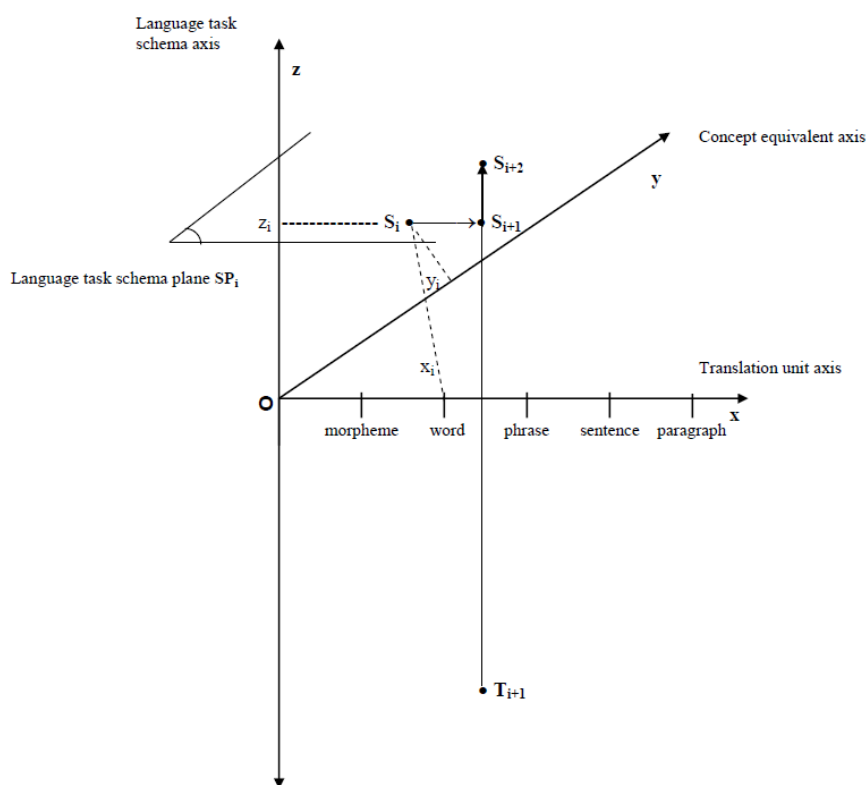


Figure 2. Coordinate translation model

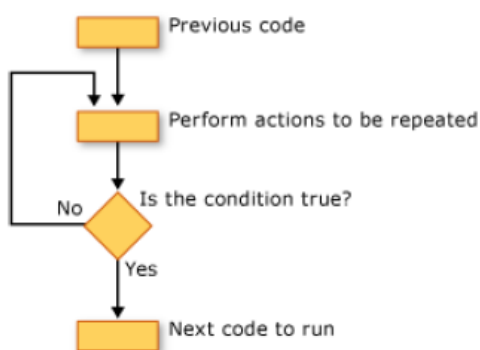
### B. Translating Terms in the Context

As an unfamiliar term manifests itself in a context, if it is a single word or derivative, its set of semantic components can be likely identified; however, if it is a phrase, it must be distinguished from an unidiomatic phrase by analyzing the interactions between the term and the rest of the sentence, the other sentences in the theme-rheme progression, the text type and style, and even the text title. The analysis of these interactions will help determine whether the phrase in the context is a term or an unidiomatic phrase, i.e. the translation unit(s) is (are) a phrase or words. Consider the following text:

(1) Visual Basic loop structures allow you to run one or more lines of code repetitively. (2) You can repeat the statements in a loop structure until a condition is **True**, until a condition is **False**, a specified number of times, or once for each element in a collection.

(3) The following illustration shows a loop structure that runs a set of statements until a condition becomes true.

#### Running a set of statements until a condition becomes true



(retrieved on February 17 2009 from [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ezk76t25\(VS.80\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ezk76t25(VS.80).aspx))

Facing the phrase “loop structures” in the above text, the translator needs to determine if the translation unit(s) is (are) the whole phrase “loop structures” or words “loop” [shape > circular or curved over on itself] and “structures” [parts > arranged or put together to form a whole body]. The semantic interaction between the phrase “loop structures” and the intra-sentential/inter-sentential components “repetitively” in the first sentence and “repeat” in the second sentence



shows that the component “loop” does not merely literally refer to the circular shape in the arrangement of the statements, but further highlight the iteration in these structures. Thus, there is a transition from  $x_i \rightarrow x_{i+1} = \text{word} \rightarrow \text{phrase}$ , and the term “loop structures” is translated as “cấu trúc vòng lặp” (structure + loop depicting the iterativeness), not “cấu trúc vòng” (structure + loop-shaped) in Vietnamese language.

#### V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Even though terms take up a modest ratio in the content of the scientific text, 5-10% as Newmark (1995, p. 151) states, they are building blocks contributing to scientific style. Achieving the accuracy in translating terms in the scientific texts helps project scientific style in the source text to the target language. This article explores two principles of translating IT terms: recombination of semantic components and functional equivalence. Functional equivalence principle involves complete conceptual equivalence, partial equivalence, inclusion, and no conceptual equivalence. From these two principles, six term translation procedures, corresponding to six of Vinay & Darbelnet's (1977) translation procedures, embracing direct borrowing, “calque” or loan translation, literal translation, transposition, modulation, and adaptation, are discussed. Among these term translation procedures, direct borrowing, “calque” or loan translation, and literal translation are source-oriented translation procedures, whereas transposition, modulation, and adaptation are source-independent or target-oriented translation procedures. The article also proposes Coordinate Translation Model built upon three axes: X axis – translation unit axis, Y axis – concept equivalent axis, and Z axis – language task schema axis, which helps the translator locate the appropriate translation units and project to concept equivalent axis to reach the equivalents in the target language.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Arntz, R., & Picht, H. (1991). Einführung in die Terminologearbeit. Hildesheim: Olms.
- [2] Cao, V.D. (2005). Suy nghĩ về dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ văn chương (Thoughts on Translation and Literary Language). Retrieved on July 9 2008 from <http://vietnamnet.vn/vanhua/chuyende/2005/12/526939/>
- [3] Fromkin, V. (Ed.) (2000). Linguistics: An Introduction to Linguistic Theory. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- [4] Green, D.W. (1998a). Mental control of the bilingual lexico-semantic system. *Bilingualism*, No. 1, pp. 67–81.
- [5] Green, D.W. (1998b). Schemas, tags and inhibition. Reply to commentators. *Bilingualism*, No. 1, pp. 100–4.
- [6] Newmark, P. (1995). A Textbook of Translation. London: Prentice Hall Europe.
- [7] Ohly, R. (1987). Primary Technical Dictionary. Institute of Production Innovation, Dar-es-salaam and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, Eschborn.
- [8] Quang, H., Ta, Q.H., Nguyen, P.K., & Do, D.V. (2009). Từ điển Bách khoa Công nghệ Thông tin & Kỹ thuật Máy tính Anh-Việt (English-Vietnamese Information Technology & Computer Technology Dictionary). Ho Chi Minh City: Hong Duc Publishing House.
- [9] Van Hoof, H. (1989). Traduire l'Anglais. Paris & Louvain-la-neuve: Duculot.
- [10] Vinay, J.P., & Darbelnet, J. (1977). Stylistique Comparée du Français et de L'Anglais. Paris: Didier.
- [11] Zhu, C. (1999). Ut once more: The sentence as the key functional unit of translation. *Meta: Translators' Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 3, p. 429-447.

**Luu Trong Tuan** is currently an EFL teacher at National University of Ho Chi Minh City. He received his M.TESOL from Victoria University, Australia in 2004. Besides his focus on TESOL, his recent publications such as Language Transfer is Cultural Transfer between Communities, *Social Sciences Review*, No. 11, 2004, pp 60-63; and Principles for Scientific Translation, *Social Sciences Review*, No. 8, 2004, pp 63-67 show his profound interest in language contact and translation areas.

# Speak Out Students! Why Don't You Attend English Classes?

Pauline Ghenghesh

Department of English Language, the British University in Egypt, El Sherouk City, Cairo, Egypt

Email: paulineghenghesh@yahoo.co.uk

Nabila Louis Nakhla

Department of English Language, the British University in Egypt, El Sherouk City, Cairo, Egypt

**Abstract**—This paper aims to focus on the reasons why students do not to attend English classes, and linking this to performance. Data were gathered from three sources: (1) a student questionnaire, (2) a round of semi-structured interviews and (3) attendance records and end of semester grades. The results indicated a number of reasons for non-attendance to include: workload in the faculty, the duration of the classes, time of the day, uninteresting and unchallenging classes, and irrelevant material and writing tasks. A significant positive relationship between attendance and grades was also found.

**Index Terms**—student attendance, grades, duration of classes, uninteresting classes

## I. INTRODUCTION

Student attendance is a topic that is widely discussed amongst academics worldwide and in particular those working in Higher and Further Education institutions. A review of the literature has shown that relatively little research has been done at universities in Western countries and to the authors' knowledge no study has been published in the Arab world to investigate the fundamental reasons for student non-attendance at lectures or classes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that student attendance at English classes at the British University in Egypt has been on the decline for a number of years. Although teachers tend to make assumptions as to why students do not attend classes, prior to this study, no empirical research had been conducted to examine the reasons for non-attendance or to investigate whether there is a relationship between attendance and performance. Since English is the medium of instruction at the university and all students are required to take English modules in order to support them in their degree areas, this research sets out to examine why students do not attend English classes and linking this to performance.

## II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON NON-ATTENDANCE

From the available published research findings 'work on other assignments' has tended to rank high in the reasons given for not attending lectures. The results of a study at Lincoln University found that 40% of the reasons given for non-attendance at lectures were the pressure of other learning tasks (Fleming, 1995). For Hunter and Tetley (1999) it ranked as the number one reason in their UK study with 43% of students claiming to miss lectures because of it. In another study conducted in the UK, it has also been reported as high as 61% and ranked as the second most prominent reason for missing lectures (Kottasz, 2005). Similarly, it ranked second for 32% of students at a Scottish University (Paisey & Paisey, 2004) and third by 51% of students in Australia (Pithers & Holland, 2007).

The 'timing of the class' also has an impact on student attendance. Fifty percent of Kottasz (2005) respondents claimed that inconvenient lecture times were reasons for missing lectures while other researchers reported 20% (Hunter & Tetley, 1999) and 16% (Fleming, 1995). Findings have shown that classes scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. will have better attendance (Paisey & Paisey, 2004; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996). Furthermore, the 'length of the class' is also a factor that some students see as a reason for non-attendance. It has been reported that students may prefer a shorter lecture (50 minutes) three times per week over a longer lecture (75 minutes) given twice a week (Devadoss & Foltz, 1996).

Classes which are considered to be 'boring', 'a waste of time', and 'unnecessary' can have a strong effect on student motivation and attendance. Results indicate that if students find the lectures and material boring, they will more than likely not attend (Kottasz, 2005; Romer, 1993; Fjortoft, 2005; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Hunter & Tetley, 1999; Massingham & Herrington, 2006). Poor lecturing was also found to be an important factor for non-attendance (Fleming 1992; Kottasz, 2005). Along similar lines, uninteresting and unclear lecturers ranked as the second most important factor for non-attendance in Pithers and Holland (2007) study. 'Unchallenging classes' was another factor that has a significant impact on the percentage of lectures that students attend (Hunter & Tetley, 1999; Kottasz, 2005; Dolnicar, Kaiser, Matus & Vialle, 2009).

Other important factors with varying response rates are 'transport/parking problems' ranging from 7% (Hunter & Tetley, 1999) to 61% (Kottasz, 2005). 'Illness/family problems' accounting for 14% of Hunter & Tetley's (1999) responses, 37% of Pithers & Holland's (2007) business students, about 26% of Paisey & Paisey's (2004) accounting students and as high as 72% for Kottasz (2005) study. 'Employment commitments' was 6% of the reasons given by Hunter & Tetley's (1999) students and was the most frequently cited reason for missing classes in Paisey & Paisey's (2004) study. 'Two or more hour breaks' before or after a class was another reason found for not attending class (Fjortoft, 2005).

#### A. Does Attendance Improve Performance?

Several studies provide strong empirical evidence that there is a relationship between attendance and grades. The findings of these studies are fairly consistent, regardless of the country, course, university and students. Romer's (1993) study in economics classes at three elite US universities found that students who attend only a quarter of the lectures on average earned a C- grade, while a student who attends all lectures earned a B+. Other researchers (Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Paisey & Paisey 2004; Gendron & Pieper, 2005; Thatcher, Fridjhon & Cockcroft, 2007; Massingham & Herrington, 2006; Ajiboye & Tella, 2006) found similar results from studies conducted at US, UK, Canadian, Botswanan, Australian & South African Universities. The more classes a student attends the better the student's grade. Similarly, LeBlanc III, (2005) compared the attendance records of students against their test score averages at four institutions over a fourteen year period and found that attendance significantly influences test score averages whether or not an attendance policy is enforced.

This study adds to the existing literature on non-attendance by investigation the reasons why students do not attend English classes and linking this to performance. The main aim of the present study is to examine the reasons for non-attendance at English classes.

1. What are the perceived reasons for non-attendance at English classes?
2. Does a relationship exist between attendance and performance?

#### B. The Setting

At the British University in Egypt (BUE) English is the medium of instruction in all faculties and departments. There is a Department of English which acts as a support centre for all students in the different faculties. There are five levels of English: Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, Advanced and Advanced Writing. The Advanced and Advanced Writing modules are compulsory for all students to take.

Students sit for a placement test upon entry to the BUE and are placed in one of the English levels according to the score they obtain. The placement test consists of two components: Listening and Grammar. Students must follow the sequence of modules to progress through the levels. Each module must be successfully completed before moving to the next level. Students must score Pre-Intermediate on the placement test which is equivalent to 3 on IELTS in order to enter the degree area. Furthermore, students must take English modules alongside degree area modules and must complete them before graduating.

During the academic year 2009/2010 Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate were one-year long modules consisting of 48 contact classes and 52 hours of independent learning per semester. The Upper Intermediate, Advanced and Advanced Writing modules were 48 contact classes and 52 hours of independent learning over the course of one semester. Classes were two hour sessions twice a week and the number of students in each group varied from 15 to 30.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

The participants in this study were 727 undergraduate students studying in the faculties of Engineering, Informatics and Computer Science, Nursing, and Business (including Business Administration, Economics and Political Science) at the British University in Egypt (BUE). All students completed a questionnaire survey during the last two weeks of semester one, 2009.

Fifty students were invited to take part in a semi-structured interview in semester two. Ten students were selected from each of the five English levels: Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, Advanced and Advanced Writing. Students were chosen according to the following criteria:

- They were either repeating the module, or had less than 50% attendance in semester one.
- They were available at the time of the interviews.

#### B. Instruments

Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods and based on those factors which the authors considered likely to be most important to the students as possible reasons for non-attendance at their English classes. In all, a total of two research instruments were devised for this study: a short questionnaire and semi-structured interviews for students. In addition to this, the attendance sheets were provided by those teachers that kept attendance records throughout the semester and the students' grades were obtained from the module board reports for semester one.

#### C. Procedures

The researchers obtained written permission to carry out this research, administer the questionnaire and conduct the interviews on the chosen sample from the Research Committee in the English Department at the British University in Egypt.

The investigation consisted of two stages. For the initial stage the questionnaire was administered to the students by the researchers with the assistance of the class teachers during regular class time. The researchers asked teachers to explain to students the rationale for the questionnaire. All students were willing to complete the questionnaire and only a very small percentage (1.3%) was incomplete and therefore not used. The completed questionnaires were collected by the teachers and handed to the researchers for analysis. The questionnaire took about 10 minutes to complete and students were not asked for personal details such as name and ID number.

The main part of the questionnaire consisted of 14 reasons for non-attendance which required students to respond to the items by simply ticking a box. There were also two open-ended questions and a statement which provided the students with the opportunity to include their own ideas on how the English department can help them attend all their classes, to give additional reasons for non-attendance and for those that do attend one hundred percent of their classes to say why. The questionnaire also sought to obtain some background information about the students.

For the second stage of data collection 50 semi-structured interviews (about 20 minutes) were conducted, recorded and analysed to establish the reasons for non-attendance and to enable students to speak about their own experiences and provide additional information on this topic. Students were asked individually if they would like to assist the researchers by taking part in this study. The interviews were conducted towards the end of semester two during the students' free time. The interview questions for students are as follows:

1. How long have you been studying at the BUE?
2. When you joined the BUE which English module were you placed in?
3. Have you repeated English modules? If yes, which ones? Why?
4. If you miss English classes, why?
5. How do you make-up for missed classes?
6. How can the English department encourage students to attend classes?

#### *D. Data Analysis*

The data obtained from the questionnaire was computer coded and processed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 13.0. Student grades and attendance were also analysed using the SPSS. Secondly, a correlational analysis using Pearson Product-Moment Correlations was conducted to identify the interrelationship between the students' grades and attendance to examine the relationship between these two variables.

The semi-structured interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken of student's answers and were listed in specific descriptive phrases that could be easily read and counted. At the end of the analysis there was one complete table for each student illustrating the responses to the questions. In addition to this, notes were taken of student's individual comments that were considered to be significant and would further assist in understanding their reasons for non-attendance. These were written on the back of their tables.

#### *E. Findings*

##### *1. Questionnaire*

##### *Do you attend all your English classes?*

Rather than ask students to estimate their percentage of attendance or absence throughout the semester, they were asked whether they attend all their English classes. Overall, 67.7% (492/727) of students said they did not attend all their classes as opposed to 32.3% (235/727) who said they did.

##### *Reasons for non-attendance at English classes*

The findings of the present study show that the most prominent reason given by students for non-attendance to English classes was because they needed to work on assignments and projects for subjects in their faculties (49.4%). Along similar lines was the third ranked factor which was that students missed English classes to revise for mid-semester exams in degree area subjects (38.2%).

The second ranked factor for missing English classes was because of the duration of the teaching sessions which were two hours (38.8%). The fourth ranked factor is the perception that English classes are not interesting (21.8%) while the fifth ranked factor is the wrong timing of classes which were at the end of the day from 2 – 4 (21.1%). Other reasons given for not attending all English classes are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT ENGLISH CLASSES

Reasons for non-attendance	No. of students (n=492)	%	Rank order
I do not have time because of assignments and projects for my faculty	243	49.4	1
Length of class is too long (2 hours)	191	38.8	2
I do not have time because of mid-semester exams for my faculty	188	38.2	3
Classes are not interesting	107	21.8	4
The 2 - 4 teaching session is not suitable	104	21.1	5
I can pass English modules without attending all classes	86	17.5	6
Illness & too tired	73	14.8	7
The material is not relevant to my degree area	64	13.0	8
English is not very important for my faculty	46	9.4	9
Material is available on BUE E-learning site	44	8.9	10
Class attendance is not compulsory	42	8.5	11
I take material and information from friends	42	8.5	11
There are no credits for English modules	37	7.5	12
I cannot understand lessons	30	6.1	13
The teacher is unhelpful	21	4.3	14

#### *Reasons for attending all English classes*

With regard to the students who attend all their English classes, they were asked to give the reasons for this. The major reason given by more than 60% of the students was to improve their English proficiency. Table 2 shows other reasons given by the students for attending all English classes.

TABLE 2.  
REASONS FOR ATTENDING ALL ENGLISH CLASSES

Reasons for attendance	No. of students (n=235)	%	Rank order
To improve my English	144	61.3	1
To progress to the next English module	31	13.2	2
English is important & useful	26	11.1	3
I enjoy the subject	25	10.6	4
To gain marks	24	10.2	5
The class & teacher are interesting	19	8.1	6
Attendance is taken for each class	10	4.3	7
I can understand the lessons	10	4.3	7
To keep up	5	2.1	8
I have friends in the same class	2	0.8	9
The number of students in the group is small	1	0.4	10

#### *In your opinion, what can the English Department do to help you attend all your classes?*

The last consideration of the questionnaire for this study was to elicit the opinions of students on how the English Department can help students attend all their classes. More than 24% (177/727) of students responded that making the lessons fun, interesting, varied, useful and challenging will help them attend all their classes.

#### 2. Interviews

##### *How long have you been studying at the BUE?*

From the analysis of the first interview question the number of interviewed students and years they have been studying at the BUE are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3.  
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND YEARS STUDIED AT THE BUE

No. Students	No. Years at BUE
16	1 year
16	2 years
6	3 years
9	4 years
3	5 years

*When you joined the BUE, which English module were you placed in? Have you repeated any English modules? If yes, which ones? Why?*

The emerging patterns from Questions 2 and 3 of the interviews are shown in Table 4. The majority of interviewed students (31/50) have repeated English modules with a number of students (10) having repeated more than one module. All students attributed repeating English modules to poor attendance.

TABLE 4.  
MODULE PLACEMENT, NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TIMES REPEATED ENGLISH MODULES

Module placement	No. of Students	English Modules Repeated	No. of Students Repeated English Modules	No. of times Students Repeated English Modules
Pre-intermediate	18	Pre-intermediate	2	1 time (2 Ss)
Intermediate	16	Intermediate	5	1 time (5 Ss)
Upper Intermediate	12	Upper Intermediate	13	1 time (10 Ss) 5 times (1 S) 6 times (1 S) 8 times (1 S)
Advanced	4	Advanced	11	1 time (5 Ss) 2 times (1 S) 3 times (1 S) 4 times (2 Ss) 8 times (1 S) 10 times (1 S)
Advanced Writing	0	Advanced Writing	10	1 time (3 Ss) 3 times (2 Ss) 4 times (2 Ss) 5 times (2 Ss) 6 times (1 S)

S = Student Ss = Students

*Did you attend 100% of your English classes last semester? If not, why?*

In order to determine why all the interviewed students did not attend all their English classes last semester, the aim of Q. 4 of the interview was to elicit the possible reasons for this. Amongst the reasons for missing English classes are: classes and materials were considered to be uninteresting (60%); workload and mid-semester exams in the faculties (54%) and because of the 2 – 4 teaching session (42%). Other reasons given for missing classes are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5.  
REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING ENGLISH CLASSES

Reasons for non-attendance	No. of students (n=50)	%	Rank order
Classes & material were not interesting	30	60	1
Workload & exams in the faculty	27	54	2
The 2 - 4 teaching session was not suitable	21	42	3
The material was not relevant to my degree area	18	36	4
Illness	12	24	5
Length of class was too long (2 hours)	12	24	5
Classes & material were not challenging	10	20	6

*How do you make-up for missed classes?*

In response to Question 5 which focused on eliciting from students how they made-up for missed classes, the results of this analysis revealed that 40% of the students did nothing at all while 30% either checked what material had been uploaded on e-learning or asked the teacher to inform them what had been covered in class (See Table 6).

TABLE 6.  
MAKING UP FOR CLASSES

Making-up for missed classes?	No. of students (n=50)	%	Rank order
Didn't make up for missed classes	20	40	1
Checked material on e-learning	15	30	2
Asked teacher what was missed	15	30	2
Asked friends what was taken	14	28	3
Got photocopied material from copy centre	2	4	4
Photocopied sheets from students	2	4	4

*How can the English Department encourage students to attend classes?*

The first ranked factor cited by 60% of the students as a motivator for class attendance was that the classes (including the material, activities and writing topics) should be interesting. The second ranked factor elicited by 40% of the students was to introduce relevant material and writing topics as well as having no teaching sessions during afternoon slots from 2 – 4.

TABLE 7.  
MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS RELATED TO ATTENDANCE

Motivators for class attendance	No. of students (n=50)	%	Rank order
Interesting classes / material / activities / topics	30	60	1
Introduce relevant material & writing topics	20	40	2
No 2 – 4 teaching session	20	40	2
More support from teachers	13	26	3
Reduce teaching sessions to one-hour	13	26	3
More challenging classes & material	13	26	3
More focus on speaking & oral presentations	11	22	4
Coordination between faculties / departments with timetable / mid-semester exam / workload	11	22	4
Place students correctly in English modules	9	18	5
Credits for all English modules	5	10	6
Reduce workload of advanced writing module	5	10	6

#### IV. RESULTS

Correlational analyses of students' attendance and grades

Intermediate, advanced & advanced writing modules

Although the first analysis involved testing the relationship between attendance and grades for combined cohorts (N=341) consisting of intermediate, advanced and advanced writing students there was no attendance policy during semester one, 2009 and contact hours as well as testing procedures within the different modules were consistent. The correlation test revealed a significant positive relationship between attendance and grades with a correlation coefficient of .63 ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Given the concern that student bodies may have considerably different characteristics between English modules, the researchers also tested for a relationship among students by English modules. The correlation tests for the intermediate module (N=176) revealed a significant positive relationship between attendance and grades. The correlation coefficient for the sample was .61 ( $p < 0.01$ ).

The correlation tests for the advanced module (N=88) showed a stronger positive relationship between attendance and grades .74 ( $p < 0.01$ ) compared with the intermediate module. For the advanced writing module (N=77) correlation tests revealed a positive relationship between attendance and grades with a correlation coefficient of .70 ( $p < 0.01$ ). A comparison of student cohorts revealed some differences. The two higher English modules (advanced and advanced writing) showed a relatively higher correlation compared with the intermediate.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The results of this research clearly indicate that the students who took part in this study absented themselves from English classes for a variety of reasons. The most common reason was the need to work on assignments and projects in the faculties. Linked with this was the need to miss classes to revise for mid-semester exams in the faculties. These responses suggest that students' regard English as being a burden since it is an additional subject which is compulsory for them to take alongside their degree area subjects. Students comments included: *"There's not enough time to study English and degree area subjects;" "Difficult modules in the degree area," "Because there should be no English classes the same day as mid-semester exams in the faculty."* Working on assignments and study commitments have been important issues found in other studies (Fleming, 1995; Hunter & Tetley, 1999; Kottasz, 2005; Paisey & Paisey, 2004; Pithers & Holland, 2007).

The two hour teaching session is also another prominent factor for missing English classes. All teaching sessions at the university, whether lectures or classes are two hours duration. Students move from one two hour lecture or class to another throughout the day and therefore regard it as being 'too long', 'tiring' and 'boring'. One student highlights this by saying: *"Two hours is too long, three sessions one hour each would be better."* This finding is in accordance with other research findings as Devadoss & Foltz, (1996) did find with their US sample that students may prefer shorter lectures (50 minutes) over longer ones (75 minutes).

The timing of the classes is also another factor for non-attendance. Lectures and classes at the university start at 9 a.m. and finish at 4 p.m. five days a week. The last teaching session of the day is from 2 – 4 p.m. However, students prefer to finish classes by 3:00 p.m. to avoid the rush hour traffic so that they can return home at a reasonable hour to work on assignments and projects for their faculties. Students expressed their opinions on this issue by saying: *"I leave early to go home and work on projects for the faculty;" "I leave early to avoid the traffic;" "Change the time of the class. Have earlier classes."*

This finding mirrors those of other research findings (Kottasz, 2005; Hunter & Tetley, 1999; Fleming, 1995). Fifty percent of Kottasz (2005) respondents said that inconvenient lecture times were reasons for missing lectures. Findings have shown that classes scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. will have better attendance (Paisey & Paisey, 2004; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996).

Another major reason cited by the students as a motivator for class attendance was uninteresting classes. Students mentioned that the classes should be 'fun'; 'interesting' and 'varied'. This is how some students expressed their feelings towards the English classes: *"Make it more interesting, classes are boring to death;" "Give more interesting topics;" "Make the classes more communicative."* Earlier studies have found similar results (Kottasz, 2005; Romer, 1993; Fjortoft, 2005; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Hunter & Tetley, 1999).

Unchallenging classes is another factor for non-attendance. At the BUE students are placed in English modules according to their English placement test score, whereas in the faculties students are placed in groups according to year and area of specialisation. Therefore, the material that is introduced to students in the English department accommodates their English level, whereas, students in their degree areas are required to read articles from academic books written with high standards of specialised English. As a result, students regard English as being 'too easy'. This is what students had to say about the English classes: *"Classes are below my level;" "We need challenging material and tasks;" "We've taken these components at school," "I do not need to attend classes. I can pass modules by taking assessments and doing coursework."* Furthermore, the results of the interviews showed that 40% of the students do not make up for missed classes. Unchallenging classes has also been a factor for student non-attendance in other studies (Hunter & Tetley, 1999; Kottasz, 2005; Dolnicar, et al. 2009).

Another motivational factor for class attendance was the need for the English modules to introduce reading material and writing tasks that are appropriate to student and faculty needs. Amongst other things, students mentioned the need to write 'technical reports' instead of paragraph and essay writing. Students expressed their views on this issue: *"The English we study is not relevant to my faculty," "The content of the syllabus is not helping me in my courses;" "It should give us materials and skills that will help us in the future."*

The correlation tests suggest that attendance is related to grades. This finding is in-line with other studies that found that attendance has an impact on performance (Romer, 1993; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Paisey & Paisey 2004; Gendron & Pieper, 2005; Thatcher, et al. 2007; LeBlanc III, 2005; Ajiboye & Tella, 2006). Attendance at classes will be crucial for a subject like English, as it is a verbal-based subject that requires a lot of classroom based practice.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The current study was aimed at finding out why students miss English classes. The results of the quantitative data and qualitative interviews show that the reasons offered by students on non-attendance are in accordance with other studies conducted in different parts of the world. Although some factors are beyond the control of the teachers (timing and length of classes) most of the reasons found on non-attendance in this study may be influenced to a large extent by the teachers in the English department. For example, uninteresting, unchallenging and irrelevant classes as well as workload in the faculties are issues that teachers should address. These factors will have an important influence on students' motivation, attendance and performance. To have any hope of reversing this current trend on non-attendance teachers must change the way they teach and design their curriculum accordingly.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the important findings of this research be fed into the Department of English Annual Programme Review (APR) for the coming academic year (2010/2011) and thereafter. Furthermore, to help reduce the workload of students the English department can work collaboratively with the faculties to develop students' writing (technical reports, projects, and dissertations). Lecturers in the faculties can help students develop the content of their writing while teachers in the English department can assist with the writing process by developing the form (i.e. vocabulary, spelling, sentence structure and organisation of ideas). Cooperative teaching will reduce the workload of students, as less writing will be required of them, which in turn should result in a higher standard of written work. Furthermore, the English department and faculties can work together to select content-based reading material and topics, vocabulary, writing tasks and research projects to ensure that the material is interesting, challenging and relevant to student and faculty needs.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Ajiboye, J. O. & Tella, A. (2006). Class attendance and gender effects on undergraduate students' achievement in a social course in Botswana. *Essays in Education*. Available online at: <http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol18fall2006.html> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2010).
- [2] Devadoss, S. & Foltz, J. (1996). Evaluation of factors influencing student class attendance and performance. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 78: 499-507.
- [3] Dolnicar, S. Kaiser, S. Matus, K. & Vialle, W. (2009). Can Australian Universities take measures to increase the lecture attendance of Marketing students? *Journal of Marketing Education*, 31: 203-211.
- [4] Fleming, N. (1992). Why don't they attend? Occasional Paper, Education Unit, Lincoln University.
- [5] Fleming, N. (1995). Attendance: Why don't they attend? Part 2, Discussion paper, Education Unit, Lincoln University.
- [6] Fjortoft, N. (2005). Students' Motivations for Class Attendance. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 69: 107-112.
- [7] Gendron, P. P. & Pieper, P. (2005). Does attendance matter? Evidence from an Ontario ITAL.



- [8] Hunter, S. & Tetley, J. (1999). Lectures. Why don't students attend? Why do students attend? Paper presented at the HERDSA Annual International Conference, Melbourne, 12-15 July.
- [9] Kottasz, R. (2005). Reasons for Student Non-Attendance at Lectures and Tutorials: an analysis. *Investigations in university teaching and learning*, 2: 5-16.
- [10] Le Blanc III, H. (2005). The relationship between attendance and grades in the college classroom. Paper presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the international academy of business disciplines, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, 8<sup>th</sup> April.
- [11] Massingham, P. & Herrington, T. (2006). Does attendance matter? An examination of student attitudes, participation, performance and attendance. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 3: 82-103.
- [12] Paisey, C & Paisey, N. J. (2004). Student attendance in an accounting module-reasons for non-attendance and the effect on academic performance at a Scottish university. *Accounting Education*, 13(Supplement 1): 39-53.
- [13] Pithers, B. & Holland, T. (2007). I'm too busy and they are just so boring! Students and lectures. Available online at: [www.iutconference.org/2007/pdfs/Papers/Pithers.pdf](http://www.iutconference.org/2007/pdfs/Papers/Pithers.pdf) (accessed 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2010).
- [14] Romer, D. (1993). Do students go to class? Should they? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 7: 167-174.
- [15] Thatcher, A. Fridjhon P. & Cockcroft, K. (2007). The relationship between lecture attendance and academic performance in an undergraduate psychology class. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 37: 656-660.



**Pauline Ghenghesh** was born in Liverpool, U.K. in 1959. She completed her PhD in 2005 in the area of motivation related to teaching and learning from the University of Nottingham in the U.K.

She has teaching experience at primary, secondary, high school, undergraduate and postgraduate levels in various parts of the world, including Brazil, Libya, the U.K., Egypt and Saudi Arabia. She currently holds the position of Lecturer at the British University in Egypt. She has published articles and books. Amongst them are three textbooks: English for Medical Students, ELGA Publications, 1996; Basic English for Children (1), General Company for Paper and Printing, Tripoli, 2001; Basic English for Children (2), Al An Printing and Publishing, Lebanon, 2004.

Dr. Ghenghesh's main research interests include student and teacher motivation, ESL writing, teacher development and materials development.



**Nabila Louis Nakhla** was born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1952. She completed her first MA in 1997 from the American University in Cairo in the area of TEFL and her second MA in 1983 from Leeds University in the UK in the same field.

She has over 30 years of experience in the area of linguistics and English language teaching. The first MA was related to motivation and the second one was a collocation and contrastive study on the use of verbs in Arabic and English. She has teaching experience with the Faculty of Education Ain Shams University, Cairo, the American University in Egypt and Ajman University in the UAE where linguistics, phonetics and English were taught. She presented papers at the International TESOL in California where she took accredited courses as well. She has written linguistic courses for Ajman University and participated in the phonetics, grammar, reading comprehension and listening books for Ain Shams University Center.

Mrs. Nabila's main research interests are in the area of English language teaching methodology, student motivation and English language testing.

# Towards Improvement in the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in Primary Schools: The Need to Activate Pupils' Relevant Schema

Hanna Yusuf

Curriculum Section, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru-Zaria, Nigeria

Email:hannayusuf@yahoo.com

**Abstract**—This paper reviews some aspects of the Reading process that are relevant in activating Pupils Schema. It also discusses how pupils' schema could be activated through pre-reading activities and background knowledge/experience. The paper concludes by recommending in a step by step sample lesson plan, the need to guide pupils to have expectation for their reading and the need to constantly engage them in meaningful conversation, that is in consonance with what is about to be read and what is being read. All these would help to make reading comprehension lessons more enjoyable and meaningful.

**Index Terms**—improvement, reading, comprehension, activate, relevant, schema

## I. DEFINITIONS OF READING

According to Dearman and Alber (2005), "reading is the process of stages of developmental skills that culminate in reading mastery."(p.21). Thus, ability to communicate via the print involves the development of perceptual processes, experimental opportunities, cognitive abilities and other aspects of human endeavour, all of which operate in and contribute to the meaning of reading.

Reading involves perception and cognition. Contrary to the decoding definition of reading, are those definitions which view reading as a two dimensional act. Doherty (2002) and Smith (1971) as well as some other researchers in reading have taken this position. The definitions which fall into this category, suggest that reading involves not only visual perception of the written symbols, but also thoughtful responses of the reader. This implies that the intent of the reader and the background he has to work with in responding to what he reads permits the development of a new understanding and modification of old concepts. The implication of this definition for the teacher is the concern with word perception skills and with the ability on the part of the reader to interact with the author in diverse thoughtful ways.

## II. THE NATURE OF THE READING PROCESS

Widdowson (1979) suggests that reading is the realization of general interpretative process which underlines all communicative activity. This process operates at the different levels of mental activity. The first level is the immediate apprehension of information and second, the discrimination of this information into patterns of conceptual significance (p.56). Extracting meaning from a text depends crucially on two things: the reader's knowledge or schemata and purpose which depend on the writer's effectiveness in giving the reader the necessary pointers to activate knowledge and absorb new knowledge from the text.

Some other linguists believe that reading is a matter of maturation rather than a process developed through systematic instruction and practice. Some see reading as primarily a visual task, its study and development lies in the use of mechanical device designed to record eye movements and to increase reading speed by expanding eye span intake of printed symbols. Others view reading as a matter of accurate pronunciation which emphasizes phonic instruction or modifies the orthography to ensure more specific letter – sound relationship. A few views reading as a complex process integrating all aspects of human behaviour and demanding varied and continued instructional guidance to read accurately and efficiently, to appraise what is read, and to relate what is read in a significant way to other areas of life.

On the whole, one would agree that reading is a key to wealth of experience that links people in a way that is not limited by distance or time. Reading provides experience through which the individual expands academic and intellectual horizons, identifies, extends and deals with personal interest and attitudes that affect the task of reading (Smith, 1971, p. 84). To enhance comprehension, therefore, various strategies are set in motion: the three basic ones being:

- skimming to get the gist of a text;
- scanning to locate specific information; and
- inferring and predicting meaning through the cohesive and coherent devices used in the text.

In the school setting, reading should be seen as not only enabling the students to interact with text to negotiate

meaning, but also to transfer that ability to other subject areas. To any set of learners, reading should be linked with the extension of actual experience.

A lot of work abounds on the various techniques of teaching reading comprehension using contextual clues, the dictionary, synonymy, structural and morphological clues, use of cohesive ties etc (Ayuk, 1989; Williams, 1983; Obah, 1989 etc). Teaching students to comprehend texts in the target language (i.e English, which is the medium of instruction in all the other subjects) without making them conscious of the relevance and applicability of such in the other subject areas may not lead to full realization of the aim of reading.

An important axiom is that texts relevant to student's discipline must be used to teach language points and these tally with the schema theory of background knowledge as an aid to information processing in fostering understanding and comprehension (Smith, 1975, Widdowson, 1979 and Oyetunde 2009).

From the above discussion on the reading process, it is clear that reading is interactive and multi-level orthographic phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic as well as discourse activities. Also important is the ease with which the pre-existing schemata are activated by the incoming 'data' from the text. It is the opinion of this study that a reader's existing schematic knowledge is as important as what is contained in the text by way of 'content'. It is also clear that reader's purpose in approaching a text is of vital importance. The popular notion probably held by many Nigerian teachers is that reading is the ability to pronounce words. That is, it is assumed that children can read once they can translate writing into speech sounds. The fact, however, is that it is possible to pronounce all the words in a passage beautifully and still be unable to make sense of it. Reading is far more than the ability to pronounce words on a page. It involves the recognition and interpretation of symbols. Reading also involves using both the information provided in the text by the author as well as the sources of information outside the text. (Yusuf 2005, 2009)

The reviews above have thrown up a perspective of the fact that the information needed in order to comprehend a text does not come from the text alone. What is already known about the topic of the text, as well as the familiarity with the words and sentence structure used, play an equally important role in comprehension. This means that during reading, there is interaction between what the text says and what the reader already knows. The option that reading is a process of interaction between the author and the reader is considered appropriate. In other words, during the reading process, the reader is actively trying to make sense of the written or printed text by integrating previous relevant experiences with the text information.

It is now recognised that the reader draws a number of sources of information, both from text itself and from the individual reader. The text information includes the print itself, often referred to in the literature as grapho-phonetic cues (Goodman, 1969) or perceptual information (Yorkey, 1970). The information the reader contributes to the reading task includes the intuitive knowledge of the language being read (syntactic information), knowledge of the vocabulary used in the text, as well as background of information or "prior knowledge" related to the topic of the text. Both of these are part of the semantic information drawn upon during the reading process.

Pre-reading activities are of crucial importance in activating pupil's relevant schema (Ayuk, 1989; Williams, 1983; Obah, 1989; and Oyetunde, 2009). Some of the activities that may be relevant in helping teachers to achieve this include:

- a) asking pupils questions on the topic of the text itself in order to brainstorm as to what they expect the text to contain, which may be continued, refuted or moderated later by the text content;
- b) getting pupils to draw or label a diagram related to the topic or text;
- c) asking pupils to attempt the comprehension questions before reading the text;
- d) Teacher drawing up his own questions based on the text as pre-questions on the subject matter of the text;
- e) giving pupils a task centred on a problem, the solution of which can be checked in the text:

The above activities serve as a guide and arouse interest on the:

- i. purpose of the text
- ii. information contained in it; and
- iii. value of such information to the pupil.

The pre-reading activities are thus mental set devices that pupils can find to be of immediate use in the disciplines, since reading involves a network of information processing. The author is of the opinion that if reading is approached from this perspective, it becomes a skill that is functionally and pragmatically oriented towards achieving the desired literacy level in the academic as well as the society at large. If reading is properly taught, a lot of misreading, both in specialist area and in matters of general concern such as government policy, and newspaper articles that can lead to national chaos or upheaval will be avoided. Pupils will be able to read, understand and contribute positively in the class and the society, and thereby, widen their horizon conceptually in all aspects of life.

### III. THE NEED TO ACTIVATE PUPILS' RELEVANT SCHEMA

A modern psycholinguistic perspective on reading is based on insights derived from contemporary linguistics and psychology. From this perspective, reading is viewed as a complex information processing skill. The reader is seen as an active, planning, decision making individual, who co-ordinates a number of skills strategies to facilitate comprehension. Goodman (1967) attacked previous views of reading involving exact detailed, sequential perception and identification of letters, words, spelling patterns and large language units. He sees reading as a "psycholinguistic

guessing game” involving interaction between thought and language (p.27).

Smith (1971) and Folarin (1997) elaborated on this position by emphasizing two important contributions from psycholinguistic research to demonstrate that the efficient reader does not proceed in a rigid word-by-word fashion, decoding information from print to speech to aural comprehension. First, there is a severe limit to the amount of information that we are able to receive, process, and remember. Second, research has demonstrated that reading is only incidentally visual (Kolers, 1969 cited in Yusuf, 2005, p.70). More information is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page. Readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign its membership in an appropriate group of concepts already stored in their memories.

Interactive approaches which emerged in the 1980s emphasized that meaning is not fully present in a text waiting to be decoded. Rather, meaning is created through the interaction of the text and reader. Information processing based on linguistic input from the text is called bottom-up or text based processing. In the bottom-top conception of reading, the written text contains the meaning, information or message which a reader must obtain. It views reading more or less as a process in which the reader merely goes to the written text and more or less effortlessly takes away the meaning, information or message conveyed by the text. All that a reading teacher ought to do then, is to teach how the linguistic constituents of the written text convey meaning. Armed with this understanding, the reader merely goes to them and obtains their message or information. It is this bottom conception of reading that has wrongly given the impression that reading is passive and that all that a reader does is merely to obtain designated information from the written text.

The other view which also regards reading as an interactive process is the top-bottom. Exponents of this view see reading as dynamic and pragmatic. It is a process in which the reader brings into the written text as much experience or information as possible. According to this view, the totality of information which a reader obtains from the written text is determined not just by the text content.

The foregoing has revealed clearly that the reader needs a relevant schema to be able to comprehend a given text. Experiential background appears to be the most powerful factor that brings forth the schema. Below is a lesson guide on how to activate pupils’ relevant schema using a prose passage titled “Farming in Nigeria” selected from Macmillan English textbook for primary five.

#### IV. SAMPLE LESSON GUIDE

Step 1: Teacher guides pupils to have expectations for their reading by highlighting the following

- (a) You are going to read a passage about ‘Farming’
- (b) You are going to read about what farming is
- (c) What farmers need to do to harvest good crops and the modern methods/equipment that can help farmers increase their yield.

Teacher guides pupils to set a purpose for their reading by asking them the following questions

- \* What is farming?
- \* What tools do farmers need to work on their farms?
- \* Have you ever visited a farm? How does it look?
- \* What are the things you see on a farm?
- \* Have you ever seen a farmer working on his farm?
- \* What do farmers do during planting season?
- \* How do farmers harvest their crops?
- \* What are the equipment farmers use to harvest their crops?
- \* In what ways can a tractor help farmers?

As children answer the above questions, they are unconsciously relating what they already know (background knowledge) to what they are going to read in the passage.

Step 2: Teacher engages children in a discussion in line with their answers to the guided questions above, for instance, how do farmers harvest their crops? There could be several responses ranging from farmers using local tools to farmers using sophisticated equipment.

Step 3: Children are allowed to read silently for some few minutes. Teacher goes round the class as children read to correct bad reading habit such as pointing to words with fingers, vocalization, vigorous head movement etc.

Step 4: Children are requested to pick out the difficult or new words from the passage. Teacher writes such words on the board. Teacher guides students to understand the meaning of the difficult or new words in the context in which such words appear in the passage. The teacher does this by referring the children to the paragraph where such words appear and asking the children to use the sentences surrounding such words to guess their meaning. The teacher should ensure that he/she is not quick at giving the meaning of difficult or new words right away. The teacher should encourage the children to use the context of the passage to determine the meaning of such words. Teacher can do this by asking the children to say what they think the word means in the context of the sentence it appeared.

Step 5: Teacher goes further to guide the children in understanding the meaning of the difficult words by using them in meaningful sentences. He then guides the children to use such words in their own sentences. Teacher should try as much as possible to ensure that children make meaningful sentences.

Step 6: Teacher should lead children in activities that could enhance language proficiency such as purposeful

conversation through guided questions. Such questions should be framed in line with the three levels of comprehension, viz, literal factual, inferential and critical levels. Below are some examples

- \* What do farmers do during planting season?
- \* Does the use of tractor make it easier for farmers to harvest their crops?

Why do you think so?

- \* What other modern farming equipment can assist farmers to get their jobs done with ease and speed?
- \* If you were a farmer what would you like to do to ensure good harvest of your crops?
- \* In what ways can Government assist farmers to improve their harvest?

Teacher should provide expected answers to the questions in his lesson. Teacher should ensure that children are taught how to answer comprehension questions. One way of ensuring this is to make sure children justify their answers in the passage by reading aloud specific portions of the passage to support their answers.

Sometimes children can be asked to retell orally the passage. Children should be encouraged to retell the passage using possible simple diction. Regular exercise of this nature will enhance children's language development.

EVALUATION: Teacher should provide questions for the children to answer in their exercise books. Some of the questions answered orally could also be included in the written exercise. Teacher should go round the class to mark. This will help the teacher to know whether the lesson was successful. It will also help the teacher to know the areas to emphasize in the concluding part of the lesson.

SUMMARY: The teacher concludes the lesson by highlighting some of the important information about the passage. The teacher also answers the evaluation questions with the children. He writes the answers to these questions on the chalkboard as the chalkboard summary.

HOMEWORK: Teacher gives children homework. Teacher can provide two or three additional questions on the passage for children to answer at home.

## V. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers can apply the same format written in the above sample lesson for other similar prose comprehension passages in pupils' English textbooks. This will definitely help to make reading comprehension lessons more enjoyable and meaningful.

Teachers should be creative in devising strategies to draw upon pupils' experiential background. One way of doing this is by providing prior knowledge questions directly related to the new knowledge to be gained from the passage (see example in step I of the sample lesson).

Teachers should realise that the use of prior knowledge questions would assist pupils to match new in-coming textual information in order to derive meaning. There is therefore the need for teachers to stimulate pupils existing knowledge and make them relate it to their background knowledge of the text. Each reading comprehension passage introduced to students should reflect the fact that the purpose of reading comprehension is to make sense of print.

Teachers therefore have the responsibility of ensuring that students make good sense of the printed text by activating their relevant schema through prior knowledge questions that will stimulate them to make use of their background knowledge or experiences.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Ayuk, M.E. (1989). A reappraisal of some criteria for development of foreign language reading skills programs at the tertiary level in Cameroon. A paper presented at the NESAC Conference, University of Ibadan.
- [2] Dearman, C.C., Alber, S. (2005). The changing face of education. Teachers cope with challenges through collaboration and reflective study. Newark; USA.
- [3] Doherty, R.W. (2002). Transformed Pedagogy organisation, and student achievement. New Orleans, LA; USA.
- [4] Folarin, A.O. (1997). "The place of reading in the students" effects to learn English as a second language. In E. Abe, B. Lawal, E. Onukaogu, T. Jegede (eds) *literacy and reading in Nigeria* Vol 7.
- [5] Goodman, K.S. (1967). Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game. *Journal of the Reading Specialist* Vol. 6; 126-135.
- [6] Goodman, K.S. (1969). Is linguistic approach an improvement in reading instruction? In N.B. Smith, (ed): *Current issues in reading*. Newark; Delaware. International Reading Association.
- [7] Kolers (1969). Cited in Yusuf, H.O. (2005). A comparative study of the effectiveness of Language development and vocabulary methods in teaching Reading Comprehension. Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation. University of Abuja.
- [8] Kuhu, M. (2005). Helping students become accurate, expressive readers. Fluency Instruction for small groups. In the Reading Teacher Journal of International Reading Association. Newark, USA Vol 58, n. 4 December/January 2005 pp 338-347.
- [9] Obah, T.Y (1989). Improving Standard of teaching reading in Nigeria Schools – A Re-conceptualisation. A paper presented at the XIX Annual Conference of the Nigeria English Studies Association (NESA), University of Ibadan.
- [10] Oyetunde, T.O. (2009). beginning reading scheme: Empowering teachers to help their pupils become good readers. Jos: LECAPS Publishers.
- [11] Smith, F. (1971). Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read. New York: Hold, Rinehart and Winston.
- [12] Smith, F. (1975). Comprehension and Learning: A conceptual framework for teacher. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Washington.
- [13] Widdowson, H. (1979). Explorations in Applied Linguistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- [14] Williams, R. (1983). Teaching the Recognition of cohesive ties. *Reading in a foreign language*, I (1), 35-52.
- [15] Yorkey, M. (1970). Study skills in English. London Macgraw – Hill.
- [16] Yusuf, H.O. (2005). A comparative study of the effectiveness of Language development and vocabulary methods in teaching Reading Comprehension. Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation. University of Abuja.
- [17] Yusuf, H.O. (2009). Strategies for improving the teaching of reading Comprehension in Primary Schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*. Vol 4(3), 63-68. Zaria: ABU Press.

**Hanna Yusuf** was born in Ilorin, Kwara state in 1964. She has the following qualifications: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Curriculum Studies (2005), University of Abuja, Nigeria, Masters Degree in Teaching English as a second language (1996), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, Bachelor of Education Degree in Language Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, Nigerian Certificate in Education (English major) (1984) A.B.U. Zaria.

She has worked in the following organizations; Universal Basic Education Commission, Abuja, Nigeria as a Research Officer, Principal Project Officer and Chief Monitoring Officer 1989-2006. She transferred her services in 2006 to Ahmadu Bello University, where she currently works in 2006 as a lecturer in the Curriculum section of the department of Education, Faculty of Education. She teaches both undergraduate and post graduate students. She is a member of the internal and external Oral Examination panel for Masters and PhD degrees. She has supervised and graduated a few masters' degree and PhD students.

Dr (Mrs.) Hanna Yusuf is a member of the Reading Association of Nigeria (RAN), International Reading Association (IRA) and Curriculum Organisation of Nigeria (CON). She has some publications to her credit among which are: (1). Yusuf, H.O. (2009) "Strategies for improving the teaching of reading comprehension in primary schools." *Journal of Education Research and Development*. Zaria: ABU (2). Yusuf, H.O (1997) "Effect of Direct-Reading-Thinking Activity Approach on pupils' reading comprehension" *Literacy and Reading in Nigeria*, vol 7. (3). Yusuf, H.O (2001) "How to make and use a big book to teach reading in the primary school", *UBE digest* vol. 1 No.1.

# *Ulysses*: The Novel, the Author and the Translators

Qing Wang

Shandong Jiaotong University, Jinan, China

Email: wangqing6906@126.com

**Abstract**—A novel of kaleidoscopic styles, *Ulysses* best displays James Joyce's creativity as a renowned modernist novelist. Joyce maneuvers freely the English language to express a deep hatred for religious hypocrisy and colonizing oppressions as well as a well-masked patriotism for his motherland. In this aspect Joyce shares some similarity with his Chinese translator Xiao Qian, also a prolific writer.

**Index Terms**—style, translation, *Ulysses*, James Joyce, Xiao Qian

## I. INTRODUCTION

James Joyce (1882-1941) is regarded as one of the most innovative novelists of the 20th century. For people who are interested in modernist novels, *Ulysses* is an enormous aesthetic achievement. Attridge (1990, p.1) asserts that the impact of Joyce's literary revolution was such that "far more people read Joyce than are aware of it", and that few later novelists "have escaped its aftershock, even when they attempt to avoid Joycean paradigms and procedures." Gillespie and Gillespie (2000, p.1) also agree that *Ulysses* is "a work of art rivaled by few authors in this or any century." Ezra Pound was one of the first to recognize the gift in Joyce. He was convinced of the greatness of *Ulysses* no sooner than having just read the manuscript for the first part of the novel in 1917. T. S. Eliot praised Joyce as "the greatest master of the English language since Milton" (Jin, 2001, p. 225).

## II. JAMES JOYCE: THE MODERNIST NOVELIST

James Joyce was born in Dublin, Ireland, on February 2, 1882, the eldest of 10 children of John and Mary Joyce. Owing to the fast diminishing prosperity, he had to withdraw in 1891 from Clongowes Wood College, an elite Jesuit school, where he had studied earnestly for three years. He enrolled as a day student at Belvedere College, another Jesuit school, in 1893, where he showed great talent in writing and won academic prizes, including the prize for the best English composition in Ireland in his grade. In 1898 Joyce entered University College, Dublin, and graduated with a degree in modern languages (English, French and Italian) in 1902. Following university, Joyce left Dublin for Paris, ostensibly to study medicine, but came back the following year on receiving news of his mother's fatal illness. He had apparently abandoned medicine and started writing for magazines later to be included in his *Chamber Music* (1907), a collection of poems, and *Dubliners* (1914), a collection of short stories. On 10 June, 1904 Joyce met Nora Barnacle, and their first outing took place on 16 June the same year when they walked to the Dublin village of Ringsend, a date that later became celebrated as "Bloomsday" as a commemoration observed annually in Dublin and elsewhere to celebrate the life of Joyce and relive the events in his novel *Ulysses*.

To support his family, Joyce gave English lessons at the Berlitz School, first in Pola, Yugoslavia, and later in Trieste, Italy, and also worked in a bank in Rome copying out letters, but all the while he kept working on his stories and novels. With the help of Ezra Pound, his *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which he, since 1907, had started rewriting from *Stephen Hero*, an unfinished draft of an autobiographical novel, appeared in serial form in the *Egoist* in 1914, and was finally published in New York in 1916. In 1914 Joyce began working on *Ulysses*, which was first serialized in *Little Review*, and finally published in Paris in 1922 by Sylvia Beaches' bookshop, Shakespeare and Company, and in 1934 by Random House in New York. He began working on *Finnegans Wake* in 1923. This novel, which was to be Joyce's last, was published by Faber & Faber in London and Viking in New York in 1939. Joyce suffered from a perforated ulcer and died on 13 January, 1941.

Joyce's status as a modernist writer is well-established in English literature. Broadly speaking, the modernist writers in English literature occupied the first 40 years of the twentieth century (Miller, 2006, p.1). Like other modernist novelists and poets such as Conrad, Forster, Lawrence, Eliot and Woolf, Joyce was also influenced by Sigmund Freud, whose psychological theories that human behavior is influenced more by subconscious drives than by reason and logic inspired the modernists to turn to the inner life of the character as the focus of art. The modernist artists found interiority a good form to explore the theme of the alienated individual in the radically, disastrously altered world during and after the First World War. Encouraged by Ezra Pound's catchphrase "Make it new," these artists were strongly aware of the need to find or create a new language, a new style, to articulate the reality of experience in the modern world. Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), *Ulysses* (1922), and *Finnegans Wake* (1939) are three

novels that manifest ever more radical stylistic experimentalism.

With *A Portrait*, Joyce began to forge a narrative style that mapped the development of the mind and abilities of the growing artist Stephen Dedalus, literally from infancy to adulthood. The fragmented and simple style that opens the novel: “Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down the road” is reflective of a child’s mental state in understanding the world. The subsequent four chapters progress to more complex logic and subtle perception of a sensitive and artistic young man. This novel is regarded as Joyce’s “nascent experimentalism” (Miller, 2006, p. 83). It is composed in a stream-of-consciousness style, which is further complicated by Joyce’s employing techniques of free indirect speech, which as Semino and Short note, is “ambiguous with respect to the ‘words and structures’ faithfulness claims” (Semino and Short, 2004, p. 13).

These modernist techniques of experimentalism grow into maturity in *Ulysses*. The episodic development shifts from the protracted chronicle of growth from infancy to adulthood in *A Portrait* to the compact 20 hours or so — from 8 a.m. June 16, 1904 to 4 or 5 a.m. the following day. Still focusing on exploring the nuances of a character’s inner life, Joyce experiments with more writing techniques: stream of consciousness, free indirect speech as well as interior monologue are used frequently and masterfully. *Ulysses* is especially noted for its vagaries of style, as explained by Butler, “by the time he is writing *Ulysses* he has set himself the ‘task’ ‘of writing a book from eighteen different points of view and in as many styles, all apparently unknown or undiscovered by my fellow tradesmen’.” Butler further points out that by disrupting the conventions of word formation and syntax, Joyce begins his “revolution of the word” (Butler, 1990, p. 261), which is complete in *Finnegans Wake*.

Joyce’s final work, *Finnegans Wake*, is often cited as the logical end of the line of his radical experiment with language and style. This novel is clearly indebted to Freudian psychoanalysis, as Butler argues, “A Freudian interpretation of its language, and a Jungian one of its myths and symbols, seem inevitable.” (ibid, p. 273) Joyce experiments more radically with the English language and style, making it the most esoteric of the novels ever written. It is so difficult to read that even Ezra Pound wrote to Joyce, complaining that “nothing so far as I make out, nothing short of divine vision or a new cure for the clap can possibly be worth all the circumambient peripherization” (16 November 1926; *Letters III* 145, in Norris, 1990, p. 173). Norris assures us that no other existing literary work needs a “guide” more sorely than Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*, “with its strange language, its neologisms, its generic ambiguity, the obscurity of its allusions, the mysterious status of its speech.” Even with a guide all along, the common reader often feels baffled to make sense of the words, such as

[1] Behailed His Gross the Ondt, prostrandvorous upon his dhrone, in his Papyllonian babooshkees, smolking a spatial brunt of Hosana cigals,...as appi as a oneysucker or a baskerboy on the Libido, with Floh biting his leg thigh and Luse lugging his luff leg and Bieni bussing him under his bonnet and Vespatilla blowing cosy fond tutties up the allabroad length of the large of his smalls.

If the novel is unintelligible even to the native reader, it is even more so to foreigners. When Joyce’s linguistic experimentalism in *Finnegans Wake* results in incomprehensibility of the text, the novel seems to bring only bewilderment rather than pleasure to the common reader. It is in this sense that Xiao Qian, who has translated Joyce’s *Ulysses*, remarked when talking about Western Modernism literature that Joyce has wasted his gift upon taking the road of an impasse (Xiao Qian, 2005a, p. 4).

### III. ULYSSES: STRUCTURE AND STYLE

*Ulysses* is regarded the best of the three novels Joyce has written. In *Ulysses*, Joyce displays to advantage his masterful ability to compose a simple story elaborately, to exploit the English language creatively, and to express his deep concern for his Irish motherland through mask and mockery, making the novel a nationalistic epic in prose. One of the major claims to importance which *Ulysses* has in the canon of twentieth-century literature is that it may well be the first novel fully realize the vision of Flaubert, that the novel should evolve toward a “novel of pure style”, that “from the standpoint of pure Art one might almost establish the axiom that there is no such thing as subject, style in itself being an absolute manner of seeing things.” (qtd. in Ellman and Feidelson, 1965, p. 126)

More than any other novel except *Finnegans Wake*, *Ulysses* asks to be reread and requires guides, compendia, maps, and a great deal of patience. As demanding as this reading process may be, Joyce believed that it is well worth it: “I don’t think that the difficulties in reading it are so insurmountable. Certainly any intelligent reader can read and understand it, if he returns to the text again and again. He is setting out on an adventure with words.” (Bulson, 2008, p. 71-72).

*Ulysses* is a parallel parody to Homer’s Greek epic *The Odyssey*. In writing the novel Joyce referred to each of the 18 episodes by a Homeric title. These parallels allowed him to organize each episode around a single idea, theme, symbol, and narrative technique. Though Joyce removed these titles before publication, Joycean researchers still use them for convenience references. The following are the Homeric titles in *Ulysses*:

- I. 1. Telemachus
2. Nestor
3. Proteus
- II. 4. Calypso
5. Lotus Eaters



6. Hades
7. Aeolus
8. Lestrygonians
9. Scylla and Charybdis
10. Wandering Rocks
11. Sirens
12. Cyclops
13. Nausicaa
14. Oxen of the Sun
15. Circe
- III.16. Eumaeus
17. Ithaca
18. Penelope

The first 3 are grouped as “the Telemachiad”, which focuses on the young poet Stephen Dedalus, who is alluded to Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. The 12 middle episodes are “the Odyssey”, displaced in time and space to the streets of Dublin at the beginning of the 20th century, June 16, 1904. In this part Leopold Bloom acts as a main character, who, parallel to be Odysseus, the Homeric hero, wanders here and there through Dublin, attending his daily duties, and suffering from family unhappiness as well as public exclusion because he is a Jew. The last 3 episodes of the *Ulysses* epic are grouped as “the Nostos”, or “Return”, in which Molly Bloom, alluded to as Penelope, Odysseus’s wife, is given one whole episode to speak her soliloquy. Molly weighs in her mind the three men who are associated with her life—her husband Leopold Bloom, her concert manager Blazes Boylan, with whom she begins having an affair, and Stephen Dedalus, the young poet.

Stylistically speaking, *Ulysses* is the most creative work of fiction of its age, regarded by critics as the kaleidoscope of style. A vigorous read, *Ulysses* is a feast for eclectic readers: it includes various literary forms from a parody of medieval romance to the 17th century scientific discourse in English language. With the wandering of the protagonists, the story changes scenes, and the styles change accordingly. “The Telemachiad” takes on the style of the young: rigid and somewhat awkward, as if Stephen, as a novice poet, were beginning to learn to write. The narrative techniques in the first 3 episodes are, therefore, comparatively traditional. The third-person narrator as in the beginning sentence of the whole novel

[2] Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed. (*U* 1. 1-2)

promises a story with a plot, as Lawrence (1981, p. 38) points out.

From “Calypso” to “Circe”, however, the writing style matures into that of an adult: experienced and flexible. Third-person narrations gradually give way to free indirect speeches and interior monologues, disclosing more of the characters’ innermost thoughts than their outward appearances. What is more remarkable in these 12 episodes is Joyce’s capability to accommodate style to situation. Take Episode 7 “Aeolus” for an example. The scenario in this episode is the newspaper office, where Bloom attempts to place an advertisement and Stephen arrives to see about publishing an article. The episode is broken up into short sections by newspaper-style headlines, and is characterized by a deliberate abundance of rhetorical devices. By employing such a writing style, Joyce mocks the high-sounding but vacuous Irish journalistic circle.

The last three episodes, “the Nostos”, especially Episode 16 “Eumaeus”, are written in a style of the elderly: sluggish, repetitive and full of clichés. By this time, the long day of June 16, 1904 has come to an end, and at such a moment of midnight all the people—Bloom, Stephen, the drunken sailor and others at the cabman’s shelter, as well as Molly, who is already in bed and half-asleep—are feeling lethargic, and so is the style of the language. Suffice it to cite the beginning sentence of a paragraph in episode 16 as an illustration of verbosity and as a contrast to [2], the beginning sentence of “Telemachus”.

[3] On the other hand what incensed him more inwardly was the blatant jokes of the cabmen and so on who passed it all off as a jest, laughing immoderately, pretending to understand everything, the why and the wherefore, and in reality not knowing their own minds, it being a case for the two parties themselves unless it ensued that the legitimate husband happened to be a party to it owing to some anonymous letter from the usual boy Jones, who happened to come across them at the crucial moment in a loving position locked in one another’s arms, drawing attention to their illicit proceedings and leading up to a domestic rumpus and the erring fair one begging forgiveness of her lord and master upon her knees and promising to sever the connection and not receive his visits any more if only the aggrieved husband would overlook the matter and let bygones be bygones with tears in her eyes though possibly with her tongue in her fair cheek at the same time, as quite possibly there were several others. (*U* 16.1529-1542)

Apart from the general features of the three style chunks, Joyce also creates in the novel many subtle lexical and syntactic styles, by resorting to devices such as incomplete spellings, ungrammatical speeches, numerous wordplays as well as non-punctuated page-long sentences. Detailed analysis of such stylistic features will be conducted in chapters 4 through 7.

According to functional stylistics, style is a prominent feature in a text that is related to the intention of the language

user, or in Halliday's words, a literary style is the author's "motivated prominence" (Halliday 1973). The intentionality of the language user in choosing a specific linguistic expression is not to be ignored in the study of style. If *Ulysses* were a novel that merely borrows its structure from a Greek epic and characterizes its style by kaleidoscopic changes but lacks a serious literary theme or motif as its substance, it could never have been read and appreciated by so many readers and scholars. In this most innovative and stylistically eclectic novel of its period, Joyce expresses his unrelenting love and hatred. It is one of "revenge" on England's century-long intrusion into Irish political and cultural nationalism. As Gibson convincingly argues (Gibson, 2002, p. 13):

[I]n *Ulysses*, Joyce works towards a liberation from the colonial power and its culture. He also takes his revenge on them. There is a will to freedom in *Ulysses*, and a will to justice, but also a recognition that the two do not necessarily coincide.

Joyce's pervasive hostility towards England is manifested in his description of the English as a "reptile people" and English literature as "pompous and hypocritical". Joyce claims, "It is my revolt against the English conventions, literary and otherwise, that is the main source of my talent. I don't write in English." (ibid, p. 4) Indeed, when the readers of *Ulysses* encounter so many un-English sentences in the novel, like

[4] Yes, bronze from anear, by gold from afar, heard steel from anear, hoofs ring from afar, and heard steelhoofs ringhoof ringsteel. (U 11.112-113)

they would agree with what John Eglinton wrote in *Irish Literary Portraits*, that the English language "found itself constrained by its new master to perform tasks to which it was unaccustomed in the service of pure literature... Joyce rejoiced darkly in causing the language of Milton and Wordsworth to utter all but unimaginable filth and treason." (Gibson, 2002, p. 1) By abusing the conventional rules of the English language, Joyce intends to subvert the English government, as a reaction to the "Irish Ireland Movement". Although in the novel he mocks bitterly the stupidity and paralysis of Dubliners, for which he incurred so fierce hatred from his countrymen that he never returned to Ireland but chose to die in exile, his concern for his motherland is deeply hidden and can be felt in this nationalistic epic of *Ulysses*.

#### IV. TRANSLATION OF *ULYSSES* IN CHINA

Joyce lived to see this masterpiece of his in other languages, but he showed so great concern for the quality of the translations that he even took all the trouble to visit the Danish translator, only to tell her "not to change anything in the novel, not even a word". This would be utterly impossible. What he demanded of his translators, actually, was a conscientious attitude and adequate attention to the peculiar features that characterize *Ulysses*, making it a work distinctive from any other novels.

The earliest translations of *Ulysses* were the German version (1927) and the French version (1929), and the author actually helped make final decisions in the translating process of the two versions. Maintaining regular correspondence with his German translator, Georg Goyert, Joyce explained certain esoteric points and offered his own suggestions where necessary. Upon the completion of the task, Goyert came from Munich to Zurich to see Joyce and the author edited the first 88 pages of the German translation. Even with his own assistance in the whole process, Joyce was still not very satisfied with the Goyert version. He then spent a lot of energy on the French version of *Ulysses*. Having studied in Paris and well-versed in French himself, Joyce organized a translation team of three professionals Valéry Larbaud, Auguste Morel, and Stuart Gilbert to translate *Ulysses* into French. In a letter to Miss Harriet Weaver, his patron and publisher, Joyce explained that he "solved" for Larbaud "a list of difficulties" which the translator had sent him, but as to the "great deal of licence" Morel had taken "here and there, sometimes incorporating whole sentences of his own manufacture", he had them all "struck out". Joyce admitted that the translation "is really his [Morel's] and has been done with great care and devotion, but like many other people, by dint of brooding on it he sees one aspect to the exclusion of another." It took seven years, 1922 to 1929, even with Joyce's personal supervision, to complete the French translation.

When the heroic *Ulysses* was born in the West, the Chinese readers, though far afield, heard its loud cry and gave response. In *Novels Monthly*, Issue 11, Vol 13, 1922, Chinese novelist Mao Dun announced the newly-born novel to his readers (Wang Yougui, 2000, p. 79-80):

James Joyce's *Ulysses* has recently been published...James Joyce is a quasi-Dadaist American writer. Even when *Ulysses* was serialized in the *Little Review*, some "vulgar" readers had written, burning with scorching words, to the editors of the magazine, which boasted itself of its "different tastes from the vulgarians". Meanwhile there are enthusiastic comments from young readers as well. The British youth also like Joyce, probably because of Wilks's praise on *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, an earlier novel of Joyce. The influential critic Arnold Bennett, however, voiced his dissatisfaction with the casually broken sentences in the novel which, in his opinion, are the very contrary to the rules of writing. Though admitting that some best parts of the writing will be immortal, his comments are more negative than positive.

Mao's brief and neutral introduction, which was erroneous in Joyce's nationality, was based on second-hand information, for he himself could not have read either of the two novels mentioned. One Chinese writer who actually read *Ulysses* was Xu Zhimo, a young romantic poet studying at Cambridge University at the time *Ulysses* got published in Paris. In the foreword to his lyric "Dusk at Cambridge" (1922) Xu expressed his admiration:

I believe this book is not only a unique work for this year, but will be so for a whole historical period. The last 100

pages of his book (which has more than 700 pages in all) are written in a prose which is absolutely pure -- smooth as cream, and clear as the stone font in a church. It is not only free from capital letters, but is totally unburdened with all those tiresome marks like, ... ? : -- ; -- ! ( ) “ ”. There is neither the division of paragraphs, sentences, chapters or sections. Just a flow of limpid, beautiful, torrential text pouring forward, like a huge bundle of white poplin let loose, a large waterfall coming down without any break. What great masterly art! (Jin Di's translation, 2001, p. 16)

Neither Mao nor Xu attempted to translate *Ulysses* for Chinese readers, though both were translators. Another translator, Wu Xinghua, took the translating task. Wu translated “A Painful Case” from *Dubliners* and three fragments of *Ulysses* and got them published on a special issue of Joyce in *Western Literature* in 1941.

Since the foundation of the New China when heroic revolutionary spirit was used as a yardstick of literature *Ulysses* became a novel of poison, full of “nihilism, philistinism and obscenity” (Jin, 2001, p. 24-25). The executive editor of the Joyce Issue of *Western Literature* was, in the irrational decade of “Cultural Revolution” (1966-1976), accused of poisoning the youth's mind. The translation of *Ulysses*, however abridged, was nipped in the frosty climate.

The Chinese reader would have to wait till the frost thawed in the spring for the transplanting of western modernist literature in their soil. The first herald was the publication of *Selected Foreign Modernist Works* by Academy of Social Science of China in 1981, which included the “Nestor” episode of *Ulysses* translated by Jin Di. Though Jin merely transplanted a rather disproportionate twig of the giant tree in the foreign soil, it would grow in favorable conditions. In subsequent years Jin translated two other episodes “Hades”, “Wandering Rocks” as well as fragments from episodes “Penelope” and “Circe”, and, encompassing them in *Selected Translation of Ulysses*, brought them out at the Hundred Flowers Literature and Art Press of Tianjin in 1986. Jin's complete Chinese translation of *Ulysses* was finally published by Chiu Ko Publishing Company of Taiwan, with the first 12 episodes coming out in October 1993 and the last 6 in February 1996. After negotiation of the copyright, the People's Literature Publishing House on mainland China was authorized to publish the first volume of Jin's *Ulysses* in April 1994, and the second in 1996.

Almost at the same time when Jin was working on his full translation of *Ulysses*, Xiao Qian and his wife, Wen Jieruo, also a professional translator versed both in English and Japanese, were commissioned by Yilin Press in August 1990 to translate the novel. Xiao was selected as the major translator because he was a professional translator and writer. His Chinese translation of *Jonathan Wild the Great* and *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* by Henry Fielding and *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Mary Lamb were popular among Chinese readers. The short stories he wrote such as *Silkworms* (1933), *The Captivated* (1934), *Chestnuts* (1935) and *Sunset* (1937) were also appreciated and widely read in China. In 1938 Xiao wrote *Dreamy Valley*, the only novel of his, which gained popularity among the youth for its romantic theme and lyric diction. This translator-writer's high proficiency in the source and target languages convinced the publishing press that he would be qualified for the challenging task of translating *Ulysses*. The press also knew that Xiao had been studying Joyce when he was a postgraduate at Cambridge University and as early as in the 1940s Xiao expressed the idea in his postcard to Hu Shi, the renowned scholar, that if the novel were translated into Chinese, its writing techniques would be inspirational to the Chinese novelists. Persuaded by Mr. Li Jingduan, the head of the Yilin Press, Xiao and his wife eventually embarked on the task. Their first volume of the translation was published in April 1994, and the second volume in October of the same year.

*Ulysses* translated by these senior scholars won popularity among Chinese readers. One year after its publication, Xiao's *Ulysses* received the national prize for foreign literature, and Jin's *Ulysses* won the same prize in 1998, in the wake of the publication of the complete version, both awarded by the Press and Publication Bureau of the People's Republic of China. It is quite unprecedented in the bureau's history to award the top prize to different versions of the same foreign work. The prizes accredit the quality of the translational feat; the two thick masterpieces loom like “two abreast peaks, each with its unique charm.” (Lv Jun, 1995, p. 35- 40).

#### V. XIAO AND JOYCE: SPIRITUAL AFFINITY OF THE TWO WRITERS

*Ulysses*, the last work Xiao translated in his life, is universally acknowledged as the acme of his literary career, which manifests the summation of his achievement and artistic skills in literary translation.

Xiao attached great importance to the proper choice of work to be translated. By “proper” he means those works that are not only commonly acknowledged as valuable but agreeable to the translator's taste and disposition as well. In the 1930s while working as an editor for the literary column for *Dagong Weekly*, he wrote about the importance of translating works that one likes (Xiao Qian, 2005b, p. 137):

Dickens is not likely to be translated well by one who lacks a sense of humor. Nor can Conrad or O'Neill be translated lively if the translator falls short of lived experience at the sea. Likewise, a translator of Mansfield must be embodied with a soul as subtle and delicate as the authoress herself.... The best way to guarantee a good translation is to choose an author you love, with whom you share similar life experiences.

Xiao himself best exemplifies the point he advocates. The similarity between the two authors of Xiao and Joyce explains the success of his translation of *Ulysses*. As early as 1929 Xiao heard for the first time of the name of this rebellious novelist in classroom lectures. A decade later when studying in London he began to devour Joyce's *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses*. Hence chronologically speaking, Joyce did not exert direct influence on Xiao's story and novel writing, which were all written before he went abroad. It is an interesting coincidence that Xiao and Joyce shared quite a few similarities in their literary creations.

Firstly, the two writers share a similar way to get source material of literary writing: personal life experiences. Xiao's writings are also mostly auto-biographical, centering on his boyhood experiences, and molding characters in his own cast. He was the knowledge-hungry boy struggling against destiny for schooling (*Pear Peels*), the fatherless boy suffering his palm to heavy ferule for delayed tuition fee (*Low Eaves*), the homeless boy who eventually learns to behave himself in other's home (*Under others' Roofs*), and the milk boy who swallows bitter insults and bullies (*Little Jiang*). However, for all these sufferings, he was still a boy—naughty, bold and chivalrous (*The Captivated*). The only novel *Dreamy Valley* is framed on the author's calf love at the age of 18, a tragedy of pure and true love crushed by an evil, wealthy and powerful rival. Xiao asserts that great works are in essence autobiographic; imagination is useful only in that it can play some role in pruning, refilling, readjusting and transforming the given source materials for a given purpose of expounding a certain aspect of life (Xiao Qian, 2005b, p. 345). In this aspect Joyce shares similar ideas. Almost all the characters in *Ulysses* have prototypes in Joyce's life. Stephan, the rebellious young poet in Joyce's *Dubliners*, *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*, is James Joyce in prototype. The voluble narrator in "Cyclops" is modeled after his father John, Molly, his wife Nora, and Mulligan, a former friend named Gogarty that Joyce believed to have betrayed him.

Secondly, religious rebellion and passionate patriotism are prominent themes in both of the authors' literary works. Four of Xiao's stories *Conversion*, *Promising Prospect*, *Shen and Shang* and *Epiphyllum* expose from varied perspectives the deceiving and enslaving attempts of missionaries and priests to convert the Chinese "infidels". Xiao's reflections on religious problems were induced by the conflicts of doctrines. In daytime at school he was taught to believe in God and to read and recite the *Bible*, whereas in the evening at home he was made to worship Buddhism. Life finally taught him to see through all this foolery and, waging his pen, he wrote to unveil the hypocrisy of all religions with Voltairean poignancy. Like Xiao, Joyce also articulated the pains and rebels of religion in his stories and novels. One of the themes of Joyce's *Dubliners*, *A Portrait*, and, of course, *Ulysses*, is the relentless revelation of the hypocrisy of Catholic Church, which accounted for the publication trouble and banning of the books. In *Ulysses*, Joyce wrote dozens of doggerels to mock at priests and clergymen, and adroitly reverted quotations from the *Bible*, for example *Alleluia* becomes *Aiulella*, and God becomes "Dooooooooooooog".

Xiao and Joyce also shared common love for their motherland. Their passionate patriotism was expressed in the same fervor. In *Stamps* Xiao mouthed a young patriot's indignation at Japan's invasion into China through his communication with a boy who was obsessed with stamp-collecting. Patriotism was also the theme in *Roadside* and *Chestnuts*. Similarly, through the eyes and mouths and personal experiences of the minor, mediocre Irish people Joyce unpacked to the world a history of suffering from waves of foreign invaders, plunderers and manslaughters since the 10th century. History, like a nightmare, leaves Joyce unspeakable pains, which finally found expression in one of his speech in exile: "How can a slave forget the slashes on his back?" With disintegrated portraits and deconstructive languages in all his works, Joyce "subverted the lies of colonizers, unmasked the true history, aroused the countrymen's numb conscience, and stepped further towards liberating national spirit: reflecting on history." (Guo Jun, 2004, p. 81-90)

The above analysis on similarities in literary writing between Xiao and Joyce demonstrates the affinity of the soul of the two writers. Xiao could have finished his thesis on modernist novels for his Master's degree at SOAS of London University but for the breakout of the Second World War. When, at the age of 80, he accepted the commission by Yilin Press to translate *Ulysses* into Chinese, it rekindled his earlier enthusiasm about *Ulysses*. Xiao's translation techniques of the novel will be expounded later in this dissertation, but here it suffices to point out that Xiao is a qualified translator of Joyce, whose ideas on choosing a proper author to translate echoes finely what Dillion Wentworth, the English translator, advocated four centuries ago. In *Essay on Translated Verse* (1685), Wentworth wrote (Lefevere, 1992, p. 43):

Then seek a Poet who your way does bend,  
And choose an Author as you choose a Friend:  
United by this sympathetic Bond,  
You grow familiar, intimate and fond;  
Your Thoughts, you Words, your Styles, your Souls agree  
No longer his interpreter, but he.

## VI. CONCLUSION

As a renowned modernist novelist, Joyce is very creative in his literary writing, maneuvering freely the English language to express his deep hatred for religious hypocrisy and colonizing oppressions, as well as well-masked patriotism for his motherland. In *Ulysses*, the best of his three novels, Joyce employs a vast variety of stylistic experiments, making it a novel of kaleidoscopic styles. Though very hard to translate, this nationalistic epic in prose has been translated into many languages, some supervised by the author himself. The complete Chinese versions of the novel were produced by Xiao and Jin in the 1990s, 70 years later since its publication in Paris in 1922. Of the two translators, Xiao arouses our major interest because he is not only an experienced translator, but an established writer in Chinese as well, and his literary composition shares some common features with Joyce, showing a kindred spirit between the two authors.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Attridge, D. (1990). James Joyce. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [2] Bulson, E. (2008). The Cambridge Introduction to James Joyce. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- [3] Butler, C. (1990). Joyce, modernism, and post-modernism. In D. Attridge (ed.) *James Joyce*. pp. 259-282. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Gibson, A. (2002). Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetic in Ulysses. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [5] Gillespie, M. P. and Gillespie, P. F. (2000). Recent Criticism of James Joyce's Ulysses: An Analytical Review. Woodbridge: Camden House.
- [6] Guo, Jun. (2004). James Joyce: Nightmare of History and Art of Trauma. *Foreign Literature Review*, 2004(3):81-90.
- [7] Halliday, M. A. K. (1973). Exploration in the Functions of Language. London: Edward Arnold.
- [8] Jin, Di. (2001). Shamrock and Chopsticks. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
- [9] Lawrence, K. (1981). The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [10] Lefevere, A. (1992). Translation/History/Culture: A Source book. London and New York: Routledge.
- [11] Lv, Jun. (1995). On the Two Chinese Translations of *Ulysses*. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal*, 1995 (1):35-40.
- [12] Miller, M. A. (2006). Masterpieces of British Modernism. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- [13] Norris, M. (1990). *Finnegans Wake*. in D. Attridge (ed.) *James Joyce*. pp. 161-184. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Semino, E. and Short, M. (2004). Corpus Stylistics: Speech, writing and thought presentation in a corpus of English writing. London and New York: Routledge.
- [15] Wang, Yougui. (2000). Joyce in China: 1922-1999. *Comparative Literature in China*, 2000(2): 79-80.
- [16] Xiao, Qian. (2005a). Ulysses. Nanjing: Yilin Press.
- [17] Xiao, Qian. (2005b). Complete Works of Xiao Qian. Wuhan: Hubei People's Press.

**Qing Wang** was born in Yantai, China in 1969. She graduated from Shandong University, China, in 2010 with Ph. D in Translation Studies.

She is currently associate professor in Department of English, Shandong Jiaotong University, Jinan, China. Her research interests include translational stylistics, literary stylistics, and corpus translation studies.

Dr. Wang is a member of China Association for the Philosophy of Language.

# The Effect of Visual and Textual Accompaniments to Verbal Stimuli on the Listening Comprehension Test Performance of Iranian High and Low Proficient EFL Learners

Ataollah Maleki

English Language Department, Faculty of Medicine, Zanjan Medical Sciences University, Zanjan, Iran  
Email: atamaleki@hotmail.com

Masoud Safaee Rad

Azad University of Hamedan, Iran  
Email: masoud.safaei@gmail.com

**Abstract**—The present study aimed at comparing the effect of a series of static images with that of condensed paraphrased scripts accompanying verbal stimuli in listening comprehension tests supplemented with visual or textual input. It utilized three batteries of IELTS listening tests: one sampling 58 participants to carry out the study with, another with supplemented visual or textual aids, and the other without such aids. The participants were then divided into higher proficient listeners group (HPL) and the lower proficient listeners group (LPL) on the basis of their performance on a general listening module of the IELTS examination. The HPL was subsequently divided into two groups: one receiving static images with verbal stimuli, another receiving script presentations with the same verbal stimuli. The LPL was also divided into two groups with the same procedure. The analysis of results showed that listening tests with static images yielded better performance than script presentations, visual aids were more advantageous to lower proficient listeners while textual aids were more advantageous to higher proficient listeners, and tests with more static images yielded much better performance than those with fewer static images.

**Index Terms**—listening comprehension, verbal stimuli, visual aids, textual aids, static images, higher proficient, lower proficient

## I. INTRODUCTION

As in other fields of study, new technology has had a profound influence on language education industry. The application of such pedagogically prolific technology has been an object of research by language educationalists (see, for example, Bubel, 2008; Zielinski, 2008; Ockey, 2007; wagner, 2007; Gruba, 2006). One important, but less considered area, is listening comprehension and testing, which is now being taught and assessed using modern technology, i.e., multimedia and computerized equipment. Bachman (1990) notes that listening comprehension assessment needs to correspond with language used in the real life to be authentic. As such, listening comprehension tests offer the most challenging area of language assessment and research. The advent of reliable and high quality video recording equipment with listening texts accompanied by video texts and auditory channel juxtaposed with visual channel has eased the problem. This can be seen in the emergence of manifold listening tests as a result of different research projects conducted on the effects multimedia application on listening comprehension tests (see Robin, 2007). (Hoven, 1999; Balizet et al., 1999).

Most real life listening involves both verbal and nonverbal information; however, listening sections in current high stakes tests of English such as IELTS and TOEFL lack the non verbal (visual) component which is highly abundant in target language use. Wagner (2002) and Ginther (2001) assert that presenting a more realistic and valid test of communicative competence, increasing the face validity of the test, ensuring better representations of actual communicative situations, and enhancing the measurement of the test taker's listening comprehension may help make audiovisual presentation of the listening comprehension stimuli more advantageous to audio only presentation. On account of this, the present study is intended to address the problem by first exploring the effect of added visual component to the verbal stimuli on an IELTS listening comprehension test and, subsequently, comparing this visual aid with another help option, textual aid. Secondly, it sets out to investigate the effects of these supplemented components across different levels of test takers, viz, higher and lower proficient listeners.

The study is significant as it aims at finding out the impact and difference in the performance of two modes of modified listening comprehension test inputs. Since multidimensional representation of the input is thought to enhance

the learning of listening and its testing, the outcome of the research will contribute to improvement of teaching and testing of listening comprehension.

#### A. *Research Questions*

- a. Is there a significant difference between performance on listening comprehension tests accompanied with static images and those accompanied with condensed and paraphrased scripts?
- b. Do low proficient listeners benefit from visual and textual aids more than high proficient listeners on listening comprehension tests?
- c. Is there a meaningful difference between performance on listening tests accompanied with more static images and those accompanied with fewer static images?

#### B. *Hypotheses*

The following null hypotheses are proposed to investigate the research questions:

- a. There is no significant difference between performance on listening comprehension tests accompanied with static images and those accompanied with condensed and paraphrased scripts.
- b. There is no significant difference between low proficient listeners' benefiting from visual and textual aids and that of high proficient listeners.
- c. There is no meaningful difference between performance on listening tests accompanied with more static images and those accompanied with fewer static images.

## II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although listening skill plays a vital role in second language learning (Field, 2002; Lynch, 2002; Peterson, 2001; Rost, 2001), it was not taken seriously until late 19th century (Rost, 2001). Rost thinks that as a result of developments in anthropology, education, linguistics, sociology and even global politics in the late 19th century, teaching listening has experienced many changes. Rost (2001) also records that 1960s witnessed the rise of Communicative Language Teaching Movement and Conversation Analysis, which regarded listening as an integral part of communicative competence (see, also, Nunan, 2002; Field, 2002; Morely, 2001). During 1970s and 1980s, spontaneous spoken language and scripted texts with a degree of authenticity and authentic recordings were regarded pertinent input (Rost, 2001; Willmington and Steinhilber, 1993). Since 1990s up to now, spontaneous spoken language and scripted texts with a degree of authenticity, face to face learner talk, expert speaker learner interaction, and authentic recordings have been the main input of this period. Here, instructional focus is the use of listening strategies for enhancing comprehension and coping with problems (Nunan, 2002). Robin (2007) asserts that over the last 25 years authentic audio and video in which real media are utilized have received considerable attention. It is now possible to deliver listening texts using video texts which extend beyond just auditory channel to encompass visual channels (Wagner, 2007). Visual information, which is richly present in real life situation, is a primary non verbal input that can aid listeners to take part in real communication (Rost, 2007; Buck, 2001).

Textual support for listening comprehension is another type of listening supplement offered to L2 listeners (Chang and Read, 2007). It has recently been investigated from many different angles including listeners' interaction with subtitles and transcripts (Grgurović and Hegelheimer, 2007), the effects of captions on listening comprehension (Robin, 2007; Winke et al., 2010), synchronous bimodal chat that includes sound and text (Blake et al., 2008), the effect of textual support on listening comprehension tests (Chang and Read, 2007) and the interaction of text and context in a multimedia environment (Kramsch and Anderson, 1999). According to Kramsch and Anderson (1999), the crucial role of textual aids in listening comprehension is incontrovertible, but there are still disputes over how they are different from visual aids (Chun and Plass, 1997).

Testing listening has posed a real dilemma for language testers (Balizet et al., 1999). According to Lynch (2002), "It is not easy to design listening comprehension tests that reflect the purpose of real life listening, partly because most listening tasks require either no response or a minimal response from the listener" (P. 42). The transient nature of the spoken language (Hughes, 2003), the internal and unobservable nature of the listening comprehension process (Chastain, 1988; Lynch, 2002), the reciprocal nature of real life situations (Lam, 2002; Nunan, 2002), the interference from knowledge or skills other than listening (Buck, 2001; Field, 2002; Lynch, 2002), the role of non verbal information (Wagner, 2002; Wagner, 2007), and the complexity of real world listening context (Buck, 2001) will certainly compound the problem.

Increasingly, listening assessment has attempted to investigate the effects of task characteristics and task conditions on learners' performance in competency based listening assessment tasks (Brindly and Slatyer, 2002), the cognitive processes involved in the listening comprehension (Bubel, 2008), the inclusion of still image or video in computer based listening tests (Ockey, 2007), test takers' viewing behavior during an L2 video listening test (Wagner, 2007), the effects of different visual types on listening comprehension tests (Ginther, 2001; Ginther, 2002), the effects of speech rate modification on listening comprehension (Griffiths, 1990), the role of technology in test construction, administration, and assessment (Chalhoub-Deville, 2001), the effects of item stems and answer options on listening comprehension tests (Yanagawa and Green, 2008), the effects of emotion on comprehension assessment (Chen et al.,

2007), the effects of multiple choice listening question on listening comprehension test performance (Yi'an, 1998), the effects of different text and question types on L2 listening test scores (Shohamy and Inbar, 1991), and the effects of test method and item preview on the measurement of listening comprehension (Buck, 1991).

Despite the myriad researches conducted, "... the assessment of listening remains far behind current views of listening" (Rost, 2001, p. 13). Attempting to bridge this gap, researchers have emphasized the importance of authentic input and authentic listening (Chang and Read, 2007; Hughes, 2003; Weir, 1990), focus on meaning (Richards, 2005), computer and technology applications in language testing (Chalhoub-Deville, 2001), and the role of context in listening assessment (Fulcher and Davidson, 2007).

Trying to investigate whether simultaneous presentation of visuals with the verbal text improved L2 listeners' performance, Ginther (2002) included content and context visuals. Ginther (2002) concluded that visuals increased the face validity of listening tests and their accompaniments to verbal stimuli ensured finer examples of actual communicative situations.

Another study which was conducted by Ockey (2007) included a series of static images or videos in computer based listening tests to see how they would affect the construct validity of listening tests. The results of the study implied that listening comprehension tests must include static images with only minimally altering the listening construct to be measured. In contrast, video implementation required a rethinking of listening construct on the grounds that test takers showed various engagements with video stimuli on computer based listening tests.

Chen et al. (2007) considered another aspect of audio visual content, efficacy of affective annotation in a multimedia listening comprehension environment. They designed Emo Player software which enabled them to make interactions upon the emotional status of the listeners through a timeline model. This specific type of modified listening input delivery, exploring both visual and auditory channels to listening, resulted in a better comprehension of a video clip in a limited period of time.

Video mediated listening tests, on balance, have gained approval in recent years (Brindley, 2001). Their efficiency has been explored from different viewpoints such as the effect of film discourse and the use of video in listening tests (Bubel, 2008), the use of videotexts for listening comprehension by adopting a media literacy perspective (Gruba, 2006), the application of listening theory in the context of visual media (Hoven, 1999), the test takers' interaction with video listening texts (Wagner, 2007), and the listeners' integration between verbal and visual information (Chun and Plass, 1997).

The important role that textual support plays in listening comprehension has been well documented in the literature (Chang and Read, 2007; Robin, 2007). Robin (2007) recommends updating the definition of authenticity and including technological possibilities supporting a text. Grgurović and Hegelheimer (2007) presented two types of textual help options, i.e., subtitles and transcripts, to test takers and wanted to explore whether subtitles or transcripts were more effective as modified listening input to L2 listeners. They believed that multimedia presentation of listening materials accompanied with textual alternatives would yield better results than paper and pencil listening comprehension tests. Results of their study showed that the participants of the study made use of subtitles more frequently and for longer periods of time than the transcripts. The subtitles were also used by higher the proficiency group more frequently and for longer period of time than the lower proficiency group. Both groups, however, interacted in a remarkably similar manner with the transcripts.

More recently, Winke et al. (2010) have sought to investigate the effects of video based listening activities with and without captioning on learners of different first language backgrounds. They concluded that captioned videos were more effective than non captioned videos partly because they improved attention and processing by reinforcing previous knowledge and mainly because "... captions facilitate language learning by helping learners visualize what they hear" (P.65). They asserted that captions were important pedagogical tools which connect auditory and visual input in authentic listening videos and could be used as "crutch" for second language listeners.

### III. METHOD

#### A. Participants

Out of a pool of 100 Iranian EFL students 62 were selected on the basis of their performance on an IELTS listening comprehension test. One participant was excluded due to his illness during the second test administration. Three others were also removed from the study because of their extreme scores. Therefore, the final number of participants was 58, which was divided into two 29 homogeneous, male female groups.

The participants who scored one standard deviation above the mean in a general listening module of the IELTS examination were regarded as the Higher Proficiency Listeners group (HPL), which included 15 females and 14 males. On the other hand, those who scored one standard deviation below the mean were considered as the Lower Proficiency Listeners group (LPL), which consisted of 14 females and 15 males.

The HPL group was then divided into two subgroups: one receiving static images along with listening texts, abbreviated as the HSI (Static Image) group and the other receiving condensed paraphrased script presentations along with listening texts, abbreviated as the HSP (Script Presentation) group. The HSI group consisted of 7 females and 8 males, but the HSP group consisted of 8 females and 6 males.

In the same way, the LPL group was divided into two subgroups: one receiving static images along with listening



texts, abbreviated as the LSI (Static Image) group and the other receiving condensed paraphrased script presentations along with listening texts, abbreviated as the LSP (Script Presentation) group. LSI group consisted of 7 females and 7 males, but LSP group consisted of 7 females and 8 males.

All participants were native speakers of Persian. Their age ranged from 16 to 26 with the mean of 21.22. Their English language learning experience ranged from 3 to 7 years with the mean of 4.6. Mean age of the HPL group was 22.16 and that of the LPL group was 20.31. The English language learning experience mean of the HPL group was 4.64 years and that of the LPL group was 4.54 years.

#### B. Instrumentation

In order to obtain measurable data to get the intended results of the study, we used the following instruments, which were adopted from Harrison and Whitehead (2005):

1. An IELTS listening module test
2. IELTS listening test one—a four section forty question IELTS listening module test
3. IELTS listening test two—a four section forty question IELTS listening module test with two different versions of modified input supplemented to the listening text—one with visual aid consisting of a series of still images related to the verbal stimuli of the listening text and another with textual aid consisting of a series of condensed and paraphrased script presentations related to the verbal stimuli of the same text.

The Kurder Richardson 20 formula was used to estimate the reliability of tests one and two ( $r_1 = 0.754$ ;  $r_2 = 0.743$ ).

#### C. Design

Two different types of modified listening input, namely visual and textual supplementations to the verbal stimuli, are provided to be administered via a computerized multimedia IELTS listening comprehension test (Listening test 2). These tests results are then compared with each other and with the results obtained from another IELTS listening comprehension test with no modifications, that is, an audio only listening test module (Listening test 1). Both tests, however, are similar, except for the modifications in the listening test 2.

### IV. RESULTS

Table 1 presents data on the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP, HPL, and LPL groups on the listening test one.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST ONE SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI AND HSP, HPL, AND LPL GROUPS

	Mean	Median	Maximum	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	15.57	15.50	21	10	2.74	7.49
LSP	15.13	15.00	25	10	3.70	13.70
HSI	25.53	25.00	31	19	3.44	11.84
HSP	21.64	22.00	27	17	2.68	7.17
HPL	23.58	23.5	31	17	3.06	9.5
LPL	15.35	15.25	26	10	3.22	10.59

As depicted in table 1, the HSI group scored the highest mean (25.53), but the LSP group scored the lowest mean (15.13). Moreover, the lowest average disparity among the scores on the listening test one belongs to the HSP group ( $SD = 2.68$ ) while the highest average disparity among the scores on the listening test one belongs to the LSP group ( $SD = 3.70$ ).

Table 1 also shows the performance of the HPL and LPL groups on the listening one test. Here, the highest mean score belongs to the HPL group (23.58). The HPL group's standard deviation ( $SD = 3.06$ ), on the other hand, is lower than that of the LPL group ( $SD = 3.22$ ).

Table 2 displays data on the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP groups on the listening test two.

TABLE 2  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST TWO SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI, AND HSP GROUPS

	Mean	Median	Maximum	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	19.36	19.00	29	14	3.89	15.17
LSP	15.40	16.00	23	9	4.10	16.83
HSI	26.73	27.00	33	20	4.30	18.50
HSP	23.64	23.50	28	19	2.56	6.55

According to table 2, the highest mean score in the listening two belongs to the HSI group (26.73) and the lowest mean score belongs to the LSP group (15.40). In addition, the lowest average disparity among the scores in listening test two belongs to the HSP group ( $SD = 2.56$ ) while the highest average disparity belongs to the HSI group ( $SD = 4.30$ ).

Section one of the IELTS listening test is a non academic dialogue which comprises the first ten items of the test. Table 3 shows the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP groups on this section.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST TWO (SECTION ONE) SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI, AND HSP GROUPS

	Mean	Maximum	Median	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	6.36	10	6	5	1.60	2.55
LSP	5.60	9	6	3	2.03	4.11
HSI	6.87	10	7	1	2.13	4.55
HSP	6.43	8	6	3	1.28	1.65

As depicted here, the highest mean score in section one of the listening test two belongs to the HSI group (6.87) and the lowest belongs to the LSP group (5.60).

Section two of the IELTS listening test is a non academic monologue which comprises the second ten items of the test. Table 4 shows the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP groups on this section.

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST TWO (SECTION TWO) SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI, AND HSP GROUPS

	Mean	Maximum	Median	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	6.07	8	6.50	2	1.59	2.53
LSP	4.47	7	5.00	1	1.51	2.27
HSI	7.80	10	8.00	4	1.66	2.74
HSP	6.50	8	7.00	3	1.34	1.81

According to table 4, the highest mean score in section two on listening test two belongs to the HSI group (7.80) and the lowest belongs to the LSP group (4.47).

Section three of the IELTS listening test is an academic discussion which consists of the third ten items in the test. Table 5 shows data on the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP groups on this section.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST TWO (SECTION THREE) SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI, AND HSP GROUPS

	Mean	Maximum	Median	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	5.21	7	5.50	3	1.12	1.26
LSP	4.07	6	5.00	1	1.39	1.92
HSI	6.80	9	7.00	3	1.66	2.74
HSP	5.71	8	6.00	3	1.44	2.07

As depicted in table 5, the highest mean score in section three belongs to the HSI group (6.80) and the lowest belongs to the LSP group (4.07).

Section four of the IELTS listening test is a mini lecture monologue which consists of the fourth ten items in the test. Table 6 displays data on the performance of the LSI, LSP, HSI, and HSP groups on this section.

TABLE 6  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE IELTS LISTENING TEST TWO (SECTION FOUR) SCORES OF THE LSI, LSP, HSI, AND HSP GROUPS

	Mean	Maximum	Median	Minimum	Std Deviation	Variance
LSI	1.71	7	1	.00	2.13	4.53
LSP	1.27	3	1	.00	.96	.92
HSI	5.27	10	5	1.00	2.43	5.92
HSP	5.00	7	5	2.00	1.47	2.15

Here, the highest mean score is 5.27 which belongs to the HSI group and the lowest belongs to the LSP group (1.27).

## V. DATA ANALYSIS

Based on the information in table 2 for the LSI and LSP groups' performance on listening test 2, an independent samples t test was run to measure the differences between the scores of the two groups (Table 7).

TABLE 7  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T TEST OF THE LSI AND LSP GROUPS' PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST TWO  
**Independent Samples 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
Equal variances assumed	1.50	.486	2.50	27	.013	3.96	1.49	.90	7.0
Equal variances not assumed			2.50	27	.013	3.96	1.49	.90	7.0

According to table 7, there was a significant difference in the scores of the LSI group (M= 19.35, SD= 3.89) and the LSP group (M= 15.40, SD= 4.10),  $t(27) = 2.66$ ,  $P < .05$ . The magnitude of the difference in the means was very large

(eta squared= .207), with the static images accompanying the verbal stimuli explaining 20.7 percent of the variance in scores over the LSI and LSP groups.

Further, as depicted in table 2, the HSI group displayed a noticeably higher mean score for listening test two than the HSP group (26.73 V 23.64). To see whether the difference between the two means was by chance, we run an independent sample t test (Table 8).

TABLE 8  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T TEST OF THE HSI AND HSP GROUPS' PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST TWO

	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	3.80	.061	2.40	27	.028	3.09	1.32	.369	5.82
Equal variances not assumed			2.40	23.06	.027	3.09	1.30	.393	5.79

The analysis proved that the difference between the means was significant ( $t(27) = 2.32, P < .05$ ). The magnitude of the difference in the means was large (eta squared= .167), with the static images accompanying the verbal stimuli explaining 16.7 percent of the variance in scores over the HSI and HSP groups.

The statistics in tables 1 & 2 for the LSI group display a noticeably higher mean score for the listening test two than the listening test one (19.36 V 15.57). To determine whether this difference reaches statistical significance, we carried out a paired samples test. Table 9 summarizes the data.

TABLE 9  
PAIRED SAMPLES T TEST OF THE LSI GROUP'S PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST ONE AND TWO

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Test1-Test2	-3.78	3.30	.884	-5.69	-1.87	-4.3	13	.001

The information in table 9 indicates that there was a significant difference between the LSI group scores for test two ( $M = 19.36, SD = 3.89$ ) and test one ( $M = 15.57, SD = 2.74$ ),  $t(13) = -4.28, P < .05$ .

In a similar way, based on the statistics in tables 1 & 2, the HIS group displayed a somewhat higher mean score for the listening test two than the listening test one (26.73 V 25.53). Table 10 depicts the statistical significance of the tests means.

TABLE 10  
PAIRED SAMPLES T TEST OF THE HSI GROUP'S PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST ONE AND TWO

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Test1-Test2	-1.20	2.27	.587	-2.45	.059	-2.04	14	.060

The information in table 10 indicates that there was no significant difference between the HSI group scores for the test two ( $M = 26.73, SD = 4.3$ ) and the test one ( $M = 25.53, SD = 3.44$ ),  $t(14) = -2.04, P > .05$ .

According to tables 1 & 2, the LSP group performed somewhat better on the test two than the test one (15.40 V 15.13). The paired samples t test, table 11, proved that there was no significant difference between the LSP group scores for the test two ( $M = 15.40, SD = 4.10$ ) and the test one ( $M = 15.13, SD = 3.70$ ),  $t(14) = -.48, P > .05$ .

TABLE 11  
PAIRED SAMPLES T TEST OF THE LSP GROUP'S PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST ONE AND TWO

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Test1-Test2	- .266	2.12	.547	-1.44	.907	-.487	14	.634

As it was shown in tables 1 & 2, the mean difference between the test two scores and the test one scores for the HSP group was significant (23.64 V 21.64). This was proved by results of the paired samples tests in table 12 ( $M = 23.64$ ,  $SD = 2.56$ / $M = 21.64$ ,  $SD = 2.68$ ),  $t(13) = -3.22$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

TABLE 12  
PAIRED SAMPLES T TEST OF THE HSP GROUP'S PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING TEST ONE AND TWO

Paired Samples Test								
	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Test1-Test2	-2.00	2.32	.62	-3.33	-.66	-3.22	13	.007

Table 13 summarizes the information related to the LSI and HSI groups mean performance on sections two and four of the listening test two.

TABLE 13  
THE LSI AND HSI GROUPS' PERFORMANCE ON SECTIONS TWO AND FOUR OF THE LISTENING TEST TWO

Paired Samples Statistics				
LSI+HSI	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Section 2	29	6.94	1.80	.33
Section 4	29	3.50	2.80	.53

As it is shown in the table, the mean score for section two is approximately twice the mean score for section four (6.94 V 3.50). Results of a paired samples t test (table 14) proves that the difference was statistically significant ( $M = 6.94$ ,  $SD = 1.80$ / $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 2.80$ ),  $t(28) = 6.04$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

TABLE 14  
PAIRED SAMPLES T TEST OF THE LSI AND HSI GROUPS' PERFORMANCE ON SECTIONS TWO AND FOUR OF THE LISTENING TEST TWO

Paired Samples Test								
LSI+ HSI	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Section 2-Section 4	3.40	3.00	.56	2.25	4.57	6.04	28	.000

## VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Drawing on the results obtained to answer the first question of the study, there was a significant difference between performance on listening comprehension tests accompanied with static images and those accompanied with condensed and paraphrased scripts. In the lower proficient listeners group, the LSI group outperformed the LSP group and in the higher proficient listeners group, the HSI group outperformed the HSP group. Therefore, results for the first question suggest that listeners' performance on listening comprehension tests supplemented with static images is better than their performance on the same listening tests supplemented with condensed and paraphrased scripts. The finding is in line with the research results reached by researchers such as Ginther (2002) and Ockey (2007).

Regarding the second research question, it was found that lower proficient listeners (the LSI group) benefited from visual aids accompanied with the verbal stimuli in the listening test two and the listening test one. However, higher proficient listeners (the HSI group) did not benefit from visual aids accompanied with the verbal stimuli in the listening test two and the listening test one. It was also found that lower proficient listeners (the LSP group) did not benefit from textual aids accompanied with the verbal stimuli in listening test two and listening test one. The higher proficient listeners (the HSP group), however, did benefit from textual aids accompanied with the verbal stimuli in the listening test two and the listening test one. Visual aids, on the other hand, helped lower proficient listeners (the LSP group) more than the higher proficient listeners (the HSP). Other researchers have also supported these findings in one way or another (see, for example, Brindley, 2001; Hoven, 1999; Chun and Plass, 1997).

Finally, answer to the third research question revealed that listening tests accompanied with more static images resulted in much better performance by the LSI and HSI groups than listening tests accompanied with fewer static images. Therefore, it can be concluded that higher frequency of static images accompanied with verbal stimuli enhances test takers' performance on listening comprehension tests. These findings, also, get support from other studies (e.g. Robin, 2007; Grgurović and Hegelheimer, 2007; Winke et al., 2010).

Pedagogically, the present study has practical implications for listening comprehension materials development. Multidimensional presentation of listening input at most, and bimodal presentation of listening input at least, will surely duplicate the real life language atmosphere in the classroom in which both listening comprehension and viewing comprehension are accentuated.

Taking communicative listening assessment into consideration, the study implies that authentic performance based assessment needs to be more representative of target language use domain by supplementing non verbal components to verbal stimuli in listening comprehension tests. Their inclusion may also add to the validity and interactiveness of listening tests.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [2] Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Balizet, S., Treder, D., & Parshall, C. (1999). The development of an audio computer based classroom test of ESL listening skills. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- [4] Blake, R., Wilson, N. L., Cetto, M., & Pardo Ballester, C. (2008). Measuring oral proficiency in distance, face to face, and blended classrooms. *Language Learning & Technology*, 12 (3), 114-127.
- [5] Brindley, G. (2001). Assessment. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 137-143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Brindley, G., & Slatyer, H. (2002). Exploring task difficulty in ESL listening assessment. *Language Testing*, 19 (4), 369-394.
- [7] Brown, H. D. (2003). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.
- [8] Bubel, C. M. (2008). Film audiences as overhearers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40, 55-71.
- [9] Buck, G. (1991). The testing of listening comprehension: an introspective study. *Language Testing*, 8 (1), 67-91.
- [10] Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [11] Chalhoub Deville, M. (2001). Language testing and technology: past and future. *Language Learning & Technology*, 5 (2), 95-98.
- [12] Chang, A. C-S., & Read, J. (2007). Support for foreign language listeners: its effectiveness and limitations. *RELC Journal*, 38 (3), 375-395.
- [13] Chastain, K. (1998). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- [14] Chen, L., Chen, G., Xu, C., March, J., & Benford, S. (2007). EmoPlayer: A media player for video clips with affective annotations. *Interacting with Computers*, 20, 17-28.
- [15] Chun, D. M., & Plass, J. L. (1997). Research on text comprehension in multimedia environments. *Language Learning & Technology*, 1 (1), 60-81.
- [16] Field, J. (2002). The changing face of listening. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 242-247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [17] Fulcher, G., & Davidson, F. (2007). *Language testing and assessment: An advanced resource book* (C. N. Candlin & R. Carter, Eds.). New York: Routledge Applied Linguistics.
- [18] Ginther, A. (2001). Effects of the presence and absence of visuals on performance on TOEFL CBT listening comprehension stimuli (TOEFL Research Rep. No. 66). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- [19] Ginther, A. (2002). Context and content visuals and performance on listening comprehension stimuli. *Language Testing*, 19 (2), 133-167.
- [20] Grgurović, M., & Hegelheimer, V. (2007). Help options and multimedia listening: Students' use of subtitles and the transcript. *Language Learning & Technology*, 11 (1), 45-66.
- [21] Griffiths, R. (1990). Facilitating listening comprehension through rate control. *RELC Journal*, 21 (1), 55-65.
- [22] Gruba, P. (2006). Playing the videotext: A media literacy perspective on video mediated L2 listening. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10 (2), 77-92.
- [23] Harrison, M., & Whitehead, R. (2005). *Thomson exam essentials: IELTS practice tests*. London: Thomson ELT.
- [24] Hoven, D. (1999). A model for listening and viewing comprehension in multimedia environments. *Language Learning & Technology*, 3 (1), 88-103.
- [25] Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [26] Kramsch, C., & Andersen, R. W. (1999). Teaching text and context through multimedia. *Language Learning & Technology*, 2 (2), 31-42.
- [27] Lam, W. Y. K. (2002). Raising students' awareness of the features of real world listening input. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 248-253). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [28] Lynch, T. (2002). Listening: Questions of level. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 39-49). Oxford University Press.
- [29] Morley, J. (2001). Aural comprehension instruction: Principles and practices. In M. Celce Murcia (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.) (pp. 69-84). US: Thomson Learning; Heinle & Heinle.
- [30] Nunan, D. (2002). Listening in language learning. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 238-242). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [31] Ockey, G. J. (2007). Construct implications of including still image or video in computer based listening tests. *Language Testing*, 24 (4), 517-537.
- [32] Peterson, P. W. (2001). Skills and strategies for proficient listening. In M. Celce Murcia (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.) (pp. 87-99). US: Thomson Learning; Heinle & Heinle.
- [33] Richards, J. C. (2005). Second thoughts on teaching listening. *RELC Journal*, 36 (1), 85-92.
- [34] Robin, R. (2007). Commentary: Learner based listening and technological authenticity. *Language Learning & Technology*, 11 (1), 109-115.
- [35] Rost, M. (2001). Listening. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 7-13). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [36] Rost, M. (2007). Commentary: I'm only trying to help: A role for interventions in teaching listening. *Language Learning &*

- Technology*, 11 (1), 102-108.
- [37] Shohamy, E., & Inbar, O. (1991). Validation of listening comprehension tests: The effect of text and question type. *Language Testing*, 8 (1), 23-40.
  - [38] Wagner, E. (2002). Video listening tests: A pilot study. Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, 2, 1.
  - [39] Wagner, E. (2007). Are they watching? Test taker viewing behavior during an L2 video listening test. *Language Learning & Technology*, 11 (1), 67-86.
  - [40] Weir, C. J. (1990). Communicative language testing. New York: Prentice Hall.
  - [41] Willmington, S. C., & Steinbrecher, M. M. (1993, April). Assessing listening in the basic course: The university of Wisconsin Oshkosh listening test. Paper presented at the Joint Meeting of the Southern States Communication Association and the Central States Communication Association, Lexington, KY.
  - [42] Winke, P., Gass, S., & Sydorenko, T. (2010). The effects of captioning videos used for foreign language listening activities. *Language Learning & Technology*, 14 (1), 65-86.
  - [43] Yanagawa, K., & Green, A. (2008). To show or not to show: The effects of item stems and answer options on performance on a multiple choice listening comprehension test. *System*, 36, 107-122.
  - [44] Yi'an, W. (1998). What do tests of listening comprehension test? A retrospection study of EFL test takers performing a multiple choice task. *Language Testing*, 15 (1), 21-44.
  - [45] Zielinski, B. W. (2008). The listener: No longer the silent partner in reduced intelligibility. *System*, 36, 69-84.



**Ataollah Maleki** is currently Associate Professor of TEFL at Zanjan Medical Sciences University, IRAN. His main interest of research is communication strategies, EFL teaching, teaching and testing, ESP, discourse analysis, and phonetics. He has been engaged in teaching English and applied linguistics for more than twenty years. He holds a Ph. D. degree in TEFL, an M. A. in TEFL, and a postgraduate diploma in applied linguistics and phonetics. He has published a number of books and articles in his areas of interest in academic journals.



**Masoud Safaee Rad** is an instructor at Azad University of Hamedan, Iran. His main area of research is CALL. He holds a B. A. degree in English translation and an M. A. degree in TEFL.

# Thinking through Content Instruction: Microteaching Unveils

Nor Hashimah Isa

Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan  
Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Perak, Malaysia  
Email: shima6655@yahoo.com

Hj. Kamaruzaman Jusoff

Department of Forest Production, Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang 43400, Selangor, Malaysia  
Email: kjusoff@yahoo.com

**Abstract**—This paper investigates the extent of critical skills being incorporated in the undergraduates' lesson as shown in their microteaching sessions. The researcher seeks to find evidence of critical thinking skills in the undergraduates' content instruction of their respective lessons. She investigates the integration of critical thinking skills via the undergraduates' lesson plans and the lesson's implementation. She seeks for inclusion of these skills by viewing the taped lessons. Recommendations to UPSI are also presented in an effort to inspire awareness on the compelling need for thinkers amongst undergraduates and future teachers.

**Index Terms**—critical thinking, content, instruction, skills, microteaching

## I. INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking (CT) is higher order thinking and it involves skills. We use critical thinking when we are trying to make decisions or solve problems in our daily lives. Decision making is a thoughtful process of choosing a variety of options for acting or thinking (Freeley & Steinberg, 2008). They stress further that in critical thinking the decider in decision making makes a choice. Undeniably, critical thinking is a vital skill and ability that can assist us in difficult times at work or at home. Bassham *et.al* (2005) define critical thinking (CT) as 'a wide range of cognitive skills and intellectual dispositions needed to effectively identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments and truth claims; to discover and overcome personal prejudices and biases; to formulate and present convincing reasons in support of conclusions; and to make reasonable, intelligent decisions about what to believe and what to do.' Freiberg and Driscoll (1992) see critical thinking (CT) as the ability and disposition to make and assess conclusion based on evidence and it is a process for determining the value of an idea, a concept, a solution or information. Paul and Elder (2001) say 'development in thinking requires a gradual process requiring plateaus of learning and just plain hard work. It is not possible to become an excellent thinker simply because one wills it. They believe that it will take years. Hence, it is undisputedly true that critical thinking is cognitive skill to identify, analyze and problem solving for the goodness of everyone involved. It requires a long time to materialize. In so doing, disposition to critical thinking is very much needed as it is an inclination to think critically and to make use of its fundamentals in solving problems, supporting an argument or making decisions.

Bassham *et. al* (2005) provides justifications why critical thinking is important in the classroom. They believe the focus at the universities or colleges is higher-order thinking. They go on further to say that the students learn a variety of skills that can immensely improve their performance in the classrooms. These skills are about arguments and beliefs of others where they understand them, critically evaluate them and develop and defend their own well-supported ones. Lett (2010) a college professor says that most of the freshman and sophomore students in his classes simply do not know how to draw reasonable conclusions from the evidence although they've been taught in high school what to think; few of them know how to think. He declares:

In an attempt to remedy this problem at my college, I've developed an elective course called "Anthropology and the Paranormal." The course examines the complete range of paranormal beliefs in contemporary American culture, from precognition and psychokinesis to channeling and cryptozoology and everything between and beyond, including astrology, UFOs, and creationism. I teach the students very little about anthropological theories and even less about anthropological terminology. Instead, I try to communicate the essence of the anthropological perspective, by teaching them, indirectly, what the scientific method is all about. I do so by teaching them how to evaluate evidence.

Critical thinking is pertinent to be grasped by college or university students as they are pursuing tertiary education. This is undisputedly true as these undergraduates come from diverse cultural backgrounds and they need to be equipped with these critical thinking skills to see opinions and arguments in a healthy way. They will turn out to be more understanding and accommodating persons. Hence, it is pertinent that undergraduates who are future teachers of the English Language in Malaysian secondary schools conscious of the significance of having critical thinking skills and

imparting them to their students. The thought provoking question is whether these undergraduates are really knowledgeable and aware of their critical thinking skills. Therefore, this paper probes for answer as it is crucial that these future teachers of the English language are aware of the necessity of being equipped with these critical thinking (CT) skills if they wish to bring their secondary students to more doors of possibilities and challenges in the future.

The quality of education that teachers provide to student is highly dependent upon what teachers do in the classroom (Effandi and Zanaton, 2007). Teachers make a difference in their students' lives and this will continue to shape them into fantastic individuals when they become great sons, daughters, fathers, wives and the list goes on. Irrefutably, believing in the greatness of critical thinking (CT) as having the power to change peoples' lives and thinking is much required amongst these university students. Norris (1985) suggests that teachers should check their own awareness and ability to be open to critical thinking from their lessons in order to promote this. This is indeed great advice for these future teachers. Nevertheless, a lecturer can only pray that there is a critical thinking beacon shining in the Malaysian Secondary English Language classrooms emitted by her UPSI graduates. For this reason, she looks for incorporation of critical thinking (CT) and the much awaited disposition of CT in their lessons during the challenging yet entertaining microteaching sessions.

Microteaching in Teaching of English as Second Language (TESL) is part of the undergraduates' coursework for the TESL Methodology 14 week course conducted by the researcher who is a senior lecturer of the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Languages and Communication at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI). This is an education university and with this stature UPSI must produce great secondary school teachers who will be mushroomed all over Peninsular and East Malaysia. In order to meet this demand lecturers and undergraduates work together in the transformation of these ignorant souls to effective English Language secondary school teachers. We do not need more teachers to perceive their higher order thinking skills to be inadequate as researched by Rajendran (2001). In his study that focused on the teaching of higher-order thinking skills in language classrooms he found that the teachers possessed significantly different and better attitude towards teaching Malay or English as compared to the teaching of Higher Order thinking skills. These teachers perceived that they were better prepared in terms of their knowledge; pedagogical skills and attitude to teach these subjects as compared to teach higher order thinking skills. Hence, UPSI must ensure that novice teachers who graduated from this institution have the capability and knowledge to teach higher-order thinking skills to their students.

The objective of this paper are three-folds, namely to (a) examine the different levels of critical thinking skills incorporated in the undergraduates' microteaching lessons, (b) study the relationship between having critical thinking skills amongst the undergraduates and carrying out their lesson during the microteaching and (c) determine the possible reasons of undergraduates' refusal to integrate critical thinking and its higher levels in their microteaching lessons.

## II. METHODS

The undergraduates have to carry out a Microteaching session from week 8 to 12. The microteaching Laboratory equipped with sound proof walls and equipment is the venue as the undergraduates' microteaching lessons are videotaped by the technician. This brings us to the purpose of this paper that is to seek the extent of critical skills being incorporated in the undergraduates' lesson as evident in their microteaching sessions. Prior to their microteaching sessions they received input on critical thinking (CT) and its importance in teaching in their TESL methodology course. In fact, they have also gained knowledge about CT from their education papers offered by the Education Faculty. Therefore, these undergraduates are aware of critical thinking, its different levels and significance in teaching the English Language to Malaysian secondary school students. The researcher hopes to investigate CT being included in their lesson plan and their teaching in Microteaching sessions. They were previously taught to include critical thinking in their lessons and one way to find out if CT is truly given some importance is to analyse their taped lessons and their lesson plans. This is very pertinent because as future teachers of the English Language they must be equipped with critical thinking (CT) skills so that they can train young Malaysians to be more critical, creative and innovative as required by inevitable changes in the highly competitive society. Freiberg and Driscoll (1992) go on to say that "much of the push for thinking skills has resulted from an awareness that we live in a society that requires us to make complex decisions. They also believe in providing specialized preparation for teachers as well as support for their efforts in critical thinking content.

Data for the analysis is the undergraduates' video taped lessons and their lesson plans during the microteaching sessions. Microteaching is the ultimate session where the undergraduates put into practice theories, examples, aids and new ideas that they have acquired from the TESL Methodology course. Critical thinking skills are integrated in the course and undergraduates are repeatedly guided and advised of incorporating them in their lessons. These undergraduates prepare their respective lessons using the stipulated lesson plans and implement the lessons microteaching laboratory where their lessons were videotaped by the technician. Their classmates are given the roles of Malaysian secondary school students depending on the requirements of the 'teachers'. If the 'teacher wants an average Form 1 class then the classmates have to abide and take up the role. The researcher sits at the back and assesses the lessons. At the end of two lessons, she asks the 'teachers' about their strengths and weaknesses of their lessons. She then gives her feedback and suggestions. The researcher then continues observing the other lessons being taught by other undergraduates.



Later, the researcher views the microteaching via the video-taped lessons, where she analyses the incorporation of critical thinking (CT) embedded in participants' lessons and in their lesson plan. She then looks for the different levels of critical thinking skills such as from the lower to the higher end. To exemplify, identifying is on the lower end while problem solving and making decisions are on the higher end of the critical thinking continuum. She analyses and records the incorporation of CT and its levels in Table 3. Then, she subsequently calculates it to a percentage to see the patterns of the incorporation of the CT and its levels in the participants' lessons.

This is actually the participants or undergraduates' very first experience teaching and they were actually nervous but excited. It has been an interesting experience for the researcher too because she is very anxious to witness knowledge and theories being put into practice. She is even more concerned to see the integration of critical thinking (CT) and its different levels incorporated in their lessons.

The participants of the research are the TESL (Teaching of English as Second Language) major undergraduates of the TESL Methodology course (BIT 2083) Semester 2, 2009/2010. They are from group B and 16 of them from different gender and ethnicity. They participated in the microteaching which was carried out in the microteaching laboratory. They are between 21 to 23 years of age and are in their first semester second year. BIT 2083 is an important course that guides them to be effective English Language secondary school teachers. They will embark on their compulsory Practicum Teaching when they reach semester eight. Therefore, this course is very essential for them as it exposes them to the teaching theories and practices, critical thinking skills and microteaching before they go for their practicum or teaching practice.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are several significant findings of the research. The undergraduates' microteaching lessons overall do not consist of critical thinking skills of the higher end such as problem solving and making decisions. In fact, their lessons are more inclined to have lower critical thinking skill such as identifying, categorizing and cause and effect. Table 1 explains the findings of the research.

TABLE 1:  
THE UNDERGRADUATES' INCORPORATION OF CT AND LEVELS OF CT IN THEIR MICROTEACHING LESSONS

No.	Undergraduates	CT in Lesson Plan	CT in implementation of lesson (Microteaching)	Lecturer's Remarks
1	A	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Environment</i> . She did not include CT of Cause & effect or 'problem solving'. She merely told a story of a trash can that turned into a monster and chased them in the field.
2	B	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Recycle</i> . She did try to elicit students to CT 'cause & effect'. No CT 'problem solving'.
3	C	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Environment</i> . She just talked about changes in the weather and animal extinction and asked student about changes to their neighborhood (CT identifying) but did not bring CT cause & effect or 'CT problem solving'.
4	D	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Earth</i> . Showed students video clip of M.J's 'Earth Song'. Although she asked students what caused earth's destruction she did not bring them to CT problem solving.
5	E	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Friendship</i> . She showed interesting video animations. She merely asked her students what they think about the video and friendship. Did not give a situation that can make students do CT 'cause & effect' or 'solving problems'. She actually had interesting games and her students enjoyed her class.
6	F	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Environment</i> . She did not have CT 'cause & effect' or 'Problem solving'. Her elocution is good. Interesting games though and her students enjoyed her class
7	G	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Environment</i> . Merely CT 'identifying'. Very little CT 'cause & effect' and he did not relate his students' answers to CT 'Problem solving'.
8	H	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Air pollution</i> . He carried out interesting games but no CT at all.
9	I	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Friendship</i> . She had a good song that is relevant to the lesson and her students sang well but did not relate their responses to CT 'cause & effect' or CT 'problem solving'.
10	J	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Being great friends</i> . She had interesting games that caught her students' attentions. Nevertheless, no CT.
11	K	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Healthy foods</i> . She had CT 'identifying' only. Did not have CT 'cause & effect' or CT 'problem solving'.
12	L	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Healthy lifestyles</i> . She had interesting games for her students 'fruits & vegetables' that is CT 'identifying'. She had CT 'cause & effect' but no CT 'problem solving'.
13	M	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Foods</i> . He had CT 'identifying' of foods that offer protein, carbohydrates and vitamins. He also had CT 'cause & effect' but none on CT 'problem solving'.
14	N	Yes	No	Lesson: <i>Healthy Foods</i> . He has guessing games but no CT of any level at all.
15	O	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Disabled people</i> . He showed very relevant pictures and video of disabled people that was actually very moving. He merely discussed the answers based on the video but did not bring his students to CT 'problem solving' or CT 'cause & effect'.
16	P	Yes	Yes	Lesson: <i>Caring society</i> . He had interesting pictures of the disabled but he only had CT 'identifying' of different types of disability. No CT 'cause & effect' or CT 'problem solving' incorporated.

It was observed that 100 % of the participants incorporated critical thinking skills (CT) in their lesson plans. A total of 62.5 % of the participants integrated CT in implementation of their microteaching lessons while 37.5 % of the participants did not integrate CT in implementation of their microteaching lessons. Meanwhile, 100 % of the participants who incorporated CT in their microteaching lessons did not include CT 'problem solving' in their microteaching lessons. A total of 90 % of the participants who incorporated CT in their microteaching lessons did not include both CT 'cause & effect' and CT 'problem solving', while 50% of the participants who incorporated CT in their microteaching lessons included CT 'cause & effect.' However, 100 % of the participants who incorporated CT in their microteaching lessons included merely CT 'identifying'.

The participants who are undergraduates of TESL Methodology course did incorporate critical thinking skills in their microteaching lessons but only to a certain extent. Majority of them integrated critical thinking skill 'identifying' which is the lower end, half of them incorporated CT 'cause and effect' while majority too did not include the higher level CT problem solving. Unquestioningly, all of the 62.5 % participants who integrated CT in their microteaching lessons merely used the lower CT that is 'identifying.'

The compelling question is whether these undergraduates are really knowledgeable of critical thinking and its different levels. The researcher is rather disappointed because she did give her input on critical thinking skills and their exemplifications in her class. They did get their input from the education lecturers from the education faculty. So, what went wrong? Why the glaring incomprehensible loopholes? The researcher strongly believes that these undergraduates lack knowledge of creating scenarios of CT in the higher level such as 'cause and effect' and 'problem solving.' Wright (2001) gives an example of a situation where the students can read through and try to solve it.

Example:

In another case, suppose you forgot to put your name (or ID number) on one of the weekly quizzes in certain course (A) and received an unusually low grade on that quizzes (B). This would be a correlation, and you might speculate about how omitting your name might have affected the grade. However, if you also know that you skipped class and did not do the reading for the week, this would be something else that correlated with both A and B. In this context it would be NTD (non-trace data) favoring a chance explanation of the correlation. For lack of preparation would be such a good explanation of the low grade that we need not try to construct weird stories involving your name (p. 252).

He gives a question:

What is the most plausible story you can think of that would connect omitting your name to the grade in this case? What direction of influence does this story have (p. 252)?

He gives an answer:

It depends on your personality. But for most people, perhaps most plausible, would be that you realized you were unprepared and the anxiety or panic or fretting caused you to omit your name. This would be a common cause: being unprepared caused both the bad grade and the omitted name, independently (p. 307).

The above is a clear cut example of a scenario in critical thinking where students or undergraduates of colleges and universities must comprehend, analyse and solve. It is not trivial as the researcher believes such example to be highly incomprehensible to many especially when it is in the English Language. Hence, the undergraduates must be knowledgeable in order to understand critical thinking. Norris (1985) believes that "to think critically, one must have knowledge" (p.308). He agrees that a teacher's first responsibility to his or her students 'critical thinking is development of a knowledge base (p. 308). This is true as without certain knowledge students will not be able to identify, analyse and to solve problems and make decisions. In others words, they are far from being critical thinkers.

Pertaining to the issue of not being knowledgeable in the creation of critical thinking (CT) examples or scenarios, the researcher is aware of the fact that perhaps these undergraduates could have done better if the lessons were in the Malay Language. This medium of instruction is Malaysia's national language and the Malays' first language. This is because one horrendous problem that is ever so burdening them is their proficiency in the English Language. This is so crystal clear regardless of race or gender. Not being proficient and eloquent in the English Language is nothing new if one is to put these TESL undergraduates under the microscope. Critical thinking in the English language would require a certain level of vocabulary and comprehension. This is because according to Freiberg and Driscoll (1992) the fundamentals of critical thinking includes confirming conclusion with facts, identifying bias, propaganda, stereotype, identify assumptions, recognize overgeneralization and identify relevant or irrelevant information.

TABLE 2:  
RESPONDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Skills	Count No.	%
Most unsatisfactory	66	.3
Not Satisfactory	358	1.7
Fair	4730	22.1
Satisfactory	11777	55.1
Most Satisfactory	4438	20.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>21369</b>	<b>100.0</b>

TABLE 3:  
RESPONDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING ACROSS FIELDS OF STUDY

Area of Discipline	Least Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		Fair		Satisfactory		Most Satisfactory	
	Count (n)	%	Count (n)	%	Count (n)	%	Count (n)	%	Count (n)	%
Arts & Science Social	61	.7	192	2.3	61	.7	1607	19.3	4007	48.2
Science	46	1.0	227	4.9	46	1.0	1377	29.8	2091	45.3
Technical	30	0.5	135	2.4	30	0.5	1047	18.3	2701	47.1
ICT	12	0.8	32	2.0	12	0.8	243	15.3	712	44.8
Education	9	0.8	15	1.3	9	0.8	190	17.1	597	53.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>4464</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>10108</b>	<b>47.3</b>

Nor Hashimah *et.al* (2009) report that only 20.8 % of the graduates admit their critical thinking skills are most satisfactory while 55.1 % admits that their critical thinking skills are satisfactory (Table 2). This is rather disheartening as critical skills are very essential in ensuring employability and marketability amongst the graduates. This data shows that a significant number of the graduates are in the category of having satisfactory, average and unsatisfactory critical thinking skills. This is not something that we can sweep under the carpet because critical thinking skills are crucial in an employee's life as this assists him or her in making decisions, problem solving and other challenging moves in their work environment. Although UPSI graduates do have a better chance of securing jobs as secondary school teachers but they must realize that Teaching institutes in the country which were formally Teacher training colleges are also having TESL courses for their students. Hence, this could pose a stiff competition in terms of getting their posting to schools.

It is not surprising that graduates are also not knowledgeable in critical thinking skills and its levels. This is found in a recent tracer study of Public university graduates of 2007. Nor Hashimah *et.al* (2009) realize although 53.9 % of the education graduates admit that their Critical Thinking Skills are most satisfactory and they top compared to the other fields of study (Table 3). It is also important to note that these teachers do admit that their CT is merely satisfactory and least satisfactory. Perhaps, the future teachers feel they have satisfactory Critical thinking skills more than the other graduates because they did learn about them in their education courses at the universities. Let it be known that most education courses are taught in the Malay Language. Hence, it is understandable that the education graduates or teachers perceived their critical thinking skills as high compared to the others. What would have happened if their medium of instruction is English Language?

Another possible reason to the undergraduates' failure to incorporate higher level CT in their microteaching lessons is their nervousness and anxiety. The participants are greenhorns. The microteaching experience was their very first exposure to teaching in English despite having their friends as their secondary school students. This experience is a simulation of the real deal in schools yet their apprehension when teaching was easily detected. There are many reasons for their nervousness and anxiety. They are prepared because they have designed their lessons and instructions with visual aids, games, and video. They prepared their lesson plans well. The most glaring reason is their lack of vocabulary in English and that made them very nervous and insecure.

Nor Hashimah *et.al* (2009) investigate the relationship between 2007 graduate employability and marketability and the employability skills (soft skills) courses they attended prior to their graduation. This is a survey carried out by the Ministry of Higher Education. The study found that English Language is still a problem to be acquired by the graduates even for those with highly related jobs. It is alarming those who are employed by the government have low MUET (Malaysian University English Test) scores compared to the ones employed in local private companies. The Education graduates also rank the highest in having low MUET for highly related, fairly related and not related jobs. MUET stands for Malaysian University English Test and Education graduates are future secondary school teachers. What is to be expected of their teaching profession if their English Language is low? How can they be role models to encourage their students to listen, speak, read and write in English if their English is low? Undergraduates who are not living up to the expectation of future graduates can pose a big problem to the immensely competitive working organization.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Critical thinking is indeed a difficult skill to grasp and it takes time to settle in the individuals. It is crucial that these future teachers of English include critical thinking skills in their lessons as they help mold future critical thinkers amongst the young Malaysians in schools. Therefore, it is a compelling necessity that these undergraduates' microteaching is unveil to detect the evidence of critical thinking and its disposition being included in their lessons or content instruction. The undergraduates have to really understand what Freiberg and Driscoll (1992) have in mind for teachers when they say this of critical thinking in the classroom:

Critical thinking is a process begins with questioning by you and by your students. Together, you engage in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of events, information and ideas. The kind of thinking do before making a major purchase is critical because you look for options, weigh the advantages of your choice and reach a conclusion (p. 306).

The researchers have a few practical recommendations to help improve the undergraduates' critical thinking and its disposition. If considered, these suggestions can help these participants and other undergraduates to be better thinkers.

Firstly, UPSI needs to set up a new course in critical thinking and its disposition. The Faculty of Languages may create a synergy with the faculty of Science Cognitive and Faculty of Education. This has to be a course in English Language where undergraduates are exposed to the fundamentals of CT and the different levels. In so doing, the lecturers involved may refer to practical suggestions such as the ones by Moore and Parker (2009). They provide an in depth essentials of critical thinking. It includes among others 'how well the student determine what information is or is not pertinent, separate facts from opinion, recognize that a problem may have no clear answer or single solution and propose other options and weigh them in the decision.' These are some of the 21 fundamentals that he offered. Without a doubt, it takes a good command of the English language to decipher the critical thinking essentials given by these authors. If the undergraduates lack in critical thinking what is to be of the future of their students. What is to be said of the future of young Malaysians if their teachers lack critical thinking skills? Teachers need to give this input so that the young people will be able to make decisions, solve problems and present their opinions and ideas in shaping the nation. This is the forceful obsession that drives and forms tomorrow and respectively the future of a nation. Freiberg and Driscoll (1992) are in agreement that "another example of content for tomorrow is higher level thinking or critical thinking. It is the kind of content that will cross other curriculum areas: that is you will be able to teach critical thinking while teaching something else". Secondly, UPSI can provide soft skills workshops in English for the undergraduates. Soft skills workshops can help equip undergraduates to be better at communication and critical thinking. This can focus on communication in the English Language. These workshops should start as early as their second year till their final year. The researcher understands the time, monetary and human constraints of these workshops but they are indeed worth it. The undergraduates will be exposed to critical thinking in English that includes its essentials. These workshops can help undergraduates acquire critical thinking skills as soft skills so that when they graduate they will be marketable. Potential employers look for potential employees who are dynamic, extrovert and who can use arguments with reasons to win more revenues for the company. Howell and Kemp (2005) say 'an attempt to persuade by argument is an attempt to provide you with reasons for believing a claim, desiring something or doing something. They further stress that arguments appeal to a person's critical faculties that is his or her reason. Chafee (2004) advises us about the importance of making decisions so that we achieve greatness in our careers. He says that our jobs should be much more than a way to earn a pay check and the jobs should be vehicles for using our professional skills. They should also be opportunities for expressing our creative talents and stimulants to our personal growth and intellectual development. Chafee (2004) believes that our jobs should give experiences that provide us with feelings of fulfillment and self-esteem. University students should consider this advice before they pursue their future vocations.

Perhaps UPSI may use the nine strategies by Paul and Elder (2001). They believe prior to embracing the strategies we must accept the fact that there are serious problems in our thinking (accepting the challenge to our thinking) and begin regular practice through these stages:

Stage 1: The Unreflective Thinker (we are unaware of significant problems in our thinking)

Stage 2: The Challenged Thinker (we become aware of problems in our thinking)

Stage 3: The Beginning Thinker (we try to improve but without regular practice)

Stage 4: The Practicing Thinker (we recognize the necessity of regular practice)

Stage 5: The Advanced Thinker (we advance in accordance with our practice)

Stage 6: The Master Thinker (skilled & insightful thinking become second nature to us)

Possibly UPSI can use Paton's idea of using the reflective journal to enhance critical thinking amongst the university students. Paton (2006) from the University of Sydney, Australia reports one student who reflects that he or she has learnt that university is a place to start build up his or her own value of the world and that things happen in the world is not simply good or bad but it is important to understand the story and the background of it. Hence, reflective journals are undeniably excellent to enhance university or college students thinking skills.

Another idea is to use collaborative learning rather than individual learning. Gokhale (2010) finds that students who participated in collaborative learning had performed significantly better on the critical thinking test than students who studied individually. Perhaps UPSI can design a course that incorporates collaborative learning so that students may work together with their peers in the hope of equipping themselves with critical thinking skills. Malaysia needs critical thinkers who will bring the country to greater heights.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Gokhale, A.A. (2010). Collaborative Learning Enhances Critical Thinking. *Journal of Technology Education* Vol. 7 No. 1, Fall 1995. [http://sxholar.google.com/scholar?as\\_q=critical+thinking+&num=10&btnG=Search+Scholar&as\\_epq=&a](http://sxholar.google.com/scholar?as_q=critical+thinking+&num=10&btnG=Search+Scholar&as_epq=&a) retrieved 29 August 2010
- [2] Bassham, G., Irwin, W., Nardone, H. & Wallace, J.M. (2005). *Critical Thinking. A Student's Introduction*. 2nd edition. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- [3] Howell, T. & Kemp, G. (2005). *Critical Thinking. A Concise Guide*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge.
- [4] Chafee, J. (2004). *Thinking Critically. A Concise Guide*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- [5] Effandi Zakaria & Zanaton Iksan. (2007). Promoting Cooperative Learning in Science and Mathematical Education: A Malaysian Perspective. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 3(1). 35-39. <http://www.ejmste.com>.

- [6] Freeley, A.J. & Steinberg, D.L. (2008). *Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making*. <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ZRCRXPgIOgQC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=critical+thinking&retired=31August2010>
- [7] Freiberg, J. & Driscoll, A. (1992). *Universal Teaching Strategies*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- [8] Lett, J. (2010). *A Field Guide to Critical Thinking*. Vol 14.4. [http://www.csicop.org/si/show/field\\_guide\\_to\\_critical\\_thinkerretrieved31August2010](http://www.csicop.org/si/show/field_guide_to_critical_thinkerretrieved31August2010)
- [9] Moore, B.N. & Parker, R. (2009). *Critical Thinking* 9th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- [10] Nor Hashimah Isa, Rohana Jani & Md. Yusof Abu Bakar. (2009). *Employability Skills of 2007 Employed Public University Graduates: An inquiry*. Ministry of Higher Learning, Malaysia.
- [11] Norris, S. P. (1985). Synthesis of research on critical thinking. *Educational Leadership*, 40-45.
- [12] Paton, M. (2006). *Reflective Journal & Critical Thinking*. Symposium Presentation. <http://science.uniserve.edu.au/pubs/procs/2006/paton.pdf>. 16 August 2009.
- [13] Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2001). *Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life*. <http://www.criticalthinking.org/resources/books/tools-for-taking-charge.cfm>. 23 August 2010
- [14] Rajendran Nagappan. (2001). The Teaching of Higher-Order Thinking Skills in Malaysia. *Journal of Southeast Asian Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1.p 1-22. [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?as\\_q=critical+thinking+&num=10&btnG=Search+Scholar&as\\_epq=&a](http://scholar.google.com/scholar?as_q=critical+thinking+&num=10&btnG=Search+Scholar&as_epq=&a). Retrieved 25 August 2010
- [15] Wright, L. (2001). *Critical Thinking. An Introduction to analytical reading and reasoning*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [16] Paton, M. (2006). Symposium Presentation. *Reflective journals and critical thinking*. <http://sydney.edu.au/science/uniserve/science/pubs/procs/2006/paton.pdf>. Retrieved 25 August 2010

**Nor Hashimah Isa** is a senior lecturer of the English Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Sultan Idris Education University), Malaysia. Nor Hashimah holds a Ph.D in English Literature from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (National University of Malaysia), an M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction (English) from the University of Houston, Texas, USA and a Bachelor degree in TESL (Hons) from the Universiti Sains Malaysia (the Science University of Malaysia) Penang. The author's field of study is comparative literature, literatures in English and TESL Methodology.

She teaches English literature and Literatures in English to Bachelor, Masters and Advanced Diploma Students at the university. She is also the COORDINATOR of a compulsory university English language proficiency course called English for Communication II. She is the FACILITATOR for English for the Workplace, a course for the officers at the university. Her previous position was as a LECTURER of the English Language Department of the Federal Teacher Training College, Penang where she worked for five years. Prior to that, she taught English Language and Literature to Matriculation students of the Science University Malaysia in Penang. She has presented papers at international conferences of literature and English Language in Spain, Scotland, Australia and Germany. She is also the PEER REVIEWER for Universiti Teknologi MARA. Her books include *Communicate Better - reading, listening and speaking for academic purposes*(2000), *Read Up Write Down- English for Communication 2*(2010), *Read up, Write down*(2009), *Zenith in Communicative English*(2005) and *Zenith in Communicative English Second Edition*(2006). These books are all published by Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. Her upcoming book is entitled *Gusty Trail of May 13: Post-independence Malaysian Short Stories*. Her current research is on the selection literary texts for Malaysian Secondary Schools where she is the RESEARCH LEADER. It is a two year FRGS or Fundamental Research Grant Scheme, fully sponsored by the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

Dr. Nor Hashimah Isa was a member of the Kappa Delta Phi when she was studying in the USA. Now, she is a member of the MLA. She also contributes to the education bureau of *Persatuan Waris dan kerabat Negeri Perak*, an association for the royalties of the state of Perak.



**Hj. Kamaruzaman Jusoff** was born in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Malaysia, in 1958. He received the PhD in Forest Engineering from Cranfield University, England, UK in 1992. He is currently a Professor (Grade B) with Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been a Visiting Professor with The Harvard Forest, Harvard University, Kyoto's Graduate School of Engineering, Yale's Center for Earth Observation and an Erasmus Mundus Professor in Lund University, Sweden and ITC, The Netherlands. His field of expertise is in airborne hyperspectral image processing. Research and higher education leadership especially in creating succession planning models and talent pools have also being his current field of interests.

Hj. Kamaruzaman has been very active in scholarly journals-book writing and publishing and has published 7 books and more than 250 citation index/impact factor journal papers. Administratively, used to hold several posts in UPM as Deputy Dean, Faculty of Forestry, UPM Kampus Bintulu Designate Director, MACRES Deputy Director (R&D) while being active doing some consultancies on airborne hyperspectral sensing for forestry, agriculture, marine and Search-and-Rescue operations.

# Implied Negation in Discourse

Yun Ding

Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China  
Email: rainsdy@sina.com

**Abstract**—This essay aims at making qualitative analysis on implied negation in discourse proceeds by virtue of some linguistic theories related to this topic. The ubiquity of implied negation in discourse is owing to the speaker's need of politeness on account of face-saving theory. If it is used appropriately in conversation, it can make the conversation interesting and humorous and thus achieve a harmonious atmosphere by avoiding embarrassment caused by direct negation.

**Index Terms**—implied negation, co-operative principle, politeness

## I. INTRODUCTION

The tradition view of negation as a logical operator that reverses the truth-value of a proposition, has conditioned its status as a semantic concept in much of the literature in the field. Research in pragmatics and related disciplines, however, has incorporated negation as an element that determines the creation of specified discourse pragmatic functions, such as denial. A negative utterance can be part of any functional or pragmatic classification just in the same way as affirmative utterances are, as long as their different properties are accounted for.

Unfortunately, however, most work on negation on these terms has a semantic orientation, and the examples are typically isolated sentences. Very little work has been carried out on the discourse and pragmatic properties of negation in context. The most extensive works in the field are those by Givon (1993), and Tottie (1991). Whereas the former develops a framework of negation based on the notion of negation as a prepositional modality and on the cognitive properties of negative states and events, the latter carries out a detailed computer-based study of variants of negation in English speech and writing. Other authors have also contributed to the field, either by devoting sections of grammars, or of broader studies, to the functions of negation (Halliday, 1994; Lyons, 1977), or by focusing on specific aspects of its use (Horn, 1978). Thus, Horn (1978) considers the rhetorical properties of negation as a means of foregrounding and of establishing cohesion. The cohesive function of negation, in particular of lexical negation in discourse, is also mentioned by other authors (Lyons, 1977). The notion of negation as involving the denial of an assumption or a defeated expectation has also been the focus of attention of many studies, although the majority have been concerned with the psychological aspects of the processing of negation terms of sentences (Clark, 1977), rather than on the processing of negatives in discourse, be it spoken or written.

Therefore processing of negatives in discourse, especially affirmative utterances with negative meaning will be discussed in this article.

## II. TYPES OF SENTENCES WITH IMPLIED NEGATION IN DISCOURSE

Any utterance that is produced on some particular occasion is an actual utterance. In certain situations, the utterance that is produced is very highly determined by factors which we may describe, loosely for the moment, as contextual. For example, the utterance *Hello* when answering the telephone or of "Good morning" upon entering a shop at a certain time of day is highly determined by the social role that the utterer is playing and his recognition of what utterance types are appropriate to this role, and by a variety of more particular contextual features. (Lyons, 1977)

As for the implied negative meaning, it can be realized as well by the following types of sentences:

### A. Interrogative Sentence, Especially Rhetorical Question

Rhetorical question is asked not in order to elicit an answer but in order to state or deny something. A positive rhetorical yes-no question is like a strong negative assertion:

- (1) Is that a reason for desPAIR? (Surely that is not a reason...)
- (2) Can anybody doubt the WISdom of this action? (Surely no one can doubt...)

Unlike exclamatory questions these rhetorical questions have the normal rising intonation of a *yes-no* question, and are distinguished chiefly by the range of pitch movement.

There are also, rhetorical *wh*-questions. The positive question is equivalent to a statement in which the *wh*-element is replaced by a negative element (Quirk, 1985):

- (3) Who knows/cares? (Nobody knows/cares or I don't know/cares.)
- (4) What should I say? (There is nothing that I should say.)

Questions introduced by *why do you* have a positive presupposition, but a negative orientation when they have illocutionary force of directives:



(5) Why do you make such a fuss? (You are making a lot of fuss, but shouldn't make so much fuss.)

#### B. Imperative Sentence

Some positive imperative sentences are often employed to convey negative meaning:

(6) Please be more careful. (You are not very careful.)

(7) Leave the tap alone. (Don't touch the tap.)

(8) Keep off the grass. (Don't step on the grass)

#### C. Exclamative\Exclamation\Exclamatory Sentence

Nonsentence

(i) Exclamatory noun phrases modified by a restrictive relative clause (in most instances with zero relative) generally express disapproval:

(9) The clothes she wears! (I really don't like the clothes she wears.)

(10) The fuss they made!

(ii) Also expressing scornful disapproval are exclamatory phrases consisting of a noun phrase, generally a pronoun, followed by *and*, and other noun phrase with a matching possessive pronoun:

You and your statistics! (I deplore the way you so frequently resort to statistics; I am not satisfied with...)

(11) Him and his malicious gossip!

(iii) Exclamatory prepositional phrases beginning with *of all* express strong disapproval:

(12) Of all the impudence! (13) Of all the stupid things to say!

(iv) Exclamatory noun or adjective phrase may also express disapproval:

(14) Dirty place!

Apart from the subordinate *wh*-clause discussed before, several other kinds of clause that are subordinate in form are used as irregular sentences. They generally have the illocutionary force of exclamations, the omission of the matrix clause being mimetic of speechless amazement:

(i) That-clause generally contains the putative *should* that may accompany expressions of surprise. They typically convey disapproval or regret:

(15) *That* you could ever want to marry such a man!

(16) *That* it should come to this!

These sentences are distinctly more formal than the infinitive sentences in (ii) below.

(ii) To-infinitive clauses convey kinds of illocutionary force similar to those for that-clause. A common type begins with *To think (that)*, and is very similar in its illocutionary force to the that-clause in (i), though less formal:

(17) *To think* that she could be so ruthless! (She shouldn't be so....)

(18) *To think* that I was a millionaire!

The implied subject in such sentence is the first pronoun. It may be interpreted as something like "It surprises me to think..." or "It surprises one to think...", though the fuller forms are not exclamatory. When the infinitive clause begins with some other verb than *think*, its subject is understood from an introductory subject or vocative, or it may be apparent from the previous context:

(19) You fool, to forget your wedding anniversary!

(20) You're going to be in trouble. To say something like that!

(iii) Infinitive clauses introduced by *oh* express an exclamatory wish. The style is poetic or archaic, expect when jocular:

(21) Oh to be in England! (I wish I were in England.)

(22) Oh to be free! (I wish I were free.)

#### D. Ironical Sentence

By using a word in such an ironic way that it could convey a meaning opposite to its literally meaning. Typically there is an intention to mock:

(23) A fine daughter you raised. (Your daughter is not fine at all)

(24) You are telling me. (I don't need you to tell me.)

Of course, irony can be fulfilled by the sentence types or special structure mentioned above, e.g.:

(25) Much I care! (I don't care at all.)

(26) I am damned if it is true. (It is not true certainly)

Certainly, the above types of sentences conveying negative meaning are far from enough, since the conversation is various in forms. Nevertheless, I just illustrate those sentences that could be summarized, as their structures are different from the common ones. The ordinary sentences with implied negative meaning are also inside this category. Now that we know the variations of sentences with negative meaning, it is pertinent to inquire why they have some magic power? Actually, these sentences are some kind of implicatures we will deal with next. The following is the explanation.

### III. GENERATION OF IMPLIED NEGATION IN DISCOURSE

### A. Grice's Co-operative Principle

Assuming that we now have some idea as to what implicatures are, a natural question is how to explain their generation. Implicatures clearly play an important part in communication and equally clearly, there is a great deal of consensus as to what the implicatures of particular situated utterances are. There must therefore exist a principle mechanism (mechanisms), which licenses a set of inferences, given an utterance and its setting.

First of all, we need know Grice's conversational maxims.

No doubt the major contribution to our understanding of this type of process, however, has been Grice's theory of "*conversational implicature*". Grice proposed a system of 'conversational logic' i.e. intuitive principles which are supposed to guide conversational interaction in keeping with a general 'co-operative principle' (often referred to in the literature as CP). 'Maxims' differ from 'rules' in that they are seen as generally valid rather than to count only for specified and specified cases. The CP says:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose and direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice, 1975)

The maxims are:

a. The maxim of quantity

(i) Make your contribution as informative as is required for current purpose of the exchange.

(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

b. The maxim of quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

(i) Do not say what you believe to be false.

(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

c. The maxim of relation (later called relevance): Be relevant

d. The maxim of manner: Be perspicuous.

(i) Avoid obscurity of expression (ii) Avoid ambiguity (iii) Be brief (iv) Be orderly

It is generally regarded as being less important than the others; it is largely self-explanatory, except that:

(i) *Ambiguity*, of course, means "ambiguity in context": it is virtually impossible to avoid potential ambiguity.

(ii) Not everybody knows what *prolixity* means! The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* has lengthy, tediously wordy".

(iii) The orderliness Grice had in mind was recounting events in the order that they occurred (if temporal relations are not explicitly signalled).

In short, these maxims specify what participants have to do in order to converse in a maximally efficient, rational co-operative way; they should speak sincerely, relevantly, and clearly while providing sufficient information.

e. The nature of the maxims

A number of points need to be made about the nature of the maxims. The first is that they are not rules, after the fashion of grammatical rules. They are much more flexible, more like guidelines. Infringing a rule of grammar leads to an ill-formed utterance; the maxims can be creatively infringed, frequently conflict with one another, and are to be followed by and large, to the least of one's ability.

Grice is at pains to emphasize that the maxims are not culture-bound conventions like table manners: they are rationally based, and would hence be expected to be observable in any human society. In fact, Grice claims that similar maxims govern any co-operative activity. So, for instance, if workman A asks fellow workman B to pass him a chisel, B does not hand over a saw (maxim of quality), give two chisels (maxim of quantity), hand over a saw when none has been requested or seems necessary (maxim of relation), nor does he indicate the location of the chisel by means of a riddle (maxim of manner). This does not entail, however, that there are no cultural differences to be observed. One way in which cultures can differ is in the relative importance allotted to the maxims. For instance, a strict adherence to the maxim of quality may lead to no information at all being given. In some cultures, this may come across as rudeness, and to avoid this result, it may be preferable to provide fictitious information in order to make up a seemingly response.

### B. How Conversational Implicatures Arise—Flouting Maxims

It is now to consider the question of how implicatures arise. In Grice's system, there are two main mechanisms. The first, which gives rise to what are sometimes called *standard implicatures* require the assumption that the speaker is doing their best to follow the co-operative principle, even though the result may not be the best, from the point of view of the hearer. The second mechanism involves a deliberate *flouting* of the maxim, which is intended to be perceived as deliberate by the hearer, but at the same time as none the less intending a sincere communication, that is to say, without abandonment of the co-operative principle. But since speakers are expected to be co-operative by using language in accordance with the maxims, any clear breaching or flouting will be interpreted by a co-operative interlocutor as a conscious act signaling special (implicit) meaning. The inference based leads to *conversational implicatures*, in addition to or different from the 'standard' or 'conventional' ones, i.e. aspects of meaning that go even further beyond what is literally said. That is to say: If someone drastically and dramatically deviates from maxim-type behavior, then his utterances are still read as under-lying some maxim, the speaker can force the hearer to do extensive inferencing to some set of propositions, such that if the speaker can be assumed to be conveying these then at least the over-arching co-operative principle would be sustained. Some examples will follow.

Both kinds of implicature are of great interest. Since implied negation in discourse is fulfilled by certain



conversational implicature, I shall only concentrate on that, especially those conversational implicature indicating negative meaning.

#### Flouting Maxims

##### a) The maxim of quality:

This maxim might be flouted in the following exchange:

(27) A: What if the USSR blockades the Gulf and all the oil? B: Oh, comes now, Britain rules the seas!

Any reasonably informed participant will know that B's utterance is blatantly false. That being so, B cannot be trying to deceive A. the only way in which the assumption that B is co-operating can be maintained is if we take B to mean something rather different from what he has actually said. Searching around for a related but co-operative proposition that B might be intending to convey, we arrive at the opposite, or negation, of what B has stated—namely that Britain doesn't rule the seas, and thus by way of *Relevance* to the prior utterance, the suggestion that there is nothing that Britain could do. Hence Grice claims, ironies arise and are successfully decoded.

Other *Quality* flouting includes the uttering of patent falsehoods as in (28):

(28) A: Teheran's in Turkey, isn't it, teacher? B: And London's in Armenia I suppose.

Where B's utterance serves to suggest that A is absurdly incorrect. Or consider the rhetorical question like (29):

(29) Was Mussolini going to be moderate?

Which if the participants believe that whatever Mussolini was, he was not moderate, is likely convey:

Mussolini was definitely not going to be moderate.

Here, by overtly violating the sincerity of a question, an implicature is generated by a flouting of the maxim of Quality—do not say something that you believe it false.

##### b) The maxim of quantity

The uttering of simple and obvious tautologies should, in principle, have absolutely no communicative import; however, utterances of (30), (31)

(30) Annie: Was the dessert any good? Mike: Annie, *cherry pie is cherry pie*.

(31) If he does it, he does it.

Note that these, by virtue of their logical forms are necessarily true; the differences we feel to lie between them, as well as their communicative import, must be almost entirely due to their pragmatic implications. An account of how they come to have communicative significance, and different communicative significances, can be given in terms of the flouting of maxim of *Quantity*. Since this requires that speakers be informative, the asserting of tautologies blatantly violates it. Therefore, if the assumption that the speaker is actually co-operating is to be preserved, some informative inference must be made. Thus in case of (30) it might be 'the property of cherry pie is boring, and I don't like it at all; in the case of (31), it might be 'it's no concern of ours'. Clearly these share a dismissive or topic-closing quality, but the details of what is implicated will depend upon the particular context of utterance. Incidentally, exactly how the appropriate implicatures in these cases are to be predicted remains quite unclear, although the maxim of *Relevance* would presumably play a crucial role.

##### c) The maxim of relation

Exploitations of this maxim are, as Grice notes, a little harder to find, if only because it is hard to construct responses that *must* be interpreted as irrelevant. But Grice provides an example like the following:

(32) Johnny: Hey Sally, let's play marbles

Mother: How is your homework getting along Johnny?

Where by Johnny's mother remind him that he may not yet be free to play.

##### d) The maxim of manner

Be brief: wherever we avoid some simple expression in favour of some more complex paraphrase, it may be assumed that we do not do so wantonly, but because the details are somehow relevant to the present enterprise. One example of exploitation of this maxim will suffice here:

(33) A: Let's get the kids something. B: Okey, but I veto I-C-E C-R-E-A-M-S.

Where B ostentatiously infringes the maxim of manner (be perspicuous). By spelling out the word *ice-cream*, and there upon conveys A that B would rather not have ice-cream mentioned directly in the present of children, in case they are thereby prompted to demands some.

Another example:

(34) Miss singer produced a series of sounds corresponding close to the score of an aria from Rigoletto.

(35) Miss singer sang an aria from Rigoletto.

By the flagrant avoidance of the simple (53) in favor of the prolix (52) (and consequent violation of the sub-maxim 'be brief'), the reviewer implicates that there was in fact such considerable difference between Miss singer's performance and those to which the term 'singing' usually applied that her performance couldn't be called 'singing' at all.

Finally, and importantly, an expression with a single meaning can give rise to different implicatures on different occasions, and indeed on any one occasion the set of associated implicatures may not be exactly determinable. For example:

(36) John is machine.

This could convey that John's cold, or efficient or never stops working, or puffs and blows, or has little in the way of gray matter, or indeed any and all of these. Some implicatures can have creation indeterminacy in at least some cases, incompatible with the stable determinate senses usually assumed in semantic theory.

### C. How to Recognize Conversational Implicatures

The following are amongst the criteria which have been proposed to distinguish conversational implicatures from other semantic/pragmatic phenomena with which they might be confused. These criteria are not entirely logically independent from one another.

#### a) Context dependence:

An expression with a single meaning (i.e. expressing the same proposition) can give rise to different conversational implicatures in different context:

(37) A: Have you cleared the table and washed the dishes?

B: I've cleared the table. (But haven't washed the dishes)

(38) A: Am I in time for supper?

B: I've cleared the table. (No, you are too late for supper)

#### b) Defeasibility/Cancellability

Conversational implicatures can be cancelled by additional material without contradiction or anomaly.

(39) A: Did the Minister attend the meeting and sign the agreement?

B: (i) The Minister attended the meeting.

(ii) The Minister attended the meeting; a statement will be issued later with regard to the agreement.

B's first answer as it stands creates quite a strong presumption that the Minister did not sign the agreement. However, the additional material in B (ii) suppresses the implicature: we are no longer entitled, or invited, to conclude that the agreement was not signed.

Although defeasibility or cancellability is one of the standard criteria for CI, it is none the less questionable. The reason is that adding material changes the context: there is no way of suppressing the implicature without doing this. In other words, this criterion adds nothing that is not covered by the criterion of context dependence.

#### c) Non-detachability

The same propositional content in the same context will always give rise to the same conversational implicatures, in whatever form it is expressed (that is to say, the implicature is tied to meaning and not to form):

(40) A: Have you cleared the table and washed the dishes

B: I've taken all the things off the table.

#### d) Calculability

A conversational implicature must be calculable, using stable general principles, on the basis of conventional meaning together with contextual information. E.g.

(41) A: Do you like my new hat? B: It's pink.

If B's answer is a conversational implicature, A will surely calculate B's opinion—B doesn't like my new hat. If A couldn't understand B's implied meaning, this will not be a CI, for Grice points out that, for the addressee H to be able to calculate the implicature, H must know, or believe that he knows the facts in the following (i)-(iv):

(i) The conventional content of the sentence P uttered.

(ii) The cooperative principle and its maxims.

(iii) The context of P (e.g. its relevance)

(iv) Certain bits of background information.

(v) That (i)-(iv) are mutual knowledge shared by the speaker and the addressee.

This criterion serves to distinguish conversational implicatures from special arrangement whereby, for instance, two people agree (arbitrarily) that whenever one of them says X, they actually mean Y. For instance, a husband and wife might fix it between them that if one of them says "Have you seen anything of Clive recently?" it will mean "Let's leave in 15 minutes". This will not be calculable, by general principles, from the convention meaning of the utterance together with contextual information.

### D. Why Conversational Implicature Occurs? —On Politeness

As mentioned above, CI is arisen by the flouting of maxim. Why does this occur? Leech's (1983) *politeness principle* has provided explicit instructions.

#### The Politeness Principle

Before we discuss this principle and its maxims, some discussion of politeness is necessary. Politeness is first and foremost, a matter of what is said, and not a matter of what is thought or believed. Leech expresses the politeness principle thus:

i) Minimize the expression of impolite beliefs.

This has the merit of throwing the weight on to expression. Let us rephrase the principle as follows:

ii) Choose expressions which minimally belittle the hearer's status.

The sorts of thing which may be thought to belittle the hearer's status (or, alternatively expressed, "cause the minimum loss of face to the hearer") are:

- Treating the hearer as subservient to one's will, by desiring the hearer to do something that will cost effort, or restrict freedom, etc.

- Saying bad things about the hearer or things related to the hearer.
- Expressing pleasure at the hearer's misfortunes.
- Disagreeing with the hearer, thus denigrating the hearer's thought.
- Praising oneself, or dwelling on one's good fortune, or superiority.

The purpose of politeness is the maintenance of harmonious and smooth social relations in the face of the necessity to convey belittling messages. Of course, the nature of reality, social, psychological and physical, constrains the scope for politeness: if our world is to "work", we must respect this reality. We can think of co-operative principle as restraining influence on the politeness principle.

It is worthwhile distinguishing between *positive* and *negative* politeness. Negative politeness mitigates the effect of belittling expression:

(42) Help me to move this piano.

(43) You couldn't possibly give me a hand with this piano, would you?

Positive politeness emphasizes the hearer's positive status:

(44) Thank you, that was extremely helpful.

Generally speaking, we are more concerned, as social beings, with negative politeness, as breakdowns in social harmony are much more likely as a result of the expression of belittling thoughts.

Certain language expressions are specialized for politeness, such as *please* and *thank you*. But the greater part of politeness comes across in the form of implicatures. As many examples mentioned above, negative meaning (disagree) is conveyed by implicatures in terms of politeness. The overall mechanism Leech proposes for the generation of implicatures via the politeness principle is similar to that proposed by Grice for the co-operative principle, each principle, is accompanied by a set of more specific maxims. There are several maxims, of course, but I only deal with those relevant to my topic in this section.

Two things emerge here. First of all, and not surprisingly, saying something good about other person is much more polite than say something bad. Leech called this:

The approbation maxim, which can be summarized as:

Minimize dispraise of the hearer.

Maximize praise of the hearer.

Second, if we have to say something bad about (dispraise) the other, it seemed to be more polite to take an indirect route. Leech pointed out that, while speakers need to observe the maxim of quality (be truthful) in representatives, they often find that this conflicts not so much with one of Grice other three maxims, but rather with the need to be polite. To resolve this clash, speakers imply a criticism rather than badly state it.

As usual, negative politeness is the more crucial; hence the first sub-maxim is the more likely to be brought into play. The effect is to tone down any criticism or unfavorable comment:

(45) A: Well, I've done it. I've dyed my hair blonde. B: You look amazing.

"You look amazing" probably implies that B did not like the blonde hair. He does this by flouting the maxim of quantity (be maximally informative). The ambiguity of *amazing* (amazing for its beauty or awfulness) allows the speaker to be truthful and yet somewhat more polite than the direct answer, "You look awful, and I don't like that at all!"

*The agreement maxim*

Agreement is a relation between the opinions of the speaker and those of the hearer. This maxim is simply:

Minimize disagreement with the hearer. Maximize agreement of the hearer.

The sub-maxims are not clearly distinct. A typical strategy is to begin with partial agreement before expressing disagreement:

(46) A: She should be sacked immediately. We can't tolerate unpunctuality.

B: \* I disagree.

I agree with the general, but in this case there are mitigating circumstances.

*The consideration maxim*

Leech presents the consideration maxim as a separate principle, and it works just like the other maxims:

Minimize the hearer's discomfort/displeasure.

Maximize the hearer comfort/pleasure.

Negative politeness under this maxim involves the softening, by various devices, of references to painful, distressing, embarrassing or shocking events, facts or things etc. This also can produce implied negation in discourse:

(47) Wife: Will you go to the party with me tonight? You said you would last night.

Husband: \*No, that's impossible.

Well, yes, I am so glad to do that. But you know, honey, I have an important appointment tonight, so I am sorry. If I have time, I will ...

*Miscellaneous principle*

Leech proposes two more principles, independent of both the politeness principle and the co-operative principle. We shall not propose additional principle, but follow the Gricean example and speak instead of the deliberate flouting of

the principle of politeness. There are two basic possibilities here: one can be superficially polite, but patently insincere, leading to rudeness by implicature, or one can be superficially rude, but patently sincere, leading to politeness by implicature. The insincerity must be indeed patent, for the trick to work, and the strategy carries a certain risk that one might be taken at one's word. Leech groups the following sort of example under what he calls the *irony principle*:

(48) Do help yourself! (to someone who helps himself unjustifiably, without invitation)

(49) Well, thank you very much! (Someone parks his car in front of your drive, so you can't get out)

The opposite sort case comes under Leech's *banter principle* (actually both involve a type of irony):

(50) Look, what the cat's just brought in.

(51) You stupid bitch! (to a close friend who's just done something daft)

The implicature here is that the relationship is so solid that politeness is not necessary, and this is, of course a polite implicaturee.

Eventually, the irony principle, again, offers a sound theoretical foundation for those ironic sentences with negative meaning, such as (23), (24) and so on.

Take the following example as further illustration:

(52) Annie: Was the dessert any good?

Mike: Annie, *cherry pie is cherry pie*.

Mike's answer breaches the maxim of quantity (co-operative principle)—make your contribution as informative as is required for current purpose of the exchange. However, if Mike directly expressed his negative opinion, Annie would feel embarrassed. Therefore, Mike employs implication to his expression, which is the very application of politeness principle: the agreement maxim, the praise maxim, and the consideration maxim—all emphasized on minimizing disagreement, dispraise and discomfort with the hearer.

Leech observed that the relationship between indirectness and politeness could be quite complicated. The social distance between the speaker and the hearer, and the need to feel accepted by other people, can also have a significant effect on how we interpret the politeness of an utterance, and indeed how we structure our own utterances.

We see that between friends an indirect and more formal directive like "would you mind passing me the salt or could you please pass me the salt?" can sound rather unfriendly. However, with someone you do not know very well, this seems more appropriate. In the case of the military, the authority of a higher rank is so absolute that politeness does not really seem an appropriate criterion to apply.

Virtually, a framework to deal with these kinds of issues was developed by Brown and Levinson (1978). They have set out to develop an explicit model of politeness which will have validity across cultures. The general idea is to understand various strategies for interactional behavior based on the data that people engage in rational behavior to achieve satisfaction of certain wants. The wants related to politeness are the wants of *face*, "Something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction." (Brown and Levinson, 1978). The concept is directly related to the folk-expression 'lose face', which is about being embarrassed or humiliated. There are two kinds of face. One is *positive face*, the positive consistent self-image that we have and want to be appreciated and approved of by at least some other people. Positive politeness orients to preserving the positive face of other people when we use positive politeness, we use speech strategies that emphasize our solidarity with the hearer, such as Nicknames, informal pronunciation, shared dialect or slang expressions and so on. The other is *negative face*, or the right to territories, freedom of action and freedom from imposition, essentially the want that our actions be not impeded by others. Negative politeness orients to preserving the negative face of other people. This is much more likely if there is a social distance between the speaker and hearer. When we use speech strategies that emphasize our defense for the hearer. Nicknames, slang, and informal pronunciation tend to be avoided and requests tend to be more indirect and impersonal. The rational actions we take to preserve both kinds of face for ourselves and the people we interact with essentially add up to politeness.

A strengthen of Brown and Levinson approach over the rule-oriented presentations of politeness by Leech is that Brown and Levinson are attempting to *explain* politeness by deriving it from more fundamental notions of what it is to be a human being (being rational and having face wants). According to Leech's maxims of politeness, we can understand politeness phenomena in terms of these rules, but we fail to learn very much about why they should be such rule in the first place. Granted, Brown and Levinson ask us to accept at the start that people are rational and have two kinds of face wants, but this is much deeper starting point for explanation that starting with rules designed specifically for politeness itself.

We clearly attach great importance to 'speaking politely'. This aspect of the communicative process was largely ignored by Grice. Yet, the need to be polite can often account for why we choose to imply rather than assert an idea.

Overall, when we talk, we often observe the co-operative principle, but on certain occasions, we flout some maxims, thus creating conversational implicature, on account of politeness, which, surely, is in an attempt to save the hearer's face—both positive and negative. Therefore, it is quite luminous how and why implied negation in discourse is generated: belonging to conversational implicature, it is triggered by ostentatiously flouting co-operative principle on the ground of politeness for the purpose of saving hearer's face. Thus, owing to the four distinguished linguists implied negation in discourse has been justified in this essay.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bolinger, D. (1977). Meaning and Form, London: Longman. 21-35
- [2] Brown, N. and Levinson, S. (1987). Politeness: Some Universal in Language Usage. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- [3] Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1978.) universals in Language Usage Politeness phenomena in Goody, E. (ed), Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- [4] Clark, H.H. (1977). Psychology and Language. New York: Harcourt BraceJovanovich.
- [5] Downing, L.H. (2000). Negations, Text World and Discourse, the Pragmatics of Fiction. Ablex Publishing Corporation Stamford, Connecticut. 53
- [6] Givón, T. (1993). English in Grammar: a function-based Introduction. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub, Co.
- [7] Grice, H.P. (1975). Logic and Conversation. In P.Cole and J.L. Morgan (eds) (41-58)
- [8] Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. (1985). Language, context, and Text: a social-semiotic perspective. *Language and Learning* (3) Geelong, vic: Deakin University Press.
- [9] Klima, E.S (1964). Negation in English, in Fodor and Katz (eds). *The structure of Language*. Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice-Hall. 246-323
- [10] Leech, G.N. (1983). Principle of Pragmatics. London: Longman
- [11] Leech, G.N. (1994) .A Communicative Grammar of English 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Longman Singapore Publishers Ltd.
- [12] Levinson, S. C. (1983). Pragmatics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.109-125
- [13] Tottie, G. (1991). Negation in English Speech and Writing: a Study in Variation. New York: Academic Press, INC.

**Yun Ding** was born in Qingdao, China in 1976. She received his M.A degree in linguistics from Dalian Maritime University, China in 2003.

She is currently lecturer in Foreign Languages Department, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China. Her research interests include applied linguistics and language teaching.

# The Agony and Ecstasy of Being Black and Female: A True Voice of African American Women Poets

Vijaya K Raman

English Department, Rajalakshmi Engineering College, Chennai, India

Email: [viji.murari@gmail.com](mailto:viji.murari@gmail.com)

**Abstract**—Black women poets have made a significant contribution to African American Literature. They have written, both as Black and women, addressing the inequalities of Race and Gender. For a long time, Black women were mute spectators of discrimination against them. But in the twentieth-century, they began to break their silence and attempt to speak to the readers in a genuine voice. They share the drive to reassess and redefine themselves in the Past, Present and Future. This article deals with the way in which the four Women Poets, Ntozake Shange, June Jordan, Lucille Clifton and Audre Lorde deal with the issues of gender; they unanimously express their anger and indignation on Black female subjectivity and also convey their pleasure, while celebrating their womanhood.

**Index Terms**—black women, race, gender, dual colonialism, black oppression, double standard, African American female subjectivity, duality of black womanhood, sexual exploitation of black girls

The literary works of Black American women, whether fictional, biographical, autobiographical or poetic seem to share a theme that speaks to Black women's spirit. Lisa Jones says a Black woman is like bullet proof diva, "whose sense of dignity and self cannot be denied; who though she may live in a war zone, goes out everyday greased, pressed and dressed... she has the lip and nerve and she uses that lip and nerve to raise herself and the world" (Lisa Jones 3)

Black women poets of late twentieth century United States have been driven into a quest for identity. They address the two questions: How do we assert our identities in a world that prefers to believe we do not exist? How can we control our rage as well as express our love and warmth for fellow beings?

The literary history of Black American women poets in the eighteenth and nineteenth century had a beginning in the work of Lucy Terry, Phillis Wheatley and Harper and their sister poets. Yet, their history was neither documented nor appreciated. The women's participation in the Harlem Renaissance was not hailed at the beginning. Black feminist critics while analysing the nineteenth-century African American women literature say how African American women were genderless during the period of slavery and how they were alienated from the aspects of mainstream femininity:

Since (black) women, no less than men, were viewed as profitable labor-units, they might as well have been genderless as far as the slaveholders were concerned. In the words of one scholar, "the (black) woman was first a full time worker for (the landowner) and only incidentally a wife, mother and homemaker". Judged by the evolving nineteenth century ideology of femininity, which emphasises women's roles as nurturing mothers and gentle companions and house keepers for their husbands, black women were practically anomalies. (Davies 5).

So, even during the period of slavery, the White landlords were under the perception that Black men and women had an equal capacity for hard labour. In the White dominant society, she was genderless. During the reconstruction era, Black women also had played a heroic role in the struggle for freedom and equality. Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Daisy Bates, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Coretta Scott King, Ruby Doris Robinson, Angela Davis to name a few. When one studies African American literature in the beginning, one can find that there was one of conspicuous omission, the study of Black women poets and the neglect is historical. In Black Feminist Thought, Patricia Hill Collins writes:

The shadow obscuring the black women's intellectual tradition is neither accidental nor benign; Suppressing the knowledge produced by any group, makes it easier for dominant groups to rule because the seeming absence of an independent consciousness in the oppressed can be taken to mean that subordinate groups willingly collaborate in their own victimization, maintaining the invisibility of black women and our ideas in critical, in structuring patterned relations of Race, gender and class inequality that pervade the entire social structure. (Collins 63)

Some Black women poets' works exist only in anthologies. Many were not so fortunately preserved. In the "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl", Linda Brent writes that slavery is terrible for men but it is more terrible for women because, added to the burden common to all, they have wrongs and sufferings and mortification peculiarly of their own. These Black women writers were the victims not only of a social injustice but of a sexual arrogance synonymous to dual colonialism. They have had to fight against two battles one against White oppression and another against the Black oppression. Hence male writers, who portrayed the women, did it only at the surface level. Black women shared equally in the labour and strife for Black people, but they invariably seemed to live for others; for Black

men and White; for children; for parents and not for her independent self. When history shaped into tradition, women were deleted from the texts. Black men were shown as the slave, fiery orator, the political activist, but the heroic voice of the Black woman got suppressed and they were disinherited. They faced the racial and sexist oppression crippled by poverty. Black women did not have control of the institution that could print their work. But, there was no lack of intellect, imagination and energy among Black women. They continued to write in their poetic tradition.

Probably, the first African American woman poet was Lucy Terry (1730-1821) who wrote about an Indian ride on Deerfield Massachusetts. More familiar is Phillis Wheatley (1735-1784) the eighteenth-century slave who was one of the best known poets of her time. She wrote:

I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate  
Was snatch'd from Africa's fancy'd happy seat:  
What pangs excruciating must molest  
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?  
Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd  
That from a father seiz'd his babe belov'd:  
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray  
Others may never feel tyrannic sway? (Julian 50-51)

These lines written in 1772, prior to this country's own war for freedom, were expressed by Wheatley. This love for freedom and a search for place in an alien culture are themes that have persisted through two centuries of African American women's poetry.

Sajourner Truth's (1797-1883) Ain't I A Woman? a speech at the Akron, Ohio women's Rights convention in 1852 has been adapted into the poetic form by Erlene Stetson, and its title remains a cry for oppressed women everywhere:

Ain't I a woman?  
Look at me  
Look at my arm!  
I have plowed and planted  
and gathered into barns  
and no man could head me...  
And Ain't I a woman  
.....  
A woman can't have as much rights as a man  
cause Christ wasn't a woman  
Where did your Christ come from?  
From God and a woman!" (Stetson 25)

Mid-nineteenth century novelist Frances E.W. Harper (1825-1911) published nine volumes of poetry and spoke strongly for the freedom of African Americans. She was the foremost woman poet to sound out the men in her poems. In "Double Standard", she expresses:

Crime has no sex and yet today  
I wear the brand of shame;  
Whilst he amid the gay and proud  
Still bears an honored name

Can you blame me if I've learned to think  
Your hate of vice a sham,  
When you so coldly crushed me down  
And then excused the man? (Stetson 26)

Harper's protest poetry focused on the right of women to rebel against the unjust laws of American society. She was followed by Georgia Douglas Johnson (1886-1966) whose, The Heart of a Woman and other poems appeared in 1918. Between Harper and Johnson, poems of other female African Americans such as Angelina Weld Grimke (1880-1958), and Ann Spenser (1882-1975) were published in anthologies, but they produced no individual volumes of poetry.

Grimke was one of the earliest lesbian poets and Spenser was a Seminole Indian. Jesse Fauset (1888-1961) a much anthologized poet, was widely read during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. Women's literature during renaissance dealt with identification with the race, expressing a militant proud spirit, anger at racism, determination to fight oppression and rejection of White American culture. Anne Spencer addressed lynching, female subordination and racism. In her poem "White Things", she writes:

They pyred a race of black, black men  
And burned them to ashes white; then,  
Laughing, a young one claimed a skull,  
For the skull of a black is white, not dull,  
But a glistening awful thing

Made, it seems, for this ghoul to swing  
 In the face of God with all his might,  
 And swear by the hell that sired him:  
 "Man-maker, make white!" (Shadowed Dreams 49)

Georgia Douglas Johnson reflected on prejudice and cultural imperialism, the strength of their ancestors, Black culture and the beauty of their colour and their hope for freedom.

In the poem "Armageddon", she says:  
 In the silence and the dark  
 I fought with dragons:  
 I was battered, beaten, sore,

But rose again  
 On my knees I fought, still rising,  
 Dull with pain!

In the dark I fought with dragons—  
 Foolish tears! cease your flowing!  
 Can't you see the dawn appears? (Shadowed Dreams 62)

In some of the verses they explored the forbidden topics of sexual attraction and freely wrote their erotic attraction for women.

The literary history of Black women poets in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century began with the work of Lucy Terry, Wheatley, Harper, Douglas Johnson and their contemporary women poets. Before 1890s, there was no book of poetry published other than the books of Wheatley and Harper. In the beginning, women's writing was considered singular and abnormal, not universal and representative. More than that, writing about Black women was not considered as racially significant as writing about Black men. Thus, when the Black writers sang against the racial oppression, all of the Renaissance women of the 1920s continued the tradition of voicing their opinion about the oppression within the race. Alice Nelson Dunbar writes:

Black emphasis must be not against White but for Black. In the conference that counts...there will be neither looking up nor looking down. It frightens me to realize that I had died before the age of fifty; I would have died a Negro fraction. (Marie Evans 75)

Treating the subjects ranging from the revolution to institutionalised religion, these poets have brought a sensitivity and insight to their work that is distinctly Black and female. As a result, the role and the treatment of Black women have been focused. It in turn, resulted in Free Speech Movement, The Peace Movement, The Gay Movement and The Woman's Movement. When Black women discovered a political context that involved both race and gender, it took a special turn and women's literature. African American writers differed from their male counter parts in the manner in which they treated the subjectivity of their major protagonist; to define their selfhood and to define their being in their own terms and their special need to speak about feminine concerns. The women writers knew that it was necessary to tell their story. It often meant telling a story of imprisonment without liberation, of struggle without resolution, of pain without relief. They echoed the writers of a hundred or even two hundred years ago to deal with, a contemporary issue. As a result, the Black literature had been enriched and expanded. Black female writers often claimed descent from other Black women literary ancestors such as Zora Neale Hurston and Ann Petry. The writers of Black Literary Movement had been intent upon bonding with other women. Several important anthologies such as Mary Helen Washington's Invented Lives, Mary Evans', The Black women writers and Some of us are Brave had a pivot role in the institutionalisation of Black women in literature.

Then came Margaret Danner, Margaret Walker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker and more. In the 1960s, a tornado of Black women poets occurred-Sonia Sanchez, Nikki Giovanni, Carolyn Rodgers, Lucille Clifton, Fabio June Jordon, Audre Lorde, Mari Evans, Rita Dove and the like. Many are still growing. Even some of the Black women writers such as Nikki Giovanni, June Jordon, Audre Lorde and Rita Dove introduced political writing. Sonia Sanchez and Jayne Cortez blasted the issues of racism and sexism boldly in their poems. In the literary techniques and forms, African American women poets have made and are making very substantial contribution to the literature. A brand new generation of women poets is on the scene, all of whom are within and extending tradition.

Owing to the historically extraordinary oppression of women of African descent in the world, the literary tradition of African American tradition is a separate and unique tradition. The tradition constitutes the legacy handed down from generation to generation of Black women poets. Their poetry deals with the elements of women's lives and women's aspirations in women's terms; child bearing, girlhood, aloneness, love and un love, deaths, survivals, dreams, struggles and transformations.

Barbara Christian analyses the development of woman writers' tradition between 1892 and 1976:

a rich and powerful tradition of black women writers...involving the variety and richness of the black women's experience... challenging the very definition of women and project their very definitions themselves' transferring the contents of their communities' views on the nature of woman therefore on the nature of life renewing the tradition while



sustaining them...these story tellers both oral and literary transform gossip, happenings into imposter of factual events, images, fantasies and fables critical not only of an individual but of the entire social fabric. (Black Women Novelists 153)

In late twentieth century, Black women poets started to address African American female subjectivity and take up the question of dual identity, as well as Eurocentrically based conceptions of the real that have maintained womanhood as a White, middle-class identity category. They also renegotiated these assumptions about identity that understood anti-racist action in terms of African American males. They dealt with the issues like rape, female sexuality, and marriage roles like sister, daughter and mother which had been framed by White women. They started to celebrate their weaknesses to conform to mainstream notions of femininity and women's role that had consigned to Black women to silence.

Ntozake Shange, June Jordan, Lucille Clifton, Audre Lorde are some of the prominent poets of late-twentieth century. Their goal is to emphasise the counter hegemonic position of Black female subject. The female body created by these poets celebrates its womanhood and they willingly come out of traditional settings and roles. They have used imageries to create a Black female body to resist the narrow definitions of womanhood.

Shange was the first of these poets to gain popularity among the readers. She is best known for her work, "For coloured girls who have considered suicide when the Rainbow is Enuf" (1976). The poems of Shange's, "Nappy Edges" (1978) open with a short poem that defends the title, 'Nappy Edges.' The expression refers to the straightened hair of African American women which is turning back to its original state because of exposure to water and humidity. She defines:

The roots of your hair/ what  
turns back when we sweat, run,  
make love, dance, get afraid, get  
happy; the tell tale sign of living/ (Nappy Edges 3)

Shange locates the readers to be Black and female. It is not an invitation to those in the century who exist outside this dual identity. In choosing the title as an idiom intimately associated with African American Women's bodies, activities and standards of beauty, Shange locates the voices of the Black audience. Another poem, "resurrection of their daughter", traces a young African American woman's journey to self-invention and discovery who freed herself from the social constraints of Black Bourgeoisie. The daughter's family strictly adheres the social conventions. It is proud of its daughters who:

... cd set a formal table  
curtesy as if not descendants of slaves  
& speak English with no accent at all  
they were virgins for a long time (resurrection 90)

The daughter of this poem is a fugitive from the chaste sensibilities of an African American middle class which leaves no space for the sexual expression of single Black woman. The portrait of this daughter highlights Black women's willful departure from traditional paths to empowerment.

Shanges', "Oh, I'm 10 Months Pregnant" is a whimsical allegory in which the poet uses the unlikely image of the Black women poet in her tenth month of pregnancy. African American figure is embodied in the unborn girl child developing within the Black female body of the mother. The mother capitulates to the wishes of her daughter to emerge not as a simple physical being, but as a discursive figure:

i finally figured out what to say  
to this literary die-hard of a child of mine  
"you are an imperative my dear" & i felt her startle  
toward my left ovary than I said "as an imperative  
it is incumbent upon you to present yrself" (A Daughter's Geography 31)

Thus, Shange's Black mother woman wants her unborn daughter to be a revisionist image. June Jordan attacks the White man's belief in his racial and sexual superiority by challenging the public images of the father of the American Republic, George Washington. The poet underlines the gap between the two leaders' high religious and political ideals expressed in public and their dehumanizing treatment of women slaves in private. In "Cameo No. II", she calls Washington, "George, the father hypocrite" and presents him as an:

aristocratic raider at the vulnerable  
slavegirl bed

Americanus Rex  
Secretus Blanco-Bronco-Night-Time-Sex

the father of this country  
leading privileges of rape and run (Things that I Do in the Dark 116)

June Jordan similarly plays the role of witness in "Unrecorded Agonies", in which she refers to the death of a 19 year-old Black woman who was gang-raped on a Brooklyn roof and then thrown off in to the river. Though she

screamed, it was inaudible. Her murder was unrecorded and unremembered and she joined the group of already murdered Black women whose raped bodies were never answered by the White Law.

In "The Rationale" from the book *Passion*, Jordan presents with irony the mentality prevailing in male-dominated societies that rape is a crime of passion usually caused by the victim. In this view, any woman who walks alone, especially at night, is prone to trouble, because her mere presence is a provocation for passing men. If she looks foreign, sexy and fast, as the woman does, then the provocation increases. When, therefore, a man loses his control and rapes her, it is her fault but his aggressive behaviour is considered normal. Yet, Black females are not exposed to danger only when they are in public places.

Sometimes, young girls often face even greater danger of sexual assault in their own homes. The rapist describes how he raped her and also how he broke the car and got into it. Yet, the difference lies in the value that a capitalist patriarchal society attaches to the car and the woman. The man is arrested again for the theft of somebody's expensive car and will certainly be sentenced for violating property laws. There is no indication in the poem, however, that he will be sentenced for the rape. This is because the woman, who is also considered an object and is treated as such, has no male owner. It is not accidental that Jordan does not give the woman the chance to speak about her rape and the rapist. The woman's silence suggests her subordinate position, which does not allow her to define herself and her experience in her own terms:

I looked all around to see where her  
owner/where the man in her life could  
probably be. But no show. She was out.  
By herself. On the street:  
As fine, as ready to go as anythin you could  
ever possibly want to see so  
I checked out myself: what's this?  
Then I lost my control; I couldn't resist.  
What did she expect? She looked foreign  
besides and small and sexy  
and fast  
by the curb. So I lost my control and  
I forced her open and I entered  
her body and I poured myself  
into her  
pumpin for all I was worth  
wild as I was  
when you caught me

third time apprehended  
for the theft of a Porsche. (Passion 11-12)

In "Poem about my Rights", Jordan speaks more directly about the political nature of rape, and reveals the interconnection of racist, sexist and economic factors. At first, the speaker protests against the multiple obstacles, rejections and dangers she has faced because of her difference from those in power. She then parallels the sexual and other abuses she has suffered as a Black woman in the USA, with the rape of African countries by the forces of neo-colonialism. She concludes that she has paid a high price for her difference, but, instead of feeling defeated, she asserts her determination to retain her identity and to fight back against her oppressors:

I have been raped  
be-  
cause I have been wrong the wrong sex the wrong age  
the wrong skin the wrong nose the wrong hair the  
wrong need the wrong dream the wrong geographic  
the wrong sartorial I (Passion 89)

The lack of social protection and the need for women of colour to develop their own skills in self-defence are also pointed.

Like Shange, Clifton knows what is to be a Black woman in America. Even when she speaks of her enemy she is not harsh. She is humane while referring to their enemy:

he heads, always for a cave  
his mind shivers against the rocks  
afraid of the dark  
afraid to be alone  
afraid of the legendary creature  
who is Black  
and walks on grass

and has no need for fire (Good Times 15)

Race contributes to the meaning of Clifton's other poems about womanhood. In the poem "the lost baby" (Good news about Earth), the poem is addressed to the baby lost through abortion. The poem is elegiac in tone and it is similar to Brooks' poem "mother". The mothering "the lost baby" explains the reason why she not to have the aborted baby. At the time of pregnancy, her family was very poor. Even if she had delivered the baby, she would have given the baby for adoption:

you would have been born in winter  
in the year of the disconnected gas  
and no car  
we would have made the thin walk  
over the genecy hill into the canada winds  
to let you slip into a stranger's hands  
if you were here i could tell you  
these and some other things (Good news about Earth 60)  
Even if the child had born, it would have had a bad start in its life:  
You would have been born in winter  
in the year of the disconnected gas  
and no car

The mother says that the child would have fallen into the snow and died. The mother threatens herself with the punishment mentioned in the Old Testament for the sinners. Anyhow the mother feels a special obligation to her own Race. She has destroyed a being in the Black Race and it is a sin to be punished.

In the poem "Monticello" (Good woman), Clifton ridicules the hypocrisy of the politicians who say that they are against the system of slavery. She makes an ironic reference to the gap between Jefferson's statements and his private actions. Although Jefferson stressed in America's declaration of independence from British colonial rule that all men are created equal. He himself was a big plantation owner and slave holder. Like other slaveholders, he used Black women slaves as field workers and slave breeders and objects of sexual pleasure. So, she ironically says:

God declares no independence.  
here come sons  
from this Black sally  
branded with Jefferson hair (Good woman 126)

In the poem "What the mirror said", Lucille Clifton creates a strong and assertive woman who embraces her sexual and personal identity happily. Even the title indicates Clifton's confidence in seeing her own identity reflected in the mirror. In the poem, the narrator is the image in the mirror, telling the woman standing in front of it:

listen,  
you a wonder.  
you a city  
of a woman.  
you got a geography  
of your own.  
listen,  
somebody need a map  
to understand you (The woman that I am 57-58)

The image reflected back to the woman standing in front of the mirror is bigger than life and shows the woman to be a wonder and a city of a woman with geography of her own, one which somebody will need a map in order to negotiate. This imagery suggests that instead of taking directions, the image in the mirror reassures the woman before it that somebody needs directions to move around her that she is not a girl without name and place as Black women were during slavery, but she is somebody with the identity. Clifton emphasizes, with pride and confidence, the identity of her woman character, women of all Races can identify with the poet on issues related to Gender prescriptions that tend to cut across all cultures, such as the need to be beautiful and the feeling that one is not meeting cultural standards.

Clifton's poems often challenge the pervasive attitudes of the society. Women especially Black women become the victims of the adversary or the non-entity. The poem "There is a girl inside" focuses on an old woman's vitality:

She is a green tree in a forest of kindling  
he is a green girl in a used poet (Good Woman 170)  
The body of the old woman may look old but like a nun, she is waiting for the second coming:  
when she can break through gray hairs  
into blossom  
Effectively combining the images of nature and sex, the poet concludes:  
and her lovers will harvest  
honey and thyme  
and the woods will be wild

with the damn wonder of it

For this old woman one lover is not enough. More than one lover is expected. If given an opportunity she will inspire and gratify those around her. Clifton proposes through this poem that it is no matter what is the age of a woman. She is a wondrous resource, waiting to be tapped creatively and sexually. The girl inside every woman is not only sexy but also amazingly strong. Clifton's vision is a uniquely a female vision.

Lorde also deals with the duality of Black womanhood. In, "A Woman Speaks", Lorde uses the theme of magic and timeless nature to explain the Black woman's subjects' capacity to transform:

Moon Marked and touched by sun  
my magic is unwritten  
but when the sea turns back  
it will leave my shape behind (1-4)

Black womanhood endures as the planets and seas endure. Blackness and womanhood combine in the African American female body. Her 'endurance' here means her ability to transform into transcend the boundaries of past, present and future.

The poem "Need: a Choral of Black Women's Voices" deals with the issues of race as well as gender. Lorde assumes the role of the witness to the Black man's sexual crimes and the spokesperson for his victims 'whose blood is shed in silence' because of society's indifference. The shedding of blood denotes the waste of Black lives and the failure of love in a social environment divided by racism and sexism:

I: Dead Black women haunt the black maled streets  
paying the cities' secret and familiar tithe of blood  
burn blood beat blood cut blood  
seven year old child rape victim blood blood  
of a sodomized grandmother blood blood  
on the hands of my brother blood  
and his blood clotting in the teeth of strangers  
as women we were meant to bleed  
but not this useless blood (Complete Poems of Audre Lorde 350)

With great poignation, she presents the unrecorded and unremembered murder of a young girl who was raped and murdered in a public place.

In another poem "Chain", Lorde illustrates how a young girl is facing even greater danger of sexual assault in her own home. From the newspaper report of the case of two girls sent to foster homes as they had borne children by their natural father, Audre Lorde recreates the story in her own poems. In an imaginary dialogue with the mother figure, Lorde makes the girl explain how their father coerced them into having sexual intercourse with him:

but he said if we did it then  
we would be his  
good children if we did it  
then he would love us (Complete Poems of Audre Lorde 247)

Lorde also points out the girls' consequent confusion about their identities and their relationships with each of their parents and with children, they bore their father:

Am I his daughter or girlfriend  
am I your child or your rival  
you wish to be gone from his bed?  
Here is your granddaughter mother  
give us your blessing before I sleep  
(Complete Poems of Audre Lorde 247)

In addition to the sexual exploitation of Black girls and teenagers, the sexual harassment and rape of adult Black women in contemporary society is a frequent theme in her poems.

In the poem "Hard Love Rock # 2", Lorde questions the male nationalists who devalue and subordinate the sexual exploitation of their racial sisters. She doubts the Black male's ability to improve the condition of their race by slogans or by rhetorical questions. She sarcastically refers to the men's frequent distortion of the popular slogan 'Black is beautiful' as an excuse to satisfy their lust. Her female speaker expresses her anger against this distortion and the sexism it hides:

Black is  
not beautiful baby  
beautiful baby beautiful  
lets do it again  
It is  
not  
being screwed twice  
at the same time

from on top  
as well as  
from my side. (Complete Poems of Audre Lorde 125)

The poet vehemently attacks the hypocrisy and the lust of the Black nationalists, who have promised the Blacks for freedom. She also points out the lack of cohesion and order in the Black community.

In "Scar", Lorde explains the intense constructive power of recognition of African American with one another. When one Black woman recognizes another, it brings a lot of happiness. In that crucial moment, they indirectly acknowledge that they share a common place origin. The emphasis in this poem is upon the ways which women subjects invent each other. Lorde provides this scene of women dancing together by moon light as an allegory for the transmission of the traits of Black womanhood not from mother to daughter, but among women of the same generation. She says:

Only a tideless ocean of moonlit women  
in all shades of loving  
learning the dance of open and closing  
learning a dance of electrical tenderness  
no father no mother would teach them

Lorde traces the Amazon's origin in African community in which women were considered as a symbol of power and strength. In Amazon warriors who cut their breasts wilfully, Lorde finds the source of Black female power. By providing those African models, she sees the Black woman's struggle as a continuation of long struggle.

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, African American women poets reclaimed the Black women's body by recreating the meaning of its component parts, Blackness and womanhood. They have proved themselves as artists, as capable of intellect and creative talents. Through their poetry, one can understand that though they are different in their treatment of theme and stylistic devices, they all have a common vision of a society free of race and gender discrimination. All these poets use poetry as a means of expressing their anger over the prevailing realities. They can grapple with contemporary issues as well as the questions of existence and meaning of survival. Consciously as well as unconsciously, these Black women poets express the hurt in their body and soul. They use gendered and racial imagery, as well as the Black American idiom, ellipses, fragmented words or lines, and the violation of punctuation, grammar and syntax so effectively to express Black woman's experiences and struggle for meaningful existence. They also reveal the ideological, socio-political, and economic factors for the devaluation of the Black woman as a human being. They also have trapped her as the victim of male sexual and racial politics. They also want to change the prevailing stereotype of the Black woman who is scared of the sexual abuse. They show the brutalising effects of such continuous abuse on her body and consciousness.

Through their severe criticism, they reclaim the Black American woman's control of her colonised body, life, and speech. They advocate the urgent need for the creation of a truly egalitarian and more humane society with greater respect for all its members. These poets understand time and again as Lorde implies, "Poetry is not a luxury", the act of not writing at all would be asphyxiating and would ultimately equal to the death of the poet. The above discussed poems read the African American female Body through the lens of the experiences of the poet which is rooted in each poet's perspective as a Black woman.

#### REFERENCE

- [1] Clifton, Lucile. (1970). *Good Times*. New York: Random House.
- [2] Clifton, Lucile. (1976). *An Ordinary Woman*. New York: Random House.
- [3] Clifton, Lucile. (1970). *Good News About the Earth*. New York: Random House.
- [4] Clifton, Lucile. (1987). *Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir 1969-1980*. Brockport, New York: BOA.
- [5] Davies, Angelou Y. (1983). *Women, Race and Class*. New York: Random House.
- [6] Evans, Mari. (Ed) (1985). *Black Women Writers (1950-1980): A Critical Evaluation*. New York: Doubleday.
- [7] Hill, Collins. (1991). *Black Feminist Thought*. New York: Routledge; Chapman and Hall Inc.
- [8] Honey, Maureen (Ed) (1989). *Shadowed Dreams: Women's Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance*, New York: Rutgers University Press.
- [9] Jones, Lisa. (1994). *Bullet Proof Diva: Tales of Race, Sex and Hair*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group.
- [10] Jordan, June. (1997) *Kissing God Goodbye*. New York: Anchor.
- [11] Jordan, June. (1990). *Naming our Destiny: New and Selected Poems, 1989*. New York: Thunder's Mouth.
- [12] Jordan, June. (1980). *Passion: New Poems, 1977*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- [13] Jordan, June. (1977). *Things That I Do in the Dark*. New York: Random House.
- [14] Julian D. Mason, Jr. (Ed) (1989). *The Poems of Phillis Wheatley*. Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- [15] Lorde, Audre. (1997). *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde*. W.W. Norton, New York.
- [16] Shange, Ntozake. (1976). *For Coloured Girls Who have considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*. New York: Macmillan.
- [17] Shange, Ntozake. (1978). "nappy edges", *Nappy Edges*. New York: St. Martin's.
- [18] Shange, Ntozake. (1978). "resurrection of the daughter", *Nappy Edges*. New York: St. Martin's.
- [19] Shange, Ntozake. (1983). "Oh, I'm 10 Months Pregnant". *A Daughter's Geography*. New York: St. Martin's.
- [20] Stetson, Erlene. (Ed.) (1981). *Black Sister: Poetry by Black American Women, 1746-1980*. Bloomington: Indian University Press.



**Vijaya K Raman** is a lecturer in the Department of English, Rajalakshmi Engineering College, Chennai, India. She was born in Sivakasi, South India. She is an M.A., M.Phil., in English Literature. She had her education in South India. She was awarded the seventh university rank during her under graduation from Madurai Kamaraj University. She got her post graduation degree from the prestigious Lady Doak College, Madurai. She completed her M.Phil., degree in Madurai Kamaraj University. She has submitted her Ph.D. dissertation on African American Women Poetry in The University of Madras and eagerly waiting for viva-voce.

Her keen interest is teaching English to technical students. Her articles have appeared in many web journals. She is a regular contributor to the web journal, Language in India. Some of her publication topics include 'The problem of teaching and learning tenses', 'A Critical Study of the Wasteland: Poetry as metaphor' and 'A

Micro-Case Study of Vocabulary Acquisition among First Year Engineering Students'. Her aim is to facilitate communication skills effectively among engineering students.

# The Relationship among Listening Performance, Metacognitive Strategy Use and Motivation from a Self-determination Theory Perspective

Sasan Baleghizadeh

Department of English Language and Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, G.C., Tehran, Iran

Email: sasanbaleghizadeh@yahoo.com

Amir Hossein Rahimi

Department of English Language and Literature, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

Email: amh\_faith@yahoo.com

**Abstract**—The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship among metacognitive strategy use, motivation and listening test performance of EFL university students. The participants were 82 students majoring in English translation and literature at Allameh Tabataba'i and Shahid Beheshti Universities in Tehran, Iran. Data were collected using three instruments: MALQ (metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire), AMS (academic motivation scale), and the listening section of the TOEFL. After administering the listening section of the TOEFL (pre-test), students filled in the MALQ and AMS. A statistically significant correlation was found between metacognitive strategy use and listening performance, listening performance and intrinsic motivation, as well as metacognitive strategy use and intrinsic, extrinsic motivation.

**Index Terms**—listening, metacognitive strategies, motivation, self-determination theory

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language learners differ in many ways and are affected by many social and psychological factors. Researchers have identified a lot of individual variables that affect learning outcome. Among these variables, motivation and learning strategies are two crucial factors which have been investigated by researchers in second and foreign language learning. Although different classifications have been proposed for learning strategies, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are considered the most important language learning strategies by several researchers (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzares, Kupper & Russo, 1985; Oxford, 1990; Skehan, 1989). Different theories of motivation have been identified which influence the field of language learning. Both of these variables are explained briefly in the following sections.

### A. Motivation

According to most teachers and researchers, motivation has a very significant role in determining success or failure in any type of learning. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) state that a motivated individual expands endeavor, is determined and attentive to the task, has goals and desires, enjoys the activity and experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure and makes use of strategies to assist in attaining aims. Motivation plays an active role in the process of second or foreign language learning. Many L2 researchers argue that L2 learning is intertwined with many affective variables, among which attitudes and motivation are important predictors of learning achievement. As Csizer and Dornyei (2005) argue, there exists a universally accepted belief that motivation plays a crucial role in the sustained process of mastering an L2. Nunan (1991, p.131) regards motivation as a key factor which determines "the amount of effort a learner is ready to put into language learning." Ellis (2008), in an overview of research on motivation, asserted that motivation affects the extent to which language learners persevere in learning, what kinds of behavior they exert, and their actual achievement. Dornyei (2001) states that a learner with enough motivation is likely to gain an acceptable knowledge of an L2 despite his language aptitude or other cognitive characteristics. Even the brightest student without enough motivation is unlikely to persist long enough to achieve any really useful language.

### B. Self-determination Theory

Self determination theory was developed by Deci and Ryan at the University of Rochester. Their published book in 1985, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*, initially outlined the basic concepts of their theory. In its basic form, human motivation is assumed to exist on a six-point continuum, ranging from amotivation on the left, through four categories of extrinsic motivation, to three categories of intrinsic motivation on the right. The four categories of extrinsic motivation, i.e. external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation are listed in order of their degree of internalization and self-regulation. The three categories of intrinsic

motivation are identified as IM to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation.

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable reason. "When intrinsically motivated, a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards" (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 56). Furthermore, intrinsic motivation is viewed as innate and universal and arises out of three basic psychological needs:

A need to strive for self-autonomy

A need to strive for competence

A need to strive for relatedness

Vallerand et al. (1992) describe more fully the categories of IM. They define IM as "the fact of performing an activity for the pleasure and the satisfaction that one experiences while learning, exploring, or trying to understand something new" (p. 1005). IM to accomplish things is defined as "the fact of engaging in an activity for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced when one attempts to accomplish or create something" (p. 1005). "Finally, IM to experience stimulation is operative when someone engages in an activity in order to experience stimulating sensations (e.g., sensory pleasure, aesthetic experiences, as well as fun excitement) derived from one's engagement in the activity" (p. 1006).

Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) describe extrinsically motivated behaviors as those behaviors that are performed not because of inherent interest in the activity, but in order to arrive at some instrumental end, such that the source of regulation is external to the activity per se. Researchers believed originally that extrinsic motivation implied a lack of self-determination in the behaviors performed. EM has four subtypes depending on its degree of self-determination:

**External regulation.** This is the least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation and includes being motivated by external reward or punishment. Internalization, if it occurs, is unstable in nature and tends to disappear once external rewards or punishments are removed.

**Introjected regulation.** The individual begins to internalize the reasons for his or her actions. However, this form of internalization, while internal to the person, is not truly self-determined since it is limited to the internalization of past external contingencies.

**Identified Regulation.** This is a more self-determined form of motivation as there is a conscious acceptance of the behavior as personally important, and especially that it is perceived as chosen by oneself.

**Integrated Regulation.** This is the most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. External regulation has been internalized and entirely integrated within the self and brought into congruence with needs and values that already become part of the self. Thus, this form of motivation shares many of the same qualities as intrinsic motivation, but it is still considered extrinsic as activities performed for this kind of motivation are driven by external regulation and not done for their inherent interest or enjoyment (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

In the continuum of motivation, Deci and Ryan (1985) mention one more category called amotivation. This is a state in which people lack the intention to behave, and thus lack motivation. "Students with this motivational style would be very unmotivated for school due to the low value, efficacy, and internal control they feel for school activities" (Brown, 2002, p. 262).

### C. *Metacognition*

Metacognition is a term that was coined by Flavell in 1970. Metacognition has been defined simply as thinking about thinking, cognition of cognition, or using Flavell's words, "knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena" (p.906). In a language learning context, this means knowing about oneself as a learner, i.e. the knowledge and self-awareness a learner has of his or her own language learning process, and is regarded as the key to successful language learning. It is used to refer to one's understanding of and control over his or her own cognitive processes by planning, choosing and monitoring (Carrell, 1998; Carrell et al., 1998; Flavell, Miller, & Miller, 1993; Hartman, 2001; Hudson, 1998; Veenman, Van Hout-Wolters, & Afflerbach, 2006). According to Flavell (1979), two basic elements comprise metacognitive awareness, namely metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation. The individual's beliefs about oneself and about others as learners and of the requirements involved in the learning process relate to metacognitive knowledge. It is divided into three categories: (a) person knowledge, (b) task knowledge, and (c) strategic knowledge. Flavell (1979) includes two dimensions of person knowledge: intraindividual differences and interindividual differences (knowledge of personal styles, abilities, and so forth, of oneself and of others), and universal of cognition (knowledge of human 'attributes influencing learning). According to Wenden (1991), task knowledge requires four aspects: (a) Knowledge about the purpose of a task (what is the objective in performing a given task?), (b) Knowledge about task demands (what resources and steps are necessary and what is the degree of difficulty involved?), (c) Knowledge about the nature of the task (what kind of learning is it?) (d) Awareness of the need for deliberate learning (Does it involve the use of self-regulatory or metacognitive strategies?). Strategic knowledge, as Livingston (1997) states, includes "knowledge about both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as well as conditional knowledge about when and where it is appropriate to use such strategies"(pp.1-2).

Anderson (2002) proposed five components of metacognition: "(1) preparing and planning for learning, (2) selecting and using learning strategies, (3) monitoring strategy use, (4) orchestrating various strategies, and (5) evaluating strategy use and learning" (p. 1). Pintrich (2002), however, identified just three types of metacognition: knowledge about strategies, cognitive tasks, and self. Learners' metacognitive knowledge helps them identify what strategies to use.



When faced with new learning situations, learners can pull from their metacognitive knowledge and choose a strategy that will help them succeed in the task at hand. "Strong metacognitive skills empower second language learners" (Anderson, 2002, p. 2).

#### *D. Motivation and Achievement*

Noels, Clement, and Pelletier (1999) investigated the link between motivation orientations and final grades. Seventy-eight students, who had registered in a summer French immersion course, completed a questionnaire assessing several constructs including intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and amotivation. No significant relationship was found between intrinsic, extrinsic motivation, amotivation and final grades. Even external and introjected regulations (sub-types of extrinsic motivation) were negatively correlated with final grades.

Noels, Clement, and Pelletier (2001) explored the relationship between motivation orientations and final course grades. The participants were 59 students in a summer immersion program at a French-English bilingual university in Ontario, Canada. The participants ranged in age from 18-47 years. A questionnaire consisting of several scales was utilized to assess the motivation preferences of students. The respondents rated the extent to which the proposed reason included in the questionnaire applied to themselves by using a seven-point scale varying from one (does not correspond at all) to seven (corresponds completely). They found a significant correlation between intrinsic motivation and final course grades. The correlation between extrinsic motivation and final course grades, however, was not significant. Besides, a negative correlation was found between amotivation and final course grades.

Vandergrift (2005) examined the relationship among motivation, metacognition, and proficiency in listening comprehension. Participants were 57 adolescent learners of French who completed two questionnaires. A motivation questionnaire assessed student responses to three orientations related to motivation: amotivation, intrinsic, and extrinsic. A metacognitive awareness questionnaire assessed the metacognitive strategies used by students when listening to authentic texts in French. Listening proficiency was determined by a listening comprehension test. The results of the study revealed that listening proficiency correlated negatively with amotivation. There was no significant correlation between intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and listening proficiency.

#### *E. Motivation and Learning Strategies*

Bacon and Finnemann (1990) investigated the relationship between attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students. The results revealed that motivation played a role in the choice of strategies. Students who were not instrumentally motivated used more global/ synthetic strategies, but avoided the use of decoding/analytic comprehension strategies.

Oxford and Ehrman (1995) examined the relationship between language learning strategies and factors such as proficiency, teacher's perception, gender, aptitude, learning style, personality type, ego boundaries, motivation and anxiety. They found a significant correlation between learning strategies and total motivation. A significant correlation was also found between strategies and intrinsic motivation. The use of metacognitive strategies was positively correlated with intrinsic motivation.

Braten and Olaussen (1998) investigated the relationship between motivational beliefs and use of learning strategy among Norwegian learners. It was found that when students perceive intelligence as a relatively important quality, they tend to use more learning strategies.

Vandergrift (2005) examined the relationships among motivation, metacognition, and proficiency in listening comprehension. Participants were 57 adolescent learners of French who completed two questionnaires. A motivation questionnaire assessed student responses to three orientations related to motivation: amotivation, intrinsic, and extrinsic. A metacognitive awareness questionnaire assessed the metacognitive strategies used by students when listening to authentic texts in French. Most strategies correlated negatively with amotivation. A significant correlation was found between intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and use of strategies, but there were more significant relationships between these listening strategies and intrinsic motivation than in the case of extrinsic motivation.

#### *F. The Present Study*

In the Iranian context, very few studies have been conducted to investigate the relationships between motivation from self-determination theory perspective and metacognitive strategies proposed by Vandergrift et al. (2006). Besides, the number of studies exploring the effect of these variables on the listening skill is relatively few. In order to bridge this gap, the present study was carried out to investigate the relationship among listening performance, metacognitive strategy use and motivation. The following research questions, therefore, guided the study:

1. Is there any relationship between listening performance of EFL students and metacognitive strategy use?
2. Is there any relationship between listening performance of EFL students and different orientations to motivation?
3. Is there any relationship between metacognitive strategy use and different orientations to motivation?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *A. Participants*

The participants for this study were 82 students of English majoring in English Translation and English Literature at

Allameh Tabataba'i and Shahid Beheshti Universities in Tehran, Iran. They were both male and female freshmen whose age ranged from 18 to 23. Ten students failed to fill in all the questionnaires completely, so for the last three questions the data collected from 72 students was subject to statistical analyses.

### B. Instrumentation

#### 1. Listening Section of the TOEFL

The first instrument used in this study was the listening section of the TOEFL. It was used to measure the listening performance of both control and the experimental groups. It consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions.

#### 2. Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire

The second instrument was the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire developed by Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal, Tafaghodtari (2006) and designed to assess second language listeners' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies while listening to oral texts. It is a 21-item instrument with five distinct metacognitive factors: problem-solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, person knowledge, and directed attention. Subjects should respond to items using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Vandergrift et al (2006) conducted an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis on two large and different samples of language learners in order to demonstrate the strength of a five-factor model underlying the MALQ. Finally, they were able to demonstrate a significant relationship between MALQ scores and actual listening behavior. To make the items easy to understand, the researcher translated the questionnaire into Persian and it was back-translated by an expert in the field. The translated version was piloted with thirty students. The Cronbach alpha reliability index turned out to be 0.82.

#### 3. The Academic Motivation Scale

The third data collection instrument was the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) developed by Vallerand et al. (1992). It is based on the tenets of self-determination theory and composed of 28 items subdivided into seven sub-scales, assessing three types of intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation), three types of extrinsic motivation (external, introjected, and identified regulation), and amotivation. It contains 28 items (4 items per subscale) assessed on a 7-point scale. Items 2, 9, 16, 23 correspond to intrinsic motivation- to know. Items 6, 13, 20, 27 correspond to intrinsic motivation-toward accomplishment. Items 4, 11, 18, 25 correspond to intrinsic motivation-to experience stimulation. Items 3, 10, 17, 24 correspond to extrinsic motivation-identified regulation. Items 7, 14, 21, 28 correspond to extrinsic motivation-introjected regulation. Items 1, 8, 15, 22 correspond to extrinsic motivation- external regulation. Items 5, 12, 9, 26 correspond to amotivation. The questionnaire was translated and used by Salehi (2001). Cronbach alpha reliability index turned out to be 0.94.

### C. Procedure

At first, the translated version of the MALQ was piloted with a similar sample of students and the Cronbach alpha reliability index was calculated using the SPSS. The first session, the researcher met the participants, talked with them about the study for a few minutes and made them aware of the processes they were supposed to go through. To investigate the relationship among listening performance, metacognitive strategy use and motivation, the listening section of the TOEFL was administrated to the participants. The researcher attempted to provide them with a calm environment while removing any possible distractions. It took 35 minutes to finish answering the questions. Immediately following the administration of the test, the participants filled in the MALQ and the AMS. Before administration of the questionnaires, the participants were given a brief explanation about how to complete them.

#### 1. Investigating Research Question (1)

The first research question sought to explore the relationship between listening performance and metacognitive strategy use. In order to answer this question, Pearson-product moment correlation was used, which turned out to be 0.320. According to the obtained result, the first research question is answered in the positive; therefore, there is a relationship between listening performance and use of metacognitive strategies by students.

TABLE 1.  
CORRELATION BETWEEN LISTENING PERFORMANCE AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY

N	r	sig
72	0.320**	0.007

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

#### 2. Investigating Research Question (2)

The second research question sought to examine the relationship between listening performance and orientations related to motivation. To this end, another correlational analysis was performed. As shown in Table 2, there is a significant relationship between listening performance and intrinsic orientation to motivation. The correlation between listening performance and extrinsic motivation was low and not significant. So there was no significant relationship between listening performance and extrinsic motivation. Table 2 reveals that there is a significant negative correlation between listening performance and amotivation.

TABLE 2.  
CORRELATION BETWEEN LISTENING PERFORMANCE AND MOTIVATION TYPES

	<u>Listening performance</u>
<b>Listening performance</b>	----
<b>Intrin</b>	0.236*
<b>Extrin</b>	0.123
<b>Amotiv</b>	-0.282*

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

### 3. Investigating Research Question (3)

To seek an answer to the last research question, which investigated the relationship between the motivation orientations and metacognitive strategy use, a correlational analysis was run. As Table 3 shows a positive and significant correlation was arrived at between intrinsic motivation, and metacognitive strategy use. The correlation between extrinsic motivation and metacognitive strategy use was positive and significant, too. Thus, there is no relationship between amotivation and metacognitive strategy use.

TABLE 3.  
CORRELATION BETWEEN METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY USE AND MOTIVATION TYPES

	<u>Metacognitive strategy use</u>
<b>Metacognitive strategy use</b>	----
<b>Intrin</b>	0.308**
<b>Extrin</b>	0.244*
<b>Amotiv</b>	0.06

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

## III. DISCUSSION

The first research question investigated the relationship between listening performance and metacognitive strategy use by the participants. The result of the statistical analysis indicated a significant relationship between these two variables. The results confirm those of Goh (1997, 2000, 2002), and Vandergrift (2002, 2003, 2006). These studies have shown that students have metacognitive knowledge about listening process, and this knowledge is linked to listening ability. While performing on different listening tasks, students make use of an extensive variety of listening strategies to improve their performance and have a better understanding of the task at hand. They are aware of the processes involved in comprehending the message.

The second research question sought to examine the relationship between listening performance and orientations to motivation. There was a significant relationship between listening performance and intrinsic motivation. It is in line with the findings of Noels, Clement, and Pelletier's (2001) study. It has been argued that the learners who are intrinsically motivated are more interested in the second or foreign language. As Deci and Ryan (1985) state, when people are intrinsically motivated, they engage in activities that interest them, and they do so with a full sense of volition and without the necessity of material rewards or constraints. When students learn materials for pleasure and enjoyment, they exert more effort and are highly motivated to perform in the second language. It can be concluded that students with higher intrinsic motivation spend more time, create more opportunities and pay more attention to developing and enhancing their English listening comprehension. Thus, they are more capable of understanding or guessing the main ideas and points of the content they are listening to and as a result they obtain higher scores on their listening comprehension test. As Table 2 indicates, there was no significant relationship between listening performance and extrinsic motivation. The finding is congruent with the results found by Noels, Clement, and Pelletier (2001) and Vandergrift (2005). An explanation which can be given for this is that learning a language for material rewards or because of an external factor or pressure cannot result in eventual competence. As expected, the result of the Pearson correlation for amotivation and listening performance demonstrated that there was a negative relationship between these two variables. This finding is consistent with that of Schmidt and Watanbe (2001) and Vandergrift (2005). Amotivation is the state in which there is no incentive or motivation to engage in any activity at all or on the part of the learner. Amotivated individuals perceive no relation between outcomes and their own actions and lack self confidence and self efficacy, so they experience the feeling of incompetence.

Finally, the last research question examined the relationship between metacognitive strategy use and orientations to motivation. A positive and significant correlation was found between metacognitive strategy use and intrinsic/extrinsic

motivation. The finding corresponds to that of Vandergrift (2005) and Oxford and Ehrman (1995). The use of metacognitive strategies or self-regulating strategies is an important aspect of self regulated learning. It appears that students who engage in self regulating are more interested and value the tasks they are working on. Therefore, students' intrinsic motivation plays an important role in their use of different metacognitive strategies. Self-regulated learning requires persistence and effort and learners must invest time and energy to use metacognitive strategies; therefore, learners should be motivated and willing to learn and apply the metacognitive strategies involved in self-regulated learning.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

There exists a meaningful and positive correlation between listening performance and metacognitive strategy use. Using metacognitive listening strategies improves the listening performance of the students, so metacognitive knowledge is linked to the listening ability. There is a significant and positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and listening scores, which means intrinsic motivation affects listening performance positively. Learners who enjoy doing tasks and activities and learn for internal satisfaction will perform better. There is no relationship between extrinsic motivation and listening performance. Moreover, it was revealed that there is a negative relationship between amotivation and listening performance. Besides, there is a meaningful and positive correlation between both intrinsic and extrinsic orientations and metacognitive strategy use. Motivation, especially intrinsic motivation, leads to metacognitive strategy use with higher frequency, and ultimately results in the process of self-regulated learning.

Teachers should consider a number of variables including the use of metacognition and motivation when working with students who wish to improve their performance on different tasks. Students approach their learning task with skills and attitudes which promote academic success when the focus is on mentioned variables. Teachers should lay emphasis on increasing students' intrinsic motivation since the study has revealed that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in improving performance and using more metacognitive strategies. Therefore, it is important for teachers to look for teaching activities and techniques that foster students' interest so as to increase their intrinsic motivation.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Anderson, N. J. (2002). The role of metacognition in second language teaching and learning. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.
- [2] Bacon, S.M., & Finnemann, M.D. (1990). A study of attitudes, motives and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *Modern Language Journal*, 74, 459–473.
- [3] Bråten, I., & Olaussen, B. S. (1998). The relationship between motivational beliefs and learning strategy use among Norwegian college students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 23, 182–194.
- [4] Brown, H. D. (2002). Strategies for success: A practical guide to learning English. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- [5] Carrell, P. L. (1998). Can reading strategies be successfully taught? *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 1–20.
- [6] Carrell P. L., Gajdusek, L., & Wise, T. (1998). Metacognition and ESL/EFL reading. *Instructional Science: An International Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 26, 97–112.
- [7] Csizér, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (2005). Language learners' motivational profiles and their motivated learning behavior. *Language Learning*, 55, 613–659.
- [8] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. New York: Plenum.
- [9] Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (2000). The “What” and “Why” of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227–268.
- [10] Dörnyei, Z. (2001). Teaching and researching motivation. New York: Longman.
- [11] Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 34, 906–911.
- [12] Flavell, J. H., Miller, P. H., & Miller, S. A. (1993). Cognitive development (3rd ed.). New York: Prentice-Hall.
- [13] Goh, C. C. (1997). Metacognitive awareness and second language listeners. *ELT Journal*, 51, 361–369.
- [14] Goh, C. (2000). A cognitive perspective on language learners' listening comprehension problems. *System*, 28, 55–75.
- [15] Goh, C. C. (2002). Exploring listening comprehension tactics and their interaction patterns. *System*, 30, 185–206.
- [16] Hartman, H. J. (2001). Metacognition in learning and instruction: Theory, research and practice. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.
- [17] Hudson, T. (1998). Theoretical perspectives on reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 43–60.
- [18] Livingston, J. A. (1997). Metacognition: An overview. State University of New York at Buffalo [Electronic version]. Retrieved from <http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/fas/shuell/cep564/Metacog.htm>
- [19] Masgoret, A.-M., & Gardner, R. C. (2003). Attitudes, motivation, and second Language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *Language Learning*, 53, 123–163.
- [20] Noels, K. A., Cle'ment, R., & Pelletier, L.G. (1999). Perceptions of teachers' communicative style and students' intrinsic and. *Modern Language Journal*, 83, 23–34.
- [21] Noels, K. A., Cle'ment, R., & Pelletier, L.G. (2001). Intrinsic, extrinsic, and integrative orientations of French Canadian learners of English. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57, 424–40.
- [22] Nunan, D. (1991). Language teaching methodology. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall International.
- [23] O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, L., & Russo, R. P. (1985). Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate ESL students. *Language Learning*, 35, 21–46.

- [24] Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House/Harper & Row.
- [25] Oxford, R. L., & Ehrman, M. E. (1995). Adults' language learning strategies in an intensive foreign language program in the United States. *System*, 23, 359-386.
- [26] Pintrich, P. R. (2002). The role of metacognitive knowledge in learning, teaching, and assessing. *Theory Into Practice*, 41, 219-225.
- [27] Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78.
- [28] Salehi, M. (2001). On the relationship between motivation and use of language learning strategies by university students. Unpublished master's thesis, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.
- [29] Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- [30] Schmidt, R., & Watanabe, Y. (2001). Motivation, strategy use, and pedagogical preferences in foreign language learning. In Z. Dörnyei, & R. Schmidt, *Motivation and second language acquisition* (pp. 313-359). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- [31] Vallerand, R.J., Pelletier, L.G., Blais, M.R., Brière, N.M., Senécal, C., & Vallières, E.F. (1992). The Academic Motivation Scale: A Measure of Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Amotivation in education. *Educational and psychological measurement*, 52, 1003-1017.
- [32] Veenman, M. V., Van Hout-Wolters, B. H., & Afflerbach, P. (2006). Metacognition and learning: Conceptual and methodological considerations. *Metacognition and Learning*, 1, 3-14.
- [33] Vandergrift, L. (2002). It was nice to see that our predictions were right: Developing metacognition in L2 listening comprehension. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58, 555-575.
- [34] Vandergrift, L. (2003). From prediction through reflection: Guiding students through the process of L2 listening. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 59, 425-440.
- [35] Vandergrift, L. (2005). Second language listening: Listening ability or language proficiency? *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, 6-18.
- [36] Vandergrift, L., Goh, C.C., Mareschal, C.J., & Tafaghodtari, M.H. (2006). The Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire: Development and Validation. *Language Learning*, 53, 431-462.
- [37] Wenden, A. L (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. London: Prentice Hall.

**Sasan Baleghizadeh** is an Assistant Professor of TEFL at Shahid Beheshti University, G.C. of Iran, where he teaches applied linguistics, syllabus design, and materials development. He is the author of a number of simplified readers such as *Tales from Rumi* and *Tales from Men of Wisdom* all published by the Iran Language Institute. His recent publications have appeared in *TESL Reporter*, *ELT Journal*, and *The Teacher Trainer*.

**Amir Hossein Rahimi** holds an MA degree in TEFL from Allameh Tabataba'i University in Tehran, Iran. His research interest lies in investigation of language learning strategies employed in EFL listening comprehension.

# Metaphor and Metonymy—A Tentative Research into Modern Cognitive Linguistics

Shenli Song

College of Foreign Languages/ Office of Foreign Language College, Zhejiang Gongshang University, Hangzhou, China  
Email: windyforever@gmail.com

**Abstract**—Metonymy, as often treated as a subtype of metaphor by cognitive linguistics, has a different working mechanism; metaphor is based on perceived similarity between things while metonymy on the relationship within things themselves. Cognition and the use of language involve the access and manipulation of mental spaces, which are constructed from human perceptual experience and are extended through imaginative processes, within which metaphor and metonymy are the most significant ones. From the perspectives of construction, poetic and cognitive function and working mechanism, this paper makes a comprehensive analysis of metaphor and metonymy through comparing and contrasting these two important language phenomena, exploring their similarities and contiguities.

**Index Terms**—construction, poetic function, cognitive function, similarity, contiguity

## I. INTRODUCTION

Metaphor and metonymy are treated as two different figures of speech in traditional rhetoric. The famous linguist Jakobson mentioned them in his works in 1960s as two important principles for language. Cognitive linguistics focuses on the ubiquity of metaphor and metonymy in language but in modern theories of metaphor, metonymy is often regarded as a subtype of metaphor and gets a bare mention. Based on the illuminating framework offered by *Cognitive Exploration of language and Linguistics*, this paper attempts to analyze these two language phenomena in terms of their constructions, functions and working mechanisms in the light of semiotics, pointing out that both of them are special signs with the features of multi-hierarchy, ambiguity and openness and its construction relies on similarity and association.

Instead of recognizing their similarities in certain respects, my thesis suggests that they are two fundamentally different cognitive devices, with metaphor involving things from two different categories and metonymy involving properties of something and its relations with other things. Cognitively speaking, metaphor is more useful since people often use metaphors to explain something in a less well-known domain in terms of things from relatively better-known domains. Human interaction generally proves to be much more significant as the foundation for the decoding of the signified. However, metonymy basically involves using a special property of something or its special relationship with some other thing to refer to it, therefore its major function is to help the hearer to locate or recognize the referent and its special characteristics. In Chinese rhetoric, it also includes synecdoche. As for their working mechanisms, metaphor is based on perceived similarity between things while metonymy on the relationship within things themselves.

## II. CONSTRUCTIONS OF METAPHOR AND METONYMY

### A. Construction of Metaphor

As we know, “metaphor” is a type of figurative language in which one thing is described in terms of some other thing. The word “metaphor” comes from Greek “*metapherein*” which means “carry over”. Another translation is “transference”, a term more familiar to us from psychoanalytic theory. “In a metaphor, one of the basic senses of a form, the source domain, is used to grasp or explain a sense in a different domain, called target domain.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.12) The idea that we take attitudes from one area of experience and use them to approach and understand another is fundamental to human interactions with the world.

Concerned with its Construction, metaphor consists of three parts: tenor (also called “topic”本体), vehicle (喻体) and ground(喻底). For example,

1. *Hang Zhou is Shanghai's backyard.*
2. *She is forever pure and innocent like spring and butterfly.*

In the first sentence, “Hang Zhou” is the tenor, “backyard” is the vehicle but there is no ground. In the second sentence, “she” is the tenor; “spring and butterfly” is the vehicle; “pure and innocent” is the ground.

In Chinese, as speaking on the level of discourse, many idioms and proverbs such as “守株待兔”, “亡羊补牢”, “狐狸吃不到葡萄说葡萄酸”, etc are also metaphorical. Besides, fable is exactly a kind of “extended metaphor” from which engendered many idioms and proverbs. Certainly not all the idioms and proverbs are constituted in the form of metaphor. Only those “understand one thing through another” (Shu, 2000, p.36) can be recognized as metaphors.

Traditionally, metaphor was seen as concerning “live” or “novel” descriptions, the kind of metaphor that is found in poetry and rhetoric. Idiomatic expressions were dismissed as “dead” metaphors; ones that had once been bright and new, but had become worn and dull with overuse.

So far a good many linguists have been attempting to elucidate the ways in which language reflects the manner in which human beings perceive, categorize and conceptualize the world. The result is like this: the more accurate, objective and literal the description is, the more elusive it may be. According to the linguist George Lakoff (1980), “we use our basic bodily understanding of places, movements, forces, paths, objects and containers as sources of information about life, love, mathematics and all other abstract concepts.”(p.38)

Cognitive linguists suggest that we use metaphor intuitively and unconsciously to understand the mind, emotions and all other abstract concepts. Such metaphors enable us, as embodied beings, to make sense of a concept such as “mind” which we cannot see with our eyes or grasp with our hands. It allows us to “take a view” on the debate and to “get to grips” with the subject. Cognitive linguists suggest that, without such conventional metaphors, there would be no abstract thought. It also suggests that metaphors may “privilege” some understandings exclude others. Through field research, Lakoff has collected large numbers of metaphorical expressions. It is believed that these are derived from a smaller number of conceptual metaphors. Both creative, novel metaphors and “dead”, conventional metaphors are derived from conceptual metaphors. For Lakoff, the locus of metaphor is not in language at all but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another. For example,

3. *Love is a journey. (We are not getting anywhere. This marriage is in a rut.)*

The idiomatic expressions above, exemplifying two conceptual metaphors, are commonplace, unpoetic and do not, perhaps, strike us as particularly metaphorical. We can say “this marriage is in a rut” and this statement is taken at literal value. If someone were to say, “Even a Massey Ferguson wouldn’t have salvaged my marriage”, we hear the statement as something new. Metaphorically, an impediment to the continuation of a marriage is an impediment to a journey continuing, such as a rut. On a real journey, we might ask the local farmer to haul our car out of a rut with a tractor. To create a novel metaphor, essential for poetry and humor, the speaker has taken an aspect of the source of the conceptual metaphor that is not usually associated with the target. In doing so, the speaker has made the metaphor explicit and brought it back to life.

Basically speaking, metaphor is describing one thing in terms of some other. Its tenor and vehicle have similarities as well as difference. The most significant difference is that the two belong to different domains: tenor belongs to the source domain while vehicle belongs to the target domain.

4. *The encyclopedia is a Gold mine.*

Here “the encyclopedia” and “Gold mine” are totally different but they have similarity in a certain aspect. To say the encyclopedia is a gold mine is because both of them deserve hard digging thus forming a metaphor. Such kind of similarity should be limited to certain aspects otherwise it cannot form a metaphor, e.g.

5. *The encyclopedia is a dictionary.*

In this sentence, “the encyclopedia” and dictionary belong to the same category. Actually the former is a subcategory of dictionary; therefore it is not a metaphor. Theoretically speaking, the possibility of forming a metaphor depends on the difference between the two things. The more different they are, the more possible a metaphor they can be form. However, the extent of difference should also be restricted by its similarity. The more different they are, the more difficult it will be for people to understand the metaphor. Because of this, a “ground” is needed to offer necessary explanations. Generally speaking, vehicles’ characteristics are more specific and familiar to people. Take this sentence for example.

6. *Architecture is solid music.*

As we know, music cannot be seen or touched but people still can understand it. By employing an abstract and invisible thing to define a concrete and specific object, this sentence gives the readers a sense of distance as well as a poetic conception.

## B. Construction of Metonymy

Cognitive linguists have paid less attention to metonymy, yet it is also a rampant phenomenon in linguistics. Metonymy is a type of figurative language in which the name of one thing is replaced with another commonly associated with it. The word originally comes from Greek, constituted by two affixes “meta” and “onoma” which mean “change” and “name” respectively. It is present whenever a part of something stands in for the whole item, or when something closely associated with an item stands in for the item itself. In other words, a partial or associative reference maps to the referent itself.

A metonymy can also be seen as consisted of three parts—tenor, vehicle and ground. What makes it different is that the “tenor” never appears in a metonymy and the “vehicle” serves as the “ground” at the same time. The “tenor” and the “vehicle” function implicitly, one substituting for the other. This is because the “vehicle” represents some characteristics of the “tenor” but the two components in the same metonymy don’t share any similarities at all. For instance,

7. *“He is mad, absolutely mad!” The greybeard said abruptly.*

Here “graybeard” is a metonymy, taking place of the person who was wearing grey beard. “Grey beard” is a significant feature of the “tenor” thus it functions as the “ground” does in this sentence. Because of this substitutive relationship existing between the “tenor” and “vehicle”, in traditional Chinese rhetoric, metonymy is also called

“substitute (借代)”

In English, there is another figure of speech called synecdoche that is quite similar to metonymy. Actually It is very difficult to distinguish one from the other since both of them make use of the relationship between things. In a synecdoche, part of a word's basic meaning can be used for the whole, referring to specific objects, e.g.

8. *They are taking on hands down at the factory.*

9. *Mary Sue lives four doors down the street.*

In sentence 8, “hands” represents “workers” and in sentence 9 “doors” stands for “houses”, both of which confirm to the rules of metonymy, “using part for the whole”.

Furthermore, there're many other ways to constitute a metonymy. “Just as conceptual metaphor restructures a conceptual domain like mountains in terms of another conceptual domain such as the human body, a conceptual metonymy names one aspect or element in a conceptual domain while referring to some other element which is in a contiguity relation with it.” (Jakobson, 1985, p.45) For instance,

a. Person for His Name: *I'm not in the telephone book.*

b. Author For Book: 马列, 鲁迅

c. Inventor For Invention: 杜康

d. Container for Contained: *This is an excellent dish/He drank the whole bottle.*

e. The Name of Some Person for A Kind of People: 西施

...

The famous linguist Jakobson has pointed out that the basic difference between metaphor and metonymy is that metaphor is based on similarity while metonymy is on contiguity. This is fairly illuminating to our study of metonymy's characteristics. Since contiguity isn't necessary to be involved in some certain relationship, as long as the two elements share some connection, one can be perceived as the other's metonymy.

The well-known semiotist Eco (1985) noted that contiguity of all kinds of metonymies generally falls into three categories:

1) Contiguity in language coding (the most common one) such as “the crown” for the throne, “white collar” for office staff.

2) Contiguity in context. E.g.

10. *There came several gunshots from the car; that car should be dumb.*

3) Contiguity in the referents, which is considered to be impossible by Eco.

Eco's classification is extremely illuminating. It is quite common to form metonymies by using semiotic contiguity, especially through phonetic contiguity and syntactical functioning. For example, some traditional Chinese two-part common expressions make use of phonetic contiguity to give a sense of humor such as “老太婆喝稀饭 – 无耻(齿)下流”, “孔夫子搬家 – 尽是输(书)”. Many Chinese taboos or auspicious expressions also work on this phonetic contiguity such as “碗(完)”, “送钟(终)”, “瓜(寡)”, “伞(散)”, “梨(离)”, “四(死)”, “八(发)”, “蝙蝠(福)”, “福倒(到)”, etc. What's more, all phenomena of ellipsis, truncation, and phonological reduction/neutralization are linguistic examples of metonymy.

In our daily life, out of some certain consideration, people often express something by describing some other related with it instead of talking about it directly.

11. A: *How did you get to the airport?*

B: *I waved down a taxi.*

Towards A's question, B didn't answer directly–“I got to the airport by taxi”–but only choose one part of the whole process to give an indirect reply. The whole process of this incident is a so-called “ideal cognitive model (ICM)” (Eco, 1985, p.330). As for a westerner, the ICM for the incident of “going to some place” is like this:

Precondition: You have (access to) the vehicle.

Embarkation: You get into the vehicle and start it up.

Center: You drive (row, fly, etc.) to your destination.

Finish: You park and get out.

Endpoint: You are at your destination.

People usually use one part of this ICM to call the whole process and the hearer will instantly understand that the speaker is talking about the whole thing through the part being mentioned simply because they share the same ICM. This enables us to infer something we're not being told.

Very common uses of metonymy in the world's languages are the reduction of movement along a path to either a stationary or just the endpoint of a path. English *over* provides examples of both types of reductions. We can invoke movement along a path by saying “Bill Walked *over* the hill”. This can be reduced to a stationary path in “the road goes *over* the hill”. A statement like “Bill lives *over* the hill” access only the endpoint of the path described by *over*. Besides, metonymy has often been used to extend the indirect object to constructions lacking a direct object. There're many verbs such as *pay*, *advise* and *hamper* that denote *the giving of something* that is so predictable from the meaning of the verb itself that there is no need to express the *something* given as an accusative direct object. This metonymy motivates the use of the indirect object, and therefore the dative case, with a host of verbs which otherwise look rather like a



random list.

The use of gestures is another way of metonymic thinking. And according to Eco, the contextual relationship also serves as a source of metonymy. Actually, some Chinese cultural traditions and local customs also created many special expressions functioning as metonymies such as “汗青(for history)”, “秋波(for misgivings and worries)”, “泰山(for father-in-law)”, “推敲(for thinking and consideration)”, “女儿红(a kind of wine)”, “十里香”, etc. Special experience can bring about special contiguities thus producing special metonymies.

### III. A FUNCTIONAL COMPARISON AND CONTRAST OF METAPHOR AND METONYMY

#### A. Six Types of Functions

Roughly speaking, both metaphor and metonymy have 6 types of functions, including rhetorical function, linguistic function, poetic function, cognitive function, social function and word-play function. I will give a comprehensive introduce of these functions in the following paragraphs (Shu, 2000, p.112-151).

##### a. Rhetorical Function

Since metonymy denotes something with its related characteristics, usually a most significant one, it often has strong rhetorical effects. A good many nicknames come in this way, making themselves protruding and humorous by emphasizing some special features of things being mentioned such as “独眼龙”, “跷脚”, “花和尚鲁智深”, “豹子头林冲”, “矮脚虎王英”, “行者武松”, etc.

Puns can be taken as a special usage of metonymy as well. For example, “东边日出西边雨，道是无情却有情 (晴)”. At the level of discourse, using a part of the ICM to send a “discourse connotation” (p.138) can help to achieve special effects.

12. A: *Would you like some coffee?*

B: *Coffee would keep me awake.*

Instead of answering “no”, B simply told the result of “drinking coffee” and A would try to infer B’s real intentions with the help of his common sense.

##### b. Linguistic Function

The so-called linguistic function mainly refers to the function of filling in lexical gaps. As metaphors use similarities between things to make names, metonymies use things’ features in certain aspects, such as “向日葵”, “映山红”, “竹叶青”, etc.

Cognitive linguists assume that language develops by metaphorical extension. Basic body experiences, such as moving in space, seeing people and handling objects, provide the foundation of language. At the same time, a certain form of language can focus some movement (or path) or the endpoint of some incident (endpoint of the path), just like the following sentences.

13. *We walked in the forest.*

14. *We walked home.*

This proves that the nature of metonymy formation lies in the possibility of establishing some connections among individuals contiguously appearing within the same conceptual Construction. These individuals don’t need to have contiguities in the sense of space. They are not restricted to behaviors, either. From this perspective, metonymy is the most basic form of meaning extension. It is even more important and fundamental than metaphor.

##### c. Poetic Function

Language is building materials for poetry. Innovation in each layer of language can engender poems. In fact, such kind of innovation is a deviation from the original regulations and rules. Layers of language include phonetics, syntax, lexical, etc. Metonymy is a kind of deviation that doesn’t involve two domains as metaphor does, thus it has weaker effects than metaphor does as well. Theoretically speaking, the more it deviates, the more poetic it could be. However, in practice, it is always limited by rules of language itself and people’s cognitive ability. If the tenor is too distant in meaning from the vehicle, it would be too abstruse to understand, no to mention appreciate.

##### d. Social Function

As we know, metonymy is an important approach to constitute euphemism, indirect discourse behavior and argot; the former two expressing politeness while the later one with a sense of privacy. All of them function in strengthening social communications.

##### e. Cognitive Function

Metonymy is an important component of our conceptual system. People can use a familiar and easy recognized characteristic to represent the whole thing. Therefore, by obtruding their characteristics, metonymy make it easy to find out and remember the identity and features of things being discussed.

##### f. Wordplay Function

This function mainly works in nicknames, puns and two-part common expressions(歇后语) that have been mentioned in former chapters.

#### B. Symmetry in Functioning

15. *Argument is war.*

16. *The ham sandwich around the corner wants another coffee.*

From the above two sentences, we can conclude like this—in a metaphor, the tenor and the vehicle enjoy equivalent positions. The relation between them is symmetrical. (argument  $\longleftrightarrow$  war) Under some circumstance, we can also make sentence like “War is argument”. But the metonymy as presented in sentence 16 is by no means symmetrical. We can only use “ham sandwich” to take place of the customer we can never use it in a reversed way. Customer cannot stand for ham sandwich anyway. (Ham sandwich  $\xleftarrow{x}$  the customer)

#### IV. WORKING MECHANISM

Some linguists regard metonymy as a subtype of metaphor while others think metonymy is contradictory to it as they are based on contradictory principles.

##### A. Difference and Semantic Conflicts

Metaphor and metonymy share something in common in their constructions and function, but they're quite different in working mechanism. First, though both of them involve substitution, they belong to different categories. Take A for B is a category mistake. Metonymy employs characteristics of things to help them to be recognized. It is never involved in two categories. In metaphor, there is a sense of distance between the tenor and the vehicle while the two elements involved in metonymy always belong to the same category. Most of the time, A is even a part of B. A can be used to represent B is because there is a relationship of evoke and being evoked existing between them. Although semantic differences and conflicts exist both in metaphor and metonymy, they are of different nature.

##### B. Similarity vs. Contiguity

In metonymy, the semantic link between two or more senses of a word is based on a relationship of contiguity, i.e. between the whole of something and a part of it. As a matter of fact, the expression can metonymically stand for each of its components. More generally speaking, “contiguity is the state of being in some sort of contact such as that between a part and a whole, a container and the contents, a place and its inhabitants, etc.” (Shu, 2003, p.89) And the concept of contiguity does not only apply to real physical or spatial contact, but also to more abstract associations such as time or cause.

However, metaphor is based on “conceived similarity between one thing from the source domain and the other from the target domain” (Chen, 1979, p.79). And this “similarity” is always in the eyes of the beholder—“if he wants to see it, it is there; if he wants not, there is none.” “The link is never objectively given as in the case metonymy, where the relation of contiguity always involves some objective link between the various senses of a word” (Chen, 1979, p.81-83).

##### C. Reflections vs. References

According to Gibbs, to understand metonymy depends on forming a stratified system to impose restrictions on the common knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer – 1> Identity of the metonymy; 2> Acts of the metonymy; 3> Relevant acts of the metonymy; 4> the type of act referred to. For instance,

17. *While I was taking his picture, he did a Napoleon for the camera.*

Here “Napoleon” refers to the typical posture of Napoleon. Without enough knowledge of the identity, acts and relevant acts of this person, the hearer won't be able to understand the referent and real meaning of this metonymy.

##### D. Metaphor = or $\neq$ Metonymy

Through an analytic study of metaphor and metonymy present in Homer's epics, Jakobson revealed a special relation between the two figures of speech. He claimed that sometimes, metaphor and metonymy could coexist in the same vehicle as applied in the sentences below.

18. *Not a bright falcon was flying beyond the hills.*

19. *Not a fierce horse was coming at gallop to the court.*

In sentence 18, the metaphor is present when a brave man appeared like “a falcon flying beyond the hills”. In sentence 19, the semantic relationship is a bit ambiguous, however. The horse coming to the court implies that the man is coming, which evoked a contiguous and metonymic image of the horse and the court. Things standing for their owner; outdoors activities stand for what happens in the door. There is no need for the horse to substitute for the man: “A brave fellow was coming at a gallop to the court, // Vasilij was walking to the porch.” The image of “horse” is waving between metaphor and metonymy. Since in poetry, similarity is often cooperating with contiguity, any metaphor is a bit metonymic and any metonymy is a bit metaphorical as well.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This paper makes a comprehensive analysis of metaphor and metonymy through comparing and contrasting these two important language phenomena from the perspective of structure, function and working mechanism. It takes pains to prove that these two phenomena are different from each other by nature. As their constructions are concerned, metaphor is consisted of three parts--tenor, vehicle and ground while metonymy is only constituted by the substitute and the substituted. Metaphor is to describe one thing in terms of some other thing, the tenor and the vehicle belonging to

two different categories with certain distance between each other; metonymy is to replace the name of one thing with another commonly associated with it, usually a part of it, the substitute and the substituted belonging to the same category. Human interactions generally prove to be much more significant than features that might be available in an “objective” description of a category.

Cognition and the use of language involve the access and manipulation of mental spaces, which are constructed from human perceptual experience and are extended through imaginative processes, within which metaphor and metonymy are the most significant ones. Many linguists including Lakoff, Johnson, Jakobson, Eco, etc. have made magnificent contribution to this field. Their theories provide a bridge between linguistics and our understanding of the body and brain, which has been acknowledged as coherent with other studies in cognitive language. Both metaphor and metonymy merit further research.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Chen, Wangdao. (1979). *An Introduction to Rhetoric*. Shanghai: Shanghai Educational Publishing House.
- [2] Cui, Xiliang. (2001). *Language Understanding and Cognition*. Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press.
- [3] Eco, U. (1985). *The Semantics of Metaphor*. In Innis, R.E. (ed.).
- [4] Gao, Mingkai. (Saussure, 1959/1985). *Course in General Linguistics*. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- [5] Gibbs, R. (1994). *The Poetics of the Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Huai, Yu. (Guiraud, Pierre 1975/1988). *Semiology*. Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House.
- [7] Innis, R. E. (1985). *Semiotics, an Introductory Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- [8] Jakobson, R. (1985). *Closing Statements: Linguistics and Poetics*. In Innis, R.E. (ed.).
- [9] Langacker, R. (1999). *Concept, Image and Symbol: the Cognitive Basis of Grammar*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- [10] Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- [11] Lakoff, G. & M. Turner (1989). *More Than Cool Reason: a Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- [12] Marvin KLChingetal. (1980). *Linguistic Perspective on Literature*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- [13] Mooij, JJA. (1876). *A Study of Metaphor*. Holland: North-Holland Publishing Company.
- [14] Ortony, Andren. (1979). *Metaphor and Thought*. London: London Cup.
- [15] Shu, Dingfang. (2003). *On the Construction and Cognitive Characteristics of Metaphor and Simile*. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 1, 36.
- [16] Shu, Dingfang. (2000). *Studies in Metaphor*. Shanghai: Shanghai Educational Publishing House.
- [17] Wang, Yichuan. (1994). *Linguistic Utopia*. Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House.
- [18] <http://www.wam.umd.edu/~mturn/www/metaphor.html>
- [19] <http://www.icsi.berkeley.edu/NTL/>.



**Shenli Song** was born in Haining County of Zhejiang Province, China in 1981. She received her M.A. degree in literature from Nanjing University, China in 2007. Her major field of study is contemporary American culture and literature.

She is currently a lecturer in the Foreign Languages College, Zhejiang Gongshang University, Hangzhou, China. Her research interests include British and American culture and literature. She has published many books and papers in this area, such as *Introducing Critical Theory* (Hefei, Anhui: Anhui Literature and Art Publishing House, 2009) and *Introducing Postmodernism* (Hefei, Anhui: Anhui Literature and Art Publishing House, 2009), “A Stylistic Analysis of ‘Miss Brill’ by Katherine Mansfield” in *Review of European Studies* (2009.12).

Ms. Song is a member of the Zhejiang Institute of Foreign Literature Study.

# The Effect of Classical Music on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian Students

Nasser Rashidi  
Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran  
Email: Nrashidi@rose.shirazu.ac.ir

Farman Faham  
Shiraz University, Iran

**Abstract**—The influence of music on language learning and performance has been the subject of study for many years. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of classical music (Mozart Sonata) on the reading comprehension performance of two groups of Iranian students in an English institute in Iran. To this end, the study compared two groups of Iranian English students (N=60) over a period of three months: one was taught reading comprehension with a music background and the other with no music background whatsoever. The results of the study showed a significant difference between the performance of the group exposed to music and the performance of the other group not exposed to music. The group taught reading comprehension with a music background outperformed the other taught it with no music background.

**Index Terms**—reading comprehension, music, background music, classical music, Mozart sonata

## I. INTRODUCTION

The use of music as a tool by language teachers to teach foreign languages has been the center of attention to researchers for many years. That is why in the literature we can see different, but mostly positive comments concerning the effectiveness of music in language learning and performance. It has been stated that music can contribute to acquiring the linguistic skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking (Jalongo & Bromley, 1984; Jolly, 1975; Martin, 1983; McCarthey, 1985). It is interesting to notice that not only teachers but also other scholars have benefited from the effect of music in their work "Throughout time, healers, philosophers, scientists, and teachers have recognized the role of music for therapeutic and developmental functions." (Bancroft, 1985 cited in Stansell, 2005). Stansell (2005) asserts that music has a positive effect on language accent, memory and grammar as well as mood, enjoyment, and motivation. Based on his assertion we can conclude that music can have some positive influences on both cognitive and affective traits of humans.

Regarding the affective filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), the degree of receiving linguistic input by the learner hinges on their inner feelings to a great extent. "Krashen theorizes that in unfavorable circumstances individuals develop negative attitudes that result in an affective filter, or mental block, that prevents them from using the input to internalize language." (Chastain, 1988, p.98). Krashen (1982) asserts that "The affective hypothesis implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter" (p.32). Thus, if the learner is affected by negative feelings and attitude, their language internalization diminishes.

Now, the question is how the teacher can create a situation that encourages a low filter. Hallam and Price (1988 cited in Merrell, 2004) stated that particular combinations and frequencies of sounds have some positive effects on certain parts of the brain, bringing calming effects to the students. They also reported that when music was playing in the classroom there were noticeable changes in body temperature, blood pressure, breathing rate, and pulse rate of the students and music helped the students to become calmer and more obliging. Merrell (2004) believes that music can reduce the level of anxiety and inhibition in learners, so he asserts that "Music can help to keep the levels of tension and stress to a minimum". Some researchers still talk more about the freeing influence of music, "Music therapists utilize both types of music (music to assuage and soothe, or music to arouse and energize) to relieve many kinds of psychological and physical stressors" (Stansell, 2005). When talking about the implications and reflections of his study, the effects of classical background music on fourth-grade silent reading comprehension, Drowns (2002) states that "During stressful moments, it (music) can help alleviate some of the pressure on both students and teachers, and serve as an outlet of expression or relaxation."

As such, if we believe that unfavorable circumstances can create negative feelings and attitudes which in turn can develop an affective filter in language learners (Chastain, 1988, p.98; Krashen, 1982, P. 32), then music by providing a suitable situation is capable of reducing the affective filter, and bringing about better language acquisition and performance.

Referring to Desuggestopedia (a method of language teaching), Larson-Freeman (2000) states that "The reason for

our inefficiency, Lozanov asserts, is that we set up psychological barriers to learning" (p.73). When Larson-freeman (2000, p.79) talks about Desuggestopedia, she states that two planes are involved in communication: on one plane the linguistic message is encoded and on the other the linguistic message is influenced by other factors. On the former plane that is conscious the learner deals with the language and on the latter one that is subconscious the music tells that learning is nice and simple, and when subconsciousness and consciousness join together, learning is improved. Also, we read through Richards and Rodgers (2001,) that:

The musical background helps to induce a relaxed attitude, which Lozanov refers to as concert pseudo-passiveness. This state is felt to be optimal for learning, in that anxieties and tension are relieved and power of concentration for new material is raised (p.102).

#### A. *Statement of the Problem*

Students are often stressed and anxious in language classes. "Learning a second language can be a stressful and difficult process." (Merrell 2004). Hence, it can develop a kind of mental block, or affective filter (Chastain, 1988, p.98; Krashen, 1982, p. 32) which in turn can prevent students from language internalization. In such a case, music can reduce their tension and stress (Drowns, 2002; Merrell, 2004; Stansell, 2005), and, in turn bring about better language learning including reading comprehension learning. Moreover, the positive effects that music can have on cognitive abilities including language learning in general and reading comprehension in particular (see, the related literature review) have often taken for granted, especially in Iranian English classes.

#### B. *Significance of the Study*

The significance of the present study can be discussed from two important points of view; firstly most studies regarding the effect of music on reading skills have just been based on exposing the participants to different musical conditions while they are taking a reading test. (see, Cooper, Cotton & Goss 2008; Drowns, 2002; Liapis, Giddens & Uhlenbrok 2008). However, the innovation with regard to this study was that the participants were both taught reading comprehension and tested on it in a music condition. To some extent the context of this study was similar to that of Desuggestopedia classes (a musical context), but with the emphasis on the reading comprehension skill. Secondly, a lot of studies have been conducted with regard to the effect of music on different cognitive abilities like language learning and performance (see, the related literature review); However, there have been very few studies, not to say almost no serious study, concerning the connection between music and language learning in Iran, especially the effect of a piece of classical music (Mozart Sonata) on the reading comprehension of Iranian English learners.

#### C. *Research Question*

So, this research question can be posed: Is there any significant difference between the result of reading performance of the Iranian English students taught reading comprehension passages in a music condition (Mozart Sonata condition) and that of those taught them in a non-music condition?

#### D. *Review of the Related Literature*

In a study by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky (1993) that showed the effect of music (Mozart Sonata) on the IQ of college students, the participants who had been exposed to Mozart Sonata for ten minutes scored higher on spatial-temporal reasoning tasks. It is interesting to see that Rauscher, Robinson and Jens (1998) conducted a similar study; this time not on humans but on rats, and achieved almost the same results. Rauscher (1988) reported that the Mozart work caused the rats to complete the maze faster and with fewer errors. She concluded that music effect can contribute to spatial learning of both rats and humans. It is also interesting to notice that an almost similar study conducted on plants; Retallack (1973) claimed that the plants exposed to soothing music grew abundantly and were extremely healthy.

"Compared with sitting in silence for 10 min, listening to Mozart induces more positive moods and relatively optimal levels of arousal, which lead to higher levels of performance on tests of spatial abilities" (Schellenberg, 2004). However, Schellenberg (2004) claims that in subsequent studies replicating the Mozart Effect have been difficult.

In another study by Schellenberg (2004), two groups of students were given two different lessons, namely, music lessons and drama lessons. Before conducting the experiment, the researcher had measured the IQ of the two groups. Having conducted the study, Schellenberg (2004) concluded that in comparison with the drama group, the music group showed greater increases in full-scale IQ, so he asserts that "The effect was relatively small, but it generalized across IQ subtests, index scores, and a standardized measure of academic achievement."

Hallam, Price and Katsarou (2002) reported that in comparison with no-music condition, calming-music condition had better effect on the arithmetic and memory task performance of children, and in a study on the cognitive content drawing of children, Gur (2009) stated that classical music had a positive effect on this cognitive ability in children. More studies have been carried out which indicate the impact of music on general characteristics of the brain such as brain skills, memory, IQ, etc (see also, Rauscher & Zupan, 2000; Stough, kerkin, Bates & Mangan, 1994). Although the results of such studies may have different results at times, they show us that the inevitable effect of music on brain skills and activities cannot be simply underestimated.

Apart from the general effect of music on learners' IQ, brain functions and other cognitive abilities, in the literature of music and learning, specifically language learning, we can find a few studies concerning the different effects of music

on the reading comprehension skill. Some of which are mentioned as follows:

Kelly (1981) explored the effect of music on the reading and language arts performance of first graders. The participants of the study were randomly divided into three groups, namely Orff-Schulwerk music, visual arts and control. Having analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data concerning the study, she stated that the effect of music contributed to the improvement of the music group to the level of the visual arts group and the control group, which had been at a higher level than the music group, with respect to reading and related areas. Kelly (1981) concluded that "Music shows a demonstrated potential for enhancing reading and language development in the first grade."

In another study by Cooper, Cotton and Goss (2008), the participants were given three different reading comprehension tests to do in three different conditions, namely no music, classical music, and lyrical music. The results showed a slightly better performance on the reading comprehension test in the no-music condition, but this difference was not significant ( $p = .94$ ). Later on the researchers of the study recommended equalizing test difficulty before conducting a similar experiment.

In a similar study, Liapis, Giddens and Uhlenbrok (2008) tested the impacts of lyrical and non-lyrical music on reading comprehension. Participants were divided into two groups and each group was asked to read the same article under two different musical conditions, one while listening to a song with lyrics (lyrical condition) and the other while listening to the same song without any lyrics (non-lyrical condition). Participants in the non-lyrical condition had better scores; however, the difference was not significant ( $p = .552$ ).

Drowns (2002) conducted a piece of research to see the effect of classical background music on silent reading comprehension. Although the results showed an improvement, the researcher doubted whether the improvement was due to the sole role of music or other factors were also involved. So, he suggested conducting more studies with this regard to shed light on other factors affecting reading comprehension as well.

Even a few studies were conducted that showed the positive effect of music on the reading skill of children who already had difficulties with their learning and were categorized as slow learners. Nicholson (1972 cited in Hodges & O'Connell, 2005) reported that after having received music instruction, the slow learners got better reading scores than the learners who had not received any music instruction, and the results of Movsesian's study (1967 cited in Hodges, et al., 2005) were in line with those of Nicholson's (1972). In an almost similar study, Register, Darrow, Standley, and Swedberg (2007) reported that music made improvement in the reading skill of the students who had already had disability in reading. However, Lu (1986 cited in Hodges, et al., 2005) who had conducted a similar study did not find any significant differences between the group who had received music instruction and the other who had received no music instruction, and also the findings of Harmon, Troester, Pickwick and Pelosi (2008) showed that there was no significant difference among the three groups (rock group, Mozart group and silence group) on their reading comprehension test.

According to Harmon, et al., (2008) different studies have been conducted regarding the effects of different kinds of music on cognitive abilities and most of them have made use of the Mozart Effect (the benefit of listening to classical music over other sorts on learning), that is why the present study was also based on the effect of Mozart music on reading comprehension.

As it is evident, the results of the above reported studies have not been in line with each other at times. So, it implies that further research is needed to explore the effect of music on cognitive abilities including reading comprehension. Again it reminds us of the research question, that is: Is there any significant difference between the result of reading performance of the Iranian English students taught reading comprehension passages in a music condition (Mozart Sonata condition) and that of those taught them in a non-music condition?

## II. METHOD

### A. Participants

This study was conducted with two groups of male EFL learners at the age cohort of (17-21), with the same level of proficiency (already tested by ARCO TEOFL), studying at the Adult's High-intermediate 3 in the Iran Language Institute (ILI), Shiraz, Iran. Each group consists of 30 students. One group is treated as the control group, and the other as the experimental group. The non-probability sampling, accidental sampling, was utilized to select the participants.

### B. Instruments

A passage with an interesting topic (i.e. The Race of Man) is chosen from MAN AND HIS WORLD by Patricia Milgrim. The passage includes 20 multiple-test items. Since the passage was published in a popular reading book for teaching reading comprehension passages, it was considered a standardized test, so its validity was taken for granted. The reliability of test was calculated by another group of the students of the same level of proficiency (also already tested by ARCO TEOFL) through applying KR-21 method. The result was the reliability of .82 so this test can be considered to be reliable. Another instrument was a DVD-player to broadcast the music (Mozart) at 50 decibel or dBA (a unit of sound pressure level).

### C. Data Collection and Procedure

The participants of the present study belonged to two different classes: one class was treated as the control group and

the other as the experimental group. They attended their classes 3 days a week for 24 sessions (2 months), and each session lasted for 105 minutes. These two groups had the same reading comprehension passages and teacher who was teaching them grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension each session. The average time spent on each of these sections, namely grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension was approximately 30, 35 and 40 minutes respectively. The reading comprehension was being taught within 40 minutes to the end of the class. The procedures for teaching reading comprehension were as follows:

1) Warming up on the passage: The teacher asks the students different questions concerning the subject of the passage to draw their attention to what they are going to read. (5 min.)

2) Silent reading: The teacher gives the students enough time to read the passage silently. (10 min.)

3) Asking general questions about the passage: The teacher asks the students general questions, concerning what they have read silently, to answer chorally, and subsequently repeats the general questions to have individual students give complete answers. (5 min.)

4) Paraphrasing the passage: The teacher reads out the passage sentence by sentence, and works on it by paraphrasing the paragraphs, asking detailed questions, and giving synonyms/ antonyms for certain words in the passage. (18 min.)

5) Assignment: The teacher wants the students to read the passage at home once more and make as many questions as they can on it. (2 min)

This five-stage procedure was followed exactly to teach reading comprehension passages to both the control and experimental groups. The only difference was that the experimental group was being exposed to music (Mozart Sonata) during teaching the reading comprehension passages.

On the 25th session the two groups (control and experimental) were given the same reading comprehension test, but in different conditions. The control group took the test in a condition where no music was being played; whereas, the experimental group took it in a condition where music (Mozart Sonata) was being played. The time allowed to take the test was 30 minutes for each group. After the administration of the tests, all the papers were collected and corrected by the researcher.

#### D. Data Analysis

An independent t-test was run to show if there had been any significant differences between the reading comprehension performance of the two groups (control and experimental) in different conditions (music and no music).

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study are shown in two tables, namely, table 1 and table 2. First the study is analyzed with regard to descriptive statistics (table 1).

TABLE 1:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE TWO GROUPS OF NON-MUSIC/MUSIC ON THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The test mark in quiet condition (non-music)	30	16.8000	2.69866	.49271
The test mark in music condition (music)	30	17.5000	1.35824	.24798

Regarding the mean scores of the two groups (music & non-music), we see that the music group has a better performance on the reading comprehension test than the non-music group ( $17.5 > 16.8$ ). To see whether this difference between the mean scores was significant, a t-test was also run with the following results:

TABLE 2:  
INDEPENDENT T-TEST FOR THE TWO GROUPS OF NON-MUSIC /MUSIC ON THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Mean difference between non-music group and music group	Non music group mean	Music group mean	df	t	Sig
	16.8000	17.5000	42.608	-5.602	.03

As evident in table 2, the difference between the means of the two groups is significant ( $t = -5.602, p < .05$ ).

Since the present study investigated the effect of music (Mozart Sonata) both on teaching reading comprehension and on testing it, the results were discussed in two respects: 1) The contribution of music to providing a suitable environment for enhancing language internalization in general. 2) The positive effect of music itself on reading comprehension performance in particular.

The experimental group of the study was taught reading comprehension passages in a music environment for two months, and then significantly outperformed the control group on the reading comprehension test. This improvement in the experimental group may have something to do with Krashen (1982) affective filter hypothesis in that when learners are in unfavorable situations they may develop an affective filter which in turn can reduce language internalization. So, it can be concluded that the music in this study, by reducing stress and negative emotions (Drowns 2002, Merrel 2004 and Stansell, 2005), may have created a favorable condition in which better reading comprehension learning took place.

Regarding the improving effect of music on the reading skill, the result of the present study showed consistency with

Kelly's (1981) study in that music had a positive effect on the reading comprehension of the participants. Also, we saw this improving effect in the works of Nicholson (1972), and Movsesian (1967).

Cooper, et al., (2008) conducted almost a similar study with three different reading comprehension tests of different levels of difficulty; in the end they recommended that other researchers equalize test difficulty for further studies in the future. On their recommendation, in this study the researcher gave just one reading comprehension test from one source (MAN and HIS WORL) to both the control group and the experimental one, so that the test difficulty could not affect the results adversely. Besides, their research results (Cooper, et al., 2008) indicated a better performance on the reading comprehension tests in a no-music condition, and this difference was not significant ( $p = .94$ ); however, in the present research the students' performance was better in the music condition, and it was significant ( $p < .05$ ). Perhaps, one reason for different results in these two studies was the test difficulty as mentioned earlier (see the literature review).

#### IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In doing this research, the researcher confronted few limitations: firstly, since the participants were all from Iran, the type of classical music (Mozart) exposed to them may not have been in line with their typically cultural music; however, Harmon, Troester, Pickwick and Pelosi (2008) state that "A variety of research has been conducted on the effects of different types of music on cognitive abilities. Many of these studies are based upon the Mozart effect. . ." So, the researcher wanted to base his study on research-based data that is why he made use of Mozart music. Secondly, the researcher was eager to have some female participants to evaluate the effect of this study on them. If he had access to female participants, he could also have run a two-way ANOVA to test the effect of gender on reading comprehension as well (the effect of two independent variables, music and gender, on reading comprehension could have been tested), but having access to female participants for a school or institute teacher in the context of the study was too difficult if not impossible.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Two groups of Iranian English students belonging to one English institute and also the same level of proficiency were taught and tested reading comprehension under two different conditions (music and no-music) within one term (2 months). The results of the study showed a significant difference between the reading comprehension scores of the two groups regarding the effect of music. Therefore, the answer to the research question was positive, that is, there is a significant difference between the result of reading performance of the Iranian English students taught reading comprehension passages in a music condition (Mozart Sonata condition) and that of those taught them in a non-music condition.

As the result of the study showed, English teachers can make use of music as an effective tool to facilitate students' language learning. Practically, applying music to all the teaching sections of a language class session may not be possible, but applying it to the reading comprehension section would be beneficial (as the results of the present study showed), and can bring variety to the language class as well.

#### APENDIX 1: CLASSICAL MOZART MUSIC

#### APENDIX 2: DVD PLAYER

#### APENDIX 3: READING COMPREHENSION PASSAGE

If you stood in a busy place in a big cosmopolitan city, like Times Square in New York City or Piccadilly Circus in London, and watched people go by, you would soon realize how intermixed the people of the modern world are.

Anthropologists speak of three major races of man. These races are identified as three distinct groups of people. Each group has certain physical characteristics that are inherited. These three groups belong to one family, and all may have been the same originally. However, as they moved to different parts of the earth, they developed different features adapted to the conditions of climate and food in the places where they lived for a long period of time. In more modern times, these groups of people have been intermixing. Some groups have been conquered; other groups have intermarried.

Nevertheless, if you watched the passers-by in Times Square carefully, you would probably recognize several major types of people. A man with yellowish skin, straight black hair, high cheekbones, and almond-shaped eyes probably belongs to the people of eastern Asia called the Mongoloid race. American Indians, who live in America and have reddish-yellowish skin, also belong to this group.

If a man is from Africa south of the Sahara Desert, he is likely to have a long head with black or dark brown skin; a broad, flat nose; thick, protruding lips; and tightly curled hair. He belongs to the Negroid race. Other men like him can be found in the South Pacific Islands.

A third group of men had their original home on the continent of Europe. This group is known as the Caucasoid race, because the earliest skull of this type of human being was found in the Caucasus Mountains region in southeastern Europe. The Caucasians are called the white race because their skin color is generally lighter than the yellow, brown, or



black skin tones of the other races. People of the white race have a variety of head shapes, and their hair varies from silky straight to curly. People of this race living near the Mediterranean Sea are usually darker-haired and darker-eyed than people in areas farther north. Nowadays people of the Caucasoid race live in all parts of the world.

Some scientists speak of a fourth group, the Australoids, who are dark-skinned aborigines living on the continent of Australia. There are also some people, like the Ainu of Japan, who do not seem to belong to any one of the major races.

If you wanted to make a map showing the races of mankind, it could not have only three or four colors for the main racial groups; it would have to show many tints and shades. As men mingle more and more in the modern world of easy travel, the races become more intermixed. It is sometimes difficult to label a man as belonging to one race or another. Is it even desirable to emphasize the differences between races? Man's great problem is to learn how to live peacefully with people different from himself. As members of one family, men must "live like brothers or die like beasts."

#### APPENDIX 4: TEST

Choose the right answer.

1) The writer of the passage is probably...

- A . standing in the middle of a large city.
- B . living in New York City or London.
- C . trying to make the reader think about a situation.
- D . watching people walk along busy streets.

2) "... how intermixed the people of the modern world are. "means...

- A . How are the people of the modern world mixed together?
- B . The many different people of the world have become mixed to a great degree.
- C . The people of the modern world are very mixed up.
- D . How did the people of the modern world become mixed?

3) In paragraph 2, line 1, "major" has the same meaning as...

- A . He's a chemistry major.
- B . His brother is a major in the army.
- C . They are majoring in engineering.
- D . A major problem in Tehran is the traffic.

4) In paragraph 2, all of the following are stated except:

- A . All men might have been the same in the beginning.
- B . Man's features changed because of the climate in which he lived.
- C . Today the original three groups of men are more distinct than they used to be.
- D . Conquest and intermarriage have caused the races of man to become mixed.

5) There are two words with INTER-, intermarry and intermix. The prefix INTER- means...

- A . between
- B . from
- C . from
- D . to

6) In paragraph 2, line 4, "However" means...

- A . and then
- B . and since
- C . but when
- D . in that way

7) All of the following statements about the people of the Mongoloid race are true except:

- A . They all live in eastern Asia.
- B . Their skin is yellow or reddish-yellow.
- C . Their hair is straight and black.
- D . They include the American Indians.

8) In paragraph 4, line 1, "likely" means...

- A . he has
- B . he wants to have
- C . he likes to have
- D . he probably has

- 9) In paragraph 4, line 3, like has the same meaning as...
- A . Jack doesn't like New York City.
  - B . It is likely to rain tomorrow.
  - C . He's a likable boy.
  - D . Mary is just like her sister.
- 10) All of the following statements about the people of the Negroid race are true except:
- A . Their hair is curly.
  - B . They have protruding cheeks.
  - C . Their skin is dark.
  - D . They are found in Africa and the South Pacific Islands.
- 11) All of the following statements about the members of the Caucasoid race are true except:
- A . Although they originated in Europe, they are found in all regions of the world today.
  - B . The name of this race is connected with a geographical site.
  - C . They all have light skin and hair.
  - D . Some of its members live near the Mediterranean Sea.
- 12) In paragraph 5, line 4, "lighter" has the same meaning as...
- A . Turn on the light.
  - B . Please light my cigarette.
  - C . You can easily carry that box because it's light.
  - D . That shirt is light blue.
- 13) "... their hair varies from silky straight to curly." means...
- A . Their hair is silky straight, wavy, or curly.
  - B . They have either silky straight or curly hair.
  - C . Their hair is different from silky straight and curly.
  - D . Their hair changes from silky straight to curly.
- 14) Which of the following statement is true?
- A . The Australoids have dark skin and live in Austria.
  - B . The Ainu and the Australoids belong to the same race.
  - C . The Ainu live in Japan.
  - D . Scientists know nothing about the Australoids.
- 15) An accurate map of racial groups would have...
- A . only three or four colors.
  - B . many light and dark shades of color.
  - C . only two main racial groups on it.
  - D . many racial groups unknown to anthropologists.
- 16) In paragraph 7, line 2, "it" refers to...
- A . a race
  - B . a color
  - C . a main racial group
  - D . a map
- 17) " As men mingle more and more in the modern world of easy travel,... " means...
- A . Easy travel in the modern world makes more mingling of men possible.
  - B . Men in the modern world want to travel and mingle more easily.
  - C . If more men mingle, more men will travel.
  - D . More and more men travel easily because they mingle in the modern world.
- 18) From the context, paragraph 7, line 4, label means...
- A . find
  - B . identify
  - C . vary
  - D . adapt

19) "Man's great problem is to learn how to live peacefully with people different from himself." The underlined part of this sentence means...

- A . how does man live peacefully with people different from himself?
- B . how man lives differently from peaceful people.
- C . how people different from himself live peacefully.
- D . how man can live peacefully with people different from himself.

20) In the last paragraph, what does the last sentence mean?

- A .The brothers of men die like beasts.
- B . If man's brothers live in peace, beasts will not die.
- C . If men do not accept other men, they are like animals.
- D . Men live liking their brothers and die liking beasts.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- [2] Cooper, A., Cotton M., & Goss, S. (2008). The effect of music on reading comprehension. Hanover College. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://vault.hanover.edu/~altermattw/methods/assets/posterpics/Fall2008/Cooper\\_Cotton\\_and\\_Goss.pdf](http://vault.hanover.edu/~altermattw/methods/assets/posterpics/Fall2008/Cooper_Cotton_and_Goss.pdf)
- [3] Drowns, M. R. (2002). The effect of classical background music on fourth-grade silent reading comprehension. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Truman State University, Division of Education, Kirksville, Missouri. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://www2.truman.edu/~ed27/eg\\_folio/mdrowns/evidence\\_reflection/1.2.9/internship\\_notes.pdf](http://www2.truman.edu/~ed27/eg_folio/mdrowns/evidence_reflection/1.2.9/internship_notes.pdf)
- [4] Gur, C. (2009). Is there any positive effect of classical music on cognitive content of six year-old children in Turkey? *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 36 (2), 251-259. Retrieved August 24, 2010 from [http://www.eurojournals.com/ejsr\\_36\\_2\\_08.pdf](http://www.eurojournals.com/ejsr_36_2_08.pdf)
- [5] Hallam, Price & Katsarou. (2002). The effects of background music on primary school pupils' task performance. *Educational Studies*, 28 (2), 111-122. Retrieved August 24, 2010 from [http://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/foundations/bwgriffin/edur7130/RR\\_backgroundmusic.pdf](http://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/foundations/bwgriffin/edur7130/RR_backgroundmusic.pdf)
- [6] Harmon, L., Pelosi, G., Pickwick, T., Troester, K. (2008). The effects of different types of music on cognitive abilities. *Journal of Undergraduate Psychological Research*, 3, 41-46. Retrieved August 20, 2010 from <http://library.wcsu.edu/dspace/bitstream/0/456/1/harmon.pdf>
- [7] Hodges, D. A., & O'Connell, D. S. (2005). The impact of music education on academic achievement. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Retrieved August 20, 2010 from <http://www.uncg.edu/mus/SoundsOfLearning/AcdemicAchievement.pdf>
- [8] Jalongo, M. & Bromley, K. (1984). Developing linguistic competence through song. *Reading Teacher*, 37 (9), 840-845.
- [9] Jolly, Y. (1975). The use of songs in teaching foreign languages. *Modern Language Journal*, 59 (1), 11-14.
- [10] Kelly, L. L. (1981). A combined experimental and descriptive study of the effect of music on reading and language. Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved August 23, 2010 from <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI8117801/>
- [11] Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles & practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://www.sdkrashen.com/Principles\\_and\\_Practice/Principles\\_and\\_Practice.pdf](http://www.sdkrashen.com/Principles_and_Practice/Principles_and_Practice.pdf)
- [12] Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [13] Liapis, Z., Giddens, Z. & Uhlenbrock, M. (2008). Effects of lyrical music on reading comprehension. Retrieved August 20, 2010 from, [http://vault.hanover.edu/~altermattw/methods/assets/posterpics/Fall2008/Giddens\\_Liapis\\_and\\_Uhlenbrock.pdf](http://vault.hanover.edu/~altermattw/methods/assets/posterpics/Fall2008/Giddens_Liapis_and_Uhlenbrock.pdf)
- [14] Martin, M. (1983). Teaching spelling with music. *Academic Therapy*, 18 (4), 505-515.
- [15] McCarthy, W. (1985). Promoting language development through music. *Academic Therapy*, 21 (2), 237-242.
- [16] Merrell, A. (2004). The benefit of incorporating music in the classroom. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from <http://Audreymerrell.net/INTASC/INTASC6/the%20benefits%20of%20incorporating%20music.pdf>
- [17] Rauscher, F. H., Robinson, K. D., & Jens, J. (1998). Improved maze learning through early music exposure in rats. *Neurological Rresearch*, 20, 427-432. Retrieved August 21, 2010 from <http://www.uwosh.edu/psychology/rauscher/NeuroResRat.pdf>
- [18] Rauscher, F. H., Shaw, G. L., & Ky, K. N. (1993). Music and spatial task performance. *Nature*, 365, 611. Retrieved August 21, 2010 from <http://www.uwosh.edu/psychology/rauscher/Nature93.pdf>
- [19] Rauscher, F. H., & Zupan, M. (2000). Classroom keyboard instruction improves kindergarten children's spatial-temporal performance: A field experiment. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 15, 215-228. Retrieved August 21, 2010 from <http://www.uwosh.edu/psychology/rauscher/ECRQ.pdf>
- [20] Register, D., Darrow A. A., Standly, J. & Swedberg, O. (2007). The use of music to enhance reading skills of second grade students with reading disabilities. *Spring*, 44 (1), 23-37. Retrieved September 3, 2010 from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17419662>
- [21] Retallack, D., L. (1973). The sound of music and plants. Retrieved August 21, 2010 from [http://www.dovesong.com/positive\\_music/plant\\_experiments.asp](http://www.dovesong.com/positive_music/plant_experiments.asp)
- [22] Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [23] Schellenberg, G. (2004). Music lessons enhance IQ. *American Psychological Society*, 15 (8), 511-514. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/pdf/ps/musiciq.pdf>
- [24] Stansell, J. W. (2005). *The Use of Music for Learning Languages*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Retrieved

August 20, 2010 from

[http://mste.illinois.edu/courses/ci407su02/students/stansell/Jon\\_Stansell\\_The\\_Use\\_of\\_Music\\_in\\_Learning\\_Languages.pdf](http://mste.illinois.edu/courses/ci407su02/students/stansell/Jon_Stansell_The_Use_of_Music_in_Learning_Languages.pdf)

[25] Stough, C., Kerkin, B., Bates, T., Mangan, G. (1994). Music and spatial IQ. *Personality Individual Differences*, 17 (5), 695.

**Nasser Rashidi** has got his BA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) from Shiraz University in 1991. He has got his MA in TEFL from the same university in 1995. He received his PhD in TEFL from Shiraz University in 2002. He is presently the academic member of the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at Shiraz University. His area of research is TEFL including language teaching and testing, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics. He has written two books and about 19 articles on topics in the areas mentioned.

**Farman Faham** is an MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University. His area of interest is Language teaching.

# Incongruity-resolution in English Humor

Yufeng Bai

Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ningbo University, Ningbo, China  
Email: baiyufeng@nbu.edu.cn

**Abstract**—Humor is a common phenomenon in language. One importance prerequisite of its humor effect lies in its incongruity, in the framework of relevance theory that is, the deviation from relevance expectations. According to the features of incongruity-resolution, the article makes the following classification of the humor: garden-path, cognitive contrast and inferring the implication.

**Index Terms**—relevance theory, humor effect, incongruity-resolution

## I. INTRODUCTION

Humor is a common phenomenon in language. It exists in every corner of our life. And it can serve various social functions: break the ice, lubricate a serious condition, satire, ridicule and criticize, to just name a few. Its universality and versatile social functions determine its research value.

In recent years, many scholars are turning their attention to the phenomenon of humor (see Yus, 2003; Wang Wenbin & Linbo, 2003; Fang Biyue & Zhang Zhijiang, 2007; Wang Yong, 2001; Liu Naishi, 2005; Liu Ping, 2006). These studies research the cognitive mechanism involved in humor comprehension in the perspective of relevance theory and conceptual blending or the combination of the two theories, but in view of the versatility of humor in life, this article holds all the above studies lack the research into the classification of the humor from the cognitive aspect. And this leads to the task of this article: make a classification of humor according to the features of incongruity-resolution in the framework of relevance theory.

## II. INCONGRUITY AND INCONGRUITY-RESOLUTION

Incongruity theory is the reigning theory of humor, for this theory illustrates the laughter-eliciting mechanism of humor. The incongruity theory of humor holds that the incongruity or inconsistent part is a prerequisite for a joke to produce humorous effect. But the incongruity alone cannot produce humor effect; it mainly depends on the resolution of the incongruity, that is, the process making the incongruity to be shown logical, or at least less incongruous than was first thought (Ritchie, 1999).

Immanuel Kant (1790) is credited to the advancement of the concept of incongruity. He suggests that humor arises when a strained expectation reduces suddenly to nothing (Kant, 1790, P.538). And later Beattie's definition of incongruity gets widely accepted: "Laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object or assemblage, or as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them" (Richie, 2004, P.46). And the incongruity mainly lies between a joke's punch line and setup. For instance:

(1) A: Waiter! There is a fly in my soup!

B: Don't worry, sir. There is no extra charge.

There exists an incongruity between the customer's words and waiter's answer. But incongruity alone cannot create humor. The humorous effect mainly comes from the resolution of the incongruity—the realization of communicators' intentions with the help of the context. In the above example, customer's words literally are a statement, but in the context of a restaurant, it is a complaint. His intention is to get the waiter's apology. But the waiter intentionally pays no attention to the intention or expectation of the customer, just responds to the customer's literal meaning, thus producing the humorous effect.

## III. RELEVANCE THEORY

Relevance Theory is one basic pragmatic theory, which is based on a definition of relevance and two principles of relevance. By relevance, According to RT, it refers to the connection between the new input and the background information. Relevance theory holds that relevance is a potential property of utterances and other observable phenomena such as thoughts, memories, sounds and so on. Relevance is determined by two factors: cognitive effect and cognitive effort. Cognitive effect refers to the relationship between the information of the discourse and the context. Cognitive effect is proportional to the relevance of the discourse. In communication, three relationships between new input and context can produce cognitive effect: 1) new input combines with the contextual assumptions, producing the new contextual implication; 2) new input strengthens the contextual assumptions; 3) new input contradicts the contextual assumptions, and abandons the contextual assumptions (Sperber and Wilson, 2001, P.109). Cognitive effort

is the effort used in processing the discourse; it is inversely proportional to the relevance of the discourse.

The aim of human cognition tends to get the maximization of relevance. That is to say, to achieve the greatest possible effects for the smallest possible effort. This is the cognitive principle of relevance. But in verbal communication, each utterance will create the expectations of optimal relevance, and this is the communication principle of relevance. The two compose the relevance principle in the Relevance Theory.

Cognitive context is an important concept in relevance theory. Cognitive context refers to the psychological construct, and it is part of the assumptions about the world; and it is dynamic, always changing in the process of discourse interpretation. According to relevance theory, the process of inferring is to some extent for the listener to search for cognitive context. In communication, the speaker shows the listener his informative and communicative intention by means of ostensive behaviors, thus providing necessary grounds of judgment for inference. Meanwhile the listener presupposes the discourse is relevant and worth processing then forms proper contextual assumptions according to the speaker's ostensive behaviors. The final aim is to reach optimal relevance. So to infer is to search relevance. In fact, the listener will make more than one assumption toward one word; only those compatible with the context will be accepted.

#### IV. HUMOR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELEVANCE THEORY

Though not meant for humor, relevance theory provides a good account of the incongruity and incongruity-resolution in the humor. According to relevance theory, relevance is the property of all kinds of communication. And the process of discourse interpretation is the process of searching for relevance; we can say the incongruity in the humor refers to the deviation from the relevance expectation. As for incongruity-resolution, according to Sperber and Wilson (1986), when a speaker violates a convention, the listeners know exactly what to do: they search for a context that will render the violation intelligible. When the listener spends extra efforts to make the punch line logical or intelligible, his efforts will be rewarded by humorous effect when he finally makes it.

Consequently, I suggest that we can identify several types of humor by paying attention to the features of incongruity-resolution.

##### A. Garden-path

This type of humor contains a punning ambiguous part. According to cognitive principle of the Relevance Theory, the first meaning of the pun is more accessible than the other, so is activated first, the other meaning on standby. The punch line deviates from the relevance expectation created by the setup. The listener has to search for a proper assumption to solve the incongruity, which leads to the activation of the other meaning of the pun. Thus, the punch line becomes compatible with the setup. Consider the following examples:

(2) A six-year-old boy returned home after his first school day and said to his mother excitedly: "Mum, our beautiful teacher kissed me when I said good-bye to her this afternoon." "How nice! Did you kiss her back?" asked his mother. "Oh, no. I kissed her face."

(3) A well-to-do couple walk into a bar and sit down next to a drunk. Suddenly, the drunk lets out a tremendously loud fart.

"Excuse me! How dare you fart before my wife!" the man yells.

"Oh, sorry," the drunk slurs. "I did not know it was her turn."

(4) "I had a round of golf with my wife this morning," a man told his friend.

"Which won?" asked the friend.

The man didn't answer.

"Which won?" asked the friend a second time.

"Which one?" thundered the man, "how many wives do you think I have?!"

The joke (2) contains a punning part, which has two meanings. *Kiss back* not only means *kiss in return*, but also *kiss someone's back*. According to the cognitive principle of relevance, the meaning *kiss in return* is more accessible than the other, especially with the aid of previous words such as *say goodbye, school*. Later, the punch line violates the relevance expectation created by the setup, the listener has to search for other presumptions, and thus activating the other meaning of *kiss back*, in this way, the punch line gets compatible with the setup.

The same occurs with *before my wife* in Joke (3). The interpretation of *in the presence of my wife* is more accessible than *in advance of my wife* according to the cognitive principle of relevance. But the first accessible interpretation is later invalidated by the punch line. The effort to find a relevant explanation for the punch line activates the other meaning—*in advance of my wife*.

Joke (4) plays with a phonetic pun—*which won* and *which one*. When one said he played golf with his wife, the listener can only respond by asking *which won*, rather than *which one*, for in the world, most countries implement monogamy. Though a few countries in Middle East and Africa practice polygamy, it is just an exception, needs more efforts or imagination to get it. So the item *which one* is not as accessible as *which won*. But later, in order to resolve the incongruity, *which one* is activated.

##### B. Cognitive Contrast

The role of setup is to create strong relevance expectation. The appearance of the punch line deviates from these expectations, thus forming strong cognitive contrast and producing humorous effect as well. Take, for instance, the jokes below:

(5) A man and a friend are playing golf one day at their local golf course. One of the guys is about to chip onto the green when he sees a long funeral procession on the road next to the course. He stops in mid-swing, takes off his golf cap, closes his eyes, and bows down in prayer.

His friend says: "Wow that is the most thoughtful and touching thing I have ever seen. You truly are a kind man."

The man then replies: "Yeah, well, we were married 35 years."

(6) One day a lawyer was riding in his limousine when he saw a guy eating grass. He told the driver to stop. He got out and asked him, "Why are you eating grass?"

The man replied, "I am so poor. I can't afford a thing to eat."

So the lawyer said, "Poor guy, come back to my house."

The guy then said, "But I have a wife and three kids." The lawyer told him to bring them along.

When they were all in the car, the poor man said, "Thanks for taking us back to your house. It is so kind of you."

The lawyer said, "You are going to love it there. The grass is a foot tall."

(7) A woman gets on a bus with her baby. The bus driver says: "That's the ugliest baby that I've ever seen. Ugh!" The woman goes to the rear of the bus and sits down, fuming. She says to a man next to her: "The driver just insulted me!" The man says: "You go right up there and tell him off -- go ahead, I'll hold your monkey for you."

In (5), while two friends are playing golf, one funeral procession comes by. One friend takes off his hat, bowing down and praying. The other friend (interpreter) naturally comes to the conclusion that he is such a nice guy. His presumption is the dead is a stranger. But the punch line not only deviates from but completely goes contrary to this presumption. By this time, we know the dead is not a stranger, but his wife for 35 years! Thus the punch line forms a strong cognitive contrast with the setup, which might well be found amusing.

In (6), by strengthening again and again, the setup produces a very strong expectation that the kind and rich lawyer will bring the hungry man and his family home to eat. But the punch line contrasts sharply with this relevance expectation. Instead of bringing them back to eat, the lawyer will use them as a lawn mower!

In (7), when the driver said to the woman that her child was ugly, the man next to the woman seems very indignant by saying *go ahead and tell him to shut up*. We can form a strong expectation that this man is a gentleman and he would not be as impolite as the driver. But the last word of the man completely deviates from our expectation. He said the child is a monkey, and even more impolite than the driver.

### C. Inferring the Implication

At first, the punch line seems irrelevant to the setup. To resolve the incongruity, the interpreter has to infer the implication of the punch line with the help of the cognitive context. By inferring the implication, the punch line gets compatible with the setup. Consider the following:

(8) The man bought a cigar in a department store and lit it while still in the store. A clerk told him to put it out because smoking was not allowed in the store.

"What do you mean?" he said. "You sell cigars but don't allow smoking."

"We also sell bath towels", said the girl sweetly. (Wang wenbin and Linbo.2003, P.37)

(9) Tom: What is your step-mother like?

Bob: She is a woman and she married my father.

(10) A woman goes to England to attend a 2-week company training session. Her husband drives her to the airport and wishes her to have a good trip.

The wife answered: Thank you honey, what would you like me to bring for you?

The husband laughed and said: An English girl!!!

The woman kept quiet and left. Two weeks later he picked her up in the airport and asked: So honey how was the trip?

The wife: Very good, thank you.

The husband: And, what happened to my present?

The wife: Which present?

The husband: What I asked for: the English girl?

The wife: Oh, that! Well, I did what I could; now we have to wait a few months to see if it's a girl!!!

In Joke (8), at first, the interpreter will feel the punch line— *We also sell bath towels* irrelevant to the customer's complaint— *You sell cigars but don't allow smoking*, seemingly violating the relevant expectations. But when we have a further thought, it is not difficult to infer the implication of the punch line. The girl implies: if keeping in line with the man's logic (selling cigarette entitles the customers to smoking cigarette at store), the store will allow customers to have a bath at store if it sells bath towels. Apparently it is a ridiculous outcome inferred from a wrong logic. After inferring the implication of the punch line, we can resolve the incongruity, and thus get some amusement as well.

In Joke (9), Tom asks Bob's opinion about his stepmother, this question sets up the following relevant expectation: the answer usually will be she is good or bad. But the punch line obviously violates this expectation. It seems irrelevant to the question, and full of nonsense words, for to be a stepmother, she must be a female and marry the boy's father.

Understanding Bob's words are relevant to the question, hearer (interpreter) infers the implication of the words with the help of the cognitive context: Bob does not like his stepmother and would not like to talk about it openly.

Finally, Joke (10) offers a punch line which seems irrelevant to the husband's question. But if the interpreter is an adult with certain encyclopedic knowledge, he/she can easily infer the implication of the wife's words: in revenge for the husband's wish—bring an English girl for him, the wife had an affair with an English man and got pregnant. And the only trouble is that she would not know if it is a girl until months later.

#### V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article researches psychological mechanism in the humor interpretation from the perspective of relevance theory, and classify the humor according to the features of incongruity-resolution. I. Garden-path. This type of humor contains a punning ambiguous part. One meaning of the pun is more accessible than the other. The punch line deviates from the relevance expectation. In searching for a proper assumption to solve the incongruity, the other meaning of the pun is activated and thus the punch line becomes compatible with the setup. II. Cognitive Contrast. The punch line not only deviates from but also forms a strong cognitive contrast with the setup. III. Inferring the Implication. The interpreter has to infer the implication of the punch line to make the punch line compatible with the setup. In view of the versatility of the humor in real life, there might be other types of incongruity-resolution, which need us to make research later.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Yus, Francisco. (2003). Humor and the search for relevance. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35.
- [2] Wang Wenbin & Linbo. (2003). English Verbal Humor: A Cognitive Pragmatic Inquiry. *Journal of Foreign languages*. 4,32-38.
- [3] Fang Biyue & Zhang Zhijiang. (2007). The Relevance-Integration Model of Verbal Humor—Some Disagreements with Wang Wenbin and Lin Bo. *Journal of TianJin Foreign Studies University*. 2,25-31.
- [4] Wang Yong. (2001). A Study of Humorous Utterances from the Perspective of Relevance Theory. *Foreign Language Education*. 1,23-27.
- [5] Liu naishi. (2005). Humor Incongruity and Resolution from the Perspective of Relevance Theory. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*.1, 16-23.
- [6] Liu Ping. (2006). Appreciation of English Verbal Humor from a Cognitive Pragmatics' Perspective. *Journal of GuangDong University of Foreign Studies*. 2,31-35.
- [7] Ritchie, Graeme. (1999). Developing the Incongruity-Resolution Theory. *Informatics Research Report*.
- [8] Kant, I. (1790). *The Critique of Judgment*, Trans J. C. Meredith, (1952) Chicago: Wm Benton.
- [9] Richie, Graeme. (2004). *The linguistic Analysis of Jokes*. London: Routledge.
- [10] Sperber D & Wilson D. (1986 & 2001). *Relevance: Communication and Cognitions*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

**Yufeng Bai** was born in Luoyang, China in 1973. She received her M.A. degree in English Linguistics and Literature from Henan Normal University, China in 2003.

She is currently a lecturer in Ningbo University, Ningbo, China, teaching English. Her research interests include Pragmatics, English Literature.



# An Eco-translatological Perspective to Translator: A Case Study of Xu Chi

Aihua Liu  
Qufu Normal University, Rizhao, China  
Email: emmalah@163.com

**Abstract**—Xu Chi is a writer and translator. He is known as a poet, essayist and “Father of Reportage” in China. In over sixties years, Xu Chi created a large volume of poems, essays, reportages, etc. and translated many foreign literary works into Chinese. An eco-translatological perspective to literary translator criticism emphasizes translator’s subjectivity with “translator-centeredness”. Xu Chi adapts to the demands of Translational Eco-environment and make selective adaptations and adaptive selections in linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions. He translates with the pursuit of “doing things with translations” and integrates creation, criticism and translation. A comparatively high degree of selections and adaptations makes his translations well accepted and help to achieve “survival of the fittest”.

**Index Terms**—eco-translatological perspective, Xu Chi, translational eco-environment, adaptive selection, selective adaptation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Xu Chi presents to the world about 500 creations under his name. This fruitful writer started his literary career in 1932 when he was just 18 years old. He is firstly a poet, with poems taking the biggest part in his creations; he is an essayist, since he stepped into the Chinese literary world with an essay and produced a large volume of essays; he is entitled as “Father of Reportage” in China, for he integrated factual report with a poetic air to lend a lyric style to his reportages, with *At the Foot of Qinlian Mountain* (1962), *Glory of Geology* (1977) and *Goldbach Conjecture* (1978) as representative. His contributions to the contemporary Chinese literature are well recognized.

Xu Chi is also a translator. Besides his large stock of literary creation, he has also produced a large amount of translations. In a time of cultural collision and ideological innovation of the Chinese society from 1930s to 1980s, he chose/selected and introduced into China many foreign literary works, over 60 in fact, among which the Chinese translation of *Walden* is the most wildly accepted. An eco-translatological perspective to Xu Chi as a translator will probe into his literary translating practice and thoughts. His translating thoughts, translating strategies, translating purpose and translation achievements will be analyzed to cast lights on the selections and adaptations he has made in translation.

## II. ECO-TRANSLATOLOGY AND LITERARY TRANSLATOR CRITICISM

Eco-translatology, as has been argued by Chinese scholar Hu Gengshen (2003; 2004; 2008), approaches translation as a process of the translator’s adaptations and selections. It proposes that the focal research concern should be given to translator’s subjectivity in both adapting to translating requirements and selecting/choosing translating strategies or concrete linguistic expressions from the translational eco-environment. The eco-translatological perspective to translation has illuminated the keynote status of translator in its substantial argumentation of “translator-centeredness” (Hu, 2004, p.83-100). The explicit announcement of “translator-centeredness” has pushed the status of translator to a new height.

On the other hand, the creativity of literary writers and diversity of variables in the field of literary translation leave less possibility for exact predictions. It’s those literary translators who have more say in decision-making, in choosing to follow or neglect the requirements or which part(s) of the requirements in linguistic, cultural or communicative dimension. Of course, not only literary translations require the action of translator subjectivity. Literary and non-literary translations differ, or to be exact, every text differs, just in degrees of decision-making possibility. But there is no denying that literary translators enjoy more subjectivity privilege in that they are confronted with more to select/choose from and adapt to, and thus be restricted by. These complicate the case and explain the very reason why literary translators have long been attracting more attention from the translation critics than translators of other fields.

The emphasis of “translator-centeredness” on the translator’s subjectivity overlaps with the call for creativity on the part of literary translators, such as the proposal of “creative treason” (Xie, 1999, p.130-143), in that literary translation depends more on the work of literary translators to adjust between, to select/choose among and to adapt to all the factors involved. Moreover, Eco-translatology researchers’ explanation and evaluation of translating practice from linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions are comparatively comprehensive and objective. Hence, the author believes that

eco-translatology is eligible to serve as a theoretical framework which years of literary translator criticism endeavor can base upon. The present article is to apply this framework to the translating practice and thoughts of Xu Chi, a writer and translator in China.

### III. ADAPTATIONS AND SELECTIONS OF XU CHI AS A TRANSLATOR

According to Eco-translatology, translation is “a selection activity of the translator’s adaptation to fit the Translational Eco-environment” (Hu, 2003, p.268). With Translational Eco-environment, we mean “the worlds of the source text and the source and target languages, comprising the linguistic, communicative, cultural, and social aspects of translating, as well as the author, client, and readers”(Hu, 2003, p.284). For Eco-translatology, the process of translating starts with the Translational Eco-environment “selecting” the translator (Hu, 2003, p.268).

#### A. The “Selection” of Xu Chi by Translational Eco-environment

Xu Chi gets most of his schooling in missionary schools. He had studied successively in the Attached Middle School of Guanghua University, the Attached Middle School of Soochow University, Soochow University and Yanching University. Direct communication with the foreign teachers and much exposure to the English language, literature and culture nurtured him in language proficiency, literary quality and cross-culture ability. He had been the translator for dispatches of foreign news agencies, and the English editor for *Chinese Writers* and *People’s China*, which can serve as proofs of his superior language proficiency and literary quality. With the large volume of publications and an indisputable reputation in the Chinese literary circle, no one will doubt about Xu Chi’s talent in his native language and literature. His bilingual proficiency and literary quality equipped him with the fundamental condition to be a translator and make him prepared for the “selection” of Translational Eco-environment. These qualities paved the way for Xu Chi to meet the demands of a certain Translational Eco-environment. In other words, that makes it possible for the Translational Eco-environment to “select” Xu Chi as a translator for a certain source text.

Besides, if a “source text is a Shakespearean sonnet”, “the Translational Eco-environment is most likely to select a translator who is a poet or a person with strong credentials as a translator of poetry” (Hu, 2003, p.285). In this case, what will the ecological perspective to the statistics in table 1 below tell us then?

TABLE 1  
NUMERICAL STATEMENT ON GENRES OF XU CHI’S PRODUCTIONS (1932-1983)

number \ genre	poetry	novel	essay	thesis	reportage	feature	comment	others
creations	163	20	87	36	13	51	41	72
translations	27	10	6	4	4	4	3	7

\*Statistics come from three sources: Wang Fengbo & Sun Luqian(1985), Deng Weizhi(2009) and Xu Chi (2007);

“Others” covers drama, songs, prefaces/epilogues and speeches, etc..

Xu Chi is firstly a poet and thus he is selected by the translational eco-environment as a poem translator more often; he is a versatile writer and thus he is selected to be translator of a diversified genre scale.

#### B. Multi-dimensional Selective Adaptations and Adaptive Selections of Xu Chi

Within the theoretical framework of eco-translatology, “the process of translating is the production of target texts by ‘natural’ selection that is made possible by the translator’s adaptation to the specific eco-environment, the selection of the degree of the adaptation (selective adaptation), as well as decision-making (adaptive selection) concerning the form of the final target text in terms of natural selection”(Hu, 2003, p.284). The translator’s selections of source texts, translating strategy(ies) and translating criteria are results of selective adaptations and adaptive selections to the specific Translational Eco-environments.

The process of Translational Eco-environment’s selecting a translator is, on the translator’s part, also the process of the translator’s adapting to the demands of the Translational Eco-environment and selection of a source text to translate. As has been indicated by table 1, he selected poems more often to translate than texts from the other genres, and poetry is the favorite genre for Xu Chi in both his creation and translation. Xu Chi made selective adaptations to accept the selection of Translational Eco-environment in pre-translation phase.

In terms of translating strategies, a distinct inclination for literal translation is perceived with a scanning of Xu Chi’s earlier translations, and in later translations, the translator turned more flexible to integrate literal and free translation together. For example, cultural elements are translated literally with explicative notes in all the translations of *Walden*; while words or sentences with unusual order prevail in the 1949 version only, following almost slavishly the original syntactic structures, and in the 1982 and 1993 versions, sentences are much smoother and compliant to the Chinese grammar.

In *My Literary Career*, Xu Chi wrote that literature, in essence, a kind of refine pleasure, and literary translation, unlike the translation of scientific texts, is valued not for exact faithfulness or similarity in form but for similarity in spirit (Xu, 2007, p.468). This viewpoint comes down in a continuous line with that of Fu Lei. Xu Chi went further by realigning the tree-character criteria of Yan Fu in a comparative order with “elegance, expressiveness and faithfulness”.

In eco-translatological terminology, Xu Chi made selective adaptations in the linguistic domain and adaptively selected literal translation and then a more flexible strategy to convey the original thoughts and foreign culture. He entrusted adaptive selections in the cultural and communicative dimensions with priority to those in the linguistic dimension.

#### IV. “DOING THINGS WITH TRANSLATIONS” AND “SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST”

The eco-translatologists hold that the translating practice of translator should have a purpose—“doing things with translations” (Hu, 2004, p.10), which echoes the basic argument of functionalism that translation is a purposeful activity. All the translating endeavors are results of Xu Chi’s pursuit for “doing things with translations”.

Xu Chi’s translating practice originates firstly from his awareness of the demands of Chinese literature to learn from foreign literature. He holds the point that translation is the best way to learn from the foreign world (Xu, 1985, p.54) and the Chinese writers should assimilate the foreign literary works for reference (Xu, 1985: 259). Thus he translated many literary works and wrote articles of criticism on them to help understanding and evaluation. He himself borrowed a lot from the foreign literature: his earlier poems show a Modernist color following Lindsay (Gu, 2006, p.153); and his essays assimilate the succinct style of Hemingway (Xu, 2007, p.174).

Acute for the input discrepancy between nations and the lack of American literature in the 1940s China, Xu Chi pointed out that the majority of the translation endeavor had gone to Russian works, especially those of Evan S Turgener (1818-1883), while much less had been done in introducing American writers (Xu, 1946, p.19). That’s why he introduced Pearl Sel, Vachel Lindsay, Ernest Hemingway, Walt Whitman and Henry D. Thoreau, etc. to the Chinese readers. To express his own expectation for victory and to stimulate the public, Xu Chi translated many warfare works in 1940s. His translating of *Walden* aims at both reference of writing and popularization of Thoreau’s thoughts.

A translation will survive if it fits the Translational Eco-environment, and the fittest will survive for the longest. Xu Chi creates, translates and criticizes literary works, which allows him reach nearer to the connotations of a source text. The selective adaptations and adaptive selections he made in linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions render his translation a comparatively high degree of holistic adaptation and selection.

His translation of Shelly’s poems, published in 1943 as a selected poetry anthology named *Tomorrow*, is deemed to be an outstanding work; his *Selected Translations of Iliad* in Chinese poetic form is regarded as a great achievement (Ye, 2006, p.62). Among his 65 translations, that of *Walden* is the fittest to the multi-dimensional Translational Eco-environment and enjoys the widest acceptance. With a total circulation of over one hundred thousand and an enlarging readership, Xu Chi’s translation of *Walden*, we can boldly declare, has achieved “survival of the fittest” to outlive the translations of other translators.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Xu Chi as a translator incorporates his creation to analyze his translating practice and thoughts. It tells that Xu Chi chooses the foreign works with his own requirements: demands from the translator’s psychological eco-environment ranks as the first to satisfy. The analysis also tells that Xu Chi’s versions are fruits of adaptive selections by the translator with an aim to selectively adapt to the dynamic and multi-level translational eco-environments, which makes his translations well accepted.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Baym, Nina. (1965). Thoreau’s View of Science. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 26.2, 221-234.
- [2] Deng, Weizhi. (2009). Xu Chi Forever. Shanghai: Shanghai Far Eastern Publications.
- [3] Feng, Yidai. (2009). Falling of a Shining Star—Lament for Xu Chi. In Deng Weizhi(eds.). *Xu Chi Forever*. Shanghai: Shanghai Far Eastern Publications.
- [4] Gu, Qingyuan. (2006). Xu Chi and Modernism. *Foreign Literature Studies* 4, 152-159.
- [5] Hu, Gengshen. (2003). Translation as Adaptation and Selection. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 4, 283-291.
- [6] Hu, Gengshen. (2004). An Approach to Translation as Adaptation and Selection. Wuhan: Hubei Education Publishing.
- [7] Hu, Gengshen. (2008). Understanding Translation as Adaptation and Selection through the Terms. *Shanghai Journal of Translators* 2, 1-5.
- [8] Sang, Zhe. (2006). Probing into the Chinese Language Planning after 1949. *Modern Chinese* 11, 27-37.
- [9] Thoreau, H. D. (1949). *Wa’erdenghu*. Xu, Chi (Tr.). Shanghai: Shanghai Chenguang Publishing.
- [10] Thoreau, H. D. (1971). *Walden*. Princeton & New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- [11] Thoreau, H. D. (1982 & 1993). *Wa’erdenghu*. Xu, Chi (Tr.). Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House.
- [12] Wang, Fengbo & Sun, Luqian. (1985). Collection of Research Papers on Xu Chi. Hangzhou: Zhejiang Arts Press.
- [13] Xie, Tianzhen. (1999). Medio-translatology. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- [14] Xu, Chi. (1946). About American Literature. *Literary Federation* 3, 19.
- [15] Xu, Chi. (1985). Foreign Literature and Me. In Wang, Fengbo & Sun, Luqian(eds.), *A Collection of Research Papers on Xu Chi*. Hangzhou: Zhejiang Arts Press.
- [16] Xu, Chi. (2007). My Literary Career. Tianjin: Baihua Arts Press.
- [17] Yao, Junwei. (2005). Xu Chi and His Translation and Introduction of American Literature in China. *Foreign Literature Studies*, 4, 145-149.

- [18] Ye, Jiaxin. (2006). Maiden Translation Collection of Xu Chi— Tomorrow. *Publication Archives* 1, 61-63.

**Aihua Liu** was born in Lin Yi, China in 1975. She received her MA in Linguistics from Qufu Normal University, China in 2002, and is now reading for her PHD in Translation Studies in Shandong University.

She is currently a lecturer in the School of Translation and Interpretation, Qufu Normal University, Rizhao, China. Her research interests include translation studies and eco-translatology.

# Meaningful Signs—Emoticons

Li Ruan

School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science & Technology, Qingdao, China  
Email: t96750@yahoo.com.cn

**Abstract**—As a complement of chat-room talks, emoticons are combinations of certain punctuations, numerals, keyboard characters and special symbols designed to convey an emotion, an appearance, an action, an object and even the tone of chatting. It is playing a unique role in the online communication.

**Index Terms**—emoticon, chatting language, sign, coined word

Chatting language online, as a new medium language, has put lexical creativity into full play. In a chat room, language can be shaped in different ways by being played with, taken apart and put back together. Therefore, coined words in chat rooms spread rapidly and widely than traditional media. While chatting online, people may find that emoticons are playing a unique role in the online communication.

## I. DEFINITION OF EMOTICON

Emoticons first appeared in 1982, which are the creation of Scott Fahlman at Carnegie Mellon University. Fahlman wrote at the time: “I propose ... the following character sequence for joke markers: :-). Read it side ways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark things that are not jokes, given current trends. For this use :-(.” (Discovery Channel, 2002, p.58).

As to the definition of emoticons, it is described that emoticons are constructed by combining punctuation marks (sometimes along with characters or numerals) on the computer keyboard to represent emotions or semantic nuances such as happiness, sadness, or qualification (Baron, 2003, p.59-127).

In this dissertation, it is defined that Emoticons (‘emotional’ + ‘icon’ means icons with emotion), or smileys are combinations of certain punctuations (‘,’, ‘>’, etc), numerals (1,2,3, etc), keyboard characters (‘a’, ‘b’, ‘c’, etc) and/or special symbols (‘#’, ‘@’, ‘\*’, etc) designed to convey an emotion, an appearance, an action, an object and even the tone of chatting. They are typed in sequence on a single line, and placed at the end of a chatting utterance. The two basic forms of emoticons express positive attitudes and negative attitudes respectively: :- ) and : -(

For understanding these emoticons, often the idea is to turn your head sideways, and it makes a picture on a lot of the smiley faces. :- ) for example where the colon : represents the eyes, the hyphen - represents the nose and the right parenthesis ) represents the mouth or smiling lips.

Some people use the hyphen - to show the nose, while others will show the same expression without the nose. Example: ;- ) and ; ) signify the same thing. Sometimes, the omission of the ‘nose’ element seems to be due to various typing speed or personal taste:

Among them, the most commonly used emoticons are:

: - ) --- happiness, humor      : - o --- shocked, amazed      : -( --- sadness, displeasure  
: . ( --- crying      ; - ) --- winking      : - ] --- sarcastic

## II. FUNCTION OF EMOTICON

Real-time chatting online lacks the facial expressions and body language which are so critical in expressing personal opinions and attitudes in social relationships. In face-to-face communication, these extra linguistic cues can help to express meaning while in the chat rooms these cues are unavailable. Without these extra linguistic cues, a rapidly constructed online message, lacking the usual courtesies, can easily appear abrupt or rude. This limitation of chatting language online is noted in the development of computer-mediated communication, and leads to the introduction of emoticons or smileys, which to a certain degree can deal with the above situation. Here is a sample collected from the ICQ chat room to show you the use and location of an emoticon:

```
<DarK_HerrOr> ur 15 ---- You are 15?  
<angeldust78> lol:) ----- Laugh out loud (smile)  
<CRUNK_586> r u sure? ----- Are you sure?  
<DarK_HerrOr> maybe 16 ----- Maybe 16.
```

In the chat, <DarK\_HerrOr> is quite interested in the age of <angeldust78>. However, <angeldust78> keeps silent and adds an acronym ‘lol’ and an emoticon ‘:.)’ at the end of her words, as an answer to the question. So the ‘:.)’ and ‘lol’ (which stands for laugh out loud) smoothes the relationship here, otherwise it would be supposed rude without any response.

### III. CLASSIFICATION OF EMOTICON

Various kinds of emoticons are created to convey different meanings. It could be a facial expression, an action, a person and his/her appearance, an animal, an object, and even the tone of the speech. Here emoticons are classified into the following groups:

#### A. Facial Expression

At the beginning, Emoticons are created for the purpose to serve as a complement of online communication to provide more emotional information to recipients in chat rooms.

: -) --- happy      : -( --- sad      : -D--- hearty laughing  
 : -( --- sad      : - { --- angry      ; -) --- wink  
 : -) --- smile      : .( --- crying      : \*( ---crying softly  
 : -e --- disappointed      : -o or 8-0 --- shocked, amazed  
 %) or : -s --- confused      : ") --- embarrassed  
 : -T --- keep a straight face      : -/ --- skeptical      x:-/ --- uncertain  
 : -& --- tongue tied      : - " --- whistling      : -7 --- wry face  
 =:-O --- scared      &-| --- tearful

#### B. Action

In addition to the basic facial expression, emoticons can also convey some information which presents one's body language and movements.

: -Q --- smoking while talking      ( ( (H) ) ) --- big hug  
 1^o --- yawning or snoring      `:-) --- sweating      1-O --- yawn  
 :-@ --- screaming      :p~ --- drooling      : - \* --- kiss  
 :-? --- smoking a pipe      : #) --- drunk

#### C. Pictures of Objects, People and Animals

Little by little, more and more complicated and delicate emoticons are made to represent vivid pictures of objects, people and animals.

0: -) --- angel      >:-> --- devil      @>--;--- a rose  
 +<: -) --- pope      \$ - ) --- Yuppie      \*<) :o) --- clown  
 ==):-)= --- Abraham Lincoln      =:-H --- football player  
 \*<|:-) --- Santa Claus      \*<<<<+ --- Christmas tree  
 +:-) --- doctor or priest      C=:-) --- chef  
 P-( --- pirate (with patch over an eye)      =: -) --- punk  
 =):-) --- Uncle Sam      :-[ --- vampire  
 8(:-) --- Mickey Mouse      })i({ --- butterfly  
 \_\_/\\_\_\o/\_ --- shark      ><> --- fish  
 8 ) --- frog      : \ --- duck      :8) --- pig  
 3:-o --- cow      3:\*> --- Rudolph the red nose reindeer

#### D. Tone

Even the tones of one's remarks can be expressed though emoticons.

: -] --- sarcastic      :-> --- sarcastic

#### E. Appearance

In order to be close to a real face-to-face conversation, people's physical characteristics, dress, and hair styles are cleverly replaced by a mixed set of letters, punctuation marks, numbers and other special symbols. Chatters' unique physical appearance ( e.g., a big or small nose, curly or parted hair, etc.) will clearly reappear in other chat-room members' mind.

: o) --- a big nose      !-| --- with a black eye  
 ( : - ) ---big face      >%-) --- cross eyed  
 { : - ) --- hair parted in the middle      &: -) --- curly hair  
 8 \*) --- glasses and a half mustache      : -)) --- double chin (or really happy)  
 : -}) --- handlebar mustache      B-) --- wearing glasses  
 : - { } --- wearing lipstick      : %) % --- a face with acnes  
 :~) --- got a flowing or running nose      ( - : --- Left handed

These emoticons are so funny and creative that they arouse chatters' rich imagination and give people a helpful aid to develop a better understanding of their partners.

### IV. STRUCTURE OF EMOTICON

Emoticons are mainly constructed by punctuation marks, letters, figures and special symbols ( #,\$,\*, et.). Even though there are various ways to combine, punctuation marks play the basic role in each emoticon, due to the fact that emoticons/smiles are based on a smile face ‘:-)’, and other emoticons are just derived from the simple ‘;-)’. Therefore, the following section a ----- e are mainly based on punctuation marks.

However, there are also some special structures which are not based on punctuation, like section f .

#### A. *Sequence of Punctuation Marks*

Some basic emoticons are formed by combining only punctuation marks.

;-) --- wink    : -} --- handlebar mustache : -) --- happy  
 : -( --- sad        : - { --- angry        : -) --- smile  
 : - { } --- wearing lipstick

#### B. *Punctuation Marks and Special Symbols*

Special symbols like %, \*, & , etc, work with punctuation marks to form new emoticons.

: - ? --- Smoking a pipe/ tongue sticking out    : - \* --- kiss  
 \$-) --- Yuppie        : % % --- has acnes        : - # --- has braces  
 & : -) --- curly hair

#### C. *Punctuation Marks and Letters*

With capitalized letters or lowercase, punctuation marks can convey more complicated information.

X-( --- mad    : - D --- laugh        : - T --- keep a straight face    : o) --- a big nose  
 P-( --- pirate (with patch over an eye)    B-) --- wearing glasses  
 ( ( H) ) ) --- big hug        : - Q --- smoking while talking    : - S --- make no sense

#### D. *Punctuation Marks and Figures*

Figures can be part of emoticons to symbolize one's wide-opened mouths and eyes, a pig's big nose, or even the shining circle over the head of an angel.

: 8) --- pig    0: -) --- angel    8) --- frog    : - 1 --- whatever    : 0 --- surprised  
 8-0 --- shocked    1-0 --- yawning    8:-) --- little girl    : - 7 --- Wry statement

#### E. *Complicated Combination (3 or More than 3 Types) of Punctuation Marks, Letters, Figures, and Special Symbols*

Very detailed and vivid images can be pictured with three or more than three types of above combination.

3: - o --- cow        3: \* > --- Rudolph the red nose reindeer  
 \* < ) : o) --- clown    C = : -) --- chef  
 8 \* ) --- glasses and a half mustache

#### F. *\*-----\*, ^-----^ or ^^---^^ Structures and Letter Spacing.*

Words or phrases quoted within different pairs of punctuations, like asterisks (\*) and caret (^) can also express emphatic meaning. Letter spacing can also be used for speaking “loud and clear”. Some of these methods for emphasis can be combined together in usage. The following sample is an illustration of the combination of capitals and letter spacing for emphasis.

this is a VERY important point    this is a \*very\* important point  
 this is a ^ very ^ important point    this is a v e r y important point  
 this is a V E R Y important point

Asterisks provide stress on something or highlight the personal opinion nature of it:

\*I\* certainly wouldn't do it    in \*my\* view

Furthermore, inserting or copying pictures also can be a good way to attract other participants' attention, if you happen to have some wonderful materials at hand. Suppose you said to your partner that you were hungry, and he could immediately send a picture of a cake to you. Obviously, such kind of expression has its own advantages which can not be replaced by words.

Although a number of emoticon lexicons have appeared (many emoticon pages available on the Web), new emoticons can appear at any time, especially among particular groups of people (e.g., students attending a particular high school).

## V. EXPRESSIVENESS OF EMOTICONS

As a complement of chat-room talks, emoticons have been designed to carry emotional meanings. In addition, skillful adoption of emoticons in chat-room talks can reflect the unique personality of the speaker, and create a humorous atmosphere at the same time.

:( --- crying        : \* ( ---crying softly  
 :( and : \* ( vividly show a face with tears running down one's cheeks.

From the explanations of these emoticons, one can easily find out that, emoticons are not only tools to create fun, but

also a way to express and convey information , just as indicated in the above example from an ICQ chat room.

It is plain that emoticons are helpful but still crude in some way. “The emoticons can forestall a gross misperception of a speaker’s intent, but an individual smiley still allows a huge number of readings (amusement, happiness, delight, joke, sympathy, good mood etc.) which can only be disambiguated by referring to the verbal context.” (Crystal, 2001: 36) From Crystal’s remarks, we can clearly observe the limitation of emoticons. However, even though emoticons are still rough in its nature, it is one of the most distinctive features of chatting language online.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Baron,Naomis.(2003).The Stanford Handbook for Language Engineers. Stanford: CSLIP Publications. p. 59-127.
- [2] Crystal, David. (2001). language and the Internet. Cambridge University Press.
- [3] Congge Lu. (2002). On the Features and Causes of Internet English. *Journal of Hubei Automotive Industries Institute*.16 (3).
- [4] Discovery Channel. (2002). September 19. p.58
- [5] Farfeleder, Sandra. (2000). Analysis of Chat Communication. University of Salzberg.
- [6] Mengqi Han. (2004). On English Abbreviation of Network Chat. *Journal of Zhengzhou Polytechnic Institute*.20 (4).
- [7] Paolillo, John. (1999).The virtual speech community: social network and language variation on IRC. *Journal of Computer-mediated Communication*.

**Li Ruan** was born in Jilin, China in 1976. She received her M.A. degree in linguistics from the Ocean University of China in 2005.

She is currently a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China. Her research interest is applied linguistics.



# Practice and Consideration on Bilingual Teaching in Basic Course—Advanced Mathematics

Xiuqing Yu

Department of Mathematics, Dezhou University, Dezhou 253000, Shandong, China

Email: sddzyxq@163.com

**Abstract**—Economic globalization makes bilingual education in universities required. This paper presents to start bilingual education with “Advanced Mathematics” in universities based on analysis of its characteristics. Meanwhile it demonstrates feasibility and necessity on bilingual education in “Advanced Mathematics”, also points out existing problems during the process on bilingual teaching and corresponding suggestions.

**Index Terms**—bilingual education, advanced mathematics, problems, suggestion

## I. INTRODUCTION

Economic globalization makes talent and education international. For current university education, how to cultivate undergrads more international perspective and International competitiveness becomes an important and hot issue in advanced education. At the same time Chinese universities have increasingly recognized Bilingual Education is urgent and significant. How to start, how to push and how to standardize the activity are being explored. In this situation, facing the limited English conditions Chinese university teachers are doing their best to research on bilingual education, and study how to correctly grasp and carry out bilingual education to achieve the goal that students can become international talent after graduating from Chinese university. This paper gives analysis of current resources used in bilingual education in Chinese university including basic knowledge and foreign language level of teachers and students, funds, and so on. Especially it discusses feasibility and necessity on bilingual education in advanced mathematics. What is more, it points out existing problems, meanwhile gives consideration to solve them.

## II. FEASIBILITY AND NECESSITY ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN “ADVANCED MATHEMATICS”

“Advanced Mathematics” is an important, compulsory, theory basic course for engineering specialty. In the first year, there are six classes a week for the engineering specialty. We suggest and try bilingual education in “Advanced Mathematics” according to teaching content and characteristics of it. Detailed analysis is as following:

Firstly, “advanced mathematics” expands on the content learned in high school. Whether thinking mathematics includes or learning methods it introduces in advanced mathematics are continuation of high school’, consequently students are able to accept it naturally with no strangeness and no time to adapt themselves to it. So if we start bilingual education with advanced mathematics learning pressure is relatively small and the effect will be relatively good.

Secondly, “Advanced Mathematics” is a rigorous, strongly logical discipline, and its definitions, theorems, proving and computational process etc. are described in unchanged formats. For example, theorems are often used the form that is “*ruguo ... name ...*” in Chinese, “if ... then ...” in English. If teachers and students choose the same model several times, not only they can remember it and express other theorems in it smoothly and easily, but also this exercises can improve students’ logical thinking ability in English. Furthermore English words relatively appear simple and small for there are a lot of formulas in “Advanced Mathematics”, which has bilingual teaching in advanced mathematics more possible.

Thirdly, in the content of “Advanced Mathematics”, professional terminology and definitions, theorems come out frequently in a class, such as “limit” in the first and the second chapters is mentioned more than 10 times in a class, and appears one after another in almost 30 classes. In such circumstances choosing “Advanced Mathematics” as the beginning of bilingual education can significantly reduce task to remember English words encountered.

Finally, the main purpose of “advanced mathematics” is to form the necessary mathematical foundations for the follow-up specialty courses. Bilingual Education in “Advanced Mathematics” is a transitional phase, as well as, it is conducive to the full implementation of bilingual education. In summary, all these above indicate that bilingual education in “Advanced Mathematics” is fit to the progressive, cognitive principles, and is feasible and necessary in the first year of university.

Although particular characteristics of “Advanced Mathematics” have bilingual education in it possible, there are many problems for teachers and students to face and conquer in order to carry out it ideally in current condition.

## III. EXISTING PROBLEMS AND CORRESPONDING STRATEGIES ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION

*A. Improve Bilingual Teachers in Quantity and Level through Multi-channel to Resolve Problems at the Lack of Teachers and Funds.*

A competent bilingual teacher involves many aspects, including academic ability, knowledge vision, language skills, and organizational skills. Since teachers in the teaching process play a dominant role in bilingual education, teachers must be equipped with professional knowledge, but also must be proficient in English oral expression ability. But at present there are few teachers in general university who have a good command of professional knowledge and can own oral expressing ability. Not to mention professional teachers who have learned in foreign country. The shortage of bilingual teachers is the most difficulty Chinese universities have to conquer. In the situation that universities have no fund to send professional teachers abroad for learning, Bilingual teachers must do as best as they can to improve their foreign language skills, especially oral and reading skills. When preparing for a class, they need to understand foreign language materials thoroughly, master foreign language professional words encountered and expressions method in foreign language. In the process of bilingual education, teachers must pay special attention to the students' the ability to accept what the teacher teaches, can use simple language to explain complex and difficult mathematics knowledge. Meanwhile, multiple channels to strengthen teachers are required. On the one hand, university should send out specialty teachers to learn to some key universities in which bilingual education is good and hire excellent bilingual teachers. On the other hand, teachers should study each other to develop their bilingual teaching's ability.

*B. Continue to Develop Bilingual Teaching Resources to Serve Students.*

During bilingual teaching on "advanced Mathematics", current teaching resources available are limited. Take bilingual textbooks as an example, up to now, there is no special textbook about bilingual teaching in "Advanced Mathematics". Common practice at this stage is to purchase foreign, original, and teaching materials directly. Even if these materials are at the advantage of rich, lively language, supplemented by a large number of cases and task-based exercises, they have different style with Chinese, besides their knowledge structure and the center are not clear enough. Nevertheless Chinese students have used Chinese teaching materials more than ten years, and have been accustomed to finding clearly chapters, sections, reading points. Teachers must spend a lot of time preparing for class according to Chinese students' learning habits, such as combining appropriately the advantage in two kinds of teaching materials, helping students sort out the structure of teaching content and knowledge points. As a result, this will add difficulty to teachers and students. To come out in the tight corner, teachers should gather and do their best to organize an excellent text book and a list of reference books on bilingual education in "advanced mathematics" for students to choose. Moreover the teaching content may be made into courseware lectures and uploaded to the campus network for students and teachers.

*C. Select the Appropriate Teaching Mode and Teaching Methods in Order to Implement Bilingual Teaching Better.*

Engineering majors are generally set up "Advanced Mathematics" course from the freshman year. Students' English level is not good enough to understand what the teacher says if the teacher teaches in English during the whole class. At the beginning, teaching materials should be Chinese, English teaching materials for secondary, teaching language mainly in the mother tongue, English supplemented by. Later on, how much English can be adopted in a class should be based on understanding ability. In addition, teachers can make good use of English Multimedia, which is helpful for students to understand.

*D. Choose Layered Teaching on Bilingual Education in "Advanced Mathematics".*

Usually, each teaching class in "Advanced Mathematics" is formed by more than 100 students in Chinese universities. For the reason that bilingual education commonly slow teaching speed to strengthen communication between teachers and students, bilingual teaching is fit to small classes. Therefore students can be divided into smaller ones by their mathematics grade and English grade, which will be helpful to teaching effect.

*E. Establish an Effective Evaluation System on Bilingual Teaching.*

Effective evaluation system can stimulate students to learn more diligently. So teachers should set aside some time for homework and small tests that are required to finish in English in normal times. In the final exam, it is bound to affect the enthusiasm of students on bilingual education if the same test paper is chosen in Chinese classes and bilingual classes. On this account, bilingual classes should be required to do a certain percentage of test questions in a foreign language in examinations, which can test the teaching effect in bilingual language and stimulate students' learning interest.

*F. Create a Favorable Bilingual Environment for School.*

Students have learned English from primary school to high school. Although they have paid more effort in the foreign language than other subjects, the effect is not clear, which is due to no good English environment. Students although remember more, they say less, listen less, and use less. Universities should strengthen the overall design to promote campus communication in English between teachers and students. Moreover they can organize students to watch foreign language television programs, listen to foreign language broadcasts, hold essay, speech contest, performances in foreign language and regular foreign language exchange, make use of modern technology to create rich

learning environment. All above serve to provide a good environment, in which bilingual education and capability of foreign language can promote each other.

*G. An Empirical Analysis of Bilingual Education in “Advanced Mathematics”.*

98 students in electromechanical specialty enrolled in the experiment about effect on bilingual education, based on their college entrance examination scores in math and foreign language performance. They have been divided into two general classes randomly. One has classes in English, another in Chinese as control experiment. A math teacher with learning experience abroad is in charge of their advanced mathematics course. At the end of a semester the students of the two classes take an examination, which is the same questions with two forms-one is in English, another one in Chinese. The comparison of results is in table one.

TABLE 1  
ANALYSIS TABLE OF MATHEMATICS SCORE

Questions		Single Choice	Calculation questions	Proving questions
Average	bilingual class	76.3	79	82
	Chinese class	77.3	77.6	80.2

We can know bilingual education in “Advanced mathematics” is better in some aspects. In order to learn detailed information about bilingual education from students, Department of mathematics ask the students in bilingual class to answer a questionnaire, which includes ten questions such as whether bilingual teaching add difficulty to understand what teachers teach or not, whether bilingual teaching is helpful to English, etc. The statistics result of questionnaire show: 87% of students believe that bilingual education is necessary to open, 79% of students feel that learning math and English have a great role in promoting knowledge, 72% of students believe that bilingual teaching strengthens learning pressure, meanwhile increases interest to learn, 82% of students think that bilingual teaching strengthens their self-confidence.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Full implementation of bilingual education in Chinese universities has a lot of problems to resolve. But now there is a good beginning. As the conditions are continuously improved bilingual education will become better and better. Because bilingual education is in Primary stage, professional teachers must constantly make adjustments according to actual situation in practice, and make bilingual teaching more and more perfect. What is more, the goal is early to achieve that train talents who own international perspective and international competitiveness.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] WANG Li-ping, (2004). Restricting Factors in Bilingual Teaching: a Positivist Analysis and the Solutions. *Journal of Yangzhou University* (Higher Education Study Edition), 77-80.
- [2] LI Chun-mao, WU Yue- feng, LIU Yu. (2007). Research of bilingual teaching progress in China’s universities. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 70-76.
- [3] XIA Dan. (2007). Reflections on bilingual education in universities. *Journal of Southwest Agricultural University* (Social Science Edition) , 117-120
- [4] WANG You-lian. (2004). Studies on bilingual teaching for undergraduate specialized courses of finance. *Journal of University of Shanghai for Science and Technology*, 53-56.
- [5] FENG Ping. (2009). The exploration and consideration of the bilingual teaching in C Language programming. *Journal of Changchun University*, 80-82.
- [6] HONG Yong-ming. (2007) .Constructing Bilingual Teaching Model Based on the Relations of Different Languages. *Journal of Research on Education for Ethnic Minorities*. 39-44
- [7] ZHANG Yu-feng, ZHAO Zhi-xin, etc. Survey of Bilingual Teaching in Clinical Internship of Infectious Diseases. *Northwest Medical Education*, 108-110.
- [8] JIN Ai-juan. (2004). Practice and Consideration on Bilingual Teaching in Major Courses. *Journal of Guangdong University of Technology* (Social Sciences Edition), 149-151.
- [9] He Honggu, Jiang Xiaoying , Xu Weiti. (2004). Practice and Evaluation on Bilingual Teaching for Undergraduate Students in Medicine and Nursing Specialty. *Chinese Nursing Research*, 440-442.

**Xiuqing Yu** was born in Dezhou, China in 1968. She received her M.S. degree in mathematics teaching from Shandong University, China in 2007.

She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Mathematics, Dezhou University, Dezhou, China. Her research interests include theory and application of rough system and mathematics teaching.

# Action Study of Teacher's Language on EFL Classroom Interaction

Xuemei Meng

School of Foreign Language, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150010, China

Email: wangxs088@yahoo.com.cn

Xuesong Wang

School of Foreign Language, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150010, China

**Abstract**—From the perspective of the interactive theories and theories of second language acquisition, this paper explores the influence of the teachers' language upon the EFL classroom interaction. The action research in this paper is based on a small-scale research, which served as a means to find the problems occurring in the teachers' language in EFL classroom. We make a class observation 10 English teachers and 102 freshmen of non-English majors from HIT. The research results show that the teachers' language has a great influence on the students' language acquisition. In the end, a series of strategies for improving teachers' language are summarized.

**Index Terms**—teachers' language, interaction, language input, strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' language refers to the use of the language, the target language of learners adopted by the teacher (Karen E. Johnson, 1999). It plays an important role in English teaching. On the basis of SLA theory, the language used in classroom is the target language of the learners and the medium of teaching, through which interactions between teachers and learners will function. However, teachers' language is not only a carrier of teaching forms and methods, but also a most important part of the language situation for learners. Teachers' language should include both verbal and the indispensable non-verbal languages. The appropriate non-verbal language facilitates the interaction between teachers and students in class.

However, in practical EFL, teachers are not well aware of the importance of teacher's language in the classroom and the relation between teacher's language and learner's output.

For Chinese students who study English in China, they are short of sufficient target language environment. The communication between learners and teachers in the classroom is therefore an important part in improving students' communicative competence. It is without doubt that the main ingredients in communication, teacher's language, can facilitate or hinder the process of classroom teaching.

## II. SECOND LANGUAGE INPUT

### A. Language Input

It is agreed that input plays a critical role in language acquisition. As EFL teachers' language is the important part of the learners' input, it is necessary to discuss the language input.

Joy M. D Red (1998, p. 80-99) has stated that the input given to the learners has to be comprehensible for acquisition to happen. He defined it as "slight beyond the learner's current knowledge level". Jack C. Richards & Willy A. Renandya (2001) explained that comprehensible input means that "language directed to the learner that contains some new elements in it but this is nevertheless understood by the learner because of linguistic, paralinguistic, or situational cues, or world knowledge backup" p,124-130)

People who have dealt with language learners have recognized that not all input have the same impact on the learner. Some input can be taken in almost immediately and directly into output, such as EFL teachers' interactive language in the class.

The only place most second language learners are exposed to the second language is in the classroom. Like mother's language, EFL teachers usually use short, simple, grammatically correct sentences and general, high frequent vocabulary. They adjust their speech to reflect feedback from second language learners. If they recognize learners do not understand them, they repeat, rephrase or expand the intended messages.

### B. Interaction Approach

Interaction is the heart of communication. It is what we interpret in a context; we negotiate what we receive; we collaborate to accomplish certain purpose. Interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas

between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. Theories of communicative competence emphasize the importance of interaction. As Rodney H. Jones (2006) puts it: "Through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even the output of their fellow students in discussions, students can use all they possess of the language – all they have learned or casually absorbed in real-life exchange. Even at an elementary stage, they learn in this way to exploit the elasticity of language" (p,269-299). And from the very beginning of language study, classroom should be interactive. "Interaction and interactive language constitutes a major role in EFL teaching, because a teachers' interactive language can keep an interaction going on smoothly in EFL classroom." (Rod Ellis & Gary Barkhuizen, 2005, p, 165-227)

### III. EMPIRICAL STUDY

Expert J. Mc. H. Sinclair & D. Brazil, (1982) states that the teacher plays multiple roles in communicative activities--as controller, as assessor, as organizer, as participant and resource. EFL classroom should be regarded as a speech community in which teachers' language plays a critical role in developing learners' communicative ability. Effective teachers' language contributes to effective learners' output. In this essay, a small scale action research project is carried out in classes of university students, attempting to explore the problems occurring in teachers' language and to seek some effective strategies and techniques to help create successful teacher-students interaction in real communication. The research aim is to investigate the features of the teacher's language so as to adjust the teaching in the classroom.

According to Krashen' theory, I made an action research as follows:

Step1: Problem identification (the problems found in the teachers' language in classroom)

Step2: Methodology:

Classroom observation, students' perception and questionnaire

Step3: Data and analysis

Step4: Reflection

#### A. Problem Identification

The teachers observed are 10 university teachers teaching English courses in Harbin Institute Technology. These teachers give English classes in the first semester to freshmen. Four of them are young female teachers, four are male teachers, two are old teachers. From the investigation, the problems are found as follows:

1. Many teachers are found to occupy most of the time in classroom by introducing, explaining, telling and giving-- a real kind of monologue. As a result, less time is given to the students to interact with teachers and their classmates.

2. Many of teachers' language lack meaningful interaction between teachers' language and learner output.

3. Most teachers have been accustomed to the traditional way of teaching foreign languages, in which teachers are regarded as an authority who dominant the whole of the class and indulge themselves in being the center of attention. They try to put everything into students heads and pay scant notice of the feelings and the recreations of the students. The teacher's language can be in this way:

I'll first introduce the background of.....

I'll tell you something about.....

I'll give you the central idea of.....

I'll.....

I'll.....

While students are just an ignorant audience. Therefore in such a class language situation, many disadvantageous aspects for learners may arise.

4. No attention is paid to the influence of teacher talk on learners' output. Why does it happen? Because most language teachers overlook students' need. They put much stress on the research of the teaching methodology and the content of teaching, especially on the quality of the teaching language itself, the language style, the proper choice of words, the proper speed of the language they are using and the teacher talk time in classroom, etc. They think that they are careful in choice of teaching methods and content will be helpful to effective learner output. But they fail.

5. The disadvantages in teachers' language also lie in teachers lacking of good mastering of the target language. As a result, learners will not enjoy themselves in native-like and beautiful language--the target language.

In our observation we find that due to the lack of correct use of words, good pronunciation, intonation, proper style of their speech and fluency presentation of a complete idea, the language some teachers presented in classroom seriously spoil the language situation for students, which in the end will lead to the failure of learner output.

6. More display questions are asked instead of referential ones, by which teachers' language is confined to a form of questions and answers. And in most cases, teachers are usually impatient to give answers to the questions, which turns out to produce a coercive output. In this case, the teachers can perhaps keep the classroom teaching continual and smooth, but they could possibly deprive the learners of their opportunities to catch the main point of the questions or to find out blocks in their understanding.

Therefore, the teachers and learners in classroom communication are not equal, with teachers' language dominant the whole class instead of being a participant or assessor. As a result, the classroom communication is rather limited,

without negotiation for meanings in the teaching stuff.

As a result, this way of teaching way severely frustrated students' initiative and restrain the development of students' potential and creativity and accordingly, their communicative competence cannot be developed. This can be proved by the following students' questionnaires.

#### B. Data Collection and Analysis of the Students' Questionnaires

##### 1. Participants

The subjects who participated in this research are 104 freshmen in Harbin Institute Technology. The students ranged from 19-20 years of age.

##### 2. Sources of the Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire items were derived from the following major sources as follows: Questioning in English Classroom, Treatment of Errors, Interaction Teaching Method. In the columns, options are the choices in each item.

##### 3. Brief description of the Content of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 11 items. The questions can be roughly grouped into 3 categories: questioning in English classroom, treatment of errors, interaction teaching method. Figures presented here are the results for each item beginning with questioning in English classroom

TABLE 1  
QUESTIONING IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Item 2	students							
Options	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%
Item 1	volunteer	12.5	According to the name list	20	At random	40	Combina-tion	27.5
Item 2	1-3seconds	10	4-6 seconds	30	7-9 seconds	52.5	Above 10 seconds	12.5
Item 3	100%	5	80%	25	50%	60	2%	10
Item 4	Display questions	42.5	Referencial questions	57.5				
Item 5	NO wish	22.5	Fully agree	57.5	Wish to be asked about what I can answer	20		

Items:

- Which kind of questioning do you like?
- The time for thinking
- The proportion of displaying question and referential question
- Which kind of questions do you like?
- Do you like to be questioned frequently, which is helpful to your English study?

In classroom, most students prefer to be questioned at random, together with 52.5% of the students would like to have 7-9 seconds to think. Majority (57.5%) favored referential questions which can inspire the students interests and motivation in their English study. For the question if you like to be questioned, 57.5% of the students prefer to be questioned frequently and believe it is which is helpful to their English study.

TABLE 2  
TREATMENT FOR ERRORS

Item	students							
Options	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%
Item 1	Correct definitely	30	Clarify the demand	5	Provide the clue advice and Information	50	induction	5
Item 2	Not correct	5	Correct Unconsciously	95				
Item 3	Severe criticism, Pointing out the errors	0	The attitude different from ordinary with the critical language	5	No severe Response, unconsciously Correct, Encouragement	25	Kind attitude, unconscious correction, Encouragement	70

Items:

- To the students' errors in the classroom, the teachers should
- The teacher should correct the errors
- The teachers' emotional feedback to the students' errors in answering a question

As for the treatment of errors, half of the students wish that the teacher provide clues, relevant advice and information. With the oral errors, unconsciously correction is more acceptable. An overwhelmingly 95% of the students favored it. In addition, the teacher's attitudes towards the students error is crucial, therefore 70% of the students appreciate kind attitude, by correcting unconsciously and encouragingly, because the emotional factors such as the

attitude to error treatment is exceedingly sensitive in the classroom which will exert great influence on the students' English study.

TABLE 3  
INTERACTION TEACHING METHOD

items	students					
	A	%	B	%	C	%
Item 1	Give the opportunity to express, inspire the interests	87.5	No benefit to English study	10	No need at all	2.5
Item 2	Teacher centered, teacher explain, students take notes	32.5	Student-centered, and students can participate actively, with teacher adjusting his teaching to the response of the students	62.5		
Item 3	Promote the atmosphere in the classroom	90	Teaching is simple, a piece of chalk and a book is enough	5	No need. It is Distraction to study.	5

- a. Activities such as group work, interesting topic discussion, guess work and telling stories
- b. The relationship between teacher and students
- c. Teachers' language should include verbal and non-verbal language

From the table, we can see that 62.5% of the student, a comparatively high percentage, would like to agree that student-centered teaching method, through which students can participated in the teaching activities freely, and the teacher can adjust his teaching method to the need of the students. Obviously, 87.5% of the students believed the activities such as group work, interesting topic discussion, guessing, and story telling are most efficient method to inspire the students' motivation in English study. Moreover, majority of students, 90% favored that teacher's language should be both verbal and non-verbal, which can promote the atmosphere of the classroom.

In short, the interactive language will be one of the best teachers' talk in college English study. Both teachers and students can benefit from interactive language in English classroom.

#### IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

##### A. *Suggestions for Improving Teacher's Questions*

As is well known that questioning is one of the most common techniques used by teachers. In some classrooms over half of class time is taken up by wit question-and-answer exchanges. There are several reasons why questions are so commonly used in teaching.

- .They stimulate and maintain students' interest.
- .They encourage a teacher to think and focus on the content of the lesson.
- .They enable a teacher to clarify what a student has said.
- .They enable a teacher to elicit particular structures or vocabulary items.
- .They enable teachers to check students' understanding.
- .They encourage student participation in a lesson.

However, in many classrooms, students have fewer opportunities to ask questions on their own although they may be given the opportunity to answer questions. Even when teachers give student opportunities to ask and answer questions, they may address their questions to only a few students in the class--those lying within their action zone.

Questions can be clarified into referential questions and display ones. More referential questions should be put forth in classroom instead of display ones or monologues. Referential questions can help negotiate meaning in the communication between teachers and learners, in which learners are given more opportunities to communicate and interact with each other, share ideas among themselves, get inspirations from each other and combine wisdom in problem solving tasks so as to make themselves understood. Thus the language classroom is made to be a speech community in which teachers are equal participants as well as advisors, helpers and organizers. As methodologist (Dick Allwright, 1991) expresses, "One of the major objectives of language teaching programs is to prepare the students for meaningful interaction, make them able to understand natural speaking form" (p,119-151). Referential questions will not only arouse students' interests but also help to develop their output and improve their communicative ability.

In the course of classroom teaching, teacher talk should occupy as less time as possible, leaving students more opportunities to apply what they have learnt to practical communication. Too much occupation of the time by teacher's talk would only frustrated students' initiative and restrain the development of students' language potential and creativity. Much attention of the textbook compiling should be put on the content in the form of referential questions. More topics for group discussion should be put forth. All these will definitely contribute a lot to the learner's participation and interaction. To our relief, it is good to see a textbook--New College English, is published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Another important dimension of a teacher's questioning skills is wait-time, which is the length of time the teacher

waits after asking the questions. In our investigation, teachers often use a very short wait time (e.g. three second). Study finds that is rarely sufficient to enable students to respond. We find in our research that when wait-time is increased to three to five seconds, the amount of students' participation as well as the quality of that participation often increases.

### *B. Treatment for Errors*

In teaching students to speak English, teachers often find a lot of errors in their speech. How should these errors be dealt with properly? This is something many teachers are working at. Through investigation of real class situation and all the possible collections of errors in teaching work, we believed that a teacher's knowledge of the learning law, careful observation of the errors and proper attitudes toward the errors are very important in treating errors. Teachers should think that the errors students make in class should be neglected. Because all of the students want to speak a language well. They feel embarrassed when they make errors. However, they still need another's help (especially from teachers) in their language acquisition. But they always expect their errors to be corrected in an unconscious way.

In the classroom, teachers take an important role in offering encouragement and correcting the students' errors. They should be ready at all times to help the students. When students succeed in learning a language item, the teachers should express genuine delight and offer a word of praise because people are likely to continue a conversation when other people agree than when they disagree. If teachers place too much attention on errors and neglect the necessary encouragement, they will lose sight of value of the positive reinforcement of clear and free communication.

At the mechanical drill stage, the teachers' main work is to teach students certain structural patters. The students' errors at this stage are more likely to be a faulty knowledge of the rule or the form of the pattern. The teachers' language at this stage are expected to supply the students with correct forms.

At meaningful drill stage, errors are mostly caused by performance of slips of tongue. The teachers' language in correction should be supplied with the right form to get learners to self-monitor their speech. Alice Omaggio Hadley (1993) suggests that teachers should call attention to the errors by using gestures, such as a raised eyebrow, a headshake or by repeating or stressing the wrong forms so that the students can do the correction themselves.

At the communication stage, errors may not be as important as the message. They can be ignored except when the serious errors occur in the teaching point or those that interfere with communication. Teachers' language should lay emphasis on the message. It is believed that peer reaching is helpful at this stage, which is exactly the kind of communicative atmosphere learners want. Jean-Marc Dewaele (2003) emphasizes that the teachers should serve primarily as sources person, helping the students when they get stuck and supply their help.

As for the goal in teaching speaking, we believe it should aim at training the students' ability to communicate with other people. Anything that interferes with the work toward this goal and blocks the way to the success may be considered useless. Teachers must be aware of this learning law. They should strive to be clear-minded at every stage of teaching. They should try to develop their language that can work well at different stages. Only if they have realized the importance of the above things and applied them to their work, will they be, hopefully, doing a good job in the language teaching.

### *C. To Enhance Interaction between Teachers and Learners*

#### *1. Interactive Approach*

Through the interaction, students can increase their language store. In interaction, students can use all language they possess, expressing their real meaning important to them. At an elementary stage learners learn to exploit the elasticity of language to make the little they know go a long way. Their brains are dynamic, constantly interacting what they have learned with what they are learning, and the give and take of message exchanges enables them to retrieve and interrelate a great deal of what they have encountered. In a second language situation, interaction is essential to survive in the new language and culture. Thus they have experienced in creating messages from what they hear and in creating discourse that conveys their interaction.

Obviously, students' English level varies. How can a teacher guide and motivate less able students to engage more actively in interactive activities? Here the teacher's effective language is the key. Teachers are expected to follow the humanistic approach, treating students as whole persons, tolerating their errors, and trying to reduce stress to the minimum. Students, especially the less able students, will benefit from the friendly, easy atmosphere. Conversely, if a teacher is too rigorous, the psychological obstacle and stressful atmosphere will demotivate students, even inhibit their initiatives.

#### *2. Group Work*

Pair Work is a good way to change the traditional teachers' talk that dominates the class. Appropriate pair activity-design is part of teachers' interactive language. Pair work enables teachers to get students engaged in interactive communication within a short period of time, which will increase students' interests and willingness to participate. Students in pairs can take turns asking questions and giving opinions.

Group activities can also replace the dominant teachers' talk in class and provides a non-competitive atmosphere, a sense of involvement and a sense of equality. When students are comfortable with their peers instead of listening to teachers' introduction of the background knowledge, explanation of the text, they become more confident and take more risks. They learn more in groups where they have more opportunities for using English, discussing the target culture, and gaining additional perspectives on their own culture.



### 3. Intrinsic Motivation

“Given motivation, anyone can learn a language,” (Tony Wright, 2005, p, 221-286). Motivation is one of the important factors in the learning. It involves the arousal and maintenance of curiosity. For many years, the motivation of students within the classroom has been the focus of applied research. Researchers have studied attempts to increase student on-task behaviors (Farch & Gersten, 1985. Lazarowitz Hertz, Vaird& Bowlden, 1988) and improvement of work quality (Andre & Thieman, 1988; Butler & Busab 1986; Marsh, 1984.)

Our research shows that teachers’ interactive language can and do affect students’ intrinsic motivation in a positive way. To some extent, teachers’ language has to provoke interest and involvement in the subject even when students are not initially interested.

The appropriate choice of activities and linguistic content can turn a class around; besides, teachers’ attitude to class participation, their verbal and non-verbal language, their relationship with students, their conscientiousness, humor and seriousness may also enhance learners’ intrinsic motivation. And teachers’ language and enthusiasm can inspire students’ motivation as well.

## V. CONCLUSION

Expert Judith M. Lamie (2005) says, “The teacher plays multiple roles in communicative activities--as controller, as assessor, as organizer, as participant and resource” (p,225-228 ).Second language teaching classroom should be regarded as a speech community in which teacher language plays a very important role in developing learners’ communicative ability. Effective teachers’ language contributes effective learners’ output. In addition, teachers’ language embodies some teaching methodology. Good teacher’s talk is beneficial. If teachers know how to talk to students, the students can hear language above their own productive level.

How to make the students more active, how to provide more input in the course of class, how to help students produce more output, how to feedback the students’ errors, how to enhance students’ intrinsic motivation?

Based on our investigation, some effective strategies to improve the EFL teachers’ language are summarized.

Through this action research, the following view points are summarized:

Firstly, EFL teachers should not only learn some teaching theories but also practice them in their teaching process. Action research is a good means to encourage the teachers to conduct research including classroom experiments in their own classes. It breaks the tendency of laying more emphasis upon theory and less on practice. It helps teachers to solve the practical problems.

Secondly, the strategies for the teachers’ language should centered on the students’ need. In the action research, the observation of ten teachers and the questionnaire are designed to find problems and the need of the students in order to put forward the proper strategies. The proper use of some of the effective strategies and techniques is beneficial to the improvement in teaches’ language.

Thirdly, it is necessary that teachers have a good command of the target language not only in theory but in applying it effectively. And good command of the target language can help learners to obtain effective input and output through communication. Much attention of the textbook compiling should be put on the content with more referential questions. More topics for group discussion should be put forth etc., which will contribute a lot to the learner participation and interaction.

The strategies mentioned above in this article for improving teachers’ language are just concluded based on a small-scale research among the students in HIT. Whether these suggestions are suitable for the whole EFL learners still need to be proved through further studies, since the design of the survey and data analysis might be subjective (the action study is based on the teachers and students in HIT), and the factors like the students’ educational background, their English level and majors, etc. are not included in this paper. These factors may influence the interaction between teacher and students anyway, and may be included in the further study in this topic.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Alice Omaggio Hadley. (1993). Teaching Language in Context. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [2] Dick Allwright. (1991).Focus on the Language classroom. Cambridge University Press.
- [3] Jack C. Richards & Willy A. Renandya. (2001).Methodology in Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Jean-Marc Dewaele & Alex Housen & LiWei. (2003). Bilingualism: Beyond Basic Principles. *Multilingual Matter*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [5] Joy M. D Red. (1998).Understanding Learning Styles in the Second Language Classroom. Prentice-Hall.
- [6] Judith M. Lamie. (2005).Evaluating change in English language teaching. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [7] Karen E.Johnson. (1999). Understanding Language Teaching: Reasoning in action. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [8] Mc.H.Sinclair & D.Brazil. (1982). Teacher Talk. Oxford University Press.
- [9] Rod Ellis & Gary Barkhuizen. (2005). Analysing Learner Language. Oxford University Press.
- [10] Rodney H. Jones. (2006). Studies in Second Language Acquisition. Vol. 28 No. 2 Cambridge University Press.
- [11] Tony Wright. (2005). Classroom management in Language Education. Palgrave Macmillan.

**Xuemei Meng** was born in Harbin, China in 1966. She received her M.A. degree in linguistics from Harbin Institute of Technology, China in 2003.

She is currently an associate professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin, China. Her research interests include Applied Linguistics.

Ms. Meng is a member of the Chinese Association of Foreign Language Teachers.

**Xuesong Wang** was born in Harbin, China in 1963. She received her M.A. degree in linguistics from Heilongjiang University, China in 2000.

She is currently an associate professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin, China. Her research interests include Applied Linguistics and Second language Acquisition.

Ms. Wang is a member of the Chinese Association of Foreign Language Teachers.

# Working through Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*—On Character and Character Portrayal

Jie Fang

Foreign Languages College, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China

Email: fangjie2005@hotmail.com

**Abstract**—William Faulkner's first published and still the best-known short story *A Rose for Emily* combined his artistic preoccupations and techniques to portray the character. The adoption of the conventional techniques and experimental devices depicts the complexity of the female psyche in decline and transition.

**Index Terms**—character, character portrayal, conventional technique, experimental device, female psyche

## I. INTRODUCTION

Among all the American writers in 1930's, Faulkner's achievement was so prominent that none of his contemporaries could compare with him. While any account of Faulkner's achievement as a whole must make some acknowledgement of his mastery of the short story form. And these short stories are important in his career of the successive volumes.

"A Rose for Emily"(1930) is the first of Faulkner's short stories to be published and perhaps still the best-known. In it are examples of several of Faulkner's artistic preoccupations and techniques. He combines the conventional techniques and experimental devices to portray the character.

## II. WAYS TO PORTRAY THE CHARACTER

Fiction writers have many ways to present character. The organization--brief telling followed by considerable showing--is common in fiction. The short story "A Rose for Emily" is a good example of this organization. Miss Emily is characterized first in a summary, a telling, and then by a series of anecdotes, a showing.

### A. Conventional Techniques

#### 1. Narrator

At the beginning of the story, the narrator, objectively, gives us information about Miss Emily's character--through the outside town-people's eyes, how they saw her and reacted to her: the whole town went to her funeral tells us that she was superior. To the men she seemed a fallen monument, which was the symbol of a tradition, a class, a way of life, and certain values. To the women she was mysterious and eccentric, resulted from her isolation. We may notice the "telling" is performed by a narrator who appears in the story only as a citizen of Jefferson. The frequent use of "we" instead of "I" is the representative of the collective opinion of the town people.

#### 2. Setting

The setting is another way to tell the character. The general setting of the story is the town of Jefferson, survived from the civil war. Miss Emily is the last generation of a big family ruined by the war. We learn that her house stood in a decaying neighborhood.

"And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of starvation."

For Faulkner, such a setting provided a strong emotional background to narrate the story and the comparison of Emily with the brave soldiers also tells the distant, grand and ruined character. "The cedar-bemused cemetery" denotes the tranquil atmosphere created by the cedar trees in the cemetery.

The episode setting is the setting of her house and the inside of her house--where she spent most of her time in her life. "Garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighborhood; only Miss Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the collon wagon and the gasoline pumps- an eyesore among eyesores." The heavily lightsome style of the seventies set with modern mechanization side by side, which is quite inharmoniously. The words "coquettish" and "decay" are disjunctive in that "coquetry" is usually associated with youth, whereas "decay" is usually a reminder of the old and of death. Their juxtaposition here hints at the bizarre and gloomy elements in the story. Another episode setting is inside her house, which no one save an old man-servant had seen in at least forty years. "It smelled of dust and disuse- a close, dark smell." The leather was cracked, the faint dust rose sluggishly, the easel is tarnished and gilt. All these indicate how stubbornly she clung to the nobleness and dignity. However, whatever stubborn she is, the generation represented by her has no vigor and hope, and doom to failure.

Then summary is given by the narrator--a brief account of Miss Emily's past and present sorry circumstance. "Alice, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care, a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town". Miss Emily is shaped by the social details of the changing town. The setting helps to portray the character with the ultimate purpose of rising theme.

### 3. Showing

Miss Emily is characterized mostly in showing. We know a character best from what that character does and says. Thus Miss Emily's dignity and pride, eccentricity and oddity, even independence and brevity are shown through dealing with the older men about tax-paying, with the druggist about poison with no extra explanation, and about post delivery, about refusal of cooperating with the modernization. Besides, she kept the father's portrait in a prominent place in her living room and resumed the tradition of a big family--she carries her head high in her dignity as the last Grierson; with her head high, she kept going out with Barron Homer. So many details are described within the short story, which will be combined in the subsequent analysis.

### 4. Flat or Round character

If we may adopt the English novelist E.M. Forster's distinction between "flat" characters and "round" ones, Miss Emily will certainly belong to the latter class. Usually a round character is dynamic or changing. It is common in a short story that the important event or crisis takes place on the protagonist and thus change the character's life. So the character must almost certainly be round. Usually such change occurs within the character, but sometimes, as in "A Rose for Emily", the change occurs within someone observing the action. We come to understand Emily as more complex than we had believed. We are left with mystery, with puzzlement over human behavior. We may ask ourselves why Miss Emily acted as she did, what motivated her to satisfy herself in a so horrible way.

The victim-Emily Grierson--was dominated by her father and his rigid ideas of social status. She has been prevented from marrying during the father's lifetime. The town people had long thought of them as a tableau.

"Miss Emily, a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip,..." and therefore after his death she is left alone and penniless. Her dependence on her father continues even after he dies, she refuses to release his body for burial, she keeps his portrait in a prominent place. Father's memory was the "pillar" in her spirit. Neither the town people nor the father regard Emily as a real normal woman. The father just kept her in house as his housekeeper or to say "slave". By her father, she was deprived of the right to have her own life. Inevitably, she can only put her desire and love on Homer--a Northern laborer. The love affair was interfered by the town people and the Baptist minister. She was only the symbol of past-tradition duty, hereditary obligation. Rather than lose his life she lost her father, she kills him in order to keep him, to get his eternal love, to live a normal life forever. Within the control and dominant of the family and old south convention, all her desire and hope were corrupted.

We may draw the omitted sentence in "Dry September" as the statement, "Life in such places is terrible for women." Life in all places is terrible for women. The Puritanism dominated over the old south for such a long time, which was even more puritanized than the puritan in New England. Together with the patriarchy convention and old moral value, they ruin and devastate the women deeply. This is one aspect that Faulkner tends to chastise. The humanist Faulkner saw that the twisted character of Emily had been formed by forces beyond her control. She is never laughed at or treated with contempt or disgust. She, one of human being-alone, boldly defied her community and fought against the norm and convention, which reminds us of Faulkner's implied attitude toward women. "No person is wholly good or wholly bad." said Faulkner himself, a view that implies the sympathetic reading is appropriate.

Some critics think conflict in the story arises between the doomed survivor of the old south and citizens of the new city that grows out of Reconstruction. Miss Emily's personal conflict with Homer Barron exemplifies the conflict. Because Barron is a Northerner, an employee to build Jefferson's first sidewalks, themselves signs of urbanization. Colonel Santoris and the later older man who protected Miss Emily, represented the old south. In the changing habits of the governors, we see a changing Jefferson, in Miss Emily we see the decadent past attempting to withstand change. The Emily-world is graceful, dignified honorable-quaint and decayed, finally morbid. The Barron-world is vital, vigorous and inevitable. In regard to this, Faulkner did not deny the two symbolic figures, but complemented "it's conflict between god and saton.". He said he was only writing about a real tragic character. So the story is not only depicting the decay of South, but also describes the conflict in a character's mind--the conflict against heart, fellow, and environment, the conflict against the past and against the present forces.

## B. *Experimental Devices*

### 1. Gothic style

One of Faulkner's experimental prose device--Gothic style is reflected in the story through influenced by American novelist Allen Poe's successive combination of detective story is the subgroup of Roman works and is regarded as the demotic style, many serious even the first class writers and poems created the Gothic works or adopted the Gothic device. Faulkner is the best one to use this device to explore the psychological reality and delineate the evil inner world of the character. So in the aspect of examining the morality and social criticism, Faulkner is far better than Allen Poe. The short story "A Rose for Emily" is the typical example to use this technique among many of Faulkner's other Gothic novels, like "Sanctuary" "Light in August" "Go down, Moses".

The astonishing end of the story calls upon the readers to recollect and reorganize the anecdotes of Miss Emily. In

this mystery story, Faulkner gives us clues relied so that we do not know that they are clues. We accept Homer's disappearance without connecting it to rat prison or bad smells. It is true we do not consider Miss Emily the murdering kind, although she is regarded as bizarre, eccentric and twisted in mind. The shocking result once again leads us to investigate her evil side of the mind and the conflict of her psych. Why did Miss Emily murder Homer?--For the eternal love? Or for the sake of her dignity? Or just because of the necrophilia? More questions than answers will be got.

## 2. Point of view

The mystery and astonishing atmosphere is enhanced through the point of view that Faulkner adopted--from the collective town people's eye. So instead of omniscient speaker, the narrator has to keep certain distance from the character and let the character speak for herself, so as to give readers much room for imagination. Allowing the narrative establish the ambiguities and implications is "the possible evidence of Faulkner's growing sophistication as an artist" (see *The Achievement of William Faulkner*) to portray a character. In the published versions of "A Rose for Miss Emily", some functionless conversation was rejected from the pre-publication versions. The original conversation itself occupies rather more than two pages of typescript. Dying Emily talks of the shock the upstairs room. The Negro indicates that he knows what the room contains. And the Negro wants neither house nor money which was bequeathed to him according to the agreement they had made thirty-five years before. He would like to go back to the poorhouse, where he can sit and watch the trains go by. (see "The Achievement of William Faulkner")

The keeping of this material would have weakened the force of the final episode and delayed the climax. Besides, the direct presentation of Miss Emily and the insight into her personality and motive would have diminished the mystery and ambiguity created by the narrator. And one of the theme--withdraw into unreality and illusion--would also have been weakened. The advantage gained through omitting is obvious.

## 3. Handling of time

When experimental devices are mentioned, the handling of time in this story can not be left untouched, which is the special way to portray the character and strengthen the theme.

When we first read the story, we may feel there is no coherence, no order, even no emphasis, there are only random notes on an eccentric character. But this anthropological order seems natural, as if we are listening to someone's free recollections--the narrator adds some background details to what he is talking reminds him of something related. Until after we finish the whole story, the vague character and disordered plot seem clearer.

The disordered time sequence is another way to illustrate the Emily's timeless character and thus to serve the theme. Miss Emily could not make clear distinction between reality and illusion. She lived in the illusion of her father and her lover. She refused to accept any change brought by passage of time. It was for eternity that she kept her father's corpse from burying and killed her lover, not to mention her refusal of cooperation with modernization and mechanization. Time means nothing to her, but she could not escape from time and change. The color of her hair, the shape of her figure, her death and the Negro growing stooped little by little, all the things indicate in the structure of the story itself, one of the themes is illustrated and reinforced--"TIME".

## III. CONCLUSION

All in all, in many ways, Faulkner provides us with more than external events and details; he also probes the inner lives of those who are trying to cope with the problem of a society in decline and transition. His artistic techniques--the exploration of psychological reality, the social structure and mores of a southern community, the nature of time, and the relation of the past to the present--depicts infinite variety of females which stimulate us more aware of the complexity of the female psyche.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Forster, E. M. (1927). *Aspects of the Novel*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- [2] Kinney, Arthur F., ed. (1982). *Critical Essays on William Faulkner: The Compson Family*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Co.
- [3] Millgate, Michael. (1978). *The Achievement of William Faulkner*. Lincoln University of Nebraska Press.
- [4] Kenan, Shlomith Rimmon. (1983). *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*. London: Routledge.
- [5] Vickery, Olga W. (1959). *The Novels of William Faulkner*. Boston: Louisiana State University Press, 1959.
- [6] Shen, Dan. (2004). *Narratology and the Stylistics of Fiction* (in Chinese). Beijing: Beijing University Press.
- [7] Xiao, Minghan. (1997). *Study on William Faulkner*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

**Jie Fang** was born in Shandong, China in 1970. She received her M.A. degree in linguistics from Zhejiang University, China in 1999.

She is currently an associate professor in Foreign Languages College, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China. Her Research interests include Pragmatics and English teaching Methodology.

# Comparative Critical Analysis of Discourse Structures

Jun Zhao

School of Foreign Languages, Tianjin University of Technology, Tianjin, China

Email: junzhao.tj@gmail.com

**Abstract**—We use systematic functional method to analyze and try to find out the estimated correlation behind several different texts. Ideology makes great influences on translation expression and strategy, which thus, is the product of the ideology. Language understanding means to obtain a semantic network and conditional information from a text in a deep sense.

**Index Terms**—critical discourse analysis, discourse structure, systematic functional theory, transitivity, modality, transformation and classification

## I. INTRODUCTION

Michael Billig has clearly pointed to the fact that CDA has become an established academic discipline with the same rituals and institutional practices as all other academic disciplines. Most kinds of CDA will ask questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance, whether they are part of a conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts. Texts as elements of social events bring about changes and contribute to changes. Critical theories want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Yao Xiaojun (2010) makes a comparative critical analysis of two reports concerning the first day of Shanghai's Expo trial opening extracted from the People's Daily and New York Times respectively, taking CDA as an analytical tool and exploring three with a view to identify diverse ideologies hidden in news discourse so as to raise readers' critical language awareness. Ren Xianmin (2009) studies on critical discourse analysis and cultivation of learning ability in English discourse, which gives a brief introduction to the theory of CDA and the main analytic theory—systematic functional theory, which is used to give a critical analysis of the text Say Yes in the following aspects: transitivity, modality, transformation and classification, so as to explore the author's purpose of writing, understand the ideology between the lines. It is expected to be of any help to the college students in enhancing their learning ability in English discourse. Based on modality of Halliday's systemic functional grammar, Zhu Wenquan (2009) explores its employment in critical discourse analysis in terms of ideology and power. Their finding shows that modality functions as a necessary and important linguistic tool in intelligence discourse. The present study reveals that in the NIE report, the strategic use of serves for the working of ideology and power relationship.

## III. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. Most kinds of CDA will ask questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance, whether they are part of a conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts. Thus, the typical vocabulary of many scholars in CDA will feature such notions as "power", "dominance", "hegemony", "ideology", "class", "gender", "race", "discrimination", "interests", "reproduction", "institutions", "social structure" and "social order", besides the more familiar discourse analytical notions. Systemic, or systemic-functional, theory has its origins in the main intellectual tradition of European linguistics that developed following the work of Saussure. Like other such theories, both those from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and more recent work in the same tradition, it is functional and semantic rather than formal and syntactic in orientation, takes the text rather than the sentence as its object, and defines its scope by reference to usage rather than grammaticality.

Critical theories, thus also CDA, want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection. Thus, they are aimed at producing "enlightenment and emancipation". Such theories seek not only to describe and explain, but also to root out a particular kind of delusion. The emergent blend of CDA, cognitive linguistics and corpus linguistics has become a huge priority that is also recognized by many other scholars. The question of language and power is still important and urgent in the

twenty-first century, but there have been substantial changes in social life during the past decade which have somewhat changed the nature of unequal power relations, and therefore the agenda for the critical study of language.

#### IV. RESOURCES AND METHODS

Critical Linguistics opinion, the 'ideology' is not the word 'false' or 'distorted' the meaning refers to the 'people's cause or to prove his way of life' or 'people's lives and to their own expression of their relationship. Critical discourse analysis can in fact draw upon a wide range of approaches to analyzing text. Mostly grammatical and semantic analyses are the main methods and are very productive in social research. It is a general feature of discourse analysis that language is not treated as information about something else but is somehow problematized. Halliday introduced the theory of metafunctions, transforming systemic theory into systemic functional theory. He showed that the internal organization of (the content plane of) language was functional in nature, being organized into ideational, interpersonal and textual systems. The social pragmatic acquisition does not consists of formal "rules" but rather of an inventory of symbolic devices to be used as tools for the construction of messages. Persons are subsumed under objects, and actions are redefined as changes of state in the relevant objects affected.

The discourses being used are from varies resources, which are "Currency appreciation of 'limited help' to trade balance" from China Daily, "Why the current currency conflict could spiral into a protectionist trade war" from Business Insider, "A different kind of currency conflict" from European Voice, "U.S. China currency war drifting towards military conflict" from Market Oracle (UK), "Economist Raghuram Rajan warns of currency conflict" from Der Spiegel (DE), "US-China economic conflict: not dead, but asleep" from International Relations and Security Network (Switzerland).

#### V. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

##### A. Transitivity

There are two kinds of transitivity: syntactic transitivity and semantic transitivity. A proposition is objective if its truth depends purely on the object under study. A proposition is subjective if its truth depends not merely on the object alone, but also on the observer and the relationship between the two. Moral judgments are nothing but expressions of, or about, the individual judge's own attitudes (their thoughts, feelings, personal opinion, etc.) Moral judgments can be "true", "false", depending on whether the judge reports her attitudes accurately (i.e. sincerely). Moral judgments can express "objective" moral facts. The facts are "objective" in the sense that their truth does not depend on who judges them, or whether anybody judges them at all. Transitivity alternations are determined by other narrower aspects of meaning, the nature of the Agent role and the Cause subevent.

Material process: "China has kept its currency artificially undervalued against the dollar for years."

Relational process: "So to keep the currency undervalued is creating distortions in the economy, and this is neither efficient nor fair."

Existential process: "Right now, there is not even a debate about whether this is an appropriate idea."

Mental process: "I just think that sustained low interest rates are dangerous."

Behavioral process: "They are worried that a flood of dollar liquidity is already helping to set off about of asset or goods/commodity price inflation in their economies."

Verbal process: "Increased urbanization will help to work off some of the oversupply in most of these markets," Wolfe says, "and the government's push for more affordable housing is a step in the right direction."

TABLE I.  
TRANSITIVITY

Items	China Daily	Business Insider	European Voice	Market Oracle	Der Spiegel	ISN
Material process	14	26	24	30	34	21
Relational process		3	5	1	11	4
Existential process		3			4	3
Mental process	1	2	2	4	1	2
Behavioral process			4		1	2
Verbal process	6		3	1		5

##### B. Modality

Modality is a category of linguistic meaning having to do with the expression of possibility and necessity; it is effectively a synonym of illocutionary force. Modals have a wide variety of interpretations which depend not only upon the particular modal used, but also upon where the modal occurs in a sentence, the meaning of the sentence independent of the modal, the conversational context, and a variety of other factors. Linguistics studies the structure of natural languages as well as the relation of language to other areas of cognitive science. The roles that logic in general and modal logic in particular, plays in linguistics are quite varied. Since natural language semantics applies model theoretic methods, the role of modal logic in this context involves the application of possible world semantics to natural language.

TABLE II.  
MODALITY

Items	China Daily	Business Insider	European Voice	Market Oracle	Der Spiegel	ISN
Can(could)	3	4	4	3	4	3
May(might)		2			1	1
Must						
Need					2	
Ought to						
Dare(dared)						
Shall(should)	1	1		1	3	
Will(would)	3	7	7	9	7	15

### C. Transformation and Classification

Nominalization is the use of a verb, an adjective, or an adverb as the head of a noun phrase, with or without morphological transformation. Passivization is a manipulation which makes active sentences such as *John moved the table* into passive sentences such as *The table was moved by John*. 2 is the passive counterpart of 1, and logically has the same meaning as 1. However, the two sentences are different in their respective viewpoints. In 1, its viewpoint is neutral; the speaker describes the event from the Agent (John)'s point of view or the Patient (the table)'s point of view or the point of view neutral to the Agent and the Patient. Instead of representing processes which are taking place in the world as processes (grammatically, in clauses or sentences with verbs), they are represented as entities (grammatically, though nominalization, i.e. transforming a clause into a nominal or noun-like entity).

TABLE III.  
TRANSFORMATION AND CLASSIFICATION

Items	China Daily	Business Insider	European Voice	Market Oracle	Der Spiegel	ISN
Nominalization	15	10	21	23	17	17
Passivization	4	6	5	4	2	2

## VI. CONCLUSION

One definite characteristic of language is that it is probabilistic, which is most evident when people choose their lexis. Critical theories, thus also CDA, want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection. Thus, they are aimed at producing "enlightenment and emancipation". Such theories seek not only to describe and explain, but also to root out a particular kind of delusion. Moral judgments are nothing but expressions of, or about, the individual judge's own attitudes. The main purposes behind the words meet with the public matters and ideological insights. There will be awareness, unconsciously or subconsciously, dominated by the ideology from their language system choose a certain form of language.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to thank Prof. Xu for his kindness and help.

## REFERENCES

- [1] A Different Kind of Currency Conflict. <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/a-different-kind-of-currency-conflict/69229.aspx>.
- [2] Crystal, D. (ed.) (2004). *The language revolution*. MA: Polity Press Ltd.
- [3] Currency Appreciation of 'Limited Help' to trade balance. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-03/21/content\\_9619248.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-03/21/content_9619248.htm).
- [4] Deborah S., T. Deborah & H. E. Hamilton. (eds.) (2003). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- [5] Economist Raghuram Rajan Warns of Currency Conflict. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/0,1518,722520,00.html>.
- [6] Fairclough, N. (ed.) (2003). *Analysing discourse*. NY: Routledge Imprint.
- [7] Fietel, von K. Modality and language. <http://semantics-online.org/fintel>.
- [8] Ren, X. M. (2009). Study on critical discourse analysis and cultivation of learning ability in English discourse. *Journal of Liaoning Technical University* 11.4, 405-407.
- [9] U.S. China Currency War Drifting Towards Military Conflict. <http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article23687.html>.
- [10] US-China Economic Conflict: Not Dead, but Asleep. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=119248>.
- [11] Wetherell, M., S. Taylor, S.J. Yates. (eds.) (2001). *Discourse as data*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- [12] Wetherell, M., S. Taylor, S. J. Yates. (eds.) (2001). *Discourse theory and practice*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- [13] Why China is our Secret Ally in the Global Currency War. <http://www.businessinsider.com/charles-hugh-smith-china-trade-war-2010-10>.



- [14] Why the Current Currency Conflict Could Spiral into a Protectionist Trade War.  
<http://www.businessinsider.com/currency-war-to-protectionism-2010-9>.
- [15] Wodak, R. & M. Meyer. (eds.) (2009). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- [16] Yan, X. J. (2007). On the role of ideology in translation practice. *US-China Foreign Language* 5.43, 63-65.
- [17] Yao, X. J. (2010). Example of analysis of critical discourse—contrastive analysis of two reports on the first day of Shanghai's Expo trial opening. *Journal of Jiamusi Education Institute* 6.102, 270-272.
- [18] Zhu, W. Q. (2009). A critical discourse analysis on National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report from modality perspective. *Journal of Guangzhou Radio & TV University* 11.32, 102-112.

**Jun Zhao** was born in Tianjin, China in 1983. She is working on her M.A. degree in Translation in Tianjin University of Technology.

She has research and analysis experience in many academic institutions. Her research interests include Eco-translatology and machine translation.

# An Insight into the Diversity of Mr. Dick's Roles in *David Copperfield*

Xiaohua Li

School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China

Email: magyan@sohu.com

**Abstract**—In *David Copperfield*, Mr. Dick has played a diversity of roles. He serves not only as a comic figure who brings absurdity and laughter to these harsh experiences, a representative of innocence in disguise of a mentally disabled man, but also as a necessary mental counselor and a domestic helper to others. By exploring those roles to their fullest Charles Dickens has created a unique character that is enchanting as well as complicated.

**Index Terms**—comic, innocence, mental counselor, domestic helper, good

## I. INTRODUCTION

In *David Copperfield*, Mr. Dick has a pretty tragic back-story: when his father died, his will requested that Mr. Dick's brother look after Mr. Dick. But Mr. Dick's brother was ashamed of him, and refused to let Mr. Dick share his house. So, he sent Mr. Dick away to an asylum—which, in the nineteenth century, were brutal, awful places where patients were frequently mistreated. So, Mr. Dick grew very ill. Miss Betsey rescued Mr. Dick and took over his guardianship.

Despite his pitiable background, Mr. Dick has several important roles to play. He is not only a comic figure who entertains people, a man of innocence in disguise of mental disability, but also a mental counselor who offers moral guide and support to both Miss Trotwood and Mr. David Copperfield.

## II. A DIVERSITY OF ROLES

### A. A Comic Figure

Mr. Dick, a comic figure in *David Copperfield*, who is in sharp contrast with other adult male characters in the novel, is both a man and a boy. Gerald (2003) holds that Mr. Dick is described as “a young mind in an adult body” (P.93) Like a boy, he is unable to control his impulses or order his thoughts. When David Copperfield first meets him, Mr. Dick has nearly scared the boy into running away from the house. Mr. Dick goes downstairs and greets the shabby child with a squinting eye and odd mix of shaking and nodding head movements, which immediately illustrates a funny character who offers ridicule and laughter to readers.

More than that, Mr. Dick is a writer whose life is devoted to writing a Memorial of King Charles, a memorial that he destroys as soon as he writes it, much as Penelope did weaving and unweaving her tapestry. He had been spending more than ten years trying to keep King Charles the First out of the Memorial; but he had been constantly getting into it, and is there now. All this makes him such a comic figure of ridicule and absurdity.

Besides being a funny writer, Mr. Dick is a man-child who delights in building and flying kites. He has the hobby of turning failed project pages into kites so that “he can fly and by doing so he believes he can disseminate his half-baked ideas at least the locals.” (Dickens, P.211) One day Mr. Dick invites David to go fly with him his new creation—a seven feet high kite! The kite is covered with the very same manuscript that the innocent soul has written:

“There's plenty of string,” said Mr. Dick, “and when it flies high, it takes the facts a long way. That's my manner of diffusing 'em. I don't know where they may come down. It's according to circumstances, and the wind, and so forth; but I take my chance of that.” (ibid., P.212)

In that magical dimension in which Mr. Dick lives, he imagines and predicts that “words -which he calls facts- not only live, fly, soar, and travel in space, but that also have consequences which a writer cannot foresee” (ibid., P.212). In a century in which radio, TV, satellite, and other special communication was unknown, only a man of imagination could have foreseen that.

As a result, Mr. Dick manifests a comic ability of laughter and absurdity yet a unique ability of imagination.

### B. Man of Innocence

Apparently, Mr. Dick is a man of innocence in disguise of his mental disability. Halliwell (2004) concludes that “The angelic innocence is vividly personified in the insane Mr. Dick.” When David first meets Mr. Dick, he begins to suspect that Dick is slightly mad because as Mr. Dick writes his auto-biography, he claims to have trouble keeping King Charles I out of it! Later in the novel, Mr. Dick tells David that he has a simple mind. When he notices the “vacant manner, his submission to aunt, and his childish delight when she praised him,” in Mr. Dick, David begins to “suspect him of being

a little mad.” (Dickens, P.189)

However, Miss Trotwood is very used to hearing other people’s negative judgments about him. In this sense, Miss Trotwood is a pioneer in her treatment of the intellectually disabled. She insists on taking care of Mr. Dick by herself instead of sending him to the asylum. In addition to that, she always tries to deny the existence of mental disability in Mr. Dick. That’s why Miss Trotwood affirms repeatedly of Mr. Dick’s “sound advice” and “common sense”, thus making this character increasingly funny (Dickens, P. 207) Nevertheless, she admits the apparent need to correct Dick’s funny behavior. Miss Trotwood becomes upset with his impropriety.

“Mr. Dick,” said my aunt, “don’t be a fool, because nobody can be more discreet than you can, when you choose. We all know that. So don’t be a fool, whatever you are ...you have heard me mention David Copperfield? Now don’t pretend not to have a memory, because you and I know better.” (ibid., P.188)

It is obvious that Miss Betsy, David Copperfield, and others know that Mr. Dick is mad. Nevertheless, Mr. Dick is portrayed as a man of innocence. While sane people tend to see reality as it is or should be, characters like Mr. Dick see the reverse side of it. And who is to say that the reverse side of things is not the real side. While eccentrics, madmen, and artists retain that child-like virtue of seeing in that elusive magical dimension, most of us lose it. And with that we lose innocence, our sense of high moral and a good and true heart. Although in David Copperfield many of Dickens’s characters are considered insane, “those characters who are crazy are often likewise of high moral quality and a good heart.” (Wright ,2001)

### C. *Mental Counselor*

Despite his mental disability, in his process of maturation, Mr. Dick represents a model of a mature adult who is not handicapped by the cruelties of the world. Dick is a moral counselor to Miss Trotwood and Mr. Copperfield. Throughout the story, Miss Trotwood is not treating Mr. Dick only out of pity. To her, Mr. Dick means more than a comic figure or an object of pity. When confronted with important problems she always asks Mr. Dick for advice. The underlining reason is that Mr. Dick always echoes what Miss Trotwood has believed to be correct yet not uttered and offers simple and spontaneous solutions to difficult situations. In other words, both Mr. Dick and Miss Trotwood believe in Christian morals and humanity. As a result, the strong-willed and sensible Miss Trotwood has total confidence in the man’s wisdom. Therefore, strangely enough Mr. Dick becomes a “wise” man and a necessary counselor who supplies Miss Trotwood with seemingly irrelevant but simple and direct suggestions that stimulate her to act immediately. These complicated human problems are nothing but simple events which only need simple answers.

When she asks Mr. Dick what she should do with the ten-year-old David who has come to her house in rags, he suggests, “wash him!” (Dickens, P. 189). Later, facing the seemingly legal demands from the cruel Mr. Murdstone to hand over his stepson, Miss Trotwood again asks Mr. Dick what she should do with Copperfield. Mr. Dick responds spontaneously with another gem: “Have him measured for a suit of clothes directly” (ibid., P. 207). In both difficult situations, Mr. Dick defies the traditional social norms and suggests some seemingly irrelevant, unexpected and naïve solutions which turn out to go hand in hand with the basic Christian doctrines. That’s why Miss Trotwood says, “because you and I know better.” (ibid., P. 188)

From what she has said, we come to five facets of meanings. First, it represents the existence of Mr. Dick as a necessary moral counselor. Secondly, it signals Miss Trotwood’s own need of mental supporter which her single life lacks. Thirdly, it is evident that Miss Trotwood has a sharp understanding of Dick’s mental disability. Fourthly, it proves her eagerness to correct his impropriety. Last, it illustrates her possession of independent and sensible judgments. Though her comments on Mr. Dick are contradictory, Miss Trotwood affirms his functions as a mental counselor. In the end Miss Betsy always follows Mr. Dick’s advice because in his humanness Mr. Dick is never wrong.

Furthermore, Mr. Dick demonstrates the power of love over cruelty within the moral framework of the novel. Mr. Dick’s love for David and Miss Betsey gives his character moral credibility throughout the novel. In the closing chapters of David Copperfield, Mr. Dick becomes heroic in his own right, demonstrating the supremacy of simplicity and gentleness over cunning and violence. In this way, he shows that craftiness does not belong to maturity or adulthood—an important lesson for David as he becomes a man. With no surprise, Holmes (2004) states that Mr. Dick has been providing Copperfield with a moral yardstick against which he measures himself.

### D. *Domestic Helper*

Mr. Dick has one other major role to play in this novel, that is a domestic helper. He becomes close friends with David’s headmaster, Doctor Strong. He believes that Doctor Strong is the finest scholar that ever lived and listens patiently to Doctor Strong reading out from his Dictionary. He’s such a loyal friend to Doctor Strong that when he notices that there is some kind of strain between Doctor Strong and his wife, Mr. Dick decides to bring them together at the right time. He announces this plan to David in really intriguing terms: “A simpleton, a weak-minded person [...] may do what wonderful people may not do. I’ll bring them together, boy. I’ll try. They’ll not blame me. They’ll not object to me. They’ll not mind what I do, if it’s wrong. I’m only Mr. Dick.” (Dickens, P. 259) From his announcement, we can see that Mr. Dick, though a mentally disabled man, is intending to help with the domestic affairs outside the usual social structures of Dickens’s novel.

We come to realize the dramatic moment at which the foolish, good-natured Mr. Dick attempts to reconcile the Strong’s, who have been torn apart by unvoiced suspicions as to young Mrs. Strong’s infidelity with his childhood

sweetheart, the wastrel Jack Maldon. Annie Strong, who is kneeling in earnest pray before her donnish, somewhat can hardly understand her husband emotionally. Dr. Strong seems rather surprised when his wife was begging earnestly before him. More than that, he is even more surprised at Mr. Dick's kind interruption. Besides the numerous reference books and loose papers that clutter around Dr. Strong's desk, David and Aunt Betsey are witnesses to such a domestic drama. In contrast to the serious subject of marital reconciliation at the right, to the left is "our military friend" and "old soldier" Mrs. Markleham, Annie Strong's snobbish mother, who has consistently has biased opinion about her daughter's marriage. When she curiously looks up from her newspaper she instinctively scolded her daughter to rise rather than abase herself before her husband. She is lit by the scene's only obvious source of illumination, the candle to the extreme left, but she remains emotionally and intellectually in the dark as to the significance of the scene Dr. Strong is awakened not only by his faithful wife but more by the amiable, simple-minded Mr. Dick. Mr. Dick gently, tentatively rouses Dr. Strong with his upstage hand and he gestures downward with his right to bring Annie to her husband's attention, so that he seems to be saying, "Doctor! . . . What is it that's amiss? Look here!" (ibid., P. 266). In some way, Mr. Dick is free from the constraints of society that he has a freedom and flexibility to interact with people's domestic affairs that even Miss Betsey and David do not have. And Mr. Dick is aware of his power. He uses this social flexibility to bring Mrs. Strong into the room where her husband is drafting his will at just the right time. Therefore, his role as a domestic helper is highly important.

#### E. *Man of Good*

The diversity of Mr. Dick's roles represents Dickens' revolutionary belief in good, which is in sharp contrast to traditional beliefs. Puccinelli (1995) states that the possession of high moral and a good heart does not necessarily lie in sanity and reason. A comic and mentally disabled figure like Mr. Dick can become the mental counselor to the sensible and the educated. In *David Copperfield*, Dickens rejects the conventional logic of the external world as the markers of high moral, rejects social position and education as markers of good, he likewise rejects sanity as a marker of maturity. Instead, he focuses on the innocence, in other words purity, of Mr. Dick's intentions and his willingness to follow his own heart and his instinctive convictions. Thereby Mr. Dick becomes such an enchanting character who has fully exemplified Dickens' revolutionary belief in being good.

### III. CONCLUSION

Therefore, Mr. Dick in *David Copperfield* serves not only as a clown who brings absurdity and laughter to these harsh experiences, but also as a moral counselor who provides humane suggestions to both Miss Trotwood and Mr. Copperfield. Mr. Dick, who is a bit crazy, is a man of innocence with high moral quality and a good heart. Therefore, with the diversity of roles Mr. Dick becomes an enchanting yet complicated character who fully represents Dickson's insight into the possession of high moral and good in a man's innocence.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Schmidt, Gerald. (2003). A Likely Lad...For Many Purposes": The Use of Naivety in *Barnaby Rudge* and *David Copperfield*. *Dickens Quarterly*. 20: 93-107.
- [2] Dickens, Charles. (1990). *David Copperfield*. London: Oxford World Classics.
- [3] Tick, Stanley. (1969). The Memorializing of Mr. Dick. *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. 24 (Sept.): 142-53.
- [4] Halliwell, Martin. (2004). *Images of Idiocy: The Idiot Figure in Modern Fiction and Film*. Cornwall: Ashgate.
- [5] Wright, David. (2001). *Mental Disability in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum 1847-1901*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- [6] Holmes, Martha Stoddard. (2004). *Fictions of Affliction: Physical Disability in Victorian Culture*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan.
- [7] Puccinelli, Patricia M. (1995). *Yardsticks: Retarded Characters and Their Roles in Fiction*. New York: Peter Lang.

**Xiaohua Li** was born in Xi'an, China in 1970. He received his M.A. degree in linguistics from Beijing University, China in 2000. He is currently a professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science & Technology, Qingdao, China. His research interests include SLA and literature.

# An Application of Collaborative Learning in a CALL Website Construction

Ji Song

College English Teaching Department, Dezhou University, Dezhou, China

Email: songji126@126.com

**Abstract**—Rationale and features of collaborative learning and a CALL website construction is discussed to verify the validity of the application of collaborative learning in foreign language teaching. It shows that collaborative learning can effectively promote learners to communicate with others and enhance their abilities to solve problems with the support to group members. Thus it can improve the development of creative thinking and train lifelong learning skills.

**Index Terms**—collaborative learning, CALL, website

Collaborative learning is a kind of learning mode which can make students collaboratively complete an assigned task in a group or team in order to promote learning (Zhang & Chen, 2005). It reflects modern teaching concept that students are cognitive subjects and embodies modern teaching ideas that students' initiative and creativity should be developed and students' cooperation spirit should be raised.

## I. RATIONALE

Collaborative learning is grounded in constructivist learning theory and social-cultural theory. Constructivists, like Duffy, Jonassen, Cunningham, believe that learning occurs because an active and self-regulated learner who resolves conflicts between ideas and reflects on theoretical explanations constructs personal knowledge. Besides, sources of meaning are experience and context. There is a real world which we experience; meaning is imposed on the world by use. It is rooted in experience and we should take advantage of new capabilities of new technologies. There is no ultimate, shared reality, but reality is outcome of a constructive process. Goal of instruction is not to assure individuals to know particular things, but construct plausible interpretations of their own.

In the theory, the emphasis is placed on the learner or the student rather than the teacher or the instructor. It is the learner who interacts with objects and events and thereby gains an understanding of the features held by such objects or events. The learner, therefore, constructs one's own conceptualizations and solutions to problems. Learner autonomy and initiative is accepted and encouraged. Constructivists view learning as the result of mental construction. Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know. People learn best when they actively construct their own understanding.

Constructivist learning theory holds that the development of human cognitive structure is result of the interaction between self-regulating adaptation mechanism of organism and external environment (Zhao & Li, 2000). It advocates learning is a process that learners make use of their existing experience, psychological structures and beliefs to construct the internal mental representation on their own initiative. That is, knowledge is obtained not through teacher instruction, but learners' active construction with the help of others (including teachers) and the use of some learning materials in certain circumstances and social-cultural context (Zhao & Li, 2000). Therefore, context, collaboration, conversation and meaning construction are four elements of constructivist learning theory. Among them, collaboration refers to learners' interaction with teachers and other learners in the process of study and practice.

Social-cultural theory is also called "cultural psychology". It originally referred to a body of ideas proposed by former Soviet psychologists in the socio-cultural movement of the 1930s, in particular, by Vygotsky. Lev Vygotsky, the famous psychologist of the former Soviet Union, the founder of social-cultural theory, stressed that all human learning and development are derived from activity. Human's psychology is developed in human activity and in the process of interaction with other people (Zhang, 2006). The development of higher mental function of human beings is all from language-based social communication. People use language to communicate with others to obtain information, then make it internalization and continue to form their cognitions (Zhang, 2006).

In recent years, many new findings have been made on that basis. Contemporary researchers in the socio-cultural tradition, notably Rogoff, Lave, Collins, etc., have put forward new concepts such as cognitive apprenticeship, tele-apprenticeship and distributed cognition. These concepts are sometimes labeled as "Neo-Vygotskyan".

Both Vygotskyan and Neo-Vygotskyan theories have the same primary tenet, that is, human cognition is social in nature. Accordingly, individual mental functions are not emerging privately in one's mind; instead, they are originated in the socio-cultural context as a result of encounters with rituals, conventions, technologies and institutional practices. Therefore, the acquisition of new understanding is made possible only through participation in certain kinds of

supportive social interactions. We believe that socio-cultural theory is closely related to our present purpose. It can be of direct benefits to our understanding of collaborative learning. Because collaborative learning among students and teachers can help learners bridge the zone of proximal development (Zhang, 2006).

## II. FEATURES OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Collaborative learning is carried out in a learning group (each typically two to four) and it aims at solving problems through consultation, discussion, and competition, etc. It is external condition for learners to understand problems deeply and obtain higher cognitive ability. The features of collaborative learning are as follows (Hu, 2001):

1. Interaction. Collaborative learning values collaboration between learners, learners and learning group, teachers and learners to promote mutual progress. The interaction in learning process is considered as the source of learning activities.

2. Learning goal. All collaborative learning groups should have a common goal. Students must be taught with collaborative learning skills and be given proper help to make learning activities carried out effectively.

3. Learner's own responsibility. Collaborative learning emphasizes learner's personal responsibility during learning process. To accomplish a common goal, each group member should finish complementary and interrelated tasks to define his own duties.

4. Group target must be hit. Only when all group members achieve their goals can each learner just reach one's own target. Thus collaborative learning can be ended.

## III. MERITS OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Research on the merits of collaborative learning is well known and convincing. Panitz (1997) concludes thirty-eight merits produced by collaborative learning grounded on the other researchers and practitioners, some of which are as follows:

1. It develops higher level thinking skills.
2. It builds self-esteem in students.
3. It develops oral communication skills.
4. It develops social interaction skills.
5. It enhances self management skills.
6. It creates an environment of active, involved exploratory learning.
7. It establishes an atmosphere of helping and cooperation school-wide.
8. It creates a strong social support system, for it helps to transfer students' social experiences to their involvement in the learning process.
9. Students are taught how to criticize ideas, not people.

What's more, Lunsford (1995) also states that collaboration does the following: aids in problem finding and solving, in learning abstracts, in transfer and assimilation of knowledge; fosters interdisciplinary thinking; leads to sharper thinking and deeper understanding of others; promotes excellence; engages the whole student and encourages active learning; combines reading, talking, writing, and thinking; and allows for practice in synthetic and analytic skills.

To sum up, collaborative learning are of great help for learners to develop higher level thinking skills and acquire meta-cognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies, which are the important language learning strategies for effective learners (Oxford, 1990). That is to say, collaborative learning at least contributes to learning autonomy and higher learning efficiency.

## IV. PRACTICE

### A. Establish Collaborative Learning Group

In order to make group members complementary in interests, abilities, ways of thinking and behavior methods, learning activities are usually organized in the way of heterogeneous grouping. Firstly group members make free combination according to their interests and then teacher makes appropriate adjustment to make the most of the advantage of all the members. Group members should be two to four.

### B. Arrange Learning Content

Group members were required to build a learning website *A Window on CALL* as a means of access to CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning). It includes the making of website logo, scrolling text and images, courseware on CALL information, and critique writing of CALL article, website or CD.

### C. Make a CALL Website

1. Division of work in each group. In the group of making scrolling text and images, one student should take ten photos of CALL instruction with a digital camera, use Adobe Photoshop software to make initial processing, then search for a short English poem on friendship; another one should surf on the Internet to find HTML and JavaScript source code which can get text or images in a window scrolled left and right or up and down. In groups of producing

CALL courseware, each group is responsible for making courseware of a chapter from the book *Internet for English Teaching*. For each chapter, one student should generalize main content, then another person use Microsoft Office PowerPoint software to make a courseware. In addition, each member in each group was asked to write two critiques on CALL, one about a chapter from the book *Network-based Language Teaching: Concepts and Practice*; the other one about a CALL website or a VCD/DVD. Each article should be at least one thousand words.

2. Collaboration in each group. First of all, relevant group members need to collaborate to make website logo. It should be on the top of webpage with highlighting words *A Window on CALL*, three images on the background, and three navigation buttons at the bottom of the logo which serve as switch from home page to other web pages. After consultations among group members, the title and subtitle of the logo was decided to use word-art function of Microsoft Office Word software to design (with color transition effect). Background images of the logo were made by powerful and easy-to-learn Adobe Fireworks software. Three images are plant or flower patterns and they should be processed with Adobe Photoshop software. The first image was diluted in an oval shape, and the second one was also done with transparent effect and the third one was embossed with Adobe Fireworks software. Finally Adobe Fireworks was used to integrate title, subtitle and three images. Navigation buttons should be three-dimensional button selected from Microsoft Windows XP operating system, in which two buttons can navigate easily with hyperlink.

Next, the most difficult problem in building the site is to make some text and images scroll. To fulfill this function, HTML and JavaScript were needed to use to compile a small program. Although they aren't large commercial software and it's not difficult for learning and mastering them, it will take a lot of time for learners to study from scratch and it's a hard work for one person to do it. After discussing and consulting computer professionals, group members decided to download HTML and JavaScript source code on the Internet, then modify some parameters by consulting computer books. Each group member was responsible for modifying a part of the code. Eventually, the entire modified one was sorted out and the task was finished.

Then is the problem of using Microsoft Office PowerPoint software to produce CALL courseware. Individuals can produce a simple one, but if they want to achieve effective combination of audio, video, animation, reach the unity of the design and truly arouse learners' enthusiasm in multimedia learning environment, they need to be open for their mind for courseware design. An effective way is to learn from other group members who grasp many skills in it; thereby it's easy to enhance the standard of courseware production.

Finally, that is to integrate the work of all groups and complete the construction of the website. After consultation and discussion among group members, they chose to use Adobe Dreamweaver software to build the framework of the site. At last the website has been finished through the collaboration of all members.

3. Intergroup collaboration. In collaboration with group members it may involve the encounter with a variety of difficulties; however, some issues can be resolved with people's help of wider range, which require collaboration between groups and even outside of groups. Along this line, a computer network is an effective means. The Internet provides learners with the convenience of online synchronous discussion in which learners in different places can make real-time communication and cooperation. By Tencent QQ, Microsoft Network (MSN) learners may achieve hyperspace communication, which can promote learning and reflection deeply and meet the demands of learners' belonging and identification. Moreover, learners at different times and in different locations can consult and discuss by e-mail, BBS and other forms of asynchronous online forum in order to complete the same task of collaborative learning.

#### D. Assess Learning Effect

After making the website, it need assess learning effect of learners. Well-timed and appropriate assessment may not only affirm learners' achievements and maintain interests and motivation of collaborative learning but also find problems. According to feedback, learners can adjust learning strategies to stimulate further collaborative learning motivation and enhance learning levels. To assess learners' learning effect, people can use self-assessment, group members' assessment, assessment outside of group and teacher's assessment.

### V. CONCLUSION

In contrary to solitary learning, collaborative learning will greatly enhance learners' cognitive development because learners can perform tasks that are currently beyond their reach through the assistance of others. Collaborative learning can also make learners more motivated and confident in learning as they can help each other and co-construct knowledge. Furthermore, it is helpful for students to prepare for future studies outside of formal educational environment.

In the process of constructing a website, non-computer majored learners usually flinch from computer problems. Nevertheless, through collaborative learning, they can not only master the technology of building a personal website, but learn to communicate with other people, raise individual ability to solve problems, promote the development of creative thinking and train lifelong learning skills.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Hu Long. (2001). *Computer Assisted Language Learning: Multimedia and Networking Applications*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

- [2] Lunsford, A. (1995). Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center, in C. Murphy & S. Sherwood (Ed.). *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- [3] Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York: Newbury House.
- [4] Panitz, T. (1997). Collaborative Versus Cooperative Learning—A Comparison of the Two Concepts Which Will Help Us Understand the Underlying Nature of Interactive Learning. <http://home.capecod.net/~tpanitz/tedsarticles/coopdefinition.htm>.
- [5] Zhang Dianbing, Chen Xuying. (2005). Collaborative Learning: Concepts, Elements and Teaching Strategies. *Continue Education Research*, 5, 118-119.
- [6] Zhang Xuan. (2006). Theoretical Framework of Computer-Mediated Collaborative Language Learning and Affective Issues. *CAFLE*, 8, 30-35.
- [7] Zhao Jianhua, Li Kedong. (2000). Collaborative Learning and Collaborative Learning Mode. *China Educational Technology*, 10, 5-6.

**Ji Song** was born in Baoqing, Heilongjiang Province, China in 1972. He received his M.A. degree in applied linguistics from China University of Petroleum, China in 2006.

He is currently a lecturer in College English Teaching Department of Dezhou University, Dezhou, China. His research interests include CALL and comparison between Chinese and western cultures.



# Translation as a Key Dimension of Social Life

Shuping Xin

Foreign Languages Institute, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China  
Email: shupingxin23@yahoo.com.cn

**Abstract**—Translation has now developed to the process in which translation is acknowledged as a key dimension of social life. At the same time, a translation approach to social praxis demands that we rethink basic premises of the social sciences. Taking translation as a key dimension of sociality means regarding difference as primary, and forces us to focus on the exchanges and interconnections between and across different contexts. What stands out are the multiple contextual involvements of social actors. This paper views translation as interactive and the influences of the factors of social life to translation. Based on the distinction between implicit and explicit levels of social translation, it explores the potentialities of translation as a way of reaching out to others.

**Index Terms**—social dimensions, social translation, social movements, universalisms

## I. INTRODUCTION

Translation has been the focus of constant self-reflection. Once translation was acknowledged as an inherent feature of socio-cultural practice, it became more and more obvious that methodological prescriptions on how to translate would not do. Particular criticism has been directed at the assumption, underlying the very idea of translation, of a continuity of meaning between source and target contexts. The objective of “equivalence of meaning in translation” was countered with a position which in its extreme form claimed that translation is an impossibility—to understand means to not translate. This is a position which in fact shares basic epistemic and social assumptions with the very stance being criticized: the notion of separate worlds or contexts of praxis, and of an intermediary which, in a successful or an uneven way, attempts to bridge the gap between these worlds or which, alternatively, can make sense of (“understand”) the gap translation was discussed with respect to semantic or meaning structures, paradigmatically texts—meanings being transported from one language zone to another. Secondly and later, expanding on the first notion, translation was discussed with reference to intercultural understanding, paradigmatically the ethnographic encounter and, following this, intercultural communication in a wide sense of the term. It seems possible today that there will be a third round of reflection on translation, again expanding on the first two rounds or notions, but at the same time in significant respects reframing the issue of translation: a round in which translation is taken as a dimension of all social life. This article will discuss some aspects and issues of the possible new trend. Taking translation as a general dimension of social life requires us to learn from the first two rounds of translation debate in the humanities and cultural anthropology. But taking translation as a basic social praxis also calls for a new sociological debate, which will have repercussions for the other two debates.

The focus of debates on translation was for a long time what is transmitted and how transmission affects what is being transmitted (meanings, contents), as well as on the (usually two) contexts of the production and reproduction of meanings, usually taken as distinct and separate — as source and target contexts respectively. In so far as any closer contact or exchange between the two contexts was considered at all, it was seen as requiring the intercession of a mediating, “bridging” agency, that is, a professional translator or, for the second case, a professional anthropologist (and, by extension, any other regional specialist), or, in a critical turn, a “hybrid” postcolonial intellectual. “Translation” in the sense discussed here takes off from and transcends the *Verstehen* and interpretation approaches. In particular, it takes seriously the idea that every social actor, be it implicitly or explicitly, makes sense of and gives sense to what s/he does or experiences: understanding and interpreting one’s world are regarded as part and parcel of social praxis. But translation as discussed here also takes seriously and generalizes the experience of difference in each person’s daily life. Thus, we cannot assume that understanding someone or something will result in experiencing or seeing things the same way. Acknowledging the non-identitarian nature of things and ideas — the critique of identity logics (Adorno, Derrida) — translation has the task of addressing the question of difference and continuity (or identity). Translation takes the acknowledgement of difference between and within cultures as a starting point and undertakes to open the self towards the other, thus extending and developing target and source languages.<sup>10</sup> The other does not figure only in the form of representations (or meta-discourses), but also as interrelations. Like the earlier hermeneutic approaches, the translation turn in the social sciences is grounded in a general social faculty of humans, furthering the inclusion of relational aspects into hermeneutics.

## II. TRANSLATION WAS EXTENDED TO MEANING TRANSFERS OR MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MEANING TRANSFERS BETWEEN COMPLEX CULTURAL ENTITIES

Translation beyond representation means an engagement of some sort with new meanings and other people, both in different kinds of combinations. Like interpretation, translation needs to be investigated as a human faculty. What “translation” requires is a deepening sociological discussion, one which takes it as a social activity, as interactive and interpretive praxis, and which also undertakes to analytically distinguish the various aspects and dimensions of translatorial action. One scholar pursuing such an endeavour is Joachim Renn (2006), but sociology in general has still to rise to the task. However, I would stress that we must be careful: in this process sociology will have to give up its attitude of being the master of all discourse on the social, of writing the theory or script which all other disciplines of the social have to follow, and as sociologists of being the ones who alone can formulate the basic principles governing social life and social action everywhere. The postcolonial and anthropological critique of Western universalist claims and the biases built into them was of central significance for the humanities and social sciences, and still holds; the contemporary reflection on translation is a notable outcome of this. To be sure, this culturally critical and self-critical attitude has yet to reach most (Western, but not only Western) sociologists. But for those of us who have partially imbibed it and are attempting the next steps in an exploration of the terrain of intercultural understanding and analysis, there is much to gain from including sociological considerations of translation once these are rephrased in a new, self-critical mode. An interactional concept of translation changes the understanding of social relationships. The following is written from a social science background, combining anthropological and sociological aspects. But it does not deal with the social as just one special field among others. It takes the social as a dimension which, when considered from the angle of Different theories (the critique of identity logic), includes or articulates all aspects and dimensions of human understanding.

The frame: basic dimensions of social translation considering translation as an interactional process of transfer of meanings, but a transfer which changes these very meanings, opens up a new field. Basically, the notion of nonequivalency in translation forces us to take into account the fact or possibility that people relate to others, and even interact with them, across and through differences, across boundaries — differences or boundaries, I mean, between discourses, between cultural contexts, between social positions, or between social fields (subsystems or institutions). People can understand each other, or new things, without the guarantee or even the possibility of a fully shared understanding of the meanings involved. Recognizing the nonequivalency of translations actually implies that contexts are ultimately not bounded or clearly circumscribed. One makes sense of the “other” in one’s own context, but one’s context does not exist in isolation. Or, put differently, nobody exists in one context only, or in one homogeneous context. Contexts are themselves complex, interlacing various and by definition different discourses, cultures, positions and social fields a certain way”. Social actors can and do, in some pragmatic way, connect to meanings or meaning practices arising in one discourse or life form or culture or social field, and refer to them in another discourse or culture or social field in the language of that other context.<sup>12</sup> This means there is understanding without full (that is, identical) understanding or agreement, and it also means that differences lie “within” oneself, that one lives difference, or lives in difference need to start not from the assumption of two separate, unconnected contexts but from the fact of contact, if not, as is actually usually the case, of interpenetration of different contexts, discourses and social fields. Secondly, the person translating is not outside the contexts involved, nor does s/he inhabit a place “in-between”. Rather, the translator—in fact, each social actor—has her/his feet in both or all the camps involved and constantly moves between them when translating. Thirdly, translations are made in everyday life by everyone; translation happens in each person’s mind—one lives in translation. Finally, meanings are usually, or often, shared only partially across contexts. Taking up meanings of one context in another one, and thus resituating and repositioning them, is a pragmatic affair. The statement that social actors take up meanings pragmatically in a second context must be explored further. This cannot be done in detail here, but it seems that at least two different modalities are conceivable. One would be “paraphrasing”: the meanings from one context trigger off certain meanings in another context in the hands, or voice, of the person translating. The other modality would be widening each actor’s horizon or the horizon of a discourse — an attempt to capture the meanings from the first context as comprehensively as possible, looking for the different connotations, etymologies, and so on and integrating them, or some of them, into another context by enlarging and reformulating the second context, discourse or social field. The first scenario or modality involves entering a different, but parallel, “world” (language, discourse, institutional field) from the first context. The second entails self-transformation. The first one means not caring too much for adequacy of meaning but just continuing according to the rhythm of the new field or discourse. The second scenario is more explorative. In the end it means acknowledging that everything is always already translated. The attempt to integrate other ideas, concepts or practices is, however, limited by the inner logic or autonomy of each of the discourses and fields involved, since even if rephrased, the content transferred and the context to which it has been transferred follow separate rationales which limit the degree of absorption.

### III. CONCLUSION

Translation here thus means acknowledging and living with difference within a larger frame. What has to be emphasized is that such translation and amalgamation happens on both sides of the translation relationship, thus not privileging one side (and clearly not one side’s knowledge faculties). Secondly, instead of outright fusion what stands out here is the continuity, even if in changed form, of difference, of different internal dynamics in the very process of amalgamation, integration or exchange, as well as the requirement to transform one’s self and one’s ideas in the process.

Meanings show resilience not only in the process of social change, but rather because of the changes social actors make that affect them: because of translation. Meanings set new contexts.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Martin Fuchs. (2009). Reaching out; or, Nobody exists in one context only Society as translation. *Translation Studies* Vol.2, No. 1, 21-40.
- [2] Michaela Wol. (2007). Social Dimensions of Translation: West and East. *Developments in Translation Studies* 125-135.
- [3] Wolf, Michaela. (2002). Translation Activity between Culture, Society and the Individual: Towards a Sociology of Translation, in Keith Harvey, ed. *CTIS Occasional Papers* 2. Manchester: UMIST, 33-43.
- [4] Holmes, James S. (1988/1972). The Name and Nature of Translation Studies, in Holmes, James S. *Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*. Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 67-80. Paper given at the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics, Copenhagen, 21-26, August.
- [5] Bassnett, Susan. (1998). The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies, in Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere, *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*. Clevedon / Philadelphia etc: Multilingual Matters, 123-140.
- [6] Gouanvic, Jean-Mac. (1999). Sociologie de la Traduction. Arras Cedex: Artois Presses University.
- [7] FIT. (1900). The Social Dimension in Translation into Non-primary languages, in Les Nouvelles de la *FIT-FIT Newsletter*, 9, 376-462.

**Shuping Xin** was born in Yantai, China in 1964. She received her bachelor's degree in linguistics from Qufu Normal University, China in 1987.

She is currently an associate professor in the Foreign Languages institute, Qingdao University of science and technology, Qingdao, China. Her research interests include translation studies.



# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

## Aims and Scope

**Theory and Practice in Language Studies (TPLS)** is a peer-reviewed international journal dedicated to promoting scholarly exchange among teachers and researchers in the field of language studies. The journal is published monthly.

*TPLS* carries original, full-length articles and short research notes that reflect the latest developments and advances in both theoretical and practical aspects of language teaching and learning. We particularly encourage articles that share an interdisciplinary orientation, articles that bridge the gap between theory and practice, and articles in new and emerging areas of research that reflect the challenges faced today.

*Areas of interest include:* language education, language teaching methodologies, language acquisition, bilingualism, literacy, language representation, language assessment, language education policies, applied linguistics, as well as language studies and other related disciplines: psychology, linguistics, pragmatics, cognitive science, neuroscience, ethnography, sociolinguistics, sociology, and anthropology, literature, phonetics, phonology, and morphology.

## 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
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- 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.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- Preparing the “Call for Papers” to be included on the Journal’s Web site.
- 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.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal’s style, together with all authors’ contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

More information is available on the web site at <http://www.academypublisher.com/tpls/>.

An Eco-translatological Perspective to Translator: A Case Study of Xu Chi <i>Aihua Liu</i>	87
Meaningful Signs—Emoticons <i>Li Ruan</i>	91
Practice and Consideration on Bilingual Teaching in Basic Course—Advanced Mathematics <i>Xiuqing Yu</i>	95
Action Study of Teacher's Language on EFL Classroom Interaction <i>Xuemei Meng and Xuesong Wang</i>	98
Working through Faulkner's <i>A Rose for Emily</i> —On Character and Character Portrayal <i>Jie Fang</i>	105
Comparative Critical Analysis of Discourse Structures <i>Jun Zhao</i>	108
An Insight into the Diversity of Mr. Dick's Roles in <i>David Copperfield</i> <i>Xiaohua Li</i>	112
An Application of Collaborative Learning in a CALL Website Construction <i>Ji Song</i>	115
Translation as a Key Dimension of Social Life <i>Shuping Xin</i>	119

---