Theory and Practice in Language Studies

Contents

Second Language Task Difficulty: Reflections on the Current Psycholinguistic Models

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Abstract—One of the unresolved issues currently being debated not only in the area of second language (L2) pedagogy but also in language testing and assessment community is what makes an L2 task difficult or complex. This paper serves three purposes. It first presents a review of historical perspectives on task difficulty, and discusses the recent developments in the testing and assessment field's understanding of a psycholinguistic approach to characterizing task difficulty proposed by some second language pedagogy researchers. The paper then makes the case that this psycholinguistic approach to the investigation of task difficulty focuses mainly on the cognitive processing of a given task, obscuring the role of linguistic demand and social dimensions in defining task difficulty and developing tasks for the L2 classroom. The paper points out that what is lacking in the literature is how interpersonal dynamics and affective dimensions of a given task may influence the cognitive processing of the task. The paper ends by suggesting that future research needs to examine how different psycholinguistic factors, linguistic demands, learner attributes and social conditions interact to make a given task more or less 'difficult' for different learners through use of different research methods. Such research will be useful as it is in line with the central objective of language teaching to produce learners who are able to communicate effectively in the target language of a particular speech community.

Index Terms — task, task difficulty, task-based language teaching, psycholinguistic models

I. INTRODUCTION

As a consequence of policy decisions to increase the number of people in their population who can communicate effectively in English, a great deal of investment has been made by governments worldwide in programs designed to improve the teaching and learning of English. For example, Nunan (2003) observes that national policies and syllabuses on English language education in Asian countries have been moving increasingly towards task-based language teaching. In the literature of L2 acquisition and pedagogy, task-based language teaching and learning is often advocated as the latest methodological realization of communicative pedagogy (Hu, 2005; Littlewood, 2007). There is now widespread acceptance that it is by engaging learners in doing valued tasks that relevant declarative and procedural knowledge is developed, and learners further develop deep linkages between what they learn and how that learning can be put to use beyond the classroom (Norris, 2009). However, despite the fact that task-based language teaching has now achieved something of the status of a new orthodoxy (Littlewood, 2004), researchers and practitioners still seem uncertain as to what exactly a task is. Breen (1987), for example, sees tasks as a range of learning activities from the simple and brief exercise type to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations. Nunan (1993) associates tasks as activities that involve speakers in using language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or objective in a particular speaking situation, that is, goal-oriented language use. In spite of an apparent lack of consensus about what constitutes a task, L2 acquisition and pedagogy researchers generally agree that pedagogic tasks provide a means of engaging learners in meaningful use of the target language (Brumfit, 1984). The concept of 'learning through tasks' has thus become an intrinsic part of the professional discourse and various innovations with task-based language teaching are frequently introduced (Littlewood, 2007)

This paper focuses on L2 task difficulty which is now firmly established as a central concern in task-based language teaching and remains a contested domain of inquiry and practice. In the discussion that follows, I first present a review of the historical perspectives on task difficulty, and discuss the recent developments in the testing and assessment field's understanding of a psycholinguistic approach to characterizing task difficulty proposed by some second language pedagogy researchers. I then make the case that this psycholinguistic approach to the investigation of task difficulty may obscure the role of linguistic and social dimensions of a given task in learners' processing of the task.

II. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TASK DIFFICULTY

An important issue which underscores much of the enquiry in the fields of L2 acquisition and pedagogy, and more recently L2 testing and assessment is what makes an L2 task difficult. Investigations into L2 task difficulty and its impact upon interlanguage developmental date to the early 1980s when SLA researchers tended to classify tasks according to the quality and quantity of interaction that result from a particular task. Hence it is assumed that two-way

tasks are more difficult than one-way tasks (Pica et al., 1993; Fulcher, 2003). Crookes (1986, Cit. in Norris, Brown, Hudson, and Yoshioka, 1998) lists the following factors that can affect task difficulty: 1) Number of steps needed; 2) Number of parties involved; 3) Presupposed knowledge; 4) Intellectual challenge; 5) Spatio-temporal displacement.

Candlin (1987) proposed a general scheme of task sequencing features. This scheme involves description of some factors that are supposed to affect the level of difficulty of a given task. For example:

1) Cognitive load. Tasks which require learners to follow a clear chronological sequence, referring to individual actions of individual characters, will clearly be cognitively less demanding than a task in which there is no such clear development and where the picture is complicated by multiple actions and multiple actors.

2) Communicative stress. Tasks where other interlocutors are less communicatively competent, or tasks where other interlocutors know less about the subject-matter will be less challenging than tasks where other interlocutors are more communicatively competent, or tasks where other interlocutors know more about the subject-matter

3) Particularity and generalizability. Tasks which follow some generalized pattern, or some ritualized interpretive schema, will be easier to manage than those where the order of assembly or the norms of interpretation are unclear and to be negotiated.

4) Code complexity and interpretive density. Tasks that involve description of textually elaborate texts would be easier than tasks that involve description of textually simple texts.

Nunan (1989) proposed a set of criteria for identifying task difficulty and task sequencing, that is, task input factors, learner factors, and procedural factors. Task input factors include grammatical complexity of the input (for example, a text made up of simple sentences is likely to be simpler than one consisting of non-finite verb constructions and subordination), length of a text, propositional density, the amount of low-frequency vocabulary, the speed of spoken texts and the number of speakers involved, the explicitness of the information, the discourse structure and the clarity with which this is signaled. Learner factors include factors that the learner brings to the task of processing and producing language such as background knowledge, linguistic knowledge, confidence, interest, motivation, observed ability in language skills. Procedural factors concern procedures, that is, the operations that the learners are required to perform on input data, for example, task relevance, task complexity such as the number of steps involved, the cognitive demands the task makes on the learner, and the amount of information the learner is expected to process.

III. CURRENT PSYCHOLINGUISTIC MODELS OF TASK DIFFICULTY

In the discussion of variability in learner task performance in the SLA research, two views figure prominently in the current task-based studies. One view is that a predictable cognitive or linguistic outcome from any classroom task is practically impossible due to learner individual variance. This is best reflected in the conceptions of task-as-work plan and task-in-process (Seedhouse, 2005). The other view is that the nature of learners' performance is broadly predictable, individual variation in L2 task performance is not significant, and that what is found for one group of learners will *ceteris paribus* be found in others (Foster, 2009). Researchers holding this view are thus confident that a particular type of cognitive and linguistic outcome can be obtained for all learners, regardless of individual differences, through manipulation of certain task characteristics like task design along dimensions of cognitive complexity (Robinson, 2001a; Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005; Tavakoli and Foster 2008). Foster argues that such confidence in generalisable task performance is vital if we want to take the step of making pedagogical prescriptions or recommendations (Foster, 2009). A corollary of this argument is that information on how task characteristics may affect learners' L2 performance in a predictable way in spite of individual variation has potential for the definition of a variable of task difficulty in assessment of learner spoken performance.

Importantly, Skehan (1998, 2001) argues that different task characteristics, task type and performance conditions influence task difficulty as well as learner performance. If hierarchy of task difficulty is established, students with greater levels of underlying ability will then be able to successfully complete tasks which come higher on such a scale of difficulty (Skehan, 1998). In line with this argument, Skehan (2001) proposed the following psycholinguistic categories that will affect task difficulty:

• Interactivity: Interactive tasks produce greater L2 complexity and accuracy than non-interactive tasks.

• Familiar information: tasks that involve retrieval of information familiar to the participants result in higher L2 fluency and accuracy

• Degree of structure: tasks that contain a clear sequential structure produce greater L2 accuracy.

• Complex and numerous operations: The greater the number of online operations and transformation of material that are needed, the more difficult the task. This may impact upon greater complexity, but at the expense of accuracy and fluency (see Fulcher, 2003).

• Communicative stress: This refers to the logistics of task performance, e.g., time pressure, nature of the prompt and number of participants. As pressure increases, task difficulty increases. Similarly, tasks which involve many participants are more difficult than tasks which involve few participants. Difficult tasks direct learners' attention to context and divert attention away from form, thus generating less accuracy and fluency

To operationalize these psycholinguistic categories, Skehan further proposes a number of task dimensions and task conditions that he claims affect the difficulty of a task, which are presented in the table below (see Table 1). For

example, tasks which require the speaker to communicate few elements and which involve few participants are less difficult than tasks which require the speaker to communicate many elements and which involve many participants. Similarly, tasks which require the speaker to describe concrete objects are less difficult than tasks which require the speaker to communicate abstract notions. Skehan (1998) thinks that such research work on task difficulty has the potential to inform task selection and assist test developers in structuring test tasks and the conditions under which these tasks are performed in appropriate ways, which will allow us to predict the relative difficulty of a particular task so that the full range of candidates' ability will be tapped. A number of empirical studies that replicated Skehan's psycholinguistic framework on task difficulty in language

TABLE 1
TASK DIMENSIONS AND PERFORMANCE CONDITIONS INFLUENCING TASK DIFFICULTY

Task dimension		Performance conditions	
Less difficult	More difficult		
Number of participants or elements		few	many
Abstractness of information or task		concrete	abstract
Type of task information here-and-now there-and-then		immediate	remote
Nature of operation required on task information		retrieval	transformation
Familiarity of task information		familiar	unfamiliar

(Skehan, 1998; see also Iwashita et al., 2001)

testing settings, however, have so far offered little support for Skehan's difficulty hypotheses. For example, Norris et al. (2002) did not find that the cognitive dimensions operationalized in their study based on Skehan's psycholinguistic framework proved particularly useful for estimating actual performance difficulty differences among test tasks. Norris et al. also reported some difficulty in operationalizing Skehan's task dimensions in their actual task design. Iwashita et al. (2001) drew on the framework proposed by Skehan (1998) and investigated predictors of task difficulty in the measurement of speaking proficiency through two different kinds of analysis: 1) a quantitative analysis of candidates' test discourse; 2) a Rasch analysis of candidates' test scores assigned by trained raters using analytical rating scales. Their statistical analysis revealed no systematic discourse variation associated with the other various task dimensions for performance conditions. Also drawing on Skehan's psycholinguistic framework, Elder, Iwashita and McNamara (2002) investigated the impact of performance conditions on perceptions of task difficulty in a test of spoken language. The participants in their study performed a series of narrative tasks whose characteristics, and the conditions under which they were performed, were manipulated and operationalized in terms of Skehan's framework. Elder et al.'s results provided little support for Skehan's framework in the context of oral proficiency assessment, but showed that differences in ability were found to be associated primarily with steps on the rating scale, rather than with differences in task's cognitive demand. Also worthy to mention is Weir, O'Sullivan, and Horai's (2004) study that examined how the difficulty of the Part 2 task in the IELTS speaking test can be manipulated using a framework on effects of planning time, response time, and amount of scaffolding on performance proposed by Skehan and Foster (1997). One of the four equivalent tasks in Weir et al.'s study was left unaltered, the other three were manipulated along three variables: planning time, response time, and scaffolded support. Weir et al.'s results suggest that there were significant differences in the responses of the three ability groups to the four tasks indicting task difficulty may well be affected differently for test candidates of different ability. Weir et al. thus caution us that simply altering a task along a particular dimension may not result in a version that is equally more or less difficult for all test candidates. "Instead, there is likely to be a variety of effects as a result of the alteration" (Weir et al. 2004:143). This resonates with Brindley and Slatyer's (2002) argument that "simply adjusting one task-level variable will not automatically make the task easier or more difficult" (p. 390).

A partially different model has been proposed by Robinson (Robinson 2001a; Robinson, 2001b; Robinson, Cadierno, and Shirai, 2009) who makes a distinction between task complexity, task difficulty, and task conditions (see Table 2). *Task complexity* concerns the cognitive demands of a task which contribute to between task variation in learner performance; *task difficulty* concerns those learner factors which contribute to differences between learners in their performance on a task; *task conditions* concern the interactive factors involved in pair and group work, such as the differences in participant background and role, and the nature of interactive participation a task requires. Within the dimension of task complexity, Robinson further makes a distinction between the resource-directing dimensions of task complexity (e.g., number of task elements, reasoning demands of the task, immediacy of information provided) that make communicative/conceptual demands, and resource-dispersing dimensions of task complexity (e.g., planning time, number of tasks, prior knowledge) that make increased performative/procedural demands on participants' attentional and memory resources. Robinson claims that these cognitively defined complexity factors can be manipulated, and as a result of such manipulation, the cognitive demand (e.g., attentional, memory, and reasoning demand) required for task

performance will vary, which leads to variation in the quality of learner language output.

TABLE 2
ROBINSON'S MODEL OF THE THREE SUPERORDINATE CATEGORIES OF TASK CHARACTERISTICS

Task Complexity (Cognitive factors)	Task Condition (Interactive factors)	Task Difficulty (Learner factors)
(a)Resource-directing variables cognitive/conceptual demands	**(a) Participation variables** interactional demands	**(a) Ability variables** and task-relevant resource differentials
+/– Here and now	+/– Open solution	h/l Working memory
+/– Few elements	+/–One-way flow	h/l Reasoning
–/+ Spatial reasoning	+/–Convergent solution	h/l Task-switching
–/+ Causal reasoning	+/–Few participants	h/l Aptitude
–/+ Intentional reasoning	+/– Few contributions needed	h/l Field independence
–/+ Perspective-taking	+/–Negotiation not needed	h/l Mind/intention-reading
(b) Resource-dispersing variables performative/procedural demands	**(b) Participant variables** interactant demands	**(b) Affective variables** and task-relevant state-trait differentials
+/– Planning time	+/– Same proficiency	h/l Openness to experience
+/– Single task	+/– Same gender	h/l Control of emotion
+/– Task structure	+/– Familiar	h/l Task motivation
+/– Few steps	+/– Shared content knowledge	h/l Processing anxiety
+/– Independency of steps	+/– Equal status and role	h/l Willingness to communicate
+/– Prior knowledge	+/– Shared cultural knowledge	h/l Self-efficacy

(Based on Robinson, 2001a; Robinson, 2001b; Robinson et al., 2009)

It can be seen that Robinson's approach has emphasized the independence of the dimensions of complexity and difficulty with complexity being a feature of the task, and difficulty operationalized in terms of two sets of learner factors categorized respectively as ability and affective variables. In other words, Robinson distinguishes task complexity which is task-dependent from task difficulty which is learner-dependent. Note that the cognitively defined task complexity factors in Robinson's framework have actually been hypothesized or empirically researched in some way as factors that determine task difficulty by other applied cognitive psychologists, SLA researchers, and L2 testing and assessment researchers (e.g., Brown, Anderson, Shilcock, and Yule, 1984; Brindley, 1987; Waks and Barak, 1988; Nunan and Keobke, 1995; Skehan and Foster, 1997; Skehan 1998, Norris et al 1998; Iwashita et al, 2001; Weir, O'Sullivan, and Horai 2004; Elder et al., 2002; Elder and Iwashita, 2005). It is also clear that Robinson's conceptualization of 'difficulty' is different from the way the term is defined in the measurement community where task difficulty is seen as the product of an interaction between many facets of the assessment including both features of the task and test-taker abilities and affect (Bachman, 2002; see also Elder and Iwashita, 2005), whereas Robinson operationalizes 'difficulty' in terms of learners' perceptions of task difficulty (2001a). For example, Robinson (2001) identified students' ratings of task difficulty through use of the following items (each item was rated on 9-point Likert scale):

1   I thought this task was easy/ I thought this task was hard
2   I felt relaxed doing this task/I felt frustrated doing this task
3   I didn't do well on this task/ I did well on this task
4   This task was not interesting/ This task was interesting
5   I don't want to do more tasks like this/I want to do more tasks like this (p. 41)

As mentioned above, Robinson suggests a direct relationship between *manipulation* of his cognitively defined task complexity features and *variation* in the quality of learner language output. In light of Bachman's (2002) comments, however, we may think that Robinson's task complexity features are not features purely inherent in tasks, as during the actual task performance, they involve the interaction of learner attributes (e.g., the actual cognitive operations that a learner applies in completing the task, which vary from one individual to another) with task characteristics (e.g., the hypothesized cognitive demand required for the task performance). Another caveat to the claim about a direct relationship between manipulation of task complexity and learner language production could be that it is possible for learners to successfully complete acts of communication within a task with little use of the target language (Fulcher, 2000).

It can also be seen that Robinson's conceptualization of task complexity exclusively focuses on the cognitive demands tasks make on learners, ignoring the role of linguistic features that may impact upon learners' task performance, as he argues that cognitively defined task complexity factors should be the sole basis of prospective task selecting and sequencing decisions (Robinson, 2001b). For Robinson, task complexity is thus essentially a cognitive issue. A danger of too exclusive a focus on defining task complexity in cognitive terms is that task performance is seen as in some way a simple projection of the learner's cognitive problem-solving abilities needed in achieving the task outcome. Vygotsky (1978), however, argues that language is a powerful mediating mechanism in cognitive activity and/or processes in the sense that language provides the tools for reflection and reasoning. For many second or foreign

language learners, linguistic demand of a language task tends to pose the greatest challenge or difficulty in completing the task, and constitute the major source of anxiety and frustration in target language learning and communication (Tsui, 1996; Li, 1998; Widdowson 1998, 2003; Carless, 2004; Littlewood, 2007). Discourse and text researchers (e.g., Brown and Yule, 1983) believe that differences in the 'task content' (e.g., ideational and interpersonal content carried by the design of different tasks) may set different linguistic demands and affect learners' comprehension and production of language. Other researchers (e.g., Brindley, 1987; Nunan, 1989, 2004; Tavakoli, 2009) also agree that a range of linguistic factors concerning the complexity of textual language input to tasks are likely to cause difficulty to learners, especially beginner- and intermediate-level learners. These include grammar, vocabulary, discourse structure, length of the text, the propositional density, amount of low frequency vocabulary, and the delivery speed and accents used in spoken texts. For example, it can be predicted that many second or foreign language learners will generally find a task that involves use of only simple present tense less linguistically challenging than a task that involves use of the present perfect passive, or subjunctives and conditionals. Note that Oxford (1996), and D ӧrnyei and Csizer (2002) remind us that in foreign language environments learners rarely surpass intermediate language proficiency. It thus follows that the nature and types of linguistic demands inherent in a task can be an important source of 'objective task complexity', which eventually contributes to perceived task difficulty (Nunan and Keobke, 1995).

Clearly, L2 pedagogy researchers tend to focus on the pure intrinsic cognitive demands of a task which is believed to contribute to between task variation in spoken and other kinds of performance (Robinson, 2009). Consequently, less attention has been paid by these researchers to the fact that the cognitive processing of certain kinds of information is likely to be socially or environmentally driven (O'Sullivan, 2000; D ӧrnyei, 2009). A number of studies have explored the role of social and interpersonal dimensions of a given task in the prediction of task difficulty. For example, Fulcher and Marquez-Reiter (2003) studied how learner L1 cultural background and pragmatic task features have an impact upon task difficulty. Their study showed that the pragmatic approach "may be preferable to the use of abstract psycholinguistic categories in the prediction of task difficulty, because the pragmatic categories appear to be more sensitive to how difficult a task may be for students from certain L1 cultural backgrounds" (Fulcheret al., 2003, p. 339). Also relying on a pragmatic approach, Taguchi (2007) examined how different types of pragmatic tasks may create different demands on performance. Taguchi found that in the case of pragmatic tasks that were more conventionalized, immediate, and were also less face-threatening, participants were able to perform quickly and easily, whereas tasks that were less common and more face-threatening were more difficult and took longer to produce.

According to Bachman (1990), communicative language ability can be described as consisting of both knowledge, or competence, and the capacity for implementing, or executing that competence in appropriate, contextualized communicative language use. Bachman and Palmer (1996) make the distinction between language competence and strategic competence. Language competence consists of organizational competence (e.g., grammatical and textual competence) and pragmatic competence (e.g., illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence) (see Littlemore and Low, 2006). Strategic competence is a general ability that enables an individual to use available resources by regulating online cognitive processes in accomplishing a communicative goal (Phakiti, 2008). It can be seen that there is a clear split between knowledge and processing action in Bachman's model of communicative language ability. In light of this, Skehan and Robinson's psycholinguistic models of task difficulty or complexity focus mainly on the cognitive demands tasks make on   learners, and ignores how tasks actually engage learners' language knowledge, topical knowledge and affective schemata. Also, what is lacking in the literature is how interpersonal dynamics and affective dimensions of a given task may influence the cognitive processing of the task. Future research in this area will be useful given the fact that the goal of L2 curriculum is to produce learners who are able to communicate effectively in the target language of a particular speech community.

IV. CONCLUSION

Despite apparent differences in assumptions about task difficulty among L2 testing researchers and L2 pedagogy researchers discussed above, Skehan and Robinson's work has certainly been intellectually stimulating, and provided important insights into how task characteristics may affect learner task performance. Admittedly, determining task difficulty is an extremely complicated and difficult business. As Nunan (2004) emphasizes, "in addition to the number of factors to be taken into consideration, there is also the issue that the factors themselves are interrelated" (p.136). In other words, task difficulty involves complex clusters of factors which are interactive rather than discrete. As such, accurate a priori identification of a separate set of theoretically motivated and empirically sustainable 'task difficulty features' may be extremely hard to achieve. Future research thus needs to examine how different psycholinguistic factors, linguistic demands, learner attributes and social conditions interact to make a given task more or less 'difficult' for different learners through use of different research methods (e.g., sophisticated statistical procedures and qualitative procedures such as discourse analysis). It is also desirable to conduct longitudinal studies that enable researchers to connect spoken performance on a task at one time with stability or instability of performance over time, and to establish whether and how the interactive effects of task features and learner factors may be variably manifested.

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Group Types as Style Markers in J. P. Clark-Bekederemo's Poetry

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Abstract—**Group types or word groups constitute a veritable aspect of the syntactic structure of the English Language. In Hallidayan systemic linguistics, it is placed third on the hierarchy of five grammatical units in the language, viz: sentence, clause, phrase (word group), word and morpheme, in a descending order. A fundamental aspect of these grammatical units is their mutual inclusiveness i.e a lower unit is included in a higher unit. Thus, clauses, word groups, words, morpheme form the sentence, which is the highest in the hierarchy. In this study, we have examined the structural constituents of word groups and the textual functions they perform in J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's poetry, using linguistics-stylistic parameters. The study demonstrates that, like other aspects or units of language, word groups have meaning-making potentials and play a crucial role in encoding the message of a text. It also throws light on the inexorable relationship between syntax and poetry, and adds to the ever-growing and divergent criticisms on African literature.**

Index Terms—**group types, style markers, J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, poetry**

I. INTRODUCTION

It was Todorov (1977) who averred that "literature is a verbal work of art". This statement implies not only the centrality of language to any discourse on literary procreation but also the fact that, 'the verbal style includes all the devices of language that are used to achieve communication in speech and writing' (Alo, 1998, p.1). The point is that, to fully grasp the message and aesthetics of a literary text (or any text for that matter), there must be recourse to language at all levels of linguistic description, because it is the singular medium of its expression. Dada (2004) explains:

A literary work contains a lot of codes and information that must be decoded in order to fully grasp the meaning of the work; it has sound patterns, semantic relations and syntactic organization. All these must be taken into account when reading a literary text.

However, from available literature, J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's poetry has not been intensively studied from a linguistic perspective. This is in spite of the universal acclaim and wide range of criticisms that his works have evoked. In fact, most of the works on his poetry are from thematic and literary angles (Eyoh, 1997). Eyoh's (1997) *J.P. Clark's Poetry: a Study in Stylistic Criticism* remains the only full-scale linguistic discussion of the writer's poetry. The limitation of this work, however, is the triadic focus on the phonological, lexical and paralinguistic affective levels of languages use. According to Crystal and Davy (1969), the levels of linguistic analysis are phonetics/graphetics, phonology/graphology, grammar/lexis and semantics.

The present study seeks to fill the gap left by Eyoh's (1997) work, by focusing on word groups which is an aspect of syntax. The grammatical level is as important as any other level of linguistic description because the literary artist essentially selects lexico-grammatical options to encode his textual message (s). Hence, Dever (1978) posits that, in creating any text, literary or non-literary, we must combin words to express complex ideas or relationships in sentences. Lyons (1977) echoes a similar viewpoint inter alia "… the function of language tends to be reflected in its grammatical and lexical structure, which interrelates sentences with the feature of situation of the utterance" (p.249).

II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION/LITERATURE REVIEW

Stylistics is the branch of linguistics that focuses on style, particularly in works of literature. Cluett and Kampeas (1979) refer to it as the judgment of "the tangible manifestation of style". According to Allan et a l (1988), the concept

.... studies the characteristics of situationally distinctive use of language and tries to establish principles capable of accounting for particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language.

From the foregoing overview, we can see the water tight relationship between style and stylistics. It is the workshop of stylistics; the soil on which stylistics is sown. Hence, Babajide (2000) observes that where there is no style, there is no stylistics. What then is style? Basically, it refers to the way we do things – dress, talk, pray, dance, walk, etc. in a linguistic sense, the concept infers the specific manner a particular speaker or writer expresses himself. Leech and Short (1981) see it as "the way language is used in a literary text, with the aim of relating it to its artistic (aesthetic) functions" (p.14-15). According to Tomori (1977), "*there is a style in everything we say; so style cannot be isolated from language itself; but it is a distinctive aspect of language*"(p.53).

Over the years various theories have been propounded by different scholars, to explicate the concept of language and its use, particularly in literary circles. This fact underscores the critical place of language in human existence, as it constitutes the bedrock of human socialization and civilization. The Russian formalism of the 1920s and the structuralist school of the 1960s, postulate the existence of a special "poetic language", as distinct from "ordinary" or "scientific" language. Wellek and Warren (1963) also distinguish a poetic use of language, in the sense that, it is non-referential, non-practical, non-casual, etc. This implies that "poetic language" is unique as a result of its conscious use of linguistic and imagistic devices to foreground aspects of meaning.

Another fundamental aspect of the language of poetry is its deviant character. The language of poetry inherently and overtly deviates from linguistic conventions or norms, at all levels of its use i.e. semantic, phonological, lexical, syntactic, etc, because poets enjoy what has been referred to as poetic license. Hence Widdowson (1984) contends that, "it is common to find instances of language use which cannot be accounted for by grammatical rules," in poetry (p.162). According to Crystal (1987), it is this deviant and abnormal feature of the language of poetry that stylistics focuses on. Chomsky's (1957) Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG), is also germane to the present discourse, as it postulates the disparity and relations between deep and surface structures. The relevant point in Chomsky's TGG is that the meaning of surface linguistic constructs like poetry is retrievable only in the deep structure. This point also underscores the fact that meaning in poetry texts is multi-layered and multi-faceted.

However, since the primary concern of the present study is on the functional aspect of language, we shall adopt M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), as our analytical model, in the sense that it focuses not only on the structure of language, but also on the properties of discourse and its functions in specific social and cultural situations. Specifically, the study adopts Halliday's three metafunctions of language viz: ideational, interpersonal, and textual for the textual analysis. The ideational metafunction focuses on the subject matter or field of discourse, while the interpersonal metafunction refers to the tenor of discourse i.e. the social relationship that exists among participants in a given discourse situation, which has the potentials to influence or shape language use. The textual metafunction is particularly relevant to our study, as it focuses on the internal organization and communicative nature of a text. The pre-occupation of this study is to show how word groups are organized in J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's poetry, to foreground aspects of meaning and aesthetics in the texts.

Thus, our adoption of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar for textual analysis, is necessitated by its sociological and functional appeal. According to Opara (2005), Halliday's claim in this theory is that language structure reflects the social uses to which language is put. In other words, we agree with Osakwe (1995) that "the language of the poet mirrors the function and purpose of a poem – like any other linguistic text which is also dependent upon major situational factors" (p.XIV). The critical point is that the linguistic-stylistic approach that we have used in the study enables us to examine and characterize the structural and functional aspects of a writer's idiolect. Ayemoni (2004) posits that the approach offers three major benefits. Firstly, the analyst will be aware of the structural pattern of language permeating a text, to enable him identify the prominent or foregrounded stylistic features of the text. It also enables the analyst to be consciously aware of the kind of social variations, which the inherent linguistic features are identified with. Finally, the approach also enables the analyst to know the technique of putting these features down systematically in order to reveal the internal patterning of texts.

The dominant critical focus on African poetry has been on the traditional literary and thematic features of texts. Linguistic/stylistic studies are generally sparse (see Eyoh, 1997). The few works that attempt a linguistic/stylistic appraisal of poetic creations in the continent include: Anozie's (1985) "Equivalent Structures in Soyinka's Poetry: Toward a Linguistic Methodology in African Poetry Criticism," Ofuani's (1987) *A Stylistic Analysis of Okot P'Bitek's Poetry*, Osakwe's (1992) *The Language of Wole Soyinka's Poetry: A Diatype of English, Adejare's (1992) Language and Style in Soyinka: A Systemic Textlinguistic Study of a Literary Idiolect,* Eyoh's (1997) *J.P Clark-Bekederemo's Poetry: A Study in Stylistic Criticism,* Edonmi's (2000) *A Text-Linguistic Enquiry into Osundare's Poetic Idiolect,* and Ushie's (2001) *Many Voices,, Many Visions: A Stylistic Study of 'New' Nigerian Poetry*.

III. THE CONCEPTS OF GROUP TYPE AND STYLE MARKER

The concept of word group or phrase is an aspect of syntax. According to Dever (1978), syntax describes:
...the way in which we arrange words like "building blocks" to construct sentences that express our ideas. Syntax is that part of grammar which specifies rules for sequencing or ordering words to form phrases and sentences.

The 'building blocks' referred to in the above definition refer to the morphemes, words, phrases (groups) and clauses, which constitute sentences. According to Alo (1995), group refers to "a group of words with no subject or predicate of its own". In Douglas' (2004) view, it is " a sequence of words, which belong together grammatically". Babajide (1996) sees the concept as:
...a group of words which serves as a single part of speech. It has neither a subject nor a finite verb ... (it) expresses fragmentary thoughts rather than complete thoughts.

Alo (1995) posits that classifications of word groups include (a) nominal group (i.e the boys, the two cars, the cleaner in the office), verbal group (i.e can go, must have gone), (c) prepositional group (i.e in the office, behind the bar, on the table), (d) adjectival group (i.e very happy, too tired), adverbial group (i.e very soon).

Style markers, on the other hand, are those linguistic features deliberately deployed in a given text or discourse by an author, to encode aspects of meaning and also achieve particular aesthetic effects. They are the linguistic features of texts which are significant for their semantic implications and aesthetic functions. In other words, for an aspect of language use to be considered a style marker in a particular text, it must have visual and imaginative appeal or effect on the reader or audience. An identification of style markers in textual analysis is expedient since it is not possible or useful to explore all the linguistics choices made by a given author. Olujide (2002) explains this view inter alia:

For the purpose of selecting stylistic features, style markers (salient features of style) are used. Once these have been identified, whole areas of language which are not used in any unusual way in a text are ignored, since no author can use all the aspects of a language code in a particular text.

The foregoing implies that stylistic analysis focuses on the significant, salient or foregrounded aspects of an author's linguistic coding in a text, in relation to the social or pragmatic contexts. It involves the identification, description and interpretation of linguistics features which stand out within a text, whether they conform to the common core of language use or are used in a deviant form.

IV. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

It is practically impossible to analyse all the group components of poems of J.P. Clark-Bekederemo which span about fifty years (1958 – to date), in a study of this nature. So, ten poems which are randomly selected across three collections, in order to account for each of the group types (i.e nominal, adjectival and prepositional) will be considered shortly. The three collections viz: *Poems* (1962), *of Sleep and Old Age* (2003) and *Once Again a Child* (2004), have been chosen essentially to achieve a temporal balance between his early and latest poetry. It should also be pointed out here that greater emphasis shall be placed on the structural peculiarities of the groups but also with due attention to their functions or textual roles.

A. The Nominal Group

In line with Systemic Functional Grammar, the word class noun heads the nominal   group with one or more modifications before or after it. Four structural possibilities of the nominal group are often identified: the 'H' type which is made up of only a nominal head; the'Mh' type, with modification (s) before the head; the 'hq' type with qualification(s) after the head and 'mhq' type with all the basic elements present (i.e the pre and post modifiers, plus the head). In order to determine the type(s) that are dominant in J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's poems under study, we analyse the first noun phrase to occur in each of the ten poems under study. The result is presented in the form of a table below:

NOMINAL GROUP TEXT		SOURCE	STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS
1	A courtyard	"My Father's House" (*Of Sleep and old Age*)	Mh
2	The photograph of an old man	"A Photograph" (*Of Sleep…*)	Mhq
3	The active state	"A Time to Sleep" (*Of Sleep…*)	Mhq
4	My first impression of my father	'My Father in his Thirties (*Once Again…*)	Mhq
5	My first outbreak of fire	"My First Fire (*Once Again…*)	Mhq
6	The mysteries of a people	"Lions and Leopards in the Night' (*Once Again a Child*)	Mhq
7	….a wife in the compound	"The Snake killer" (*Once Again a Child*)	Mhq
8	The throb of a drum	"Agbor Dancer" *(Poems)*	Mhq
9	The generals in the field	"Return of the Heroes" *(Poems)*	Mhq
10	The interest of the public	"Victoria Island" *(Poems)*	Mhq

As indicated in the table above, the nominal groups in the sampled poems are dominantly 'Mhq' type. Only ten percent is 'Mh' type and there is neither 'hq' nor 'h' type nominal group. This statistics is stylistically significant: the group type endows the poems with the qualities of simplicity, clarity and concreteness. Semantically speaking, 'Mhq' nominal group is more detailed and more explicit than other nominal group types. This is because the modifier and the qualifier elements of the nominal group perform adjectival functions clarifying the meaning of the noun head, with which they are structurally   related.

In addition, the nominal group type that is dominant in the poems helps in reducing the heuristic task of readers as it frees the poems from ambiguity. If we consider the text in the table above, we will appreciate the discourse function of the 'Mhq' nominal group type described above. The expression "A courtyard" is certainly a hang-over expression. Similarly, the 'Mh' nominal group in "3" above lacks the sort of clarity noticeable in 4 – 10.

Considering the group pattern discussed above, it can be said that the poems in the selections are simple; suggesting also that simplicity is one of the stylistic peculiarities of the poems. It is also indicative of the narrative style adopted by the poet, particularly the poems in *Once Again Child; Of Sleep and Old Age* and *A Lot from Paradise,* which are all poems derived from recollection of past experience.
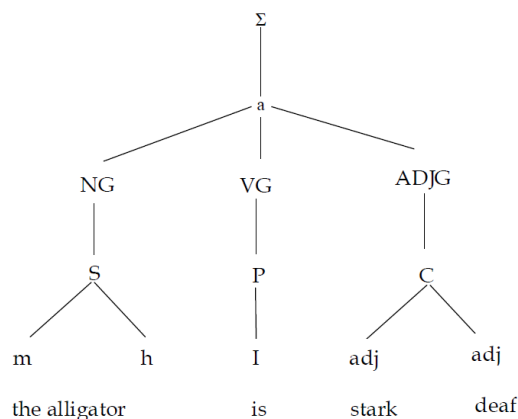
B. The Adjectival Group

The adjectival group is headed by the word class, adjective in the complement position within the clause structure. One of the general features of the adjectival group is that it is an element within a nominal group. When it occurs so, it is often regarded as an epithet. An adjectival group can also serve or function as the complement within a clause

structure. We refer to this latter category of adjectival group as completive adjectival group. In what follows shortly, we shall examine in greater details the structures and functions of the sampled specimens of the structure. Like we did above, the data is first presented in the form of a table:

	GROUP TEXT	SOURCE	FUNCTIONS
1	Honey fresh milk fang	"Ivbie or oya: a song of wrong" *(poems)*	Pre-modifier
2	..the alligator is stark deaf	"The Reign of Crocodile" *(poems)*	Complement of the clause
3	A tree in a mad act	"Dirge" *(Poems)*	Modifier (post)
4	One person' pain is dead wood	"When My Father Fell ill" *(Once Again a child)*	Complement of the clause
5	I only saw the cracked and broken floor	"Shadow in a Mirror" *(Once Again a child)*	Modifier (pre)
6	… dry coconut shells	"War Effort" *(Once Again a Child)*	Modifier (post)
7	A courtyard. Once like a market	"My Father's House" *(Of Sleep and Old Age)*	Modifier (post)
8	They flew proud colourful flags	"The Traffic Then and Now" *(Of Sleep and Old Age)*	Modifier (post)
9	A whole new world of works	"Again the Characters" *(Of Sleep…)*	Modifier (pre)
10	….a wet bare floor	"The Dead as They Lay" *(Of Sleep…)*	Modifier (pre)

As shown in the table above, the adjectival groups are dominantly modifiers of nominal head. Only twenty percent (20%) of the sampled text is clause complement. The modifier types are dominated by the pre-modifier category. This suggests that the adjectival groups are dominantly left-branched. A closer examination of some of them is necessary here in order to reveal their internal structure.

In ii above, the adjectival group underlined is the complement of the equative copular 'is.' The tree diagram below reveals this:

As shown in the tree diagram above, the adjectival group is made up of two 'h' type adjectival groups, "stark" and "deaf". Their combination in the group makes the description to be more splendid. This contributes to the effect which (the group) generates in readers. As could be noted, each of the groups can stand alone. As it were, 'stark' is a modifier of 'deaf'; giving it extra degree of quality.

Similarly, in v, the adjectival group underlined is a pre-modifier of the nominal head "floor". The tree diagram of the group below reveals its internal structure:
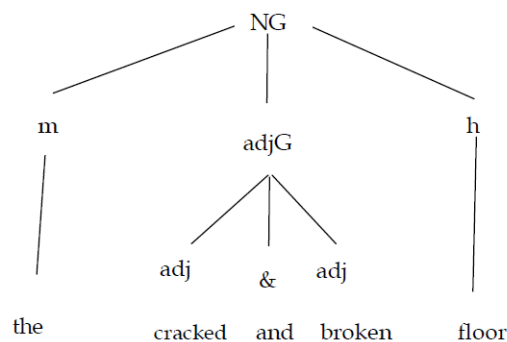
As the tree diagram analysis above reveals, the only structural difference between the adjectival group   in "ii" and the adjectival group in 'v' is that the compound adjectives functioning in the latter group are connected by a linker, indicating clearly that each of them is an independent adjectival group, separable and substitutable for each other.

A closer study of the table reveals one adjectival group exhibiting a different outlook. That is the structure 'iii' above- in a mad act. This expression has the structure: preposition + nominal group, which shows (because it is headed by a preposition) that it is a prepositional group. However, functionally, it is simply an adjective describing the nominal group "the tree". The expression can also be treated as an elliptical adjectival clause – "which is a mad act". This would now yield the tree diagram analysis below:
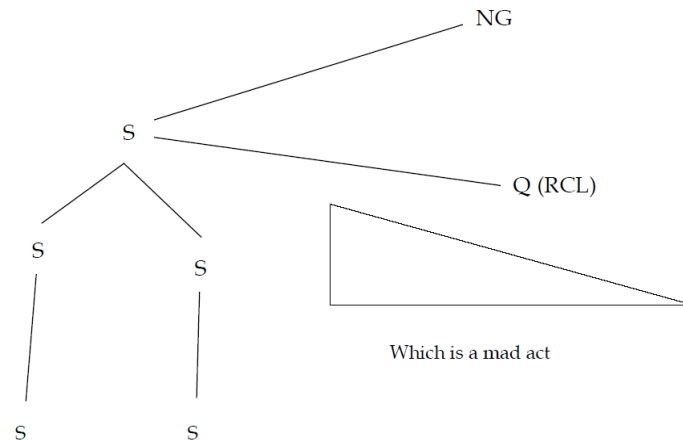
The distribution in the table above shows that structurally ambiguous patterns like the one above are very rare in J.P. Clark–Bekederemo's poems under study. This shows that simplicity and clarity of expression are marks of his poetic style.

C. The Prepositional Group

The prepositional group is a group whose headword belongs to the word class-preposition – such as in, at, of, on, of, off, out etc. It is the only one in the groups in English headed by a word traditionally classified as a grammatical rather than a lexical item. It is on this basis that our analysis here will focus on the semantic functions of the structure in the sampled poems. Some of the general semantic functions of prepositions include: expression of viewpoint, focusing, manner, instrument, place and time. In what follows here, we draw specimens of the structure from the poems and explain them in relation to the semantic functions they perform in the texts, first in tabular form:

	EXPONENT OF THE TEXT	SOURCE	SEMANTIC FUNCTION
1.	In the slot (a clime in the slot)	"Service" *(poems)*	Time adjectival
2.	In the wind (the leaves, so golden, shower in the wind)	"Two Moods of Princeton" *(poems)*	Place
3.	In his den (they killed the lion in his den)	"What the squirrel said" *(poems)*	Place
4.	In a compound (a woman now lives alone in a compound)	"The Last of Wives *(Of Sleep and Old Age)*	Place
5.	In my sleep (the many faces I see again and again in my sleep)	"The Dream Peoples" *(Of Sleep and Old Age)*	Place
6.	In the day (a m an I have come late in the day to call my friends)	"A Friend Refusing Surgery' *(Of Sleep and Old Age)*	Time
7.	In my sea son of dust (reading again, in my season of dust)	"A Certain Guest' *(Once Again Child)*	Modifier (post)
8.	Into town (where a certain guest came any day into town)	"Lost Rites" *(Once Again a Child)*	Place
9.	At home (the many rites of passage I went through as a child at home)	"Lost Rites" *(Once Again a Child)*	Place
10	At school (of the many films we were fed on at school)	"Wining the War" *(Once Again a Child)*	Place

The table above shows clearly that the sampled poems are dominated by prepositional groups whose function is expression of time and place. This pattern can be related to the poet's interest in relating events to time and place. It also makes the poems to be more picturesque and narratively concrete. We cannot overlook the structural peculiarity of the distribution of the prepositional groups in these poems. As could be noted, 80% of the sampled prepositional groups are headed by 'in', while just 20% is headed by 'at.' The 'at' headed prepositional groups serve to connect events in the poems to places not big enough to be modified by the preposition 'in'. This reflects or marks the poet's adherence to the rule of appropriateness in language use in spite of his license, as a poet, to use language in a deviant form.

V. CONCLUSION

In this study, we have examined the structural constituents of group types and the textual roles they play in J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's poetry. Essentially, we have shown that the poet's style is foregrounded by the utilization of structural devices such as group types for encoding the meaning of his texts. Thus, we agree with Ofuani (1987) that the relationship between the structure of a poem and its semantic content is that the poem means what it means largely because of its structure.

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Abstract—This article demonstrates an ESP lesson plan to teach English listening and speaking for 49 EFL college students in hospitality fields, i.e. Western Culinary Arts and Bakery Technology and Management in Taiwan. This ESP class is content-based, featuring a combination of language-oriented, skills-oriented and learning-oriented approaches to ESP syllabus design. The syllabus aims at reaching satisfactory outcomes corresponding with preordained objectives. A variety of teaching and learning activities are applied within the framework of the Whole English Approach, such as lectures in an English-medium fashion, grammar understanding and practice, audio-lingual teaching activities as well as cooperative group and pair works. Cooperative team works function to enhance learning effects and motivation. Students' performance on two oral presentations illustrate itself as learner-centered output productions in the teaching and learning process, which adds to their learning outcomes in terms of communicative performance in a behavioral fashion. This lesson plan provides an example for EFL teachers who are interested or put endeavors in teaching ESP, especially for hospitality purposes.

Index Terms—content-based, ESP, hospitality fields, syllabus design

I. INTRODUCTION

This article demonstrates an ESP lesson plan to teach English listening and speaking for 49 EFL senior college students in hospitality disciplines, 28 from Western Culinary Arts and 21 from Bakery Technology and Management in Taiwan. The ESP class is content-based, featuring a combination of language-oriented, skills-oriented and learning-oriented approaches (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993) to ESP syllabus design. A variety of teaching and learning activities are engaged in a Whole English Approach, such as lectures in an English-medium fashion, grammar understanding and practice, audio-lingual teaching activities.

Students are motivated to role-play the conversations in groups and in pairs. Cooperative learning is encouraged along with team spirit of negotiation and sharing. Adopting common-core teaching material complemented by related information on the Internet, the syllabus aims at reaching satisfactory outcomes corresponding with preordained teaching objectives/learning competencies.

II. COURSE DESIGN

A. Rationale

This is a 1-semester course. The course lasts for 18 weeks including 16 meeting weeks with 2 hours each and two weeks for mid-term and final exams. The course is designed as a content-based syllabus (Flowerdew, 1993; Kasper, 1995) with a rationale to meet both communicative and linguistic needs of the students. Given that the course encouraged students' performance in demonstrating their English listening and speaking skills applicable to their professional areas as well as valued interaction-cooperative learning process inside and outside the classroom (Breen, 1984), the course, thus, features a synthesis of, or otherwise a flexibly adapted combination of, language-oriented, skills-oriented and leaning-oriented approaches to the design of this ESP course. Elevating students' motivation is valued on the ground that motivation is one of the vital elements in bringing about the success of a language learning experience and in the development of ESP courses (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993).

B. Teaching Objectives

- to enable students to understand the content learned and to apply it in the real-life context.
- to build up students' listening and speaking skills in a communicative fashion.
- to engage students in role-play activities.
- to develop students' abilities/skills of understanding and answering oral questions posed by the instructor.
- to cultivate students' speaking skills to express their own ideas and opinions in relationship to the content areas in English.
- to engage students in group/pair works.
- to engage students in the cooperative learning process of negotiation, organization and sharing inside and outside

the classroom.

- to encourage students to independently search for and organize related information.
- to require students to demonstrate their performance/achievement in communicating in English with potential customers in simulated hospitality industry situations.
- to elevate students' learning motivation in a cooperative learning fashion in class.

C. Targeted Learning Competencies

- Understanding the ESP registers and discourse: the capacity to understand, remember and use the registers and discourse in hospitality industry in English. (language-oriented)
- Communicating ideas and information: the capacity to communicate with others using spoken and non-verbal expressions in the target language. (skills-oriented)
- Working in pairs and groups: the capacity to work as a member of a group to achieve a shared goal and complete a task. (learning-oriented)
- Solving problems: the capacity to achieve a solution for assignments or questions posed by the teachers by means of verbal performance in the target language. (skills-oriented, learning-oriented)
- Collecting, analyzing and organizing information: the capacity to find, sift and sort information and to present it in a useful way. (skills-oriented and learning-oriented)
- Elevating learning motivation: the capacity to enhance learning motivation and lower affective filter in the cooperative learning process. (learning-oriented)

III.   TEACHING CONTENT

The EFL textbook, *Ready to Order* (Baude, Iglesias, & Inesta, 2002), along with its workbook is adopted as common-core teaching material for the students majoring in the food/beverage preparation and catering industries. To carter for learning needs of the students with diverse English competencies and specialty disciplines, pieces of information from the following websites related to hospitality industry are used to supplement the teaching materials as follows.

1. *Ready to Order* and its workbook

2. Information available on the websites is referred to and covered in class:

(1) A website shows a wide variety of drink recipes at http://www.webtender.com.

(2) A website shows rules to prepare a French table, such as how to place guests, tableware displays, table decoration, assorted wines, and French recipes at http://www.ffcook.com/pages/table.htm.

(3) A website displays French tools and table at http://www.ffcook.com/pages/cooking.htm.

(4) A website shows how to mix whiskey cocktails at
    http://www.ehow.com/how_4583490_mix-whiskey-cocktails.html.

(5) A web page shows how to make a Mojito Cocktail: Cocktail Recipe
    http://www.ehow.com/how_4478962_mojito-cocktail-cocktail-recipe.html#ixzz18wyFjmz8.

(6) A website with wonderful videos to show people how to cook dishes at
    http://www.yumsugar.com/Name-Dish-3536759.

(7) A website provides videos to show how to cook Farfalle with lamb Ragu, Ricotta, and mint at http://www.myrecipes.com/recipes/dinnertonight/video/0,29865,1966502,00.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_mediu m=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+DinnerTonight+%28MyRecipes.com%3A+Dinner+Tonight%29.

(8) A website shows utensils at http://www.amazon.com/tag/utensils.

(9) A website has wonderful videos to show how to cook desserts at http://www.5min.com/Category/Food/Desserts.

(10) A website shows dessert recipes at http://allrecipes.com/Recipes/Desserts/Main.aspx.

IV.   TEACHING APPROACH

A variety of teaching and learning activities within the framework of the Whole English Approach, such as lectures in an English-medium fashion, grammar understanding and practice, audio-lingual teaching activities as well as cooperative group and pair works is applied to the class. Both audio and video material/CDs are adopted to familiarize students with real-life English conversations at a natural speed.

Students are required to do pre-reading activities, discussion and exercise in class. Homework/tasks is assigned and functioned as a learning-centered increment in the learning process. Worksheets drawn from the workbook are assigned as homework for the students in order to re-enforce their acquisition and understanding of functional and grammatical structures as well as useful words and expressions for professionals in the hospitality industry. Students are motivated to role-play the conversations in groups and in pairs. Cooperative learning is thus encouraged along with team spirit of negotiation and sharing (Chen, 1994).   Fun communicative games (e.g. Bingo, Matching, Association, Memory Test, Information Gap) are designed for the whole class to participate from time to time where necessary and appropriate.

Assignments

- Pre-reading assignments.

- Homework is assigned: Worksheets drawn from the workbook.
- Tasks/projects are assigned for students' presentation.

TABLE 1
SCHEDULE

Week 1	Introduction to the syllabus, Unit 1 ***Hello!***	
	Function:	(1) "break the ice": Introducing yourself.
	Language:	(1) Asking for and giving personal information.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Greetings and introductions. (2) Countries and nationalities. (3) Pronunciation: word stress.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Grammar understanding and practice. (4) Discussion. (5) Grouping.
Week 2	Unit 2 ***A new job***	
	Function:	(1) Describing a restaurant. (2) Describing a kitchen.
	Language:	(1) The present simple (*There is*/*There are*). (2) Prepositions of place.
	Vocabulary:	(1) The restaurant. (2) The workplace. (3) Jobs. (4) Pronunciation: sentence stress.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Grammar understanding and practice. (4) Discussion and exercise in class.
Week 3	Unit 3 ***The Casablanca***	
	Function:	(1) Dealing with enquires. (2) Giving directions.
	Language:	(1) *Present continuous*. (2) Giving directions.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Verbs of movement. (2) Pronunciation: questions.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Games (Association, Memory Test) (4) Grammar understanding and practice. (5) Discussion in class.
Week 4	Unit 3 ***The Casablanca***	
	Function:	(1) Giving directions.
	Language:	(1) Prepositions of movement.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Seating arrangements. (2) Table setting (http://www.ffcook.com/pages/table.htm)
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Games (Association, Memory Test) (4) Discussion in class.
Week 5	Unit 4 ***Reservation***	
	Function:	(1) Taking reservations. (2) Giving information about a restaurant.
	Language:	(1) Making bookings. (2) Prepositions of time.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Clock times. (2) Days, months and seasons.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Discussion and practice in class.
Week 6	Unit 5 ***Welcome!***	
	Function:	(1) Receiving guests. (2) Making arrangements.
	Language:	(1) Modal verbs *Going to* + verb.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Parts of the dining-room. (2) Tableware for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. (3) Tableware display. (http://www.ffcook.com/pages/tware-p.htm) (4) How to place your guests. (http://www.ffcook.com/pages/tplace-p.htm)
	Activities:	(1) Role-play (How to place your guests). (2) Lectures. (3) Grammar understanding and practice. (4) Games (Bingo, Matching the right tableware).
Week 7	Unit 6 ***A drink?***	

	Function:	(1) Describing drinks. (2) Ordering drinks.
	Language:	(1) Countable and uncountable nouns. (2) Making requests.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Describing drinks. (http://www.webtender.com) (2) Behind the bar. (3) Tableware for drinks. (4) Bar tools and supplies (http://webtender.barstore.com/)
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Games (Memory test, Association). (3) Lectures. (4) Grammar understanding and practice. (5) Discussion in class.
Week 8	**Oral presentation in groups**	
Week 9	**Mid-term (written test)**	
Week 10	Unit 7 *Cocktails*	
	Function:	(1) Cocktails recipes.
	Language:	(1) Imperatives.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Cocktail recipes. http://www.ehow.com/how_4583490_mix-whiskey-cocktails.html)
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Games (Association, Bingo). (3) Lectures. (4) Grammar understanding and practice.
Week 11	Unit 7 *Cocktails*	
	Function:	(1) How to make cocktails.
	Language:	(1) Linking words.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Cocktail recipes. (http://www.ehow.com/how_4478962_mojito-cocktail-cocktail-recipe.html) (2) Cocktail preparation.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Games (Association, Memory Test). (3) Lectures. (4) Discussion in class.
Week 12	Unit 8 *Recipes*	
	Function:	(1) Planning menus.
	Language:	(1) Comparatives and superlatives.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Describing restaurants. (2) Verbs of preparation.
	Activities:	(1) Games (Memory test, Information Gap). (2) Lectures. (3) Grammar understanding and practice. (4) Discussion in class.
Week 13	Unit 8 *Recipes*	
	Function:	(1) Describing dishes.
	Language:	(1) Verbs as adjectives.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Ingredients. (http://www.yumsugar.com/Name-Dish-3536759)
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Games (Association, Information Gap). (3) Lectures. (4) Discussion in class.
Week 14	Unit 9 *Here's the menu*	
	Function:	(1) Taking orders.
	Language:	(1) Taking orders.
	Vocabulary:	(1) Describing dishes. (2) Describing dishes. (http://www.yumsugar.com/Name-Dish-3536759)
	Activities:	(1) Lectures. (2) Discussion and practice in class.
Week 15	Unit 10 *The chef recommends*	
	Function:	(1) Recommending dishes.
	Language:	(1) Past tense (irregular verbs). (2) Recommending dishes. (http://www.yumsugar.com/Name-Dish-3536759)
	Vocabulary:	Verbs of preparation.
	Activities:	(1) Role-play. (2) Lectures. (3) Games (Association, Memory test) (4) Discussion and practice in class.
Week 16		Unit 10 *The chef recommends*
	Function:	(1) Describing desserts
	Language:	(1) Past tense (irregular verbs).
	Vocabulary:	(1) Desserts. (http://www.5min.com/Category/Food/Desserts) (http://allrecipes.com/Recipes/Desserts/Main.aspx)

		(2) Utensils. (http://www.amazon.com/tag/utensils)
	Activities:	(1) Lectures.
		(2) Games (Bingo, Information Gap)
		(3) Discussion and practice in class.
Week 17	**Project-oral presentation in groups**	
Week 18	**Final Exam (written test)**	

V. STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Student assessment takes the forms of tests and oral presentations. Students are required to sit in two achievement tests in order to demonstrate their learning achievement and acquisition of profession-knowledge and expressions learned from this content-based syllabus. The two written tests are administered during and after the course serving as a criterion-referenced formative evaluation of students learning accomplishment. The tests take up a format consisting of four parts, namely, vocabulary (30%), multiple choice (20%), translation (30%) and short questions (20%). The translation part purports to test students' understanding of ESP linguistic registers, namely vocabulary, phrases and expressions in hospitality fields and to address students' learning objective: capacity to understand the content learned, which is the registers and discourse in hospitality industry in English. The parts of cloze-vocabulary and multiple choice together aim at testing students' understanding of the registers related to the target situation in context. The purpose of these sections is directed at testing students' learning achievement in terms of capacity to understand the content learned and to communicate with others the ideas and information relevant to their subject matters. This purpose reflects the testing rationale in accordance with pre-designed Learning Competencies one and two. The short questions focus on looking at students' application ability. Again, this section of the tests bears an aim at addressing the teaching objectives of understanding of the content learned and the application ability.

More importantly, students are required to demonstrate their English communicative abilities/skills using spoken and non-verbal expressions in English in a behavioral fashion, which are in reference to Targeted Learning Competencies two. Students are encouraged to present in English in a form of PowerPoint and/or live demonstration to explain and/or act out the target situations of cocktail making and cuisine preparation. The group practice is meant to lower students' affective filter and to encourage peer cooperation, and the learning competence of elevating students' learning motivation is targeted. The first oral presentation is performed in the halfway of the course while the second is undertaken near the end of the course. Two respective open-ended topics in relation to their subject-specific areas are assigned. For the first presentation, the students are required to research, in groups, for the origin and background information on recipes of cocktail-making, Chinese dishes, Western dishes, or pastry of their own preference and to present it in class. As for the second presentation, they are assigned to work on such a project as to simulate a chef, responsible for promoting one of the best/most famous dishes for their own restaurant. They are required to demonstrate how to cook or bake it in front of their potential customers.

The oral testing/presentation specification is provided only to set a framework or guideline for the students to follow with a lot of rooms left for students' decision-making as to exactly how and what they present themselves. In this fashion, the learning skills of communication, problem solving, cooperation as well as data collection, analysis and organization are derived to correspond to the pre-designed Learning Competencies from three to six.

Scoring
- Homework, class involvement and class attendance: 20%.
- Achievement tests (Mid-term Exam and Final Exam): 40%.
- Oral presentations: 40%. (considered an output production and application of the acquired English competence to ESP knowledge and skills in the target situations)

VI. CONCLUSION

This content-based class, characterized by a synthesis of language-oriented, skills-oriented and learning-oriented approaches to ESP syllabus design and conducted in Whole English Approach, might appear to be of intimidation to some of the students. Fun games help reduce the level of intimidation. Audio and video aids/supplementary materials provide authentic materials, so as to cater for divergent learning needs of the students and for those with a higher English proficiency level. Cooperative team works function to enhance learning effects and motivation. Students' performance on two oral presentations illustrate itself as learner-centered output productions in the teaching and learning process, which adds to their learning outcomes in terms of communicative performance in a behavioral fashion. This content-based ESP model functions as a point of departure for the design of relative courses.

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The Effect of Regular Practice with Cloze Passages on EFL Students' Reading Ability

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Abstract—As completing blanks in a cloze passage requires use to be made of three main knowledge sources involved in reading comprehension, that is, linguistic, textual, and background knowledge, it was hypothesized that regular practice with cloze passages could lead to the enhancement of the reading ability. To test this hypothesis, two groups of adult Iranian students studying general English were selected. The students in the experimental group (30 students) were given regular practice with fixed-ratio deletion cloze passages for 13 sessions (30 minutes per session). The same passages were given to the students in the control group (30 students). However, the passages in the control group were in full but followed by carefully written comprehension questions. The practice sessions for the control group were also 13 and the time taken to work on each passage was 30 minutes per session. At the end of the treatment phase, the comparison made between the two groups' scores on a standardized reading test in the pretest and posttest stage revealed that those in the experimental group had improved more significantly in reading comprehension than those in the control group, a finding that not only underscores the pedagogical value of the cloze procedure but also points to the significance of a process-oriented approach to the teaching of the reading skill.

Index Terms—cloze passage, reading ability, linguistic knowledge, textual knowledge, background knowledge

I. INTRODUCTION

As stated by Eskey (2005), research on the processes involved in reading comprehension was hardly ever done in 1960s due to the effect of the then dominant behaviorist approach on pedagogy. However, with the emergence of cognitive psychology in the late 1960s the grip that the behaviorist approach had on applied linguistics was loosened, and scholars began to shift their attention from oral skills to reading and writing as well. Goodman (1967) ,alluding to reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game", stated that reading is an ongoing process in which readers select from the reading material certain cues to help them to predict what will come next in the text. And as they read on, their guesses are either confirmed or rejected, sometimes compelling them to modify their initial conjectures to formulate new interpretations that are more in line with what is on the printed page.

Following the same line of argument, Clarke and Silberstein (1977) contended that readers choose cues from texts and link them to what they already know to make predictions. The predictions thus made are later tested against what is selected in readers' further samplings of the reading material. Recapping the same process, Alderson and Urquhart (1984) postulated that this psycholinguistic model of reading is an attestation of the readers' attempt to comprehend through guess-making made possible by way of relating textual and linguistic knowledge to background information.

Studies by Steffensen, Joag-dev, and Anderson (1979), Johnson (1981), Johnson (1982), Obah (1983), Aron (1986), and Nelson (1987) all buttress the afore-mentioned view toward reading, a view that points to the fact that successful reading incorporates a simultaneous use of three sources of language: linguistic, textual, and background. Here linguistic knowledge refers to one's knowledge of lexis, syntax, and semantics; textual knowledge involves one's perception of coherence and cohesion as they are technically discussed by Halliday and Hasan (1976); and the last kind of knowledge embraces whatever one knows about the state of affairs in the real world.

Although from 1990s reading research fragmented into various perspectives (Stanovich,1992) to account for social, neurobiological and political dimensions (Kamil, Intrator, and Kim,2000),the psycholinguistic model has not yet lost its appeal. For example, Alderson (2000), Hughes (2003) and Koda (2005) agree with Bernhardt (1991) that successful reading embraces simultaneous use of linguistic, textual and background knowledge. That is, they subscribe to the same position which was the one prevalent in the 1980s.

If one concedes that a psycholinguistic approach to reading comprehension does make sense, the question would then be: "What can be done to help learners to become more competent in reading?" One of the ways suggested but not adequately researched is the employment of the cloze procedure as a teaching technique. The rationale behind this suggestion, as argued by Heaton (1975) and Cohen (1980), is that the same three sources of knowledge already cited (i.e. linguistic, textual and background) are called for whenever one attempts to complete a cloze passage.

The similarity in nature between what one goes through to fill in the blanks on cloze tests and what one engages in while taking reading tests is attested to by high correlations often reported between the two. Such correlations are usually something over .70 (e.g. Ruddell, 1965; Potter, 1968; Anderson, 1976; Hinofotis, 1980). Lee (2008), referring to

high correlations between cloze and reading tests, states that although the cloze procedure has mostly been regarded as an assessment tool, the similarity between this procedure and reading comprehension in terms of the mental processes that they trigger seems to suggest that it can be utilized as a worthwhile pedagogic tool for the teaching of different aspects of language including the reading ability. Lee (2008, p. 644) also corroborates the claim made in this study to the effect that instances of the use of the cloze procedure for teaching purposes are meager.

In fact, those few studies that investigated the use of the cloze procedure for teaching purposes date back to the time when the psycholinguistic model of reading was prevalent, that is, in the 1970s. For example, Stafford (1976) implemented a study to find out how reading comprehension can be promoted in intermediate ESL students. On the assumption that such students are in need of strategies to cope with unfamiliar vocabulary as well as needing practice in syntax, and reading for different purposes, she gave the students in her study regular practice with cloze passages and found such practice to be instrumental in developing the students' capacity to anticipate vocabulary and to demonstrate knowledge of structural relationships. Best (1971) also found that practice with cloze passages improved reading comprehension in young children.

And it is based on the close relationship between the cloze procedure and reading that it is argued by some scholars that this technique can be used for such purposes as diagnosing reading difficulties (Collins-Cheek and Cheek, 1984), teaching reading comprehension (Lunzer and Gardner, 1979; Rye,1980), or measuring reading (Alderson, 2000; Hughes, 2003; Koda, 2005). And it is this same affinity between the cloze procedure and reading that motivated the present researcher to design a study to probe into the potential this integrative measure might have in developing reading comprehension, a topic already addressed more in theory than in practice.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study was implemented to answer the following question:
Does regular practice with cloze passages cause any significance difference in students' reading ability?

III. HYPOTHESIS

To begin with, the research question above was changed to the following null hypothesis:
There occurs no significant difference in their reading ability when students receive regular practice with cloze passages.

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

The subjects included 76 male Iranians aged between 15 and 30 studying English at a language institute in Tehran. These students were in Level 5 at the institute where the total number of levels is 14.Hence, such students were lower intermediate students by the institute's standards. There were 36 students in the experimental group and 40 students in the control group. It is to be noted that the students in both the experimental and control groups were divided in two classes each. In other words, there were four classes, two of which served as the experimental and the other two of which as the control group.

It should also be remembered that intact classes were used and that subject mortality was 16. Hence, at the post-test stage there were 30 students in each group and the 16 students who, for whatever reason did not take the post-test, were excluded from data analysis.

B. Instrumentation

To assess and compare the subjects' reading ability before and after the treatment, Level A of the Nelson Reading Skills Test (the RST) Form 4 (Hanna, Schell, and Schreiner, 1977) was used. The reliability of the test is .92. The test contains two subtests: the Word Meaning and the Reading Comprehension subtest. The reason why this test was employed was that it is a test at a level appropriate to discriminate between the subjects in the study.

In fact, the average readability grade of the subjects' reading passages in their books, calculated through the Fog Index Formula (Alderson and Urquhart, 1984) turned out be 12.44 which is close to the average readability grade of the RST reading passages which was 11.91.

C. Materials

The whole instructional program lasted for 13 sessions in each of which one standard cloze passage with the every 7th-word deletion ratio was given to the students in the experimental group. The total number of blanks in each passage was at least 25. The passages were first examined in terms of length, lexis, structure and topic to find out if they were appropriate for conversion into instructional materials for classroom presentation. Then, their average readability grade of each was calculated via the Fog Index Formula. When the readability grade was close to the average readability grade of the subjects' reading passages in their books, they were selected for the treatment phase. The following table presents the readability grade of the 13 cloze passages exploited in this study.

TABLE 1:
THE READABILITY GRADE OF THE 13 CLOZE PASSAGES

Passage	1	P2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Readability	12.30	11.64	12,05	13.06	11.36	13.78	13.12	12.28	11.48	13.26	10.49	11.19	13.68

The same passages, which were presented to the experimental group in cloze format, were, without any blanks, given by to the students in the control group. Such passages were followed by carefully written comprehension questions. The time allotted to the practice with such passages, whether in cloze format or in full form, was the same, 30 minutes per session.

D. Procedure

Before the experiment began, the RST was given to the students in both groups to ascertain that they were at the same of level of reading ability.

Then, as already mentioned, thirteen cloze passages were developed to be used for 13 sessions, one passage per session, in the experimental group. The students were first given time to complete the related cloze passage in each session. Then the teacher checked their answers and supplied them with some explanation when he deemed it necessary.

The students in the control group received the same thirteen passages but in full form. Each passage was followed by carefully written comprehension questions. The students read the passages and answered the questions. Their answers to the questions were checked by the teacher; the students were furnished with explanation whenever deemed necessary by the teacher.

After the 13-session long experimentation was over, the RST was again used to compare the reading ability of the students in the two groups.

E. Data Analysis

The statistical procedure used in the study included: the t-test technique to compare the two groups in the pretest and posttest stage and the matched t-test technique to compare the two groups on their gain scores.

V. RESULTS

To make sure that the two groups were at the same of level of the reading ability at the outset of the study Level A of the Nelson Reading Skills Test (the RST) Form 4 was administered to the students in both groups. The results of the pretest stage are presented in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2:
T-TEST FOR COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS AT THE PRETEST STAGE

Group	$\overline{x}$	S	$s(\overline{x}_e - \overline{x}_c)$	t-observed
G_e	50.68	15.91	3.44	0.85
G_c	53.62	13.93		

P≤.05   N(G_e)= 36   df= 74   t-critical= 2.00
          N(G_c)= 40
Note: The maximum score possible to obtain on the test was 100.

As Table 2 demonstrates, there was no significant difference in the reading ability between the two groups in the study.

As was already stated, during the experimentation some students from both groups stopped attending classes and some others failed to take the posttest. Thus, before the post test was given, the scores of these absentees were removed from the pool of those who had taken the original pretest and the t-test was run once again to find out if the two groups would still be statistically the same with respect to the reading ability. Table 3 below presents the results of this second data analysis.

TABLE 3:
SECOND T-TEST FOR COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS AT THE PRETEST STAGE

Group	$\overline{x}$	S	$s(\overline{x}_e - \overline{x}_c)$	t-observed
G_e	49.87	16.64	3.95	1.59
G_c	56.18	13.84		

P≤.05   N(G_e)= 30   df= 58   t-critical= 2.00
          N(G_c)= 30

As the facts and figures in Table 3 above indicate, the two groups were still the same after subject mortality was taken care of.

Then, to determine whether there had occurred a significant difference in reading performance between the students in the experimental group and those in the control group after both groups had received instruction, as outlined in

"Procedure" section, they were compared by means of the RST. The results of the posttest stage are presented in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4:
T-TEST FOR COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS AT THE POSTTEST STAGE

Group	$\overline{x}$	S	$s(\overline{x}_e - \overline{x}_c)$	t-observed
G_e	69.91	12.00	3.24	.78
G_c	62.37	13.15		

P≤.05   N(G_e)= 30   df= 58   t-critical= 2.00
                   N(G_c)= 30

According to Table 4, practice with cloze passages and practice with traditional reading passages resulted in no significant difference in the reading ability of the two groups concerned. However, since the mean score of the experimental group jumped from 49.87 on the pretest to 69.41 on the posttest   (15.04 points of improvement) and that of the control group from 56.18 to 62.37 (6.19 points of improvement only), it was decided to compare the improvement of both groups from the pretest to the posttest stage. The results of such a comparison are presented in the following table.

TABLE 5:
MATCHED T-TEST FOR COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF EACH GROUP AT THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST STAGE

Group	$\overline{x}$ -------------- $T_1 - T_2$		SD	SD	t-observed
G_e	49.87	64.91	13.35	2.24	6.16
G_c	56.18	62.37	11.29	2.06	3.00

P≤.05   N= 30   df= 29   t-critical= 2.04

As Table 5 illustrates, the reading ability of both groups improved significantly in the course of the project. However, as Table 5 shows the improvement in the experimental group was much higher than the one in the control group. This difference in t-values made the researcher decide to take another step to see whether there was a significant difference in the reading improvement between the two groups. To this end, the gain scores of the groups were calculated and then compared. The results of this comparison are presented in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6:
T-TEST FOR COMPARING THE GAIN SCORES OF THE TWO GROUPS

Group	$\overline{x}$	S	$s(\overline{x}_e - \overline{x}_c)$	t-observed
G_e	15.04	12.45	3.04	2.91
G_c	6.19	11.11		

P≤.05   N(G_e)= 30   df= 58   t-critical= 2.00
                   N(G_c)= 30

As shown by Table 6, the difference in the reading improvement between the two groups was significant. More specifically, the experimental group improved more significantly than the control group between the pretest and posttest stage. Therefore, it can be concluded that giving students practice with cloze passages seems to be more effective than the traditional approach to teaching reading comprehension in which students receive practice via passages followed by comprehension check questions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The results obtained in this study suggest that regular practice with cloze passages is a very effective technique to develop the reading skill in EFL students and that this type of practice is more fruitful than the type of practice given through reading passages in full followed by comprehension questions of different levels of generality.

The results also seem to buttress the claim made by the schema and psycholinguistic models of reading according to which reading is an active process in which meaning is created by the reader through his background and textual as well as linguistic knowledge. The results thus encourage an approach to reading comprehension teaching in which there should be a component to figure out how readers *interpret* texts and *arrive* at answers. Such a component seems much needed to complement the skills-based and language-centered approach which places more premium on the end result of the act of reading than what happens in the process of reading. As Carrel and Eisterhold (1983) state:

... by carefully listening to what our students say about the texts they are asked to read, we can become further sensitized to their hidden comprehension problems. As teachers, we should not respond to what the reader does (right/wrong) as much as to what the reader is trying to do. Given that the reader is trying to make sense of the text (construct meaning , a teacher who listens carefully and responds to a student's efforts will become aware of both the

background knowledge and the cultural problems that students themselves bring to the text. In any case, the most valuable information is in our students' perceptions and not our own. (PP. 553-573)

Although the cloze procedure can be used to shed light on the mental processes involved in reading, a note of caution should be sounded against any simplistic interpretation of the findings of this study as suggesting that the cloze procedure alone should occupy a disproportionate amount of the books of reading. In fact, all techniques that can simulate the same function that cloze passages fulfill should also be heeded.

For example, in a reading course the think-aloud technique, questions alongside of texts (questions written on the margin of the printed page), and the cloze procedure itself can be used in a harmonious blend to help readers develop strategies such as those referred to by Oxford (1990) (e.g. compensation, cognitive and metacognitive ones). This way the mental processes that readers go through to solve comprehension problems can be identified and if they fall short of applying effective reading strategies, such strategies can be taught to them, thereby complementing their repertoire of reading strategies, part of which has probably been acquired in skills-based or even language-based approaches to the teaching of reading comprehension. How to create such a comprehensive blend of pedagogy is a responsibility upon the shoulders of teachers as well as syllabus designers and material developers.

As a final note, it should also be remembered that in testing programs where applicants' reading comprehension is tested, the inclusion of the cloze procedure may help measure abilities that are sometimes only indirectly tested in multiple-choice forms of tests. In short, due attention to the notion of cloze could help both teaching and testing experts alike to enrich their corpus.

APPENDIX

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تأثیر تمرین با آزمون تکمیل متن(Cloze) بر مهارت خواندن

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چکیده

ار آنجائیکه تکمیل جاهای خالی در آزمون های تکمیل متن مستلزم بکارگیری دانش زبانی؛ دانش ساختار متن و دانش عمومی است و از آنجائیکه همین سه نوع دانش در مهارت خواندن دخیل هستند، فرضیه تقویت مهارت خواندن از طریق روش تکمیل متن در این تحقیق مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. برای انجام تحقیق از دو گروه (گروه تجربی و گروه گواه) استفاده شد. هر گروه شامل 30 زبان آموز آقا بین سنین 15 تا 30 بود که در ترم چهارم موسسه ای با مجموع 14 ترم مشغول فراگیری زبان انگلیسی بودند.پیش آزمون نشان داد که دو گروه به لحاظ مهارت خواندن تفاوت معنی داری با هم نداشتند. سپس زبان آموزان گروه تجربی از طریق آزمون های تکمیل متن با حداقل 25 جای خالی در هر متن را در ظرف 13 جلسه به صورت هر جلسه یک متن به مدت 30 دقیقه تمرین کردند. زبان آموزان گروه گواه در طی همین طول زمانی در هز جلسه به مدت 30 دقیقه با همین متن ها بدون جای خالی و در حالی که هر متن شامل سوالات کتبی بود تمرین کردند. در هر دو گروه، مربی مربوطه جواب زبان آموزان را بررسی و در صورت لزوم توضیحات لازم را ارائه می کرد. در پایان این دوره زمانی، آزمونی که در مرحله پیش آزمون بکار رفته بود به عنوان پس آزمون نیز مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. تجزیه و تحلیل نتایج حاصله نشان دادد که اگرچه مهارت خواندن در هر دو گروه به طور معنی دار بهبود یافته بود ولی میزان این بهبود در گروه تجربی بصورت معنی دار از بهبود حاصله در گروه گواه بیشتر بود. یافته های تحقیق حاضر علاوه بر مفید بودن استفاده از آزمون های تکمیل متن در برنامه های آموزشی مهارت خواندن، اهمیت به کا رگیری روش هایی که به تدریس فرایندهایی که منجر به درک مطلب می گردد اشاره دارد.

واژه های کلیدی: آزمون تکمیل متن ، مهارت خواندن، دانش زبانی، دانش ساختار متن، دانش عمومی

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A Contrastive Study of *Zhong* Metaphors in Chinese and *Middle* Metaphors in English

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Abstract—**The present study analyzes the metaphorical extensions of the Chinese spatial term zhong and the English spatial term middle. It finds that The essay finds both ZHONG and MIDDLE are found to be used in the target domains of STATES, RANK and TIME, which further provides a piece of evidence that our abstract reasoning is partly structured by our spatial thinking through schematic mapping and metaphorical extension. The present study also concludes that the spatial metaphorical system among different languages may share some cognitive universals as well as cross-linguistic variations.**

Index Terms—**zhong, middle, metaphor, schematic, cognitive**

I. INTRODUCTION

The cognitive approach is drawing much attention from linguists and researchers in recent years due to its inquiry into human cognition to describe and explain linguistic phenomena. One fundamental claim of cognitive linguistics is that human beings have no access to the reality of the world independent of the conceptual structures in human minds, which are derived from and realized in bodily experience in the real world (Langacker 1987, Lakoff 1987). Thus much of the focus of cognitive linguistics is in fact on conceptual frameworks, in which metaphor and image schemas are two of the most fundamental conceptual structures. Within the studies on metaphor, special attention is given to spatial metaphors due to the primary role of spatial thinking in human cognition — "Spatial thinking is crucial to almost every aspect of our lives" (Levinson, 2003, p.1); non-spatial concepts appear to be structured by spatial conceptions in the conceptual system through special metaphors (Levinson, 2003).

In view of such a primary position of spatial thinking in human cognition, a large number of studies have been done on spatial metaphors both in English and Chinese; for instance, a study concerned with metaphors associated with *up/down* in English and *shang (up) /xia (down)* in Chinese was conducted by Lan (2002); other researches have been found focusing on the metaphors associated with *up/down* in English and *shang/xia* in Chinese (Li, 2002; Tao, 2000), *front/back* in English and *qian (front) /hou (back)* in Chinese (Wang and Han, 2008; Zhang and Luo, 2007), etc. all of which contributed to providing cross-linguistic and cross-cultural evidence for the primacy of spatial metaphors in structuring non-spatial conceptions and revealed some similarities and differences in the metaphorical extension processes cross-linguistically. However, these studies still are not conclusive and exhaustive in describing and explaining the rise of abstract concepts through metaphorical extensions from the source domain to the target domain; and more cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies need to be conducted to conclude the existence of a universal spatial metaphorical system. One of the spatial conceptions that has been rarely explored is *MIDDLE* in English and *ZHONG* in Chinese, which is the primary concern of the present article. The present paper follows Lan (2002) in making a distinction between two linguistic terms and two conceptual structures, that is the former are referred to as *zhong* and *middle,* and the latter by *ZHONG* and *MIDDLE.*

The present article develops along the same line of the previous studies and makes its own contributions in two aspects: firstly, it analyzes the metaphorical extensions of the Chinese spatial term *zhong* and English spatial term *middle* respectively, which are important spatial concepts and lack of full explorations; thus the present study is to fill this gap and to further explore how non-spatial concepts are derived from spatial metaphorical extensions; secondly, it compares and contrasts the metaphorical extensions of two spatial terms cross-linguistically, which further provides evidence for the existence of spatial cognitive universals as well as cross-linguistic variations.

II. CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURES, METAPHOR AND IMAGE SCHEMAS

The present paper adopts the view of experiential realism held by cognitive linguists, which attempts to characterize meaning in terms of our physical and social experiences as human beings living in the real world. (Fauconnier, 1994; Johnson, 1987) The cognitive approach advocates that we live in the world not just as beings; we also perform and act

in the world, perceiving and shaping the environment that surrounds us, as a result of which, we form basic conceptual structures and apply these conceptual structures to a range of more abstract domains to help us understand the abstract concepts.

A number of conceptual structures have been identified in the literature of cognitive linguistics, among which metaphor, image schemas, mental spaces etc. all receive much attention. The present paper is mainly concerned with metaphor and image schemas.

Metaphor, according to Lakoff and Johnson, plays an essential role in human conceptual categorization (1980). Metaphor is viewed in cognitive linguistics as existing extensively in ordinary language and occupies a central position in our language and thought. Metaphor enables human beings to understand one more abstract domain in terms of another less abstract domain, the former of which is referred to as the target domain and the latter the source domain (Lakoff and Turner, 1989).

Another important conceptual structure in cognitive linguistics is image schema, which has close relations with metaphor. According to Johnson (1987), an image schema is a dynamic pattern to display our perceptual interactions and thus shaped conceptual structures owing to their embodiment in our real life. It bridges a gap between bodily experience and human cognition and hence illuminates our understanding of metaphor used to help conceptualize the world (cited in Saeed, 2003). Thus image schema is viewed as a more basic level in the conceptual structure, which underlies metaphor. One way of applying image schemas into more abstract domains so as to enable human beings to understand the abstract domains is by metaphorical extension.

III. IMAGE SCHEMAS OF ZHONG IN CHINESE AND MIDDLE IN ENGLISH

ZHONG/MIDDLE each has their image-schematic concepts and can be delineated by either a movement or a particular area of the trajector in relation to a landmark. When *ZHONG/MIDDLE* are displayed as a movement along the horizontal axis, they are referred to as dynamic *ZHONG/MIDDLE* (see diagram1; the dotted line referred to unfixed end-point). When they are displayed as a particular position of the trajector, they are referred to as static *ZHONG/MIDDLE* (see diagrams 2, 3, and 4; dotted line referred to unfixed area)

The dynamic *ZHONG/MIDDLE* are shown in the following examples. From these examples, one can see that *ZHONG/MIDDLE* tend to underline an ongoing process.

(1). *Feiji zai feixing zhong.*
plane at   flying   middle
The plane is flying.
(2). *Lvyou   tuzhong,   youren xiang tamen zuoguo jieshao.*
travelling   on the way,   somebody to   they   did   introduction.
Somebody told them when they were traveling.
(3). *Tamen zai lunshuzhong wang'le   jiben   de   qianti.*
they in   arguing   forgot   basic   of   premises.
They forgot the basic premises while arguing.
(4). The other hangs in midair as if he had been caught in the *middle* of running.
(5). They are in the *middle* of passing bills restricting predatory lending.
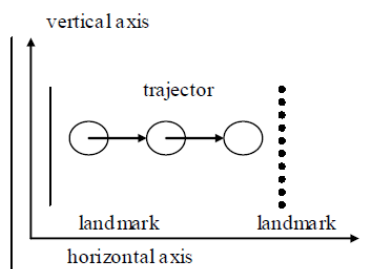(6). We're in the *middle* of an interview.

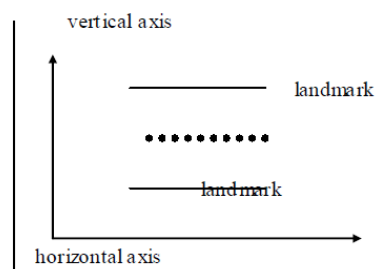Diagram 1: Schema for dynamic ZHONG/MIDDLE   Diagram 2: Schema for static ZHONG/MIDDLE
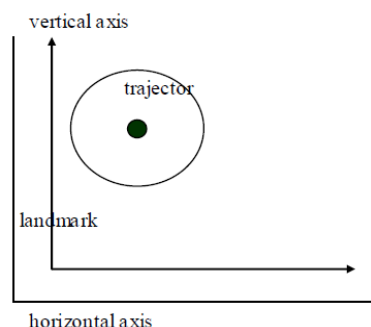
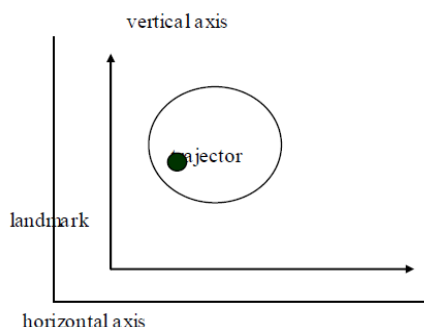Diagram 3: Schema for static ZHONG/MIDDLE   Diagram 4: Schema for static ZHONG

When *ZHONG/MIDDLE* are static, they have the two common prototypical models, the first of which describes a concept of "a position or part which is at an equal distance from two points", called "in-between" *ZHONG* (see diagram 2) and the second refers to "a position or part which is at an equal distance from more than two points", called "center *ZHONG*" (see diagram 3). The examples of this static type are given below:

(7). *Ta xiang ba   zhetiao   guanggao fangzai   baozhi   zhongfeng.*
he wants   prep.   this piece advertisement   newspaper center-seam
He wants to put this advertisement at the center-seam of the newspaper.

(8). *Zhongqiujie   jiuyao   daole.*
mid-autumn festival   is about to   arrived
Mid-autumn festival is approaching.

(9). *Tade xingzhi   bianpineryuan,   zhongjian you   kong.*
Its   shape and material   flat and round   middle   have holes.
It is flat and round with holes in the middle.

(10). *Zhongzhong meide   shi   ta   chengle shejiao   de   zhongxin.*
Various moral excellence make him   became social intercourse of   center
Many pleasant virtues make him the focus of the attention in the social life.

(11). In the *middle* of the Hall behind her a Couple exits a Room.

(12). In the *middle* of the night, two boys woke up and began shouting.

(13). The cake is frozen in the *middle*.

In addition, the fourth model is characteristic of ZHONG. It describes a concept of "within a container" belonging to containment schema (see diagram 4), which MIDDLE lacks.

(14). *Ta jiao   wo   fang zai   shizhong de   shafa   pangbian.*
he asked me   put at   in the room of sofa   side
He asked me to put it by the sofa in the room.

(15). *Xinzhong   mei   you   qiangua.*
In the heart   no   have   worry.
There is nothing to worry about.

Whether *ZHONG/MIDDLE* are referred to as dynamic or static, their meanings in the above instances all show much extension from their prototypical spatial concepts to the characterization of other domains (see examples 2, 3, 5, 6, 8,10,12 and 15, no extension of the prototypical model shown in diagram 4 has been found in the data.). Accordingly, the following analysis will be in answer to the three questions: first, what are the extensions developed out of the prototypical models; second, how are the extensions of these two concepts evolved; and third, what are the similarities and differences between the ways in which the metaphorical use of these two concepts is developed.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The data of the current study is retrieved from the two well-recognized corpora. One is the Chinese corpus called *Peking University Modern Chinese Corpus* composed of nearly 265 million Chinese characters, including two sub-corpora, namely *Modern Chinese* and *Contemporary Chinese*, both of which cover various fields such as literature and practical writing with respect to the style of the text. The corpus spanning scores of years (from 1919 to 2002) puts its focus on the language data in the recent 20 years, which is updated every year (most recent till 2005). The other is *Corpus of American English* containing more than 360 million words including the fields of spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper and academic, all of which date from 1997 to 2007. Both corpora are free of charge and accessible on line.

From the Chinese corpus, the frequency of *zhong* is found to be 1,354,405, taking up 0.5% of the total bank of characters. The English *middle* appears 65,441 times, accounting for 0.018% of the entire English corpus. For the convenience of both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data in the present paper within the limited space, 26,055 *zhong* were retrieved from the Chinese corpus by focusing on the sub-corpus *Modern Chinese,* also most up-to-date, whereas 50,271 *middle* were retrieved from the English corpus corresponding to the way Chinese zhong is retrieved.

About 0.5% of *middle* was selected with a preference for recency from the total data that had been retrieved. In other words, the selected data were largely recorded in 2007. From the total data of *zhong* that had been retrieved, around 1% of them was selected carefully with concern about the inclusion of the major fields that the sub-corpus covers. All those proper nouns that are tinted with cultural characteristics were excluded. For example, the Chinese name for China and all others associated with the name like Zhongguo (China), zhonghua (original name for China), zhongyi (traditional Chinese medicine), zhongzhuang (traditional Chinese clothes), zhonggong (Chinese Communist Party), and the person's name Sun zhongshan. In the similar vein, proper nouns associated with *middle* such as the Middle East are not regarded as part of the data either for the present study. Finally, the present study focuses on a database that consists of 205 *zhong* in Chinese and 210 *middle* in English.

All the instances of *zhong/middle* included in the database of the present paper are analyzed in terms of prototypical model of the source domains, their extensions to the target domains and how the two are mapped onto each other. In addition, generalizations are made with regard to the major target domains into which the database can be grouped.

V.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A.   Quantitative Analysis of ZHONG

ZHONG has its origin as spatial concepts just like *SHANG* and *XIA* (Lan, 1999, 2002). It was traditional in ancient times to insert the flag of a society in the center of a land to assemble the people when important events took place. The pictographic character symbolizes the figure and the rotation of the flag (Zhang, 2007). The flag had a center when rotating and certainly was inside the circle that it rotated. Therefore, *ZHONG* has originally been depicted as "center' and "inside", the evidence of which can be found on the inscriptions on oracle bones in Shang Dynasty and on ancient bronze objects in Zhou Dynasty.

Evidence from the present data finds that only 4.9% of 205 instances of *zhong* are used dynamic. This shows that whether in terms of its prototypical or metaphorical meanings, *zhong* is predominantly used to depict a static concept. Within the static *ZHONG*, the inside sense takes up 75.1%. This shows that, prototypically or metaphorically, *ZHONG* is primarily used to describe containment concept, which might be remarkably different from *MIDDLE* since the latter doesn't have the prototype of inside sense. The detailed percentages of the prototypical models are shown in Table1.

A further examination of the Chinese database demonstrates that *ZHONG* can be mainly used in the following target domains: RANGE, STATE, RANK and TIME. The specific metaphorical extensions and the percentages are presented in Table2.

TABLE 1:
THE PROTOTYPICAL MODELS OF *ZHONG*

Prototype model	Sub-category	Number	percentage	
Dynamic *ZHONG*		10	10	4.9%
Static *ZHONG*	inside *ZHONG*	154	75.1 %	
	center *ZHONG*	9	4.4 %	
	in-between *ZHONG*	32	15.6 %	
Total		205	100 %	

TABLE 2:
THE METAPHORICAL EXTENSIONS OF *ZHONG*

Target domain	Metaphorical extension	Number	Percentage of 126	Percentage of 205
RANGE	In the range	56	44.4%	27.3%
STATES	Being in a process between the beginning and ending of an event; or being in a static state.	36	28.6%	17.6%
RANK	An intermediate position in a ranked scale	25	19.8%	12.2%
TIME	Between two temporal points	9	7.2%	4.4%
Total		126	100%	61.5%

As can be seen from Table2, about 61.5% (126) of the 205 occurrences are used metaphorically, slightly more than those of non-metaphorical use. This tells us that *ZHONG* carries its prototypical meanings by a considerable amount in comparison with other spatial concepts like *SHANG/XIA* (Lan, 2003). Among all the target domains, the dominant target domain is RANGE, which is extended from the prototypical concept of "inside".

B.   Qualitative Analysis of ZHONG

The above analysis answered the research question of what the metaphorical extensions of *ZHONG* are and what domains those extensions are used. The second question, how and on what experiential foundation those extensions are realized in the target domains, leads to this section. The four domains will be covered in turn in the following discussion.

1) RANG

ZHONG in this domain indicates the meaning of within a range.

ZHONG literally means inside, which accords with containment schema. This is reflected in human body. Human beings regard themselves as a container, both inhaling and exhaling out of their primitive living need. The concept is

then extended to other abstract concepts and concrete beings. The abstract concepts are like human's knowledge, perception and reasoning about their inner world and outside world. The concrete beings include all those inscribed with human influence. The examples of this type are given below:

(15) *Haizi   de   shijie zhong meiyou yisi   lequ.*

child   of   world in   have no a little   joy

There is no joy in this child's life.

(16) *Wo   zhong   zai jieshi xinzhong   yituan.*

I   important in explain   in the heart   doubts and suspicions

What I am concerned is how to explain my doubts and suspicions.

(17) *Yexu   Tianjian   zhi dang ta   shi nvpengyou zhong de yige.*

Perhaps Tianjian only   as   her is   girlfriend in of   one

Perhaps Tianjian treats her as only one of his girlfriends.

2) STATES

ZHONG in States can express the meaning of being in a static state or being in a process of a continuous state.

ZHONG has the literal sense of in-between, i.e. between the two extremes. Just as spatial concepts *SHANG and XIA* are gained out of our bodily experience (Lan, 2003), *ZHONG* is of the same case. It is between the head and the feet, roughly in the middle of the body. When this concept is extended to everyday life, we regard a certain action as a process having a beginning and an end. *Zhong* is then used to express in the process of doing something, viz. in a continuous state.

We extend the containment schema of *ZHONG* to the descriptions of the quality or our feelings and opinions of a certain thing, treating the latter as a container. When in this container, we refer to in a static state, meaning with or influenced by this container.

(18) *Waimian de anzhong wuran qile jixiang de jiaohan.*

outside of in secret   suddenly rose   loud of gun

There is a sound of gun suddenly coming from the outside.

(19) *shenghuo zaigujizhong, mei you xiao banlv.*

live   in   loneliness have no young   companion

live lonely without companionship

3) RANK

Zhong is used to describe a balance between or in the middle of two extremes such as neither

large nor small, neither good nor bad, neither high nor low.

Human beings need to categorize as well as measure things of the world in front of them. The spatial concepts *SHANG, ZHONG* and *XIA* out of bodily experience can be used to express highness, middle, and lowness of the rank. This is extended in describing different ranks of social position, educational level, political bureau, etc.

(20) *dang   wo chu jin   zhongxue dushu shi*

when   I early   enter   middle school study time

when I first went to the middle school

(21) *zhong   xia   deng shehui*

middle   low class   society

the middle-lower society

(22) *gonggu   lianhe   zhongnong*

consolidate unite   middle peasants

consolidate and unite those middle peasants

4) TIME

Zhong is used to express somewhere between two temporal points.

This usage is still originated from the sense of in-between. In order to locating themselves temporally, human beings thought up different criteria to measure time. All these criteria provide ranks of temporal points and such temporal concepts as the beginning, the middle and the end are formed. In this way, human beings are better equipped with concrete concepts to understand each other, for instance, when they refer to things that are removed from the immediate situations.

(23) *zhongwu   yu   zhi*

noon   rain   stop

The rain stopped at non

(24) *chile wufan shui zhong jiao*

ate   lunch   sleep middle sleep

take a nap after lunch

C.   Quantitative Analysis of MIDDLE

Similar to *ZHONG* in Chinese, the schematic models of *MIDDLE* describe either the process or the location of a trajector, the former of which is referred to as the dynamic *MIDDLE* and the latter static *MIDDLE*. Among the 210 occurrences of middle analyzed, 9% are found to be dynamic, leaving the rest to be static. This indicates that *MIDDLE*

is much more often used to depict a location rather than a motion of a trajector either in the source domain or in the target domain. Within the static models, 61.4%of them denote the prototypical spatial meaning of being in a point that is equal distant from two ends Another 28.6% of middle indicate the prototypical spatial meaning of being in the center of an entity. The detailed percentages of the dynamic and static models of *MIDDLE* are presented in Table3.

Evidence from the English corpus indicates that these basic prototypical models are mainly extended into three target domains, namely, the domain of time, rank, and states. The specific percentages of the metaphorical extensions are presented in Table4.

TABLE3:
THE PROTOTYPE MODELS OF *MIDDLE*

Prototype model		Number	Percentage of 210
Dynamic *MIDDLE*		19	9%
Static *MIDDLE*	Center *MIDDLE*	60	28.6%
	In- between *MIDDLE*	150	61.4%
Total		210	100%

TABLE4:
THE METAPHORICAL EXTENSIONS OF *MIDDLE*

Target domain	Metaphorical extension	Number	Percentage of 120	Percentage of 210
STATES	Being in a process between the beginning and ending of an event; or being in a static state.	25	20.8%	11.9%
RANK	An intermediate position in a ranked scale	60	50%	28.6%
TIME	Between the beginning and ending of a time period	35	29.2%	16.7%
Total		120	100%	56.3%

As can be seen from Table5, 56.3% of *middle* that have been analyzed carry the metaphorical meanings, which is almost balanced with 61.5% of metaphorical use of zhong in Chinese.

D. Qualitative Analysis of MIDDLE

The following section discusses the detailed metaphorical extensions of *MIDLE* in each target domain and describes the realizations of the metaphorical extensions in real life.

1). STATES:

MIDDLE denotes the meaning of being in a process between the beginning and the ending if an event; or being in a static state. Below are some examples from the data analyzed:

(25) A truck is in the *middle* of off-loading its supply of tainted blood.

(26) Robert Lafontaine is right in the *middle* of getting changed in the background.

(27) I'm in the *middle* of a lecture.

(28) We're in the *middle* of the biggest shift in 200 years

2) RANK:

MIDDLE indicates an intermediate position in a ranked scale. Its realizations found in the data can be grouped into social status, quality, quantity, sequence, education level, age etc. To be more specific, middle is between a higher and a lower social status, between better and worse qualities, between larger and smaller quantities, between the first and the last in a sequence, between elementary and advanced education levels, between youth and old etc.. Below are some examples:

(29) People in the *middle* class have suffered in silence too long.

(30) It is acknowledged that there are broad upper, *middle*, and lower levels in the market,

(31) These challenges are available for elementary, *middle*, and high school.

(32) Santa Barbara has been somewhat ignored, much like the *middle* child in many families.

(33) He couldn't find his good fastball until the *middle* innings.

(34) Some studies suggest that dealers are likely to be *middle* age.

3) TIME:

MIDDLE denotes a specific time period or specific point that is preceded and followed by a same amount of time. Unlike ZHONG in Chinese, Middle in English does not denote the meaning of within a certain time period. Below are some specific examples:

(35) It's the *middle* of the school year.

(36) It's the *middle* of February

VI. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis based on Chinese and English data, we can see that ZHONG and MIDDLE share a great number of similarities in their metaphorical extensions. Firstly, both ZHONG and MIDDLE are found to be used in the target domains of STATES, RANK and TIME. Secondly, in the three target domains, both ZHONG and MIDDLE

denote the meaning of "in between"; in other words, the metaphorical extensions of both ZHONG and MIDDLE are oriented by the same image schematic concept of "between two extremes" rather than "at the center of an entity". Thirdly, the percentages of metaphorical extensions of ZHONG and MIDDLE are found to be comparable, with the metaphorical use of ZHONG taking up 61.5% and that of MIDDLE accounting for 56.3%. Fourthly, both ZHONG and MIDDLE are found to be predominantly used in their static models, which describe the position or location of a trajector.

The analysis also reveals some differences between ZHONG and MIDDLE both in their prototypical models and metaphorical extensions. Firstly, the prototypical models of ZHONG cover the sense of "inside", which is not covered by the schematic concepts of MIIDLE. Secondly, ZHONG is found in the target domain of RANE to denote the meaning of within a certain range while no evidence in the English data shows this use of MIDDLE. Secondly, the frequency distribution of metaphorical extensions of ZHONG and MIDLE reveal some differences: the most frequently occurring metaphorical extension in ZHONG is found in the domain of RANG, followed by STATES, RANK and TIME while in MIDDLE, the most frequently occurring metaphorical extensions are found in the domain of RANK, which is followed by TIME and STATES.

In conclusion, the present study further provides a piece of evidence that our abstract reasoning is partly structured by our spatial thinking through schematic mapping and metaphorical extension, which is evidenced by the fact that in both Chinese and English, abstract concepts such as RANK, TIME, and STATES are structured by schematic models of ZHONG and MIDDLE. The present study also concludes that the spatial metaphorical system among different languages may share some cognitive universals as well as cross-linguistic variations.

Notes:

1. According to Brugman and Lakoff, ZHONG/MIDDLE (1988, cited in Saeed, 2003)) have their central prototypical meaning, i.e. "center". The other models are related senses extended from the central prototype. As the other two models of ZHONG and three models of MIDDLE all have their extended metaphorical extensions, here the central sense and their related senses are all treated as equally prototypical.

2. It is claimed at their website to be updated every year, but for some unknown reason, the most recent is 2005.

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Learners' Attributional Beliefs in Success or Failure and Their Performance on the Interchange Objective Placement Test

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Abstract—Although attribution theory has been applied in many fields of education as a way of understanding individual differences, it has somewhat been neglected by professionals in ELT to date. This study has thus sought to investigate the role of EFL learners' attributions for success and failure in learning a foreign language and their performance on placement tests. Three instruments, namely, the Interchange Objective Placement Test (Lesley, Hansen, & Zukowski-Faust, 2005), the Revised Causal Dimension Scale, and the Language Achievement Attribution Scale were administered to 96 Iranian Intermediate EFL learners studying at English language institutes. Attributional properties and causal attributions were compared with learners' English language proficiency scores. Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to the data in order to see if there was any significant relationship between learners' attributions of success and failure and their English language proficiency. The results showed significant correlations between LAAS as well as CDS-II subscales and learners' proficiency scores. Results from Regression Analysis for causal attributions and proficiency scores indicated that effort attribution was the best predictor of high scores, but task difficulty attribution was the best predictor of low scores, in proficiency. Moreover, results from Regression Analysis for attributional properties and proficiency scores indicated that internal locus positively, but external control negatively, predicted students' foreign language proficiency. At the end, what the results of the study may tell us about language teaching and learning is considered.

Index Terms—Interchange Objective Placement Test, English proficiency, attribution factors, attribution dimensions

I. INTRODUCTION

Prediction of academic behavior has become the focus of contemporary psychological research. A large number of theories are formulated, and empirical studies are conducted with respect to each. Among these, attribution theory has set the scene for a plethora of studies in different areas of education.

Initiated by Heider (1958) some fifty years ago, and later expanded by Rotter (1966), attribution theory explains how individuals perceive the causes of their own behavior. The theory was further developed in the works of Weiner (1985; 1986; 1992) who clearly stipulated people's different beliefs about why particular events have occurred in their lives. According to Williams and Burden (1997), attribution theory lies within the constructivist framework and deals with the ways through which individuals shape their own views about the world around them. They proposed attribution theory as an area that could be explored to reach a better understanding of individuals. As a case in point, the attributions people make are likely to influence their subsequent performance (Weiner, 1992), or in Jarvis's (2005) words, they can influence people's motivation to tackle future tasks. For example, if individuals believe that their success is due to their own effort, they will expect to achieve the same outcomes the next time they approach the same or similar tasks. On the other hand, if they ascribe their failure to lack of ability, they will probably avoid approaching those tasks in order to avoid failing again.

Weiner's model of attribution (Weiner, 1979, 1985, 1986) is more complete than other attributional frameworks (Graham, 1991). Accordingly, many researchers in the field of educational psychology (e.g., Bempechat, Ginsburg, Nakkula, & Wu, 1996; Boruchovitch, 2004; Lei, 2009; Meyer & Koelbl, 1982; Ong, 2006) have utilized the model as a frame of reference.

According to Dornyei (2001), attribution theory can also be studied in relation to language learning because, in the first place, failure is a common experience among language learners and, as a result, how individuals perceive their failures has a very strong impact on their future performance; secondly, language aptitude is a familiar term for many people which makes it easy for them to come up with negative perceptions such as 'I don't have a knack for language

learning'. However, there could not be found a consensus in the literature concerning the effect of causal attributions in ESL/EFL learning (e.g., Hsieh, 2004; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Kun & Liming, 2007; Lei & Qin, 2009; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). Therefore, the present study has tried to introduce an application of Weiner's theory of attribution to the foreign language learning context of Iran.

II. RATIONALE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Perceived Attributions in Mainstream Psychology

Ability, effort, luck, and task difficulty are four attributional factors to which people ascribe their successes and failures (Weiner, 1985, 1986). Many researchers have dealt with these factors in their studies (e.g., Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999; Dornyei & Murphey, 2003; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008).

Weiner (2006) adds to these causal attributions three properties of locus, stability, and control. Locus, firstly introduced by Rotter (1966), is concerned with whether the causes of events are perceived as internal or external by individuals. For example, while luck and task difficulty are external attributions, ability and effort are internal factors. The stability dimension refers to the extent to which the cause of an event is fixed and stable, or unstable, over time. Ability, for instance, is regarded as stable; effort, on the other hand, is considered to be an unstable dimension. Finally, control examines how much control an individual has over a cause. In the case of the four attribution dimensions proposed by Weiner (1986), effort is controllable and the other three properties, i.e. ability, task difficulty, and luck are uncontrollable. Multiple comparisons of causal factors and properties are summarized in Table 1 adapted from Vispoel and Austin (1995), based on Weiner (1979).

TABLE 1.
DIMENSIONAL CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR CAUSAL ATTRIBUTIONS

Attributional factors	Dimensions		
	Locus	Stability	Controllability
Ability	Internal	Stable	Uncontrollable
Effort	Internal	Unstable	Controllable
Task difficulty	External	Stable	Uncontrollable
Luck	External	Unstable	Uncontrollable

B. Perceived Attributions in Education

In the area of education, most of the studies have considered the nexus between attributions and students' performance on tests (Basturk & Yavuz, 2010; Bempechat, Ginsburg, Nakkula, & Wu, 1996; Boruchovitch, 2004; Lei, 2009; Meyer & Koelbl, 1982; Marsh, 1984; Ong, 2006; Powers, Choroszy, Douglas, & Cool, 1986) some of which are briefly explained below.

Bempechat, et al. (1996), for instance, examined the effect of attributions on mathematics achievement. They found out that ability attributions were significantly related to high achievement scores. On the same line, Boruchovitch(2004) conducted a study among low socio-economic Brazilian students with the aim of exploring the role of attributional perceptions of success and failure in their math scores. Having interviewed the students, the researchers indicated internal attributions as the most important variable which made the difference between success and failure. In another study, Ong (2006) examined the relationship between causal attributions and Malaysian and Chinese engineering students' achievement grades, making use of the Revised Causal Dimension Scale (CDS-II). Surprisingly, negative relationships were found between internal locus of causality, personal control, and students' GPA.

C. Perceived Attributions in Second and Foreign Language Contexts

As mentioned before, attribution theory can be studied in relation to language learning (Dornyei, 2001). In the area of ESL/EFL learning, attribution theory has been dealt with by many researchers (e.g., Gao, 2008; Gray, 2005; Gobel & Mori, 2007; Mori, Gobel, Thepsiri, & Pojanapunya, 2010; Peacock, 2010; Pishghadam & Modarresi, 2008; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011; Taskiran, 2010; Tsi, 2000; Williams & Burden, 1997; Williams, Burden, & Al-Baharna, 2001; Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004; Yazdanpanah, Sahragard, & Rahimi, 2010). However, most of these studies have simply tried to stipulate ESL/EFL learners' attributions, and only a few of them which are discussed below have attended to the effect of perceived attributions on learners' language learning outcomes.

It was not until very recently that researchers attempted to design a scale for specifically measuring foreign language learners' attributions (Hsieh, 2004; Pishghadam & Modarresi, 2008). Hsieh (2004) devised a self-report questionnaire, namely the Language Achievement Attribution Scale (LAAS), to measure foreign language causal attributions for success and failure which ask learners to rate the extent to which they believed the result of their test was due to their ability, effort, luck, task difficulty, mood, and teacher. In an attempt to examine the role of EFL learners' attribution perceptions in their foreign language achievement, Hsieh (2004) found out that learners who tend to make more internal, personal, and stable attributions received higher achievement grades in English language classes than those who made more external, unstable, and non-personal attributions. Moreover, Hsieh and Schallert (2008) explored the role of foreign language attributions in EFL learners' achievement. The results of their study showed that ability attributions were strongly predictive of foreign language achievement on the part of learners. In a similar study conducted by Lei

and Qin (2009), significant relationships were found between learners' teacher and effort attributions and their English language achievement. Likewise, Peacock (2010) has found significant relationships between attributions and EFL proficiency. In their attempts to examine the relationship between locus of control (LOC) and academic achievement among Iranian EFL learners, Yazdanpanah, et al. (2010) concluded that locus of control was significantly related to, and predictive of, students' academic achievement. Kun and Liming (2007) also studied the effect of learners' attributions on their self-regulated language learning behaviors. They concluded that those who attributed success to internal factors, such as ability or effort, demonstrated more self-regulated language learning behaviors. Gobel and Mori (2007) conducted a research with the aim of constructing a questionnaire of attributions and also examining the relationship between EFL language learning and attributional beliefs among two hundred and thirty-three EFL students in Japan. The results of their study highlighted significant relationships between ability, task difficulty, and exam scores in oral communication and reading classes. In a recent study, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011) explored the relationship between foreign language attributions and English language achievement among two hundred and nine EFL learners studying at private language institutes in Mashhad. The results of their study indicated that Effort, Personal, and Stable attributions were positively, while Luck and Mood attributions were negatively, predictive of English language achievement. On the contrary, in a study done by Cochran, McCallum, and Bell (2010), attributions did not prove well in predicting foreign language learning.

In their attempts to design a scale for specific use on EFL learners, Pishghadam and Modarresi (2008) used Weiner's (1986) model of achievement attribution to develop and validate a questionnaire of foreign language attributions encompassing four subsections, namely Emotions, Self-image, Intrinsic motivation, and Language policy. In another part of their study, Pishghadam and Modarresi (2008) applied their newly devised questionnaire to university students. They found out that learners were more likely to attribute success or failure to intrinsic motivation and language policy.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

SLA research has mainly been concerned with stipulating ESL/EFL learners' attributions (e.g., Pishghadam & Modarresi, 2008; Tsi, 2000; Williams & Burden, 1997; Williams, Burden, & Al-Baharna, 2001; Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004). Due to the importance of perceived attributions in language learning (Dornyei, 2001), and in order to satisfy the need for further investigation, the researchers set out to test the role of learners' attributions in their performance on the Interchange Objective Placement Test. The study is an attempt to address some of the issues inherent in previous research and also to fill the gap in the literature by providing additional empirical evidence for the relationship between causal attributions and English language learning. Therefore, this research is conducted to find out answers to the following question:

Q1: Do the attributional beliefs of Intermediate EFL learners about success or failure affect their performance on placement tests?

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

Ninety-six female Intermediate EFL learners from a variety of academic backgrounds took part in the study. They were selected from five private language institutes in Mashhad, a city in north-eastern Iran (The Iran Language Institute, Jahad-e daneshgahi Institute, Khalaghan-e-Javan Institute, Kish Language Institute, and Ferdowsi Language Institute). These institutes were selected because they were among the most creditable private language institutes in Mashhad. Having assured learners of the confidentiality of the results, the researchers selected the subjects based on their agreement to take part in the study. The participants ranged in age from 15 to 38 years old (mean = 19.51, standard deviation = 4.88), and varied in their English language learning experience from 18 months to 7 years.

B. Instruments

Three instruments were used in the present study: The first instrument, the Revised Causal Dimension Scale (CDS-II), was developed by McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992) in order to measure causal attributions for performance. It encompasses 12 items which measure four attribution properties, i.e. locus of causality, stability, personal control, and external control. The items in the questionnaire are scored on a 9-points Likert scale. Scores for each subsection varies from 3 to 27, with higher values representing attributions that are more internal, stable, personally controllable, and externally controllable. McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992) report the reliability estimates for the four subscales based on the results from four independent studies: Locus of causality, r = .60 to .71; stability, r = .65 to .68; external control, r = .71 to .91; personal control, r = .71 to .90. Cronbach Alpha estimated the reliability of the whole items in this study as .68.

The second instrument used in the study was a self-report questionnaire designed by Hsieh (2004) to measure foreign language causal attributions for success and failure. It comprises 8 questions that are scored on a 6-point Lickert scale. Firstly, the students are asked their score on the last English language test they had taken and how satisfied they are with the result. Students are then asked to rate the degree to which they believe the result of their test is due to their ability, effort, task difficulty, mood, luck, and teacher. In the present study the reliability of LAAS estimated by

Cronbach Alpha was .60. The relatively low reliability of the scale is acceptable because it comprises only 6 items, each measuring a different attribution; in other words, the length of the questionnaire has affected its reliability coefficient.

Finally, the Interchange Objective Placement Test was employed in the present study to measure learners' proficiency scores in a placement situation. It was designed by Lesley, Hansen, and Zukowski-Faust (2005), and comprises 70 multiple-choice items primarily measuring the three skills, i.e. listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and language use. The number of each section in the Objective Test is as follows: listening (20 items), reading (20 items), and language use (30 items). The administration of and answering the Objective Test requires 50 minutes. The Listening items assess learners' ability to understand main idea, context, and supporting details in a conversation, as well as the speaker's intent. The Reading questions, likewise, measure learners' ability to understand main and supporting ideas in written passages, vocabulary, and also the author's intent. Moreover, the Language Use section investigates learners' ability in recognizing contextually appropriate and grammatically correct statements. As Lesley, Hansen, and Zukowski-Faust (2005, p. 5) have pointed out, "the different components of the test may be administered to individuals or to groups, and in any order". In the present study, the researchers have utilized the total Objective Placement Test containing three subcomponents of proficiency, i.e. listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and language use.

C. Procedures

The above-mentioned instruments were administered to 96 EFL learners studying at English language institutes. In order to receive reliable measures of attributional factors and dimensions as well as English proficiency on the part of the learners, they were asked not to mention their names on the questionnaires. Rather, the questionnaires were coded numerically.

The data gathered from the two questionnaires were analyzed by utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Firstly, to explore the relationship between the learners' foreign language attributions and their English language proficiency scores, Pearson product–moment correlation was employed. Next, the researchers ran the regression analysis to find out the extent to which foreign language attributions might have predictive power in learners' English proficiency.

V. RESULTS

A. Correlations between Learners' Attributions and Their Proficiency Scores

To examine whether there is any significant correlation between the learners' attributions and English proficiency, Pearson product-moment correlation was employed. The results revealed that there is a significant correlation between English language proficiency and effort attributions ($r = 0.553$, $p < 0.01$), ability attributions ($r = 0.404$, $p < 0.01$), task difficulty attributions ($r = -0.354$, $p < 0.01$), and teacher attributions ($r = -0.298$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, significant correlations were found between proficiency and internal locus of causality ($r = 0.397$, $p < 0.01$), external control ($r = -0.274$, $p < 0.01$), stability ($r = 0.221$, $p < 0.05$), and personal control ($r = 0.297$, $p < 0.01$) (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEARNERS' ATTRIBUTIONS AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

	Proficiency
Ability	0.404**
Effort	0.553**
Task Difficulty	-0.354**
Mood	0.015
Luck	-0.102
Teacher	-0.298**
Internal locus of causality	0.397**
External control	-0.274**
Stability	0.221*
Personal Control	0.297**

** Shows the existence of significant relationship at the level of 0.01
* Shows the existence of significant relationship at the level of 0.05

B. Results of Regression Analysis for Causal Attributions and Learners' Proficiency

To further analyze the data, the researchers conducted the regression analysis. A stepwise multiple regression consisting of LAAS factors 2 (effort) and 3 (task difficulty) successfully predicted total proficiency test scores($R = .61$). Put it another way, English proficiency explained 36% of the total variance, (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.36$, $p < .05$) using a combination of effort attribution and task difficulty attribution. Effort attribution was the best predictor for achievement (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.28$, $p < .05$), indicating that students who attributed the outcome of their test to effort received higher grades on the placement test. However, task difficulty attribution was the best predictor of lower grades on the placement test. Table 3 presents the results for English proficiency having been regressed on the variables of interest in this study, i.e. causal attributions.

TABLE 3.
THE RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR LEARNERS' ATTRIBUTIONS (LAAS) AND THEIR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Predictors	R	R²	Adjusted R²	F	P	B
English proficiency						
Effort	0.545	0.297	0.289	36.762	0.00	0.517
Task difficulty	0.619	0.384	0.369	26.761	0.00	-0.296

C. Results of Regression Analysis for Attributional Properties and Learners' Proficiency

Table 4 presents the results for English proficiency having been regressed on the variables of interest in this study, i.e. attribution dimensions. The results reveal which variables are important in predicting English proficiency. English proficiency explained 23% of the total variance, (Adjusted R^2= 0.23, p < .05) using a combination of internal locus and external control. Attributing success and failure to internal factors was the best predictor for achievement (Adjusted R^2 = 0.13, p < .05), indicating that students who attributed the outcome of their test to internal factors received higher grades on the Interchange Objective Placement Test.

TABLE 4.
THE RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR LEARNERS' ATTRIBUTIONS (CDS-II) AND THEIR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Predictors	R	R²	Adjusted R²	F	P	B
English proficiency						
Internal locus of causality	0.384	0.147	0.138	15.552	0.00	0.397
External control	0.504	0.254	0.237	15.160	0.00	-0.327

VI. DISCUSSION

This study has tried to fill the gap in attribution research by providing more empirical support for Weiner's attribution theory, approaching the theory from a foreign language teaching perspective in a new context. With that in mind, the researchers adopted a 'dimensions + reasons' approach to investigate the role of learners' foreign language attributions in their proficiency scores as measured by the Interchange Objective Placement Test.

The Pearson product-moment correlation applied to the data showed that among six attribution factors (i.e. ability, effort, task difficulty, mood, luck, and teacher), as well as four attribution dimensions (internal locus of causality, personal control, external control, and stability), eight attributions had significant relationships with the learners' scores on the Interchange Objective Placement Test. This finding can be explained in the light of other similar studies (Hsieh, 2004; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Lei & Qin, 2009; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). However, in order to see which variables might predict the learners' performance, the researchers ran the regression analysis the results of which are discussed below.

As far as causal dimensions (CDS-II) are concerned, the results of the present study indicated that internal locus of causality has a significant positive effect on EFL learners' scores on the placement test; on the other hand, the results showed that external control attributions were associated with low scores on the Objective Test. In sum, a combination of internal locus and external control explained 23% of the variances in test scores (Adjusted R^2 = 0.23, p < .05). English teachers are therefore recommended to help learners find the causes of success or failure in learning the English language within themselves, and also avoid attributing their successes and failures to external factors, such as luck or task difficulty, over which they have little or no control.

Having entered attribution factors (LAAS) into the regression analysis, the researchers found out that a combination of effort and task difficulty attributions significantly predicted learners' scores on the test. This finding is in line with that obtained by Lei and Qin (2009) and Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011). Because effort attribution was found in the present study to be positively correlated with (r = 0.553, p < 0.01) and strongly predictive of (Adjusted R^2= 0.28, p < .05) English proficiency scores, it is important for English teachers to recognize the crucial role that attributing success and failure to effort on the part of learners plays in their English language learning. If teachers remind learners that their foreign language learning failure is due to their insufficient effort, rather than because of other external sources, learners may realize that they did not actually make sufficient effort on the task and, as a result, it makes them make up for their failure the next time they are faced with a similar task.

But the important question is: Can we ever change learners' attributions? Fortunately, although learners' attributions of success or failure are shaped over a long time and it is difficult to change them (Hong, 2008), they are changeable (Williams & Burden, 1997) and teachers can intervene to modify or change learners' attributional perceptions. As Perry, Hechter, Menec, and Weinberg (1993) observed, teachers' attempts to change learners' perceptions of the cause of failure from lack of ability to lack of effort have proved to be effective in improving their college grades.

Therefore, as Lei and Qin (2009, p. 46) point out, "effort is very important in learning, without which learners could achieve nothing." The learner who attributes failure to lack of effort, i.e. to their own actions and characteristics, feels more responsible for their actions; teachers, thus, should remind learners of the value of effort. According to Hsieh (2004, p. 143), "when learners feel that they are responsible for the outcome of their grades, they tend to become more involved and active in the learning process."

Also, ability attributions were significantly correlated with learners' scores (r = 0.404, p < 0.01). This finding is in line with that obtained in Hsieh (2004) who concluded that ability attributions had the strongest correlation with learners' language achievement, and Hsieh and Schallert (2008) whose results indicated that ability attributions were significantly predictive of learners' achievement scores.

On the other hand, attributing success or failure to task difficulty proved to be associated with lower proficiency scores. Therefore, those learners who attribute their failures to task difficulty are recommended to change their attitudes since task difficulty is an external factor beyond the learner's control.

Since, in the present study and other studies, different attributional factors induced different outcomes in learners, a change in learners' attribution patterns would produce a change in learners' scores. Therefore, language teachers are recommended to emphasize the value of learners' effort in learning a foreign language.

However, several studies have showed that a number of individual differences such as culture (Brown, Gray & Ferrara, 2005; Holloway, 1988; Graham, 1991), gender (Bar-Tal & Frieze, 1977; Nelson & Cooper, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002), self-esteem (Ames & Ames, 1984; Fitch, 1970; Skaalvik, 1994), learning strategies (Soric & Ancic, 2008), teacher feedback (Gao, 2008), and so on may affect the way individuals perceive the causes of their success or failure. Moreover, attribution theory suffers from a weakness, i.e. self-serving bias (Zuckerman, 1979), which refers to individuals' tendency to attribute success to their own ability and effort, while ascribing their failure to external factors such as luck or task difficulty. Therefore, special care should be taken while generalizing the findings of the present study.

In sum, as long as EFL learners look for more internal causes to which they can ascribe their success or failure, instead of perceiving themselves and their performance on English tests as determined by some external, uncontrollable, and unstable factors, they will have greater chances of enhancing their English proficiency.

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A Brief Study of Reticence in ESL Class

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Abstract—It is a common phenomenon that students in China, either English or Non-English majors, are resistant to participating in individual or group-based speaking activities. This paper claims that students who refuse to actively participate in their own learning are reticent. Reticence in class impedes student learning, teacher effectiveness and classmate benefits of learning from silent students' insights, observations, and experiences. This paper takes a brief analysis of causes, effects of reticence problem and then proposes possible resolution of it.

Index Terms—English learning, reticence, communicative approach

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a common phenomenon that students in China, either English or Non-English majors, are resistant to participating in individual or group-based speaking activities, and the atmosphere of English classes are always inactive. As a result, the teachers' efforts in improving teaching quality used to end up disappointing.

In all sorts of ways, teachers are trying to involve the students actively in designing their course and planning interactions which would meet the students' needs and reasons to be willing to speak English. Their aims are to increase students' motivation to talk about what and how they want to learn. Through more personal engagement with class activities, it is expected that both students' confidence and their ability to speak English will be improved.

A. Definition of Reticence

Reticence is a communication problem with cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions and is due to the belief that one is better off remaining silent than risking appearing foolish (Keaten & Kelly 2000). Reticent individuals tend to avoid communication in social and public contexts, particularly novel situations that have the potential for negative evaluation. The publication of Gerald M. Phillips's first article on reticence in 1965 was groundbreaking in that it expanded scholarly interest in communication anxiety problems and launched a major new line of research.

In this paper, reticence will be discussed in a specific situation– English classroom. Thus, reticence here belongs to the category of foreign language anxiety, which stands for the feeling of uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced by non-native speakers when learning or using a second or foreign language. These feelings may stem from any second language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing, or the receptive skills of reading and listening.

Reticent individuals refer to those who view themselves as incompetent communicators, and measured against norms about appropriate levels of talkativeness in social situations. In their minds, reticence is typified by a set of faulty beliefs about communication, for example, good communicators speak spontaneously and one must be born with good communication skills. The adoption of this set of beliefs creates anxiety and feelings of helplessness. Reticent individuals fear negative evaluation and appear foolish, and they have to learn to associate anxiety with communication. Here in this paper, the individuals being analyzed are students in English classes.

B. Reticence in Class

Among all sorts of classroom phenomena, the most frustrating one is that students will not or cannot actively participate in group discussions. Students' reticence, withdrawal, or fear of interacting not only deprives of them sharing what they know, but also deprives the teacher and classmates of benefiting from it. Thus students' reticence has a vital influence in teaching and learning process and there is an individual, teacher and classmate obligation to reduce or eliminate such phenomena.

A student's reticence in class not only reveals that he/she is unwilling to talk in certain circumstances; it could also indicate any of the following symptoms:
 (1) the student's apathy toward the topic at hand or to the learning process itself;
 (2) the student who is not comprehending is overwhelmed, or is bored;
 (3) the student is isolated from the learning community;

(4) the student has not learned the value or strategies of engagement or he/she does not appreciate or believe in that value.

Besides, reticence is not exclusively a problem for individuals who refuse or are unable to respond to direct questions; those silent students deprive their classmates of opportunities to benefit from their knowledge, insights, and thinking, in that lots of learning stems from idea and perception sharing. Often, one's contributions stimulate more and better thinking from others; everyone in a classroom is responsible for pulling their own weight; all need to participate – by discussing and by listening to others. Therefore, the reticent problem deserves to be seriously studied and solutions are expected by all who are concerned with teaching and learning.

II. POSSIBLE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF RETICENCE IN CLASS

Whatever phenomenon it is, there must be a cause, and reticence is no exception. The causes and effects of reticence are to be presented and analyzed as follows.

A. Possible Causes of Reticence in Class

The possible causes of reticence in class are to be discussed from the following aspects --- general causes, causes for foreign language anxiety and specific causes of Chinese students.

1. General Causes

There could be several causes which lead to students' reticence in class. Generally speaking, Incapable of actively and equally participating in class discussions might result from:

(1) low self esteem – students who think of themselves as unworthy or unable to communicate successfully, so they tend to remain silent out of shame;

(2) fear of being ridiculed when they inappropriately or inaccurately respond;

(3) fear of success – this occurs when a student interacts successfully; they attributes their success to luck or accident and then is apprehensive for others expecting him/herself to continue excellent performance, which means to interact with similar or superior success in the future;

(4) cultural differences – various cultures forbid or strongly discourage individuals from speaking up in classroom settings; sometimes for the reason of deference towards teachers; elder students' behavior could also contribute to this phenomenon;

(5) "to avoid conflict – inexperienced, shy, or less competent communicators rely upon silence to avoid conflict scenarios. Such avoidance should normally be easily diagnosed by alert teachers; and this strategy needs to be confronted delicately with alternative strategies offered as substitutes for unwanted silence" (Verderber and Verderber, 1986)

(6) communication apprehension – a clinical fear of communicating with or in the presence of others. Communication apprehension is often called CA for short. It is a major problem in the elementary school level. According to research, at least 31% of elementary school students need help dealing with Communication Apprehension (Holbrook, 2008). This term is widely studied and written about in Communication Studies literature.

Although all aspects of using and learning a foreign language can cause anxiety, listening and speaking are regularly cited as the most anxiety-provoking foreign language activities.

2. Causes for Foreign Language Anxiety

As for the causes of Foreign Language Anxiety, they have been broadly divided into three main components; communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

Specifically, communication apprehension is the anxiety experienced when speaking with or listening to other individuals. Test-anxiety is a form of performance anxiety associated with the fear of doing badly, or indeed failing altogether. Fear of negative evaluation is the anxiety associated with the learner's perception of how other onlookers, instructors, classmates or others may negatively view their language ability.

3. Specific Causes for Chinese Students' Reticence

In their article "A Chinese Conceptualisation of Willingness to Communicate in ESL", authors Wen and Clement attempt something of a cultural anthropology of Willingness to Communicate in Chinese students. They conclude that the reticence to verbally engage is rooted in "two aspects governing interpersonal relations: an other-directed self and a submissive way of learning." (p. 19)

The "other-directed self" is based on the idea that Chinese culture, like many other Asian cultures, values the collective over the individual. This value could be traced back to the founding values of Chinese culture – "only in the presence of the other, will the self be significant. In Confucius theory, the self did not exist as a single entity. Its existential reality is dialectically related to the family, the community, the nation and the world. Self is relational, and it is defined by the surrounding relations. In Chinese culture, the social and moral process of 'conducting oneself' is to be aware of one's relations with others. Chinese people can never separate themselves from obligation to others." (p. 20)

The value placed on relations to others defining the self relates closely to the concept of "face". Face is lost when one behaves badly in class. "It seems likely that Chinese students would be even more sensitive to the judgment of the public upon their language behaviors and, therefore, less likely to get involved in classroom communication." Not

incidentally, Wen and Clement identify a cultural trait that places value on resisting "outsider culture," which may result in additional difficulty in adapting to different norms of verbal participation.

The second major factor detailed in this study is submission in learning – the tendency of Chinese teachers who used to play an authoritative role and of Chinese students who tend to submit to authority in the process of learning.

Submission in learning deeply shapes how Chinese students engage in ESL classroom. The teacher is seen as the source of all knowledge and input, so Chinese students will not value partner and small group work as highly as students of other cultures. In addition, another point should also be accounted – Chinese learners' enthusiasm for grammar, which is the "law" of the English language in their opinions. Thus, accuracy is valued much more than fluency and the lack of latter further diminish students' willingness to communicate.

B. Effects of Reticence in Class

The effects of reticence are particularly evident in ESL classes and it, to some degree, is a strong indicator of academic performance. Reticence is found to have a detrimental effect on students' confidence, self-esteem and level of participation.

Reticent learners suffer from mental blocks during spontaneous speaking activities, lack confidence, are less able to self-edit and identify language errors and are more likely to employ strategies such as skipping class. Anxious students also forget previously learned material, volunteer answers less frequently and have a greater tendency to remain passive in classroom activities than their less reticent counterparts.

The effects of reticence could also extend outside the second language classroom. A high level of reticence might also correspond with communication apprehension, causing individuals to be quieter and less willing to communicate in other public occasions. As a result, people who exhibit this kind of communication reticence are more likely to be perceived as less trustworthy, less competent, less socially and physically attractive, tenser, less composed and less dominant than their less reticent counterparts.

Therefore, working on reticence problem in and out of class is of great significance not only in academic development, but also in mental development of the students.

III. RESOLUTION OF RETICENCE IN CLASS

Since reticence poses vital influence on foreign language learning and teaching, a number of solutions have been studied by foreign language scholars in the attempt to resolve the problem, among which communicative language teaching (CLT) is the most-widely accepted one. However, adopting CLT solely might result in ignoring students' individual factors which contribute to reticence in classrooms; therefore, some additional methods also deserve to be carefully observed.

A. Communicative Language Teaching Method

1. CLT's Features That Contribute to Solving Reticence Problem

CLT is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as "communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages" or simply the "communicative approach".

As an extension of the notional-functional syllabus, CLT also places great emphasis on helping students use the target language in a variety of contexts and places great emphasis on learning language functions. Its primary focus is on helping learners create meaning rather than helping them develop perfectly grammatical structures or acquire native-like pronunciation. This means that successfully learning a foreign language is assessed in terms of how well learners have developed their communicative competence, which can loosely be defined as their ability to apply knowledge of both formal and sociolinguistic aspects of a language with adequate proficiency to communicate. It is the communication that could break the silence in class and raise the motivation of talking.

CLT is usually characterized as a broad approach to teaching, rather than as a teaching method with a clearly defined set of classroom practices. Features of CLT could be concluded as: "(1) an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language; (2) the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation; (3) the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the Learning Management process; (4) an enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning; (5) an attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom." (David Nunan's, 1991)

CLT might be the most effective way of creating opportunities for reticent students who are always inactive to seek for their own, for the reason that it puts emphasis on learning to communicate over memorize. Moreover, CLT stimulates students' interest in that it associates their personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

2. Class Activities and Procedures of CLT That Contribute to Solving Reticence Problem

CLT's class activities and teaching procedure are also of great value in solving reticence problem.

Littlewood (1981) distinguishes between "functional communication activities" and "social interaction activities" as major activity types in CLT. Functional communication activities include such tasks as learners comparing sets of pictures and noting similarities and differences; working out a likely sequence of events in a set of pictures; discovering

missing features in a map or picture; one learner communicating behind a screen to another learner and giving instructions on how to draw a picture or shape or how to complete a map; following directions; and solving problems from shared clues. Social interaction activities include conversation and discussion sessions, dialogues and role plays, simulations, skits, improvisations, and debates.

Both the two types of activities in CLT require all the students' participation, while functional communication activities emphasize more interaction and social interaction activities focus more on practicing oral English in communication. Therefore, the former one could be used as a warm-up method to forge an interactive atmosphere in class, which could make students relaxed and release the tension among reticent ones. When those who tend to be reticent get used to the environment, it is highly possible that they have formed their own notions during the activities, and it is high time for teachers to encourage conversation and discussion gradually.

3. Roles of Teachers and Students of CLT That Contribute to Solving Reticence Problem

The emphasis in communicative language teaching lies on the process of communication rather than the mastery of language forms; it leads to different learners' role from that found in traditional second language classroom. Breen and Candlin describe the learners' role of CLT in the following terms:

The role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process and the object of learning – emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way. (1980:10)

Once the reticent student learns that he/she should not be only a good listener but also an active negotiator and he/she, like anyone else, is responsible for contribution in group activities, the individual might feel obliged to participate and fulfill his/her role as a second language learner. On occasion, such psychological implication might take inconsiderable effects in helping students to overcome reticence.

B.   Other Solutions for Solving Reticence Problem

Except for the application of communicative approach, there are several other methods which concern more about students' psychological status and personality related factors.

For the students who have excessive shyness, the teacher might start with face-to-face communication or discussion in a relatively small group. Telling the benefits of dealing with shyness could also work. With attention and encouragement, most teachers can help reticent students tremendously.

For the students who choose to be reticent in class for the reason that they don't know how to ask a right question, critical thinking, creative thinking, or verbal skills need developing to adequately formulate effective questions. For illustration, teachers could encourage students to take different viewpoints or role play in order to practice asking questions and engaging in dialogue with a teacher. Thus, they could learn to question anything unclear to them and get used to the way of raising a question.

For those who remain reticent because of inadequate motivation, it is wise to analyze possible causes over a period of time. Some teachers use a point system to give students a concrete sense of progress. They give points for students who act positively in class. This method, especially in China where students seriously concern the points of a course, might be highly reinforcing and effective.

IV. Conclusion

The reticence in classroom is the outcome of many structural and ideological factors that undermine students' potential for learning and for generating classroom debate; such unpleasant outcome is somewhat inevitable in teaching and learning process. However, the bad influence could be diminished through efforts by both teachers and students themselves. To find the general causes of reticence problem and then work on it through appropriate resolution can motivate and help the students to overcome it, thus changing the embarrassing classroom situation as well as improving students' learning ability.

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The Effect of Bilinguality on L3 Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge and Word Reading Skill

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Abstract—**The present study aims at comparing the performance of bilingual EFL students with monolingual EFL students on vocabulary knowledge test and word reading skill test. 30 Armenian-Persian bilinguals and 30 Persian monolinguals participated in this study. The participants were homogeneous in terms of sex (they were all female), nationality (they were all Iranian), age (17-18 years old), and level of instruction (lower intermediate). Nation's Vocabulary Levels Test was used to measure the breadth of vocabulary knowledge and the Burt Word Reading Test was used in order to measure the participants' word reading skill. The results of the data analyses showed that bilinguality is highly correlated with breadth of vocabulary knowledge and reading skill. In other words, bilingual participants have larger size of vocabulary knowledge and they enjoy better word reading skill. The results are interpreted to have implications for EFL methodologists and syllabus designers.**

Index Terms—**bilinguals, monolinguals, breadth of vocabulary knowledge, word reading skill, learning**

I. INTRODUCTION

Many people believe that it is difficult to learn a second or foreign language. Bilingualism, however, is common in some parts of the world (to mention just a few examples: North Wales and Welsh-English; Canada and French-English; and places where there are many ethnic minorities within a culture). Reich (1986) had mentioned that 47.3% of the world's population speaks more than one language. Later, Trask (1999) had reported that 70% of the earth's population is thought to be bilingual or multilingual. However, the number of bilinguals is increasing in recent years. It is estimated that over 380 million people speak English as their first language; 100 million people use it fluently as a foreign language. As a rough estimate, 1000 million or one billion people around the world have some knowledge of English, either as a native language, as a second language, or as a foreign language (Maghsoudi, 2008).

Bilingualism means different things to different people. For some, it means an equal ability to communicate in two languages. For others, it simply means the ability to communicate in two languages, but with greater skills in one language. In fact, it is more common for bilingual people, even those who have been bilingual since birth, to be somewhat dominant in one language (Maghsoudi, 2008). If a person is fluent in two languages, then the person is said to be bilingual (Harley, 2008). Therefore, bilingualism means having the ability to speak two languages. However, there is a difference between ability and use of language. Someone may be quite competent in two languages, yet rarely or never use one of those languages. Such a person has bilingual ability but does not behave bilingually. A different case is a person who regularly uses both languages, even though one language is still developing. Such a person may be hesitant in speaking, finding it difficult to speak with correct grammar or unable to use a wide vocabulary. Practically, that person may be bilingual, although ability in one language is lacking, but improving steadily. Such a distinction between ability in a language and use of a language shows why the simple label bilingual hides a complex variety beneath its simplicity. Asher and Simpson (1994) had defined bi/multilinguality as the presence and use of two or more languages in a modern nation or state.

Some authorities (for example, Bialystock, 2001, as cited in Harley, 2008; Gleason, 2005) had distinguished between productive bilingualism, i.e. speakers can produce and understand both languages; on one hand, and receptive bilingualism, i.e. speakers can understand both languages, but have more limited productive abilities; on the other hand. Children who had high exposure to a second language throughout their lives, but have had little opportunity to use the language would fall in this category, i.e. receptive bilingualism. When they enter preschool or kindergarten, these children are likely to make rapid progress in second language, English for instance, because their receptive language skills in English has been developed (Gleason, 2005).

There are, in addition, three types of bilingualism based on when the second language (L2) is learned relative to the first language (L1). They are simultaneous bilingualism (L1 and L2 learned about the same time or in other words, learning two languages as first languages. By school age, the two languages are mastered and are completely unique.

Therefore, the child is able to speak both languages fluently, early sequential bilingualism (L1 learned first, but L2 learned relatively early, in childhood. As a result, children who acquire a second language before puberty are likely to speak it with a native accent, and late bilingualism (from adolescence onwards) (Bialystock & Hakuta, 1994 as cited in Harley, 2008; Gleason, 2005).

The early theories suggested that bilingualism is harmful. Jesperson (1922), for instance, mentioned that "the brain effort required to master the two languages instead of one, certainly diminishes the child's power of learning other things which might and ought to be learnt" (p. 148). Accordingly, because of the storage of two linguistic systems in the brain, an individual's cognitive capacity and thought are limited and less efficient (Lambert, 1990 as cited in Matlin, 1994: 321). Some other researches (Anastasi & Cordora, 1953; Darcy, 1953; Printer & Keller, 1922; Saer, 1923 among others) supported the idea that bilingual children suffered from academic retardation, were socially maladjusted, and had lower IQ comparing to monolingual children. Printer and Keller (1922), for instance, reported a linguistic handicap in bilingual children. In addition, Saer (1923) spoke of mental confusion to describe bilinguals' cognitive functioning. Mattes and Omark (1984) claimed that bilingual children are more prone to stuttering.

In contrast to these claims, some researches in the 1970's and 1980's showed that bilingualism influences the child's cognitive and social development positively (Ben-Zeev, 1977; Bialystock, 1986; Cummins, 1976; Diaz, 1985; Feldman & Shen, 1971; Ianco-Worall, 1972; Segalowitz, 1977). These studies had shown that bilinguals have superior metalinguistic skills and a more awareness of the arbitrary relationship between vocabularies and their referents. Segalowitz (1977) suggested that the internalization of two languages will result in a more complex mental calculus which enables the bilingual child to alternate between two systems of rules in the manipulation of symbols. In addition, Bialystock (1986) proposed that bilingual children have better control of the linguistic processing needed for metalinguistic problems.

A number of researches (Cummins, 1979; Eisentein, 1980; Hoffman, 2001; Klein, 1995; Lerea & Laporta, 1971; Ringbom, 1985; Sanz, 2000; Thomas, 1988; Valencia & Cenoz, 1992; Zobl, 1993) had shown that bilingualism affects learning a foreign language positively. Eisentein (1980), for example, found that learning a second language during childhood would affect learning a foreign in adolescence positively. As another instance, Thomas (1988) compared the acquisition of college French by English monolinguals and English-Spanish bilinguals. The results showed that bilinguals outperformed the monolinguals. She concluded: "Bilinguals learning a third language seem to have developed a sensitivity to language as a system which helps them perform better on those activities usually associated with formal language learning than monolinguals learning a foreign language for the first time" (Thomas, 1988, p. 240). As a result, it has been hypothesized that early bilingualism helps the child analyze distinctive structural properties of alternative language systems (Klein, 1995).

As a whole, based on a large literature, Matlin (1994) had proposed:

"In addition to gaining fluency in a second language, bilinguals seem to have a number of   advantages over monolinguals:

1. Bilinguals actually acquire more expertise in their native (first) language. For example, English-speaking Canadian children whose classes are taught in French gain greater understanding of English language structure (Diaz, 1985; Lambert et al., 1991).

2. Bilinguals are more aware that the names assigned to concepts are arbitrary (Bialystock, 1987, 1988; Hakuta, 1986). For example, monolingual children cannot imagine that a cow could just as easily have been assigned the name, *dog*.

3. Bilingual children are more sensitive to some pragmatic aspects of language. For example, English-speaking children whose classes are taught in French are more aware that when you speak to a blindfold child, you need to supply additional information (Genesee et al., 1975).

4. Bilinguals also perform better on tests of nonverbal intelligence that require reorganization of visual patterns and on concept formation tasks that require mental flexibility (Peal and Lambert, 1962)" (Matlin, 1994, p. 322).

Contrary results of researches on the benefits and drawbacks of bilinguality encouraged some researches (Barik & Swain, 1978; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Nayak et al., 1990; Magiste, 1984) to conduct researches with more controlled variables. Barik and Swain (1978), and Lambert and Tucker (1972) had conducted experiments in which sex and age were considered as control variables. They did not find any significant difference between monolinguals and bilinguals in terms of their intelligence, mental development and school achievement. As another example, Balke-Aurell and Lindbad (1982, as cited in Magiste, 1984) conducted a research on immigrants of varied L1s and Swedish as L2 who were learning English as a foreign language. They found no difference between bilinguals and monolinguals in English comprehension and grammar performance. In addition, Nayak et al., (1990) comparing monolinguals', bilinguals', and multilinguals' acquisition of an artificial grammar, reported that multilinguals showed superior performance under certain conditions over monolinguals. Keshavarz (2004) conducted a research on Turkish-Persian bilinguals, Armenian-Persian bilinguals, and Persian monolinguals in order to investigate their performance on a controlled productive ability vocabulary test. The results showed that native speakers of Turkish and Armenian who speak Persian as their second language performed better in English vocabulary test than the Persian monolingual learners of English.

As Goldman et al. (1984) and Malakoff (1988) had mentioned one of the most important assumptions underlying the efficiency of bilingual instruction is the transfer of skills and learned knowledge from L1 to L2. Goldman et al., (1984)

found that bilingual children use similar comprehension strategies when listening to Aesop's fables in two languages. Malakoff (1988) also found similarity in performance on analogical reasoning in French-English bilingual children in Switzerland. Therefore, a child learning about velocity in Spanish, for example, should be able to transfer this knowledge to English without having to learn the concepts, as long as the relevant vocabulary (in L2) is available. As a result, having the content knowledge already available in L1 seems to facilitate the learning of the appropriate vocabulary items in L2 (Keshavarz, 2004). Given that skills transfer across languages, it is possible to think about transfer as occurring on a specific, skill-by-skill componential basis, or, more globally, where the entire structure of skills in a domain transfers as a whole (Keshavarz, 2004). If skills do transfer from one language to the other, we could expect the transfer of sub-skills such as vocabulary and word reading skill from L1 to L2.

Third language acquisition may be considered as a relatively young discipline in the field of applied linguistics (Maghsoudi, 2008). However, growing research on the topic signals out relevant differences between second and third language acquisition and it also posits peculiar features to third language learning processes. Accordingly, Clyne (2003) states that learning a third language may share some characteristics with second language learning but in the former case processes are far more complex. In fact, as argued by Cenoz (2000), second language acquisition needs to be distinguished from third language acquisition, as the latter relates to extending the linguistic system of an individual not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively. Following this view, Herdina and Jessner (2002) argue for a dynamic perspective in studying multilingualism phenomena. According to these authors, learning a third language promotes the arousal of new skills and techniques deriving from the learners' previous language-learning experiences.

In many second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a special focus. There are a number of reasons for this. First, foreign language students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purposes. In fact, in most EFL situations, the ability to read in a foreign language is all that students ever want to acquire. Second, written texts serve various pedagogical purposes. Extensive exposure to linguistically comprehensible written texts can enhance the process of language acquisition. Good reading texts also provide good models for writing, and provide opportunities to introduce new topics, to stimulate discussion, and to study language (e.g., vocabulary, grammar, and idioms). Reading, then, is a skill which is highly valued by students and teachers alike (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Vocabularies are the primary carriers of meaning (Vermeer, 2001); and as a result, they can be considered as an important part of any language teaching program. Many researches now advocate that learners should initially be taught a large productive vocabulary of at least two thousands high frequency words (Jeanette S. Decarico as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001: 287). Meara (1995), for example, maintained that students should learn very large vocabularies when they start to acquire a language. On the other hand, a number of researches such as Laufer (1997), Hu and Nation(2000) also emphasized that for certain groups of students, a base of two thousand words will be inadequate. Laufer (1997), for instance, had shown that a learner needs to know over 3,000 word families or about 5,000 individual word forms in order to achieve 95% coverage of words in academic text, and this was regarded as a threshold for minimum comprehension. More recent researches, however, report that learners need to know 98-99% of words in a written text for sufficient comprehension (Hu and Nation, 2000) which means they must know 8,000 to 9,000 word families in order to be able to read a variety of texts in English (Nation, 2001).

II. THE PRESENT STUDY

As vocabulary size and ability to read are very important in learning a foreign or second language, the present study, aims at investigating the relationship between bilinguality of foreign language learners and the breadth of their vocabulary knowledge (how many words a learner knows) and word reading skills. Therefore, the following research questions and null hypotheses are formulated:

1. Is there any relationship between bilinguality of English learners and the size of their vocabulary knowledge in English?

2. Is there any relationship between word reading skill and bilinguality of English learners?

3. Does bilinguality of English learners affect the size of their vocabulary knowledge in English?

4. Does bilinguality of English learners affect the learners' word reading skill?

H1. There is no relationship between bilinguality of the English learners and the size of their vocabulary knowledge in English.

H2. There is no relationship between word reading skill and bilinguality of English learners.

H3. Bilinguality of the English learners has no impact on the size of their vocabulary knowledge in English.

H4. Bilinguality of the English learners does not affect their word reading skill.

Most of the previous studies, except Keshavarz (2004), had focused on European languages. Therefore, the significance of the present study is that it involves two non-European languages, i.e. Armenian and Persian, and it investigates the effect of these languages on English vocabulary size and word reading skill which to the best of researchers' knowledge had not been conducted earlier. The results could shed light on the issue of bilingualism and L3 vocabulary learning and reading skill.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

In order to control sex and age variables, only female students of the same age participated in this study. Two groups of female students at two different pre-university centers (30 students in each group) of Esfahan (Iran) participated in this study: Group A (Armenian-Persian bilinguals) studying both languages academically; and Group B (Persian monolinguals). The participants were selected randomly from two different pre-university centers. The bilingual participants of this study, i.e. Armenian-Persian bilinguals live in Jolfa district, the south-west of Esfahan. They learn Armenian as their L1 and they learn L2, i.e. Persian in childhood. As a result and according to Bialystock and Hakuta (1994), they can be considered as early sequential bilinguals. Also as they study both languages academically and can use and understand both languages, according to Bialystock (2001) they can be considered productive bilinguals. However, their dominant language is Armenian and in their district they use their L1 to communicate with others.

The participants in both groups were homogeneous in terms of socio-educational context: socio-economic level, type of school attended, methodology used at school, their level, and number of hours devoted to teaching of English. It also should be added that the educational system in Iran is centralized; as a result, the textbooks and methodology for teaching English as a foreign or second language are the same nationwide. However, in order to select the lower intermediate students, Oxford Placement Test was used.

B. Instruments

The materials used in the present study were as follows:

Oxford Placement Tests (OPT)

The Oxford Placement Tests (OPTs) provide teachers with a reliable and efficient means of placing students at the start of a course. The tests have been calibrated against the levels system provided by the Common European Framework of reference for languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (commonly known as CEF), which has been adopted by the Association of the Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) as well as by governments and major institutions, including exam boards, throughout Europe. The OPTs can clearly and reliably identify any learner's level and also provide a score which will show where the learner is within that band. They can also discriminate levels above and below CEF scale.

The OPTs have been calibrated against a range of major international language examinations and can thus be score of valuable information for learners and course providers with regard to suitable course books and examination targets, e.g. IELTS, TOEFL, TOEIC and others such as Cambridge ESOL Main Suite exams, CELS and BEC, which are explicitly linked to CEF and ALTE levels.

The OPT consists of listening and grammar sections. The listening section consists of 100 items. It takes approximately ten minutes to complete the listening test. Test-takers are asked to choose the correct word which they hear in short sentences from two choices. The grammar section consists of 100 items. Fifty minutes are allotted for completion. Test-takers are asked to read the stem with a blank and to choose one of the three options for the blank. Two sample test items of the vocabulary part are provided below:

a. In warm climates people (<u>like</u>, likes, are liking) sitting outside in the sun.

b. If it is very hot, they sit (at, <u>in</u>, under) the shade.

The grammar part of the OPT was used to choose the students of the same level. Since none of the students were able to reach advanced or expert level, the lower intermediate-modest users were selected for this study.

Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT)

This is a test of receptive knowledge of English vocabulary, originally developed by Nation (1983), and updated and validated by Schmitt et al., (2000) which is used to measure learners' size of vocabulary knowledge.

Version 1 of this test which has been updated by Schmitt (2000) and used in the present study is composed of five parts representative of five different vocabulary size levels, namely, the 2,000 word-family level, the 3,000 word-family level, the 5,000 word family level, the University Word List level, and the 10,000 word family level. The words in each level of the test have been selected in a way so that they would represent all the words at that vocabulary level.

At each vocabulary size level are ten items, each item comprising six words and three definitions. The test-taker is required to match the three definitions with three of the six words by writing the corresponding number of the word beside its definition. A sample test item is provided below:

1. Business
2. Clock   ……6…. part of a house
3. Horse   ……3…. animal with four legs
4. Pencil   ……4…. something used for writing
5. Shoe
6. Wall

The VLT only tests content words and not function words. The definitions are written using words from the previous vocabulary size level, and the words in each group belong to the same part of speech. The purpose of this restriction is to avoid giving test-takers a clue as to the meaning of a word based on its form. In scoring, each word correctly chosen is awarded one point. Since there are 5 levels, and each level contains 30 correct choices, the maximum score is 150.

However, because of the difficulty of the vocabularies for pre-university students, only the 2,000 word-family level and the 3,000 word-family level had been used in this study in order to measure the learners' size of vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the maximum possible score is 60.

The Burt Word Reading Test

The Burt Word Reading Test is an individually administered test. The test is aimed at assessing word-recognition skills. The test consists of a list of 110 words, arranged in groups of ten, and presented in increasing order of difficulty. This version of the test was developed using the results from a representative sample of 2200 children in Scotland in June 1974. Participants are asked to read this list of words. Responses are scored either right or wrong. Each participant's raw score was used for the analysis. The instructions of this test which had been stated in the test manual are:

1. Each student should be tested individually.
2. The test should be taken in a place which is quiet and free from distractions.
3. The student should start at the top of the page and read the words from left to right.
4. The test should continue until the student has made ten (10) errors in succession.

C. Procedure

Data collection was carried out in three sessions. In session 1, the OPT was administered to the students. The test was used to choose the lower intermediate-modest users. In session 2, VLT was administered to the learners as a group in their classrooms in order to measure the participants' breadth of vocabulary knowledge; in the third session, the Burt Word Reading Test was individually administered. In this session, each student was individually tested in a private room and the instructions in the test manual were strictly observed.

D. Data Analysis

After the administration of the tests, they were scored by the researcher and the results were submitted to statistical analysis. Regarding the first and second research questions, i.e. the relationship between bilinguality of the participants and the size of their vocabulary knowledge as well as word reading skill, Bivariate Correlation was used. Since correlation analysis is used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables, in order to investigate the cause and effect relationship between the variables research questions three and four were formulated. Considering the third and fourth research questions, i.e. the impact of bilinguality of the participants on the size of their vocabulary knowledge as well as word reading skill, independent-sample T-test was used.

IV. RESULTS

The relationship between bilinguality and breadth of vocabulary knowledge (as measured by Vocabulary Levels Test), was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Table 1 and Figure 1 show the results of this analysis to answer the first question. As can be understood from Table 1, there is a highly positive significant correlation between the two variables, i.e. bilinguality of the subjects and the breadth of vocabulary knowledge [$r=.812$, $n=60$, $P<.01$]. Figure 1 also shows the highly positive significant correlation between the two mentioned variables.

TABLE 1.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN BILINGUALITY AND VLT

		VLT	Linguality
VLT	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1	.812**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Linguality	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.812**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

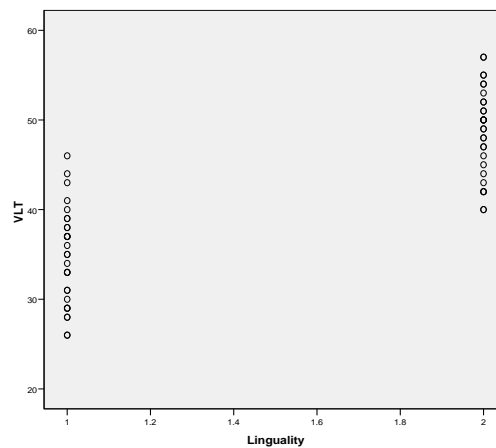**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 1. Scatter Diagram Correlation between VLT and bilinguality

The relationship between bilinguality of the subjects and word reading skill (as measured by the Burt Word Reading Test), was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Table 2 and Figure 2 show the results of the mentioned analysis to answer the second question. Table 2 reports that there is a strong positive correlation between the two variables, i.e. bilinguality of the subjects and the word reading skill [r=.885, n=60, P<.01]. Figure 2 also shows this strong positive correlation between the two aforementioned variables.

TABLE 2.
CORRELATION BETWEEN BILINGUALITY AND BURT TEST

		VLT	Linguality
Burt Test	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1	.885**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Linguality	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.885**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
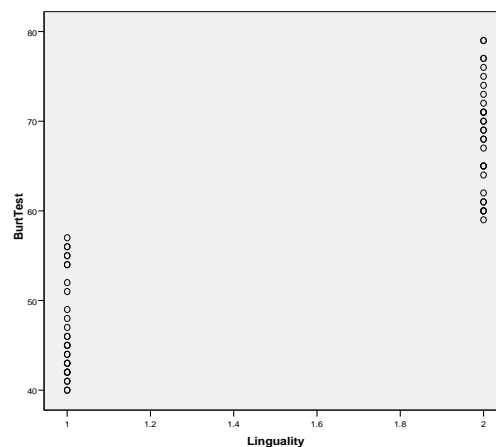
Figure 2. Scatter Diagram Correlation between Burt Test and bilinguality

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the breadth of vocabulary knowledge scores for bilinguals and monolinguals. Tables 3 and 4 show the results of the mentioned analysis for the third question. There was a significance difference in scores for bilinguals (M=48.77, SD=4.911) and monolinguals (M=34.73, SD=5.349). The magnitude of the differences in the means was very large (eta squared=.66).

TABLE 3.
GROUP STATISTICS (LINGUALITY & VLT)

Linguality		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VLT	Monolingual	30	34.73	5.349	.977
	Bilingual	30	48.77	4.911	.897

TABLE 4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST (LINGUALITY & VLT)

		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 of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper
VLT	Equal V assumed	.331	.568	-10.58	58	.000	-14.033	1.326	-16.68	-11.37
	Equal V not assumed			-10.58	57.58	.000	-14.033	1.326	-16.68	-11.37

VLT = Vocabulary Levels Test, V = Variance

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the word reading skill scores for bilinguals and monolinguals. Tables 5 and 6 show the results of the aforementioned analysis for the fourth question. There was a significance difference in scores for bilinguals (M=68.60, SD=6.078) and monolinguals (M=46.93, SD=5.521). The magnitude of the differences in the mean was very large (eta squared=.78).

TABLE 5.
GROUP STATISTICS (LINGUALITY & BURT TEST)

Linguality		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Burt Test	Monolingual	30	46.93	5.521	1.008
	Bilingual	30	68.60	6.078	1.110

TABLE 6.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST (LINGUALITY & BURT 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 of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper
Burt Test	Equal V assumed	.155	.695	-14.45	58	.000	-21.66	1.499	-24.66	-18.66
	Equal V not assumed			-14.45	57.47	.000	-21.66	1.499	-24.66	-18.66

V = Variance

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the results shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, one can understand that there is a positive significant correlation between the bilinguality of the subjects and the breadth of their vocabulary knowledge. In other words, the bilingual subjects have larger vocabulary size than their monolingual counterparts. Thus the first null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between the bilinguality of the subjects and the size of their vocabulary knowledge was rejected.

Furthermore, results shown in Table 2 and Figure 2 report a positive significance correlation between word reading skill and bilinguality of the subjects. Therefore, bilingual subjects enjoy better word reading skill than monolingual subjects. As a result, the second null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between word reading skill and the bilinguality of the subjects was rejected.

Based on Tables 3 and 4, and according to the magnitude of the differences in the mean, it is clear that bilinguality of the subjects has a high effect on the size of their vocabulary knowledge. The third null hypothesis stating that bilinguality of the subjects has no impact on the size of vocabulary knowledge, therefore, was rejected.

In the same way, by referring to Tables 5 and 6, and the magnitude of the differences in mean, the effect of bilinguality on the word reading skill could be understood. Thus, the fourth null hypothesis stating that the bilinguality of the subjects has no impact on the word reading skill was rejected.

In other words, based on the results of the data analyses the bilinguality of the subjects is correlated highly and positively with L3 breadth of vocabulary knowledge as well as L3 word reading skill. Furthermore, the subjects' bilinguality has a positive effect on L3 breadth of vocabulary knowledge alongside L3 word reading skill.

The results of the current study reject the early theories of bilingualism which considered subjects' bilinguality as a harmful phenomenon and believed that bilingual children suffered from academic retardation (Anastasi & Cordora, 1953; Darcy, 1953; Printer & Keller, 1922; Saer, 1923). In fact the results of the present study are in line with the previous studies which have shown that bilingualism results in more efficient foreign language learning (cf. Lerea & Laporta, 1971; Cummins, 1979; Eisenstein, 1980; Ringbom, 1985; Thomas, 1988; Valencia & Cenoz, 1992; Zobl, 1993; Sanz, 2000; Hoffman, 2001; Keshavarz, 2004; Maghsudi, 2006).

The bilingual subjects in this study, i.e. Armenian-Persian students, learned L1 and L2 both academically and orally. They had performed better than monolinguals on Vocabulary Levels Test and the Burst Word Reading Test. This finding is in line with Thomas' (1988) claim that bilinguals had developed sensitivity to language as a system and therefore, would perform better on third language activities than monolinguals. The results are in line with Goldman's (1984) and Malakoff's (1988) claim that skills and learned knowledge from L1 transfer to L2.

As the bilingual subjects of the present study are considered as early sequential bilinguals, the results of the study support Eisenstein's (1980) findings who stated that learning L2 in childhood, would affect L3 learning in adolescence.

VI. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

This study has practical and theoretical implications in language teaching. The results showed that bilingualism has a positive effect on L3 breadth of vocabulary knowledge and L3 reading skill. Therefore, this study provides a basis for improving the quality of practices in the teaching of first, second, and third languages' vocabulary and word reading skill.

However, the number of the participants of the study was very limited and this could affect the result. The study was done considering one grade of the students, as well. Also only two levels of vocabulary levels test were used in this study which may affect the results of the study.

Others can do this study with more students from different grades. This research also can be done with male students. It would be better to have more bilingual groups or work on other skills and sub-skills.

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Cognitive Relevance Involved in Verbal Communication: A Perspective of the Personal Experience Theory

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Abstract—This paper is intended to interpret, from a perspective of the Personal Experience (PE) Theory, the cognition and relevance involved in verbal communication. The process of verbal communication, based upon personal experience (PE), consists of two sub-processes that are heterogeneous in nature: the sub-process of the formation of the communicative notion (CN), which is non-linguistic in nature, and the sub-process of verbal expression of the CN, which is linguistic in nature. The speaker's PE enables him to turn an external context into an internal context, and develop a CN and an utterance image, which is then verbally expressed. In contrast, the listener's PE enables him to intelligently associate the verbal form with its meaning, form an utterance image, associate the image with his conceived context, and finally infer the speaker's CN. This theory of cognitive relevance involved in verbal communication from the perspective of PE Theory enjoys considerable advantages of powerful interpretation over other theories.

Index Terms—personal experience, verbal communication, cognition, relevance

I. INTRODUCTION

Broadly speaking, there are two major themes of research in pragmatics: utterance production and utterance comprehension (He & Ran, 2001). However, the processes of utterance production and comprehension are labyrinthine in nature. Researchers had approached the issue from a variety of perspectives before the 1980s, when Sperber and Wilson published their work *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*. They (2001, Preface to Second Edition) examined human communication from a general view of human cognition. "Human cognition," they argued, "are geared to achieving the greatest possible cognitive effect for the smallest possible processing effort." In order to achieve this, "individuals must focus their attention on what seems to them to be the most relevant information available." To communicate is to claim an individual's attention. The information communicated is relevant to the addressee. This is the Communicative Principle of Relevance. They (2001, p.1) pointed out that "the study of human communication raises two questions: first, what is communicated, and second, how is communication achieved?"

The "relevance" theory does provide a framework for our understanding of the process of human verbal communication. During the process of communication, both the addresser and the addressee are, at all times, cognitively processing information from whatever is involved in the context. The cognitive mechanisms working in the process of communication are geared to judging the relevant information and factors from what they perceive in the communicators, what is communicated and the situated context. However, what is relevant in verbal communication has much to do with an individual's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, mood, personality, and the like. The seemingly unquestionable starting point is not beyond reasonable doubt. A full understanding of the mechanisms involved in the cognitive activities in human verbal behavior requires further studies on another pair of related questions. First, why do communicators communicate what is communicated? Second, why is communication achieved the way it is achieved, including both successes and failures of communication? Only when we examine the two questions raised by Sperber and Wilson in terms of these two more fundamental questions, can we find the starting point of human communication and the cognitive relevance involved in communication.

This article attempts to reveal and account for what the above mentioned two further questions mean. Briefly, by the first question, we mean that, under normal circumstances, what a person communicates with another person can be somewhat anticipated from the former's personal experience (PE). When an individual with his particular PE meets another individual with equally particular PE, "what is to be communicated" on the part of the speaker will be automatically generated. The second question attempts to address the fact that both the addresser and the addressee employ their cognitive mechanisms for relevant information, but due to the differences between their respective PE, misunderstanding or misreading tend to occur.

II. VERBAL COMMUNICATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PE THEORY

Dai (2004) formulated the PE Theory in his work *The Formation and Development of Verbal Communicative*

Competence in a Foreign Language: A Perspective of the Personal Experience Theory. PE refers to whatever an individual, situated in a particular life status and equipped with certain innate mental and physical capacities, obtains in his interaction with the natural and social-cultural surroundings, including various events that he has experienced, knowledge that he has acquired, feelings and emotions that he has gone through, cognitive abilities that he has developed, and whatever that makes him differ from what he was and that will contribute to later processes of his experience acquisition.

Any individual, at any moment, is experiencing a particular and specific life situation, different from that of any other person. We are confined to it, and the lived experience affects, in one way or another, the way we feel and interact with our surroundings. Whatever one obtains from his lived experience is determined by his previous lived experience and will affect whatever he will experience. Dewey (1938) discussed two principles of experience: the principle of interaction and the principle of continuity. The first principle means that experience is both the process and the result of one's interaction with the external world; the second principle is to say that experience is continuous process; one's lived experience has a driving force, affecting the manner of his interaction with whatever he will experience.

In the course of verbal communication, each individual has his own PE. The moment the speaker meets the listener, parts of his PE relevant to the situated context come up automatically and unconsciously. For instance, the listener borrowed a book from the speaker the other day; or the speaker had heard that the listener had won the lottery; or a person that they both knew had had an accident. The reason why the speaker comes up with a topic for a conversation is that the moment the speaker meets the listener, the speaker's PE intelligently and automatically presents the part of PE relevant to the listener.

Liu (1988, 2001) views the process of verbal communication as a "double-layer" process, with one layer being linguistic and the other non-linguistic. Some researchers of cognitive linguistics (e.g. Langacker, 1987, 1991, 2008; Evans 2009) also adopt this "double-layer" view towards the process of language understanding and production. Liu (2001) argues that the reason why the same utterance is subject to different understandings is that different people draw different inferences when they convert the literal meaning of the utterance into contextual meaning and speaker's intention. Then why are people liable to draw different inferences from the same utterance? Liu provide two reasons: the meaning in an utterance consists of elements different in nature; and different people have different ways of cognition. Then the questions that we would like to address are: why do people have different ways of cognition, and how do cognitive models interact with different elements in the utterance?

According to Sperber and Wilson, communication is an ostensive-inferential process. In the communication process, the speaker should make his intended information explicit, and the listener associates the information with the context and infers the speaker's intention. Then how it comes that different people draw different inferences? How can we account for the following talk between husband and wife who have just quarreled?

Husband: Be careful on your way to work.

Wife: Don't worry. I won't kill myself in a car accident.

How do we interpret practical problems such as this in real verbal communication? In order to reveal the mechanisms involved in verbal communication, we need to introduce the concept of PE. Any kind of context is that of PE; any utterance is produced from PE; any understanding or inference is based upon PE, and no relevance is made without referring to PE.

Verbal communication begins with the speaker's intention, which is brought about by his thoughts, assumptions, ideas, information, feelings, emotions, and the like, which he wants to share with the listener. For convenience, we use "communicative notion (CN)" to refer to what the speaker intends to employ language to express or convey to the listener. A CN arises out of the need of social communication. The study of verbal communication process should not just focus on the verbal communication process alone. The formation and development of the CN should also be included, and viewed as the starting point of the process of verbal communication. Otherwise, the utterance during the process of verbal communication would seem to emerge out of thin air. The generation of an utterance can be split up into two sub-processes: first, the process of generating the CN, and second, the process of generating the form vehicle of the utterance (i.e. the process of producing the phonological form). The processes of the generation of the CN and the phonological vehicle are actually two levels with different nature. The former is non-linguistic in nature, and the latter linguistic in nature.

Researchers have noticed that the phenomenon of one meaning with different interpretations is the result of inferring the speaker's CN by virtue of integrating what is said and the utterance context. Sperber and Wilson (2001) proposed "contextual effects" to indicate the function of the context through cognitive operations involved in the understanding process. They (2001, pp.108-117) are most interested in the interaction between old and new information. One question addressed to this issue is: how can individuals pinpoint new information from the old? Only when the theory of PE is introduced to the analytical framework can the judging process be theoretically interpreted. Verbal communication of all kinds occurs between people with different PE. The speaker's CN, what he says and how he says it, are reflections of the characteristics of his PE. In the process of verbal communication, the same person has different CNs and hence chooses different utterances. This is because different contexts induce different parts of the speaker's PE. In the same context, different people show different communicative style. The reason for it can also be traced to their respective PE.

This theory on the verbal communication process interpreted for the perspective of PE Theory attempts to analyze

daily routine verbal communication and to provide a clearer, more human and more practical framework for the analysis. The following figure is an overview of the architecture of the theory of verbal communication from the perspective of the PE Theory.
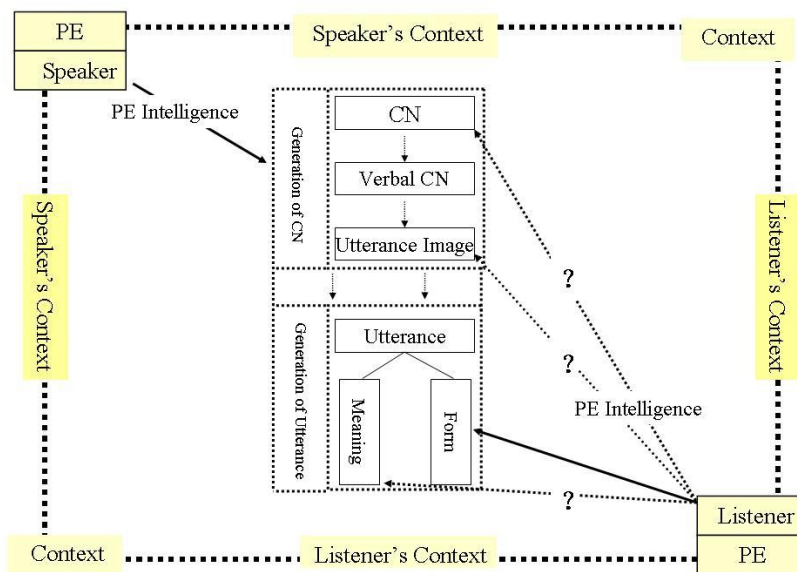

Figure 1   An overview of the Architecture of Verbal Communication

Figure 1 can be interpreted as follows:

(1) The speaker and the listener have their own respective PE. The speaker's CN is what his PE generates in a given context. Let us examine the well-known example "It is cold in here." Previous research has centered on the utterance and the context where the utterance is situated. Examination should start from the time when the speaker enters the place and feels cold, which is the very cause of his speaking "It is cold in here." The utterance originates from the coldness that the speaker feels and identifies as something that he may call as cold.

(2) In the process of verbal communication, the context is subjective rather than objective. Both the speaker and the listener exercise their PE to examine the same objective context in order to figure out what it means. The operation of the PE is effortless and automatic, and, so to speak, driven by the PE intelligence. Therefore, the same objective context becomes different versions of contexts: the speaker's subjective context and the listener's subjective context.

(3) The feeling of coldness and the PE intelligence-rendered context prompt the speaker to decide whether to express his CN by means of an utterance. It is most likely that he shuts the window himself, or that he pretends to huddle up in order to draw the attention of the person(s) in the situated context. If he decides to announce his feeling of the coldness with the intention of making the addressee shut the window, then his CN becomes verbal CN, which means that the CN has become the target that the speaker aims to express in language. The verbal CN is still nonlinguistic in nature, as it has not yet been verbalized. He can ask the addressee in direct way to shut the window by saying "Would you mind closing the window?" The speaker's PE, the PE intelligence-rendered context and the speaker's mood at the moment, contribute to the speaker's decision on the ways of expressing the verbal CN. In typical cases, the speaker and the listener seem to be playing a guessing game, where the speaker puts an image in the picture of the shared context and let the listener guess what it means. The image has to be understood against the situated context. Therefore, what the speaker actually says is termed an utterance image. It is called "image" because it is picture-like, something that the speaker intends to draw against the background of the context and that the listener has to understand against the background of his subject context.

(4) The CN, the verbal CN and the utterance image form the stage of CN generation, which is non-linguistic in nature, as opposed to the stage of utterance generation, which is linguistic in nature. In actual verbal communication, they are seemingly inseparable, but in cases of foreign language learning, foreign language learners often experience the separation between the verbal CN and the utterance generation. This is because utterances are conventionally associated with contexts. Foreign language learners seldom practice the association between the verbal CN in a given context and the actual expression of the utterance. There is no problem for them to form the CN and the verbal CN, but problems arise when they seek utterance images.

(5) Once the speaker has decided to use the utterance image of "It is cold in here," he enters the stage of utterance generation. An utterance is like a coin with two sides. One side is the phonological form vehicle, and the other side the meaning of the form. In the course of verbal communication, the listener first hears the phonological form. A person who does not know the language will have no idea of what is said. He has heard the form, but nothing is associated with it. If a foreign language learner knows "it is" and "in here", he only has fragments of the utterance meaning, and cannot

form a mental picture or image of the utterance. An utterance image differs from an utterance meaning in that an utterance image is a mental picture formed from a full understanding of the utterance meaning. If you do not know the meaning of the word "pistol" in "He took a pistol out of his pocket," you only form part of the picture. Furthermore, with this part of the picture, you will have no way to associate it with the context and infer the speaker's CN. With the utterance image, you not only know the conceptual meaning of the word "pistol", but also the possible danger with it.

(6) In the process of verbal communication, the starting point for the listener is the phonological form that he receives from the speaker. He, with his PE and linguistic knowledge, forms the utterance meaning of the utterance form, and, with the help of the PE intelligence, shapes the utterance image. Then the listener integrates the information he gets from the utterance image and relevant factors in his subjective context. This information-fusing process is also PE intelligence-mediated. In general, since the speaker's utterance image is developed from the PE-based context and PE-based CN, the listener will have no problem achieving all these with the aid of his PE intelligence. However, because the listener's PE is different, and, therefore, his context, his utterance image and his inference of the speaker's CN may differ from the speaker's. Hence misunderstanding or misreading may occur. The processes where these may occur are marked with "?".

III. CONCLUSION

Verbal communication, especially the understanding process in verbal communication, has been the research interest of philosophy, linguistics and psychology. Philosophers such as Austin (1962, 1972) and Searle (1975, 201a, 2001b) showed philosophical interest in it and developed the Speech Acts Theory. The cognition and mental mechanisms involved in the operation of the PE is incredibly elusive. Verbal communication is not just a superficial speech or social act, but a mental operation that involves relevant memory and the habitual behavior of the PE. Every individual is a physical body with his autobiographical memory of his lived process as his soul. This memory is his PE. Scholars of sociolinguistics focus on the social aspects of verbal behavior. Hymes (1979) argued that "linguistic competence", a key concept in Chomsky's theories, should be considered within the framework of "communicative competence", for linguistic competence belongs in the generation of utterance, which is the secondary stage in verbal communication. The primary stage is the CN generation. Before the speaker conducts the actual utterance, he should, first of all, examine his situated context and then determine what to say and how, when, and to whom to say it. The examination and determination work on the basis of his PE. As one's PE is his lived experience, it is the underlying soil where his beliefs and value systems grow. The underlying PE soil shapes and regulates the social and verbal behavior, through beliefs, value systems and prototypical instances from the lived experience. A habitual rude person is prone to impolite manners and violates the principle of politeness. Research should aim to explain and interpret what exists. Everything is shaped by the PE, and attitudes, beliefs, value systems, and personality are no exception. Verbal communication is a social interaction where one reveals and unfolds himself. With the PE theory, pragmatics is fused in social communication.

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The Impact of Pre-reading and Inserted Questions on Incidental Vocabulary Learning and Retention

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Abstract—One basic objective of research in the field of ESL/EFL acquisition is to provide useful techniques for teaching and learning vocabulary in language classrooms. In this study attempt has been made to investigate the role of pre-reading questions and inserted questions on incidental vocabulary learning and retention. To achieve this goal, 60 selected homogeneous intermediate learners, according to their scores on the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and by using match-pair design, were divided into two homogeneous groups of A and B. Two weeks after the pretest, the treatment started. Each group received a different treatment. After a limited time when the learners finished reading passages an incidental vocabulary learning test which contained 8 questions was administered and this procedure, continued for 5 sessions. Then two weeks after the last session of the treatment a posttest was administered to measure the retention of incidentally learned vocabulary. The statistical analysis of the data showed that group B outperformed group A in terms of the number of words learned incidentally so the first null hypothesis was rejected. Also the results showed that group B performed better than group A in the retention of the number of words learned incidentally; therefore, the second null hypothesis also was rejected.

Index Terms—top-down process, retention, incidental learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a skill of paramount importance. In many instances around the world it can be considered as the most important foreign language skill, particularly in cases where students have to read English material for their own specialist subject but may never actually have to speak the language: such cases are often referred to as "English as a library language" (Alderson,2002).

Language students need large amounts of comprehensible input, and reading materials provide the most readily available source (Chastain, 1988). Research has confirmed that reading in either a first (L1) or second (L2) language has a positive impact on language development, an impact that has been referred to as 'the power of reading' (Krashen, 1989). Whatever language development that occurs as a result of reading is said to occur incidentally (or secondarily) in that the reader's primary task is to make meaning from the text rather than learn new words or learn to spell better. Language development is an additional benefit of reading: it is the bonus that readers receive. The indisputable linguistic gain that readers receive from reading is new vocabulary, be it partial or complete knowledge of a word's meaning (For L1: Anderson, 1995; and for L2: Rott et al., 2002).

Vocabulary is the most central element in the social system of communication (Harley, 1995). This view is strengthened by McCarthy (1990) who claims that "without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in L2 cannot happen". Richards (1998) maintains that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them. Many researchers in the field of language learning and teaching believe that there is a symbolic relationship between reading and vocabulary acquisition. It is a proven fact that learners with high level comprehension skills are able to acquire broader and deeper vocabularies and learners with larger vocabularies are able to comprehend text better (Rott et al., 2002).

An assumption shared by many language-learning researchers is that much of second language vocabulary is acquired incidentally during reading for meaning (Krashen, 1989; Rott, 2002). Reader's age, reading skill, text and word characteristics, vocabulary size, readers' existing topic knowledge and familiarity with concept presented by unknown words, are pinpointed as factors influencing incidental word learning from context. The impact of reading tasks on incidental vocabulary learning and retention has long been established. It is also believed that different reading tasks impose different levels of engagement with the text and thus leading to different amounts of vocabulary achievement and retention.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

According to what has been said so far, the following questions were addressed in this study:
1. Does the inclusion of pre-reading questions and inserted questions account for different amounts of incidental

vocabulary learning from text?

2. Does the inclusion of pre-reading and inserted questions have an impact on student's retention of incidentally learned vocabulary?

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Based on the question posed by the researcher, the following null hypotheses were proposed to be tested:

H01: There is no significant relationship between the location of the reading questions in the text (pre-reading questions and inserted reading questions) and incidental vocabulary learning.

H02: There is no meaningful relationship between the location of reading questions (pre-reading questions and inserted reading questions) and retention of the incidentally learned vocabulary.

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

A total of 88 male and female students studying English at the intermediate level at Pazhooheshgaran Language Institute in Shahinshahr were initially selected for this study. To determine the homogeneity of the subjects, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) test consisting of the vocabulary and structure parts was administered. Then 60 students with intermediate level of proficiency, according to OPT chart, were selected and, by using match-pair design, were divided into two groups of 30, namely, Group A and Group B. Group A received their reading texts with pre-reading questions and Group B received their reading text containing inserted questions.

B. Instrumentation

The instruments to serve the purposes of this researcher were the following:

1. An Oxford Placement Test (OPT) comprising of the vocabulary and structure sections to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects.

2. A pretest consisting of 60 multiple-choice vocabulary questions which contained the vocabulary which was intended to be tested at the end and the rest were distractors. The reason for the pretest was to select the vocabulary which was new to the students.

3. A number of informative reading texts for the two groups. The texts were about 200 words in length and approximately at the same level of difficulty like the passages in students' course book (Mosaic 1, Reading). The reading texts for Group A contained pre-reading questions while the texts intended for Group B contained inserted questions scattered throughout the body of the texts.

4. A number of vocabulary tests which were administered after each session of the treatment.

5. A forty-item teacher-made vocabulary test which contained the vocabulary items tested after each session and was administered two weeks after the last session to check the retention of the incidentally learned vocabulary.

In order to make sure about the validity of the tests, three university professors were consulted and they approved that the test items were well-prepared and served the intended purpose.

C. Procedure

First, in order to have 60 homogeneous students, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to 88 students studying at intermediate level at Pazhooheshgaran Language Institute. Then, according to OPT level chart, 60 intermediate students were selected and were divided into two 30-student groups, namely, group A and group B.

The next step was to decide about the vocabulary. To do so, a number of words were selected and in order to make sure that these words are unknown for the students, a pretest was prepared comprising 60 multiple-choice items containing the intended words. After the test the words which were unfamiliar to the students were selected. In other words, the researcher came up with 40 unfamiliar words and included these words in his experiment.

Then after two weeks the treatment started. For the treatment, the two groups read the same texts but the nature and the kind of tasks expected from them were different. In other words, Group A read the texts containing some pre-reading questions. Group B read the same texts with the same questions, but this time the questions were scattered throughout the body of the text (inserted questions).

The researcher himself conducted the research in the two classes. Students were told that the researcher was only interested in the way they read. They were told to try to find correct answers to the questions. The researcher did his best not to direct students' attention to vocabulary. He did not tell the students about the upcoming vocabulary test. The procedures for conducting the classes were as follows:

First, a "warm-up" was conducted and the students were introduced to the text. Then the passages were handed out. In order to set a time limit for the students' reading, the researcher asked four teachers to read the text and the question.

Then, after they finish reading their texts, the reading passages were collected and the subjects were allowed a five-minute break. After the break, the incidental vocabulary learning test, which comprised 8 questions, was administered. This procedure was followed in each session for five sessions. After the last session, for two weeks there was no test or treatment. Then the post-test which was a combination of all tests given to the students after each session

was conducted to measure the students' retention of the incidentally learned vocabulary.

D.   Data Analysis

In order to fulfill the objectives of this study the following statistical analyses were employed.

Analysis No. 1: Analysis No. 1 was a descriptive analysis of the whole subjects' performance on the OPT in order to select a homogeneous group of subjects for the study.

Analysis No. 2: A number of t-tests were run, one to compare the means of the two groups after each session with respect to incidental vocabulary learning, and one to compare the means of the two groups with respect to the retention of the incidentally learned vocabulary two weeks after the last session of the treatment.

V.   RESULTS

The results consist of two parts: part one includes the results of the tests which were administered after each session of the experiments and part two includes the results of the posttest which was carried on two weeks after the experiment.

A.   The Results of the Tests after Each Session

As it was mentioned, the experiment went on for five sessions and after each session a test of vocabulary consisting of 8 multiple choice items which contained the intended vocabulary was conducted. Figure 4.1 shows a graphic representation of the results of the tests and Tables 4.1 through 4.5 below show the descriptive statistics and the results of the t-tests regarding these tests. It should be noted here that for the ease of comparison all the scores were converted to a scale of 20
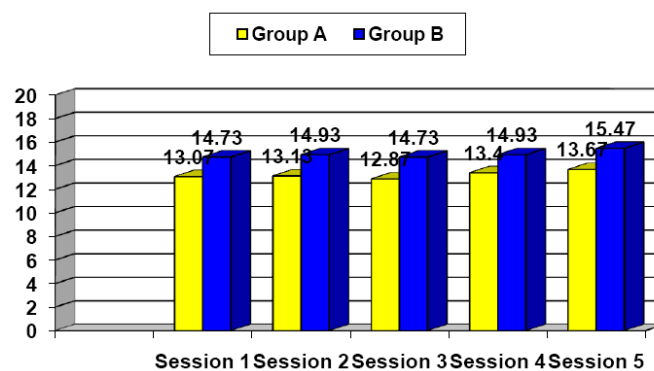
Figure 4.1. The Bar Graphic Representation of the Results of the Tests

Figure 4.2. The Line Graphic Representation of the Results of the Tests

TABLE 4.1.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE REASULTS OF THE t-TEST FOR SESSION 1A

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	Df	t	p
A	30	13.07	2.7.66	.505	58	2.405	.019
B	30	14.73	2.599	.475			

Group A: Inserted Question Group   Group B: Pre-question Group

TABLE 4.2.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE t-TEST FOR SESSION 2

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t	p
A	30	13.13	2.909	.531	58	2.57	.013
B	30	14.93	2.504	.457			

TABLE 4.3.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST FOR SESSION 3

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t	p
A	30	12.87	3.35	.612	58	2.358	.022
B	30	14.73	2.75	.5.3			

TABLE 4.4.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST FOR SESSION 4

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	T	p
A	30	13.4	3.069	.56	58	1.97	.054
B	30	14.93	2.959	.54			

TABLE 4.5.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST FOR SESSION 5

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	T	p
A	30	13.67	2.783	.508	58	2.709	.009
B	30	15.47	2.345	.428			

As it can be seen in the above tables, the results of the t-tests for sessions 1, 2, 3, and 5 show a significant difference between the performances of the two experimental groups; that is, the group receiving inserted questions performed better than the group received pre-reading questions. The results of session 4, however, show no significant difference between the results of the test of the two groups.

In order to find out about the total performances of the two groups, another t-test was run. Figure 4.3 shows a graphic representation of the results of this test and Table 4.6 descriptive statistics and the results of the t-test regarding this test.

Figure 4.3. The Graphic Representation of the Results of the Total Performances of the Groups

TABLE 4.6.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST FOR TOTAL PERFORMANCES OF THE GROUPS

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t	p
A	30	13.23	2.922	.534	58	2.445	.018
B	30	14.96	2.557	.467			

As it can be seen in the above table, the results of the t-test show that Group B, that is, the group receiving inserted questions outperformed Group A, that is, the group receiving pre-reading questions. This result rejects the first null hypothesis proposed in this study, that is, there is no significant relationship between the location of the reading questions in the text (pre-reading questions and inserted reading questions) and incidental vocabulary learning.

B. The Results of the Posttest

The next step was to review the results of the posttest which was administered two weeks after the completion of the experiment and through applying one last t-test compare the results of the performances of the two groups. Figure 4.3 shows a graphic representation of the results of the posttest and Table 4.7 below shows the results of the t-test.
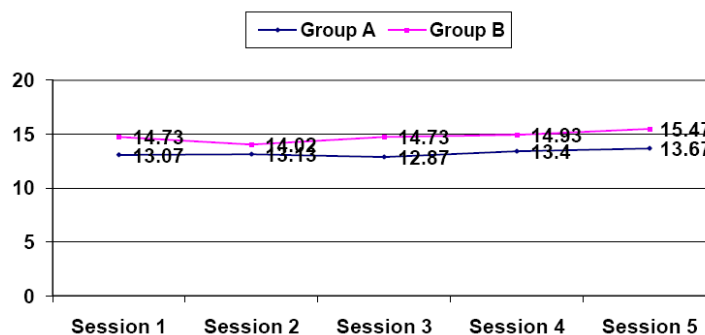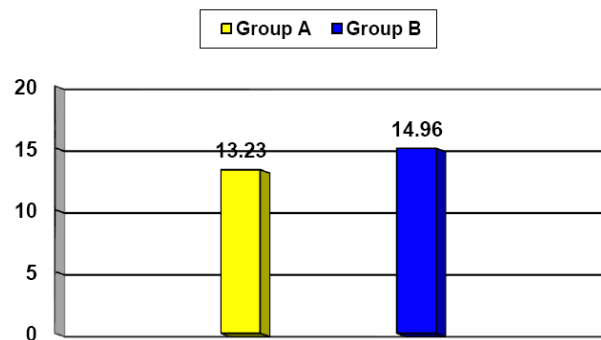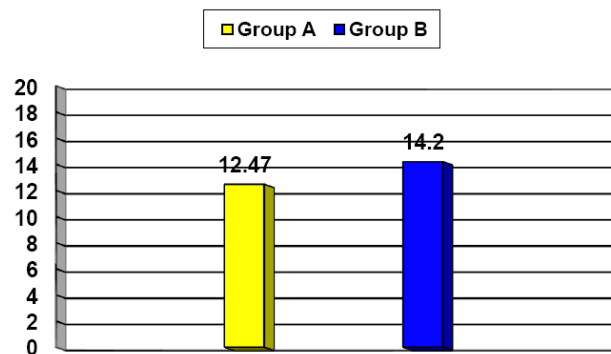
Figure 4.4. The Graphic Representation of the Results of the Posttests

TABLE 4.7.
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST FOR POSTTEST

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t	p
A	30	12.47	3.048	.557	58	2.208	.031
B	30	14.2	3.033	.554			

It can be seen in Table 4.7 that once again Group B, that is, the group with inserted questions, outperformed Group A, that is, the group with pre-reading questions. The results obtained rejects the second null hypothesis of this study which proposes that there is no meaningful relationship between the location of reading questions (pre-reading questions and inserted reading questions) and retention of the incidentally learned vocabulary.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this study was to determine the possible effects of different reading activities on vocabulary gain and the time these words are retained in the learners mind. Incidental vocabulary learning is a byproduct of reading which do not focus on vocabulary learning and many language learning researchers believe that for many learners much of second language vocabulary is acquired incidentally during reading for meaning (Rott et al., 2002). Incidental word learning is a slow and incremental process but it is valued in that learners do two things at once. As they read for comprehension they also expand their vocabulary. Coady (1979) after a review of second language research concludes that, the incidental acquisition hypothesis suggests that there is a gradual but steady incremental growth of vocabulary knowledge through meaningful interaction with texts. The incidental acquisition of vocabulary has been explained by Krashen (1989) in the context and framework of his Input hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, new, unfamiliar word is acquired when its significance is made clear to the learner.

Now given the high correlation with reading comprehension and incidental vocabulary gain we can conclude that teachers should pay more attention to this important source of vocabulary. Reading is a process in which the students who are more knowledgeable in vocabulary get richer. Therefore teachers should know that just providing students with reading materials without further aid does not lead to considerable amounts of vocabulary learning and longer retention.

As the findings of this study indicate, different reading tasks impose different levels of engagement with texts and thus lead to different amounts of vocabulary achievement and retention.

The results of this study showed the superiority of inserted questions over pre-reading questions in terms of degree of engagement with texts and amount of word learning. So teachers who seek vocabulary enrichment through reading are recommended to use tasks with higher involvement load.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Reading comprehension still is a very complicated area for many researchers and lots of questions about it are unanswered. Therefore, regarding the importance of the subject, further research can be done.

The participants of this study were Iranian boys and girls, studying English at intermediate level of language proficiency. Future research can include students of other levels or other nationalities.

This study determined the impact of only two kinds of reading tasks on incidental vocabulary and retention. Another study may focus on other reading tasks and incidental vocabulary learning and retention.

The relationship between incidental vocabulary learning and retention, and individual differences like aptitude was not the focus of this study. Another study might investigate this issue.

The present study did not pay attention to variables such as age and gender. Other studies might explore the relationship between students' age and gender and incidental vocabulary learning and retention.

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The Effects of Cooperative Learning on Improving College Students' Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—In cooperative learning students work with their peers to accomplish a shared goal through interdependence, interaction and team work among all group members rather than working alone. This article discusses three main methods of cooperative learning and how to implement cooperative learning in college English reading class. During the process some key elements should be taken into consideration, including classroom atmosphere, the design of tasks and the teacher's role.

Index Terms—cooperative learning, English reading, classroom activities

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges confronting English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners is how to improve their reading comprehension achievement, which is actually the concern of both EFL learners and instructors. Recent years have witnessed a growing interest in investigating and introducing approaches such as Cooperative Learning (CL) into classroom teaching to help students improve their reading skills. In the traditional teacher-centered classroom, teachers dominate the whole class and are regarded as the unique authority, which limits the students' chances to participate in real communication in classroom. It is necessary to build an effective model of English teaching, changing this kind of teacher-centered form and facilitating the development of students' five skills of English. Though cooperative learning is widely studied and recommended by educators and researchers, for most of the teachers there are still a lot of difficulties in how to apply it in English class. Consequently, the purpose of the present study is to explore the feasibility of the application of CL in reading class teaching.

II. WHAT IS COOPERATIVE LEARNING?

CL dates from the early 1970s in America, and achieved substantial development in the middle of 1970s to 1980s. It is a method of instruction whereby students grouped in small learning teams work in cooperation with each other to solve a problem, or to perform a task presented by the teacher. In David and Roger Johnson's opinion (2001), Cooperative Learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work on the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it. The Chinese scholar Wang Tan (2001) gave the following definition, "Cooperative Learning is a system of teaching strategy which promotes the students to cooperate in heterogeneous teams toward a common goal and are rewarded according to the success of the team."

From above, we can see CL shares the same idea that students work together and are responsible for their own as well as others' learning. Different from traditional group instruction, however, CL is much more than simply placing students in groups and telling them to work together. It is only when groups are structured so that students understand what they are expected to do and how they are expected to work together that the potential for cooperation and learning is maximized (Johnson & Johnson, 1990). In fact, the following elements crucial to structured and effective cooperative learning, as described by Johnson and Johnson (1990) were included. They were: (a) task interdependence which was established in the groups so that each member had to contribute to the group task; (b) individual accountability was established so that all members understood they were required to report on their own contributions; (c) students actively promoted each other's learning; (d) students were trained in the interpersonal and small-group skills needed to facilitate group work. These skills included: actively listening to each other, providing constructive feedback to each other on suggestions and ideas; encouraging everyone to contribute to the group efforts; sharing tasks and resources fairly; trying to understand the other person's perspective; and, monitoring and evaluating the group's progress.

III. THEORETICAL RELEVANCE AND EFFICACY OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Research on the applications of cooperative learning suggest that learners working together acquire more language and social skills than their counterparts studying the same content under individualistic classroom conditions. As such, it accommodates the tenets of the theories of cognitive and social constructivism as proposed by Piaget and Vygotsky, respectively. It also maximizes opportunities for authentic and communicative language practice in a motivating, supportive, and stress-reduced environment. Finally, CL correlates to language acquisition theory in the domains of comprehensible input and output, i+1 discourse, low affective filter, bridging social language and academic language, and combining language and content learning.

Cooperative learning is beneficial for second language learners in a number of ways. Small group work enriches the language classroom with comprehensible, developmentally appropriate, redundant, and somewhat accurate input as described by Krashen (1988) as well as promoting frequent, communicative, and referential classroom talk in a supportive, motivating, and feedback-rich environment. Furthermore, Olsen and Kagan (1992) maintained that cooperative learning offers three major benefits relative to (a) providing a richness of alternatives to structure interaction among students, (b) addressing content area learning and language development needs within the same organizational framework, and (c) increasing opportunities for individualized instruction. McDonell (1992) argued that the cooperative classroom is well-suited for second language learners as it enables them to communicate, collaborate, problem-solve, and think critically.

IV.   METHODS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Essentially, cooperative learning includes a variety of strategies and structures that utilize students' collaboration to enhance learning and maximize interaction among students according to the key elements of CL put forward by Johnson and Johnson. Table 1 presents the various cooperative learning models, their history, developers and possible primary applications in the context of ESL/EFL instruction.

TABLE 1
MODERN METHODS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Researcher Developer	Date	Method	ESL/EFL Primary Applications
Johnson & Johnson	Mid 1970s	Learning Together	Reading, Writing, Speaking, Culture
De Vries & Edward	Early 1970s	Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)	Language Rules and Mechanics
Sharan & Sharan	Mid 1970s	Group Investigation (GI)	Writing, Culture
Aronson, Blaney, Sikes, Stephan & Snapp; Slavin	Late 1970s	Jigsaw Procedure	Reading, Literature
Slavin	Late 1970s	Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)	Language Rules and Mechanics
Cohen	Early 1980s	Complex Instruction (CI)	Social Skills, Culture, Reading, Writing, Language Rules and Mechanics
Kagan	Mid 1980s	Cooperative learning Structures	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing
Stevens, Madden, Slavinn, & Farnish	Mid 1980s	Curriculum Packages: Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)	Reading, Writing, Spelling, Vocabulary, Literature

Out of the many methods that different teachers or researchers have developed, the following three have received the most attention from English teachers. The first cooperative form of learning is Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD). According to Ghaith and Yaghi (1998), the STAD technique has consistently been shown to be among the most simple and effective CL methods in improving student achievement of well defined objectives in various subjects. Slavin (1978) asserts that STAD is a technique of CL which includes small heterogeneous teams of 4-6 members who tutor each other on the material in the course and prepare each other for weekly quizzes. To be more specific, students are assigned to four- to six-member learning teams that are mixed in performance level, sex, and ethnicity. The teacher presents a lesson, and then students work within their teams to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. Finally, all students take individual quizzes on the material, at which time they may not help one another. STAD operates on the principle that students work together to learn and are responsible for their teammates' learning as well as their own, and emphasizes having team goals that are dependent on the learning of all group members.

Jigsaw is another form of cooperative instruction. The jigsaw learning technique, first developed and implemented by Elliot Aronson in 1978, is a structured, cooperative strategy that avoids many of the problems of other forms of learning in a group. In the jigsaw classroom, the day's lesson is divided into several segments, and each student, who is in one of several jigsaw groups (of three to five students each), is assigned to learn about one segment of the written material. Before reporting on their topic to their jigsaw groups, students meet first with other students who have been assigned the same segment (one from each jigsaw group) in a temporary "expert" group. Together, the experts research their segment, discuss, and clear up questions with each other. Finally, the jigsaw groups reconvene, and each student in each group acts as a tutor to the group on his or her specialty topic. Group members must work together as a team to accomplish a common goal; each person depends on all the others. Group goals and individual goals complement and support each other.

The third model applicable to improving reading achievement is Learning Together (LT) developed by David

Johnson and Roger Johnson at the University of Minnesota. It involves students working in four- or five-member heterogeneous groups on assignment sheets. The groups hand in a single sheet, and receive praise and rewards based on the group product. The method emphasizes teambuilding activities before students begin working together and regular discussions within groups about how well they are working together.

V.   COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND ENGLISH READING

Studies have shown that cooperative learning provides better learning opportunities. It will increase language practice opportunities for participants, promote positive affective climate, and motivate learners. On the other hand, it is widely recognized that reading plays an important role in improving the comprehensive language competence in English learning and is regarded as the core and focus of English teaching. Therefore, English reading counts for a big proportion in English learning. Thus we should take cooperative learning into college English reading class. In teaching reading, great care should be taken regarding classroom atmosphere, the design of reading tasks and the skills involved, and the teacher's role.

First, it is quite necessary to create relaxing and harmonious classroom atmosphere. Relaxing and harmonious classroom atmosphere will result in high motivation and interest in learning English, which in turn will be beneficial to learners' achievement. In the traditional teacher-centered and competitive English classroom, the students are often ignored and always feel anxious and oppressive. Some researches show that under the pressure of peers' competition the learners are always more anxious and nervous than inferior to the students in the cooperative learning groups. However, harmonious and relaxing classroom atmosphere can provide students safety, warmth, empathy, help, genuineness and respect. In such an atmosphere, the affective filtering is weakened to a lower degree. Students are encouraged to perform in their own way without worrying about negative social evaluation, their anxiety is relieved, motivation internalized, and they are likely to participate in learning and encourage each other to achieve goals actively. Stevick (1988) believed that the classroom atmosphere a teacher cultivates greatly influences the motivation and attitudes of the learners.

In the second place, the selected texts and attached tasks should be carefully chosen and designed to develop the students' reading skills. Preferably, tasks should motivate student and should be designed to encourage selective and intelligent reading for the main meaning rather than test the students' understanding of trivial details. Also, tasks should help develop students' reading skills rather than test their reading comprehension. Generally speaking, teaching reading in the classroom is divided into three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post reading. In the pre-reading stage, some tasks should be assigned to the learning groups before class, which include previewing the text, looking up new words in the dictionary, or colleting relevant knowledge about the topic. Students are encouraged to find out difficult points in previewing the text on their own. Then discussion will be held on their findings within the group and group members should help and support each other during the process. In classroom teaching, the teacher should try to set the context or scene around the theme of the text, getting the students familiarized with the cultural and social background knowledge relevant to the reading text as well as the general knowledge about the world. Take Unit Six Christmas Spirit in *Zooming In: An Integrated English Course* (Book One) for example. The learning groups are required to collect and sort out related information on Christmas party and gathering, celebrations of Christmas and famous quotes about Christmas. When the class begins, one representative from each group is asked to give a report on their colleted data. After that, the teacher will explain some words which will make it difficult for the students' comprehension of the text and leave some for them to guess in reading. Then students scan the text and make predictions based on the title, illustrations, new words, True or False questions, and so on. Finally, the teacher asks each group to express their views on the following question: What is the real spirit of Christmas and how Christmas spirit touched the hearts of those concerned? Through these cooperative activities, the teacher aims at arousing the enthusiasm of the students and developing their ability of colleting and sorting out information as well as their team spirit in collaborative work. In the while-reading stage, the teacher should help the students get familiar with the content and structure of the text by skimming and scanning. The group members will guess the meaning of some new words and expressions in the text and each group will report their answers in class. Then they read the text carefully and are encouraged to raise questions based on their understanding of the text. In the post reading part, the design of tasks should provide the students with opportunities to relate what they have read to what they already know or what they feel. In addition the tasks should enable students to produce language based on what they have learned. The group members may discuss the topic sentence for each part and the main idea of the text and summarize their understanding of the "Christmas Spirit". Then the teacher may help them analyze the organization of the type of the text and the writing style. Discussion, role-play, gap-filling, retelling, false summary, and writing are recommended activities to provide an effective platform for cooperative learning after class and strengthen what they have learned in class.

Thirdly, the teacher plays an important role in class. Teachers should help the students not merely to cope with one particular text in front of them but with their reading strategies and reading ability in general. We should encourage them to use reading strategies which will enable them to tackle any further texts. Teachers should also help students to read on their own. We should aim at gradually withdrawing our guidance as our students are making progress so that they eventually become independent readers. These principles require teachers attach great importance to student-centeredness in class, which is just an advantage of cooperative learning. In cooperative learning, peers are both

"tutor" and "tutee", who provide the kind of support that is usually provided by the teacher. The teacher in group activities is free to listen and assess individual student learning, facilitating student interaction and offering individual help, and taking note of general problems to address to the class. It is also possible in these groups to adapt the tasks both in terms of the content, the level and the type of reporting required for individual students. The teacher provides the chance for reading, the materials students will need, and guidance and support throughout the process. The teacher should design more cooperative learning activities and make students understand that cooperation with peers will help them improve academic achievement effectively. As Johnson and Johnson said, "to great extent, learning efficiency will be increased a lot when each individual student offers task-related help and support reciprocally." Under the friendly and cooperative situation, the students can get more help, warmth, trust, respect, and support from peers.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is feasible and effective to implement CL into reading classes. First, this student-centered approach changes the one-way operation in traditional classroom and creates harmonious atmosphere by establishing active cooperation among students. It provides EFL learners with opportunities to acquire a foreign language through group interaction and discussion where their stress will be reduced by working in small groups. Therefore, fear will be lower and their motivation to learn will be enhanced greatly. The change from passive reception into active cooperation and exploration arouses their interest and involvement in classroom activities. However, in order to bring this new approach into full play in teaching English, teachers should further make theoretical and empirical studies and make great effort in designing more suitable and effective classroom activities so as to improve their reading competence as well as their language skills.

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The Contribution of Movie Clips to Idiom Learning Improvement of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—Learning idioms in a foreign language in which there are numerous problems in exposing the learners to authentic situations has faced many pedagogical difficulties. Many researchers (Gibbs, 1992: Honeck, 1997: Simpson & Mendi, 2003) have tried to know more about the process of idiom learning and the effect of mother tongue on understanding idioms, because idioms are among the difficult areas of learning a foreign or second language. This study was an attempt to examine the impact of applying movie clips including idioms on the quality of idiom learning. To this end, 100 gifted high school students, aged between 16 and 18 were selected. Then, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to select 60 intermediate students. Due to the matched-pair technique, they were divided into two equal experimental and control groups. In order to find out whether the students have any prior knowledge about the new idioms, a pre-test including an idiom multiple choice test was used. The control group was taught 30 idioms conventionally using synonyms and antonyms. The experimental group received the treatment and the idioms were taught using movie clips. After 10 weeks an idiom multiple choice test based on the materials taught was administered to both groups. Then, 60 students and 10 high school English teachers completed an attitudinal questionnaire reflecting their attitudes towards learning idioms through the suggested way. The statistical analyses of the collected data showed that there was a significant difference between the obtained means of the two groups, meaning that, the experimental group outperformed the control one. Therefore, teachers, students, test makers, test designers, and materials developers should consider the effectiveness of using movie clips and films in L2 idiom learning/teaching.

Index Terms—EFL learners, figurative language, idiom learning, movie clips

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning is a cognitive process that involves conscious and active behavior. Students look for similarities and differences between new information and prior knowledge, and in this way are able to effectively assimilate new learning into existing cognitive structures (Piaget,1980).

Language, according to Hudson (1980), is at the center of human life and the ability to learn language is among the greatest mental achievements of mankind. Studies of language in television news programs have found that speakers use one unique metaphor for every 25 words (Graesser, Mio, & Millis, 1989). Linguists and educators in various language-related fields have been able to understand , to some extent, what language is and how it is learned as a second or foreign language and how it can be taught. Language is composed of many different parts each of which is important in learning. Learning and understanding idioms, metaphoric and idiomatic expressions have long played an important role in the English language. In fact, the use of idioms is so widespread that understanding these expressions is essential to successful communication, whether in listening, speaking, reading, or writing.

Gibbs (1992) believes that by developing a clear understanding of figurative language, students can further comprehend texts that contain metaphorical and lexical meanings beyond the basic word level. Honeck (1997) notes that figurative language is language that means one thing literally but is taken to mean something different and it is a special aspect of language. Gibbs (1980) holds that a strong knowledge of idioms will help the students to be better speakers and negotiators. They will also be in a better position to use their knowledge in appropriate contexts. So, it would be true if we conclude that the amount of the frequency of idioms is an important aspect of vocabulary acquisition and language teaching (Fernando, 1996). Native speakers of a language use idioms all the time. Idiomatic usage is so common in every language, and of course in English, that it seems very difficult to speak or write without using idioms.

Films are motivating for EFL/ESL teaching because they embody the notion that "a film with a story that wants to be told rather than a lesson that needs to be taught "(Ward & Lepeintre, 1996). Films are such valuable and rich resources for teaching because they present colloquial English in real life contexts rather than artificial situation; an opportunity of being exposed to different native speaker voices, slangs, reduced speeches, stress, accents, and dialects, (Stempleski, 2000).

It is also interesting to be aware of this fact that whether knowing only the literal meaning of the idioms will enable the students to extend that literal meaning to figurative sense in general reading. In other words, this major question comes to mind: Does watching movie clips including idioms have any significant effect on L2 students' ability to grasp the figurative meaning of idioms?

In Iran there are special schools designed merely for brilliant and talented students such as, National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents (NODET). The students enter these schools through entrance exams. Because of the high level of students' intelligence, the level of teaching and the materials taught in these schools are somehow more advanced than the ordinary ones. In English classes, extra hours are devoted to extracurricular activities. Due to the students' interests and desires, different related activities such as reading various texts, watching films, listening to stories, discussions, giving lectures, hot seat, translating proverbs, idioms, and poems are performed.

The purpose of the present study which has focused on two ways of teaching idiomatic expressions, using movie clips including the idioms and the conventional way of teaching the idioms using synonyms - antonyms, was to explore whether movie clips including the idioms can help learners comprehend their figurative meaning more effectively.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In a study Irujo (1986) states that in a second language learning classroom all the learners must be prepared to meet the challenge of idioms occurring frequently in spoken and written English.

In another study Fine (1988) compared a foreign-language learner with a child L1 acquisition. One area that caused problem was idioms learning. He taught the idioms accompanied with their stories behind, so the learners got the meaning of idioms in a better way. Boers (1992) in his article, 'Raising metaphoric awareness' states that by developing a clear understanding of figurative language, students can further comprehend texts that contain metaphorical and lexical meanings beyond the basic word level.

According to Cooper (1998) teachers think one of the reasons their students made up dialogues that always seemed so unnatural to them is that the students used the idioms without regarding their pragmatic function in the discourse. Due to Cooper (1999), idiom study presents a special language problem for all language learners because the figurative meaning is unpredictable. Nippold, Maron, & Schwarts (2001) findings show that factors such as culture, context, academic literacy (reading, writing, and language ability) and familiarity influence significantly students' comprehension of idioms. In another study Simpson and Mendis (2003) mention that information on the frequency of idioms in academic spoken American English has helped language teachers which idioms might be useful to teach to ESL/EFL students. Sprenger et al. (2006) in their study report the lexical representation of idioms contains information specifying the syntactic properties of these expressions.

Cognitive semantic studies of figurative language (Gibbs, 1994: Kovecses, 1990: Lakoff, 1987) have shown that considerable numbers of idioms are not completely arbitrary. Figurative idioms meaning are not fully predictable on the basis of a literal reading. For example, the expression *Time flies* can be motivated by the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT (also evidenced by statements such as *I'm falling behind schedule again, The holidays are approaching* and *Those days are over*).

Film communication offers links between classrooms and society. Films can help explore cultural context, maybe integrated easily into the curriculum, are entertaining. And allow flexibility of materials and teaching techniques, (Wood, 1995).

In the Clifford et al.'s (1995) study, children's knowledge gain about a topic after watching a science film was also examined. The participating primary school and middle school children had different knowledge levels before watching the science program, and both age groups benefited from watching it. This benefit was found in terms of open-ended questions. Interestingly, there were no differences in the amount of knowledge growth between the age groups, indicating that prior knowledge does not determine the amount of learning.

According to Massi & Merrio (1996) good films can serve as valuable pedagogical aids, both for classroom use and self-study.Regarding the power of films as a medium, Massi, & Merrio (1996) believe that it can be exploited in a number of ways. One possible use of films in the language program is to promote new ideas and expand the learner's horizons. In a content-based syllabus, for instance, a particular film can be used to vividly illustrate situations which are unfamiliar or inaccessible and provide the learner with a stimulus which serves as a springboard for further discussion of an issue.

Fisch et al.'s study (Fisch et al., 2001) relies on one of the few theoretical models about learning with educational television (Fisch, 2000), although this model is primarily concerned with comprehension. It is postulated that the comprehension of an educational film depends not only on the comprehensibility of the educational content, but also on the narrative content in which the educational messages are embedded (Fisch et al., 2001).

Secles, Herron & Tomasello (1992) explain", viewing the video and movie clips would enhance students' learning of vocabulary and idiomatic structures because of the contextualized presentation of the video", and viewing English Speaking Foreign Films of course gives necessary exposure and experience.

A study (Beuscher, Robers, & Schnider, 2005) revealed a significant increase in specific knowledge as well as strong age effects of test format. Children aged 6, 8 and 10 years were shown a short film about sugar production and 1 week later individually questioned about it using different test formats: free recall, open-ended questions and recognition

questions. Expectedly, older children outperformed younger children and open-ended and recognitions yielded more correct information than free recall. Although people are probably aware that popular history films are partially fictionalized, previous research indicates that information from fiction is often integrated with real-world knowledge, which leads to learning and subsequent production of misinformation (Marsh & Fazio, 2006). Quiang,H & Wolff(2007) tried to explain the notion of using films , exposing students to the language has been explored and has been recognized as being more beneficial for students' communicative skills, rather than grammar and such. Many The entertainment value of a film increase interest in the topic, which can boost people's motivation to learn (Silvia, 2008).

Fazly, Cook, & Stevenson (2009) looked into the usefulness of some of the identified linguistic properties of idioms for their automatic recognition. Specifically, they developed statistical measures that each model presents a specific property of idiomatic expressions by looking at their actual usage patterns in text. The researchers used these statistical measures in a type-based classification task where they automatically separate idiomatic expressions (expressions with a possible idiomatic interpretation) from similar-on-the-surface literal phrases (for which no idiomatic interpretation is possible).

In the previous studies, none of the researchers paid attention to idiom learning through watching films or movie clips. In this study, however, it has been attempted to investigate whether or not showing films or movie clips including idioms has any effects on the acquisition of idioms by EFL Iranian learners.

A. Teaching Idioms

One important component of successful language learning is the mastery of idiomatic forms of expressions including idioms, collocations, and sentence phrases, collectively referred to as formulaic sequence (Wray, 2000). Irujo (1986) believes that teaching idioms requires a multi-faceted approach. Sometimes, a teacher needs to explain the grammar of idioms, such as the difference between separable and non-separable verbal idioms.

B. Approaches to Teach Formulaic Language

The first approach is devoted to Willis (1990) who favors "procedures which make [the] patterns salient' (personal communication). He believes that "we need to help students to notice patterning and to speculate about them". His approach introduces formulaic sequence incidentally, as part of the body of data used to demonstrate words in their customary usage. The rational is clear and sensible:

The commonest pattern in English occurs again and again with the commonest words in English. If we are to provide learners with language experience which offers exposure to the most useful patterns of the language, we might as well begin by researching the most useful words in the language (Willis, 1990, p.38)

The second approach proposed by Nattinger & Decarrio (1992) deals with the interactional functions accompanied by individual examples of common formulaic sequences. They focus on their usefulness in teaching conversation and recommend the following exercises:

• Pattern practice drills using fixed routines, to develop confidence and fluency;

• Increased variation " allowing them to analyze the pattern further" (Nattinger and DeCarrio, 1992 p.32)

The third approach which belongs to Lewis (1993), downgrades the significance of the single words as a unit and prefers the broader term like lexical item. In this approach, the lexical phrase is important. So he selects lexical phrases on the basis of their "archetiicality" and his aim is to provide:

• "a large vocabulary, if low level students are initially unable to grammaticalize it".

• "balance between relatively rare words carrying considerable meaning and relatively wide and frequent pattern with low meaning content"(Lewis 1993 p.58).

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every language has phrases or sentences that cannot be understood literally. Even if you know the meaning of all the words in a phrase and understand the grammar completely, the meaning of the phrase may still be confusing. Many clichés, proverbs, idioms, slang phrases, phrasal verbs, and common sayings offer this kind of problem. For long, learning idioms has always been a big problem for students especially the foreign language learners. Any foreign language learner knows that idioms are essential and their misunderstanding leads to a feeling of insecurity.

Boers (1992) states that it is inevitable for students to face problems dealing with idioms by knowing this fact that their meanings are not clear and cannot be attained directly at the first look. Because of the tricky nature of idioms, students face problems dealing with them.

Educational films for students aim to impart knowledge about a certain topic like idiom learning. In this study it will be shown how much and what kind of idioms students can remember from educational films and how idiom acquisition through films will be enhanced.

Iranian students studying English as a foreign language have no desirable and practical conditions in their schools, because they don't have sufficient exposure to authentic situations needed to become proficient enough at English language components like using and learning idioms. Movie clips and films offer endless opportunities of sound activities for developing fluency. The key to use films and movies effectively mainly lies in the teacher's ability in preparing students to receive the film's message, (King, 2002).

Very little has been done to investigate the effectiveness of using films and movie clips on idiom learning in Iran. Thus, it has been hypothesized that teaching idioms by using movie clips including the idioms might facilitate their learning. In addition, it might enable the learners to go beyond the literal meaning of the idioms when supported by appropriate visualizers like films and movie clips.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study attempted to investigate appropriate answers to the following questions:
1. Does watching the movie clips including the idioms facilitate idioms learning of Iranian high school EFL learners?
2. Do L2 learners have positive attitude towards the application of movie clips including the idioms in teaching new idioms?
3. Do L2 teachers have positive attitude towards the application of movie clips including the idioms in teaching new idioms?

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. Watching movie clips including the idioms doesn't facilitate idioms learning of Iranian high school EFL learners.
2. L2 learners have no positive attitude towards the application of movie clips including the idioms in teaching new idioms.
3. L2 teachers have no positive attitude towards the application of movie clips including the idioms in teaching new idioms.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Needless to say, it is important for teachers to make learning of the idioms easier and more effective. Different teachers use different methods for teaching idioms. As it was mentioned earlier idioms are among the difficult areas of learning. Teachers may compare the idioms of two languages and ask students to find appropriate equivalence for them in their mother tongue. It is also probable that they use the idioms in related contexts. These teachers believe that the co-text can help the students infer the meanings of idioms and the retention of them becomes possible in exams. There are also teachers who classify the idioms due to their themes to make them easier for efficient learning. There are educational books that are designed according to this fact.

In this study, one more solution was proposed for the mentioned problem. Words and phrases have been born based on the society expectations. Idioms are no exception. In this study, it was suggested that if the language learners watched movie clips or films including the idioms, they could learn the idioms in a more effective way. Thus, the purpose of this study was to make it clear whether watching movie clips including the idioms could be effective.

VII. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

An original population pool of 100 Iranian high school students was randomly selected. Then, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to select 60 students with intermediate proficiency level. Next, due to the matched-pair technique, they were divided into two groups, one experimental and one control, identical in number. All the participants in the research were high school boys, aged between 16 and 18. Ten high school English teachers also participated in the study to offer their attitudes towards teaching idioms.

B. Instrumentation

This study proceeded in applying three instruments: First, a proficiency test was administered to screen the subjects and homogenize them based on their level of proficiency.

Second, an achievement test for the final measurement and evaluation was conducted. It included thirty idiom multiple-choice items, with four alternatives for each sentence. It was designed in advance by the researcher through pilot studies. Based on the performance of the participants the characteristics of the individual items were determined and some items were revised, in order to ensure test replicability. The reliability of test was calculated by using KR-21 formula. The results showed a reliability index of (0.945). To determine the validity of the test the researcher asked some experts and English teachers to pass their comments on the content of the test. The test had a total of thirty points and the time allowance was thirty minutes.

Third, an attitudinal questionnaire including 15 items (see Appendix A) that would show the students' and teachers' attitudes towards learning English idioms was administered. The questionnaire used is Robert Gardner's (1985), Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which is made up of over 130 items, and its reliability and validity have already been confirmed (Gardner, 1985, 2005; Gardner & Macintyre, 1991: Gardner & Macintyre, 1983). The reliability of the questionnaire were determined through an exact pilot study. To determine the validity of the questionnaire the researchers asked some experts and English teachers to pass their comments on validity and content

appropriateness of the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by using KR-21 formula (R=.87).

C. Procedures

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following procedures were followed:

First, it was a selection of the subjects and administration of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). Second, an idiom multiple-choice test which was constructed by the researchers was administered. This test was piloted to determine its validity and reliability. After getting the results of the Oxford Placement Test, the homogeneity of subjects was determined. In order to extract the outliners, the researcher included only those subjects whose scores were at intermediate proficiency level and they were assigned on two groups of experimental and control.

Before teaching the new idiom, the previous idioms were reviewed. The whole project of teaching took two and a half months. The students' tasks were to go over the idioms and make themselves ready for the test at the end of the term. In group A the idioms were taught by showing movie clips including the idioms. In group B the same idioms were taught only by teaching synonyms and antonyms of the new words in idioms. To exemplify, an example of two ways of teaching the idiom "***between the devil and the dark blue sea***" will follow:

Group A: In this group at first the researchers taught the idioms in movie clips. The researchers showed a clip to the students that included the idiom ' *between the devil and the dark blue sea'*. The students watched the clip two or three times in order to get the idiom. After that one of the researchers asked the students to write the idiom on a piece of paper.

Group B: For this group the researchers taught only the figurative meaning by providing a synonym for the idiom – to be in a difficult situation – and then he wrote an example on the board. e.g.,: David had an important final test last week and his father was terribly sick, in fact he was between the devil and the dark blue sea. The purpose of giving this example was to make students familiar with the way to use the idiom in different situations.

In most of the American films the actors, actresses, and directors use the idioms in the episodes of the films. The researchers extracted some parts or clips of films and showed them to students. The comprehensibility, culture, appropriateness of content, and the comfort level of students needed to be taken into account in the process of selecting a film.

The idioms were chosen based on students' level of proficiency, culture, religion, interest, motivation, and practical feasibility. The final test that was the post-test of the study included twenty items. For every item there was a situation which could be completed just by one idiom out of the four idioms given in each items.

At the end, an attitudinal questionnaire was administered .Sixty students and 10 high school teachers completed in it in order to reflect their attitudes towards teaching and learning idioms using movie clips. It included 15 items. The attitude/motivation scale of the original 5-point Likert format of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) Gardner, (1985) & Clement et al.'s (1994) was adapted from ' strongly disagree ' to ' strongly agree '. The scales were coded as (Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree= 5). The data from questionnaire was fed into the computer and then analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, & standard deviation) were computed for all items involved in the questionnaire of the study.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several statistical analyses were concluded to answer the research questions in this study.

This study required a comparison of two groups drawn from the population (third grade) senior gifted high school students in Shahrekord (a province in Iran).

A. The Pretests

After the administration of the Oxford Placement Test at the first session of the study**,** the subjects were divided into two intact groups of experimental and control. Then, in order to ascertain the homogeneity of the two groups, a t-test was run. Figure 8.1 indicates the graphical representation of the means and Table 1 shows the results of the t-test.
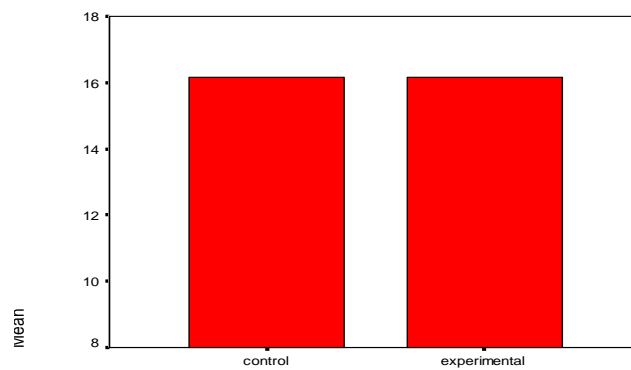
Figure 8.1. The Graphic Represetation of the Means on the OPT

TABLE 1.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE OPT

Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	CODE	
.322	1.763	16.17	30	control group	OPTTESTT
.267	1.464	16.17	30	experimental group	

TABLE 2.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE OPT

t-test for Equality of Means					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			
Std. Error Difference	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	df	t	Sig.	F		
.418	.00	1.000	58	.000	.141	2.233	Equal variances assumed	OPTT ESTT
.418	.00	1.000	56.104	.000			Equal variances not assumed	

As presented in Tables 1 and 2. the t-observed is .000 at the significant level of 1.000 which means the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group and the control group are homogeneous. In order to establish the homogeneity of groups in terms of idiom knowledge prior to the study, an idiom test comprising 30 multiple-choice items was administered to both groups as the pretest. Then, the performances of the students on this test were compared and analyzed applying another t-test. Figure 2 shows the graphic representation of the means and Tables 3 and 4. represent the results of the second t-test.
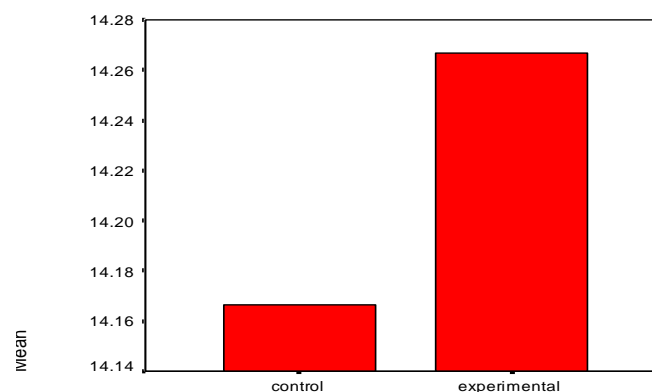

Figure 8.2. The Graphic Representation of the Means on the Pretest

TABLE 3.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE PRETEST

Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	CODE	
.325	1.783	14.17	30	control group	PRETEST
.295	1.617	14.27	30	experimental group2	

TABLE 4.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE PRETEST

t-test for Equality of Means					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			
Std. Error Difference	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	df	t	Sig.	F		
.439	-.10	.821	58	-.228	.372	.809	Equal variances assumed	PRETEST
.439	-.10	.821	57.459	-.228			Equal variances not assumed	

The above table shows that the amounts of t-observed is statistically not significant (t=0.228, p=0.821); therefore, it can be claimed that two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of the experiment regarding their idiom prior knowledge.

B. The Posttest

After 10 sessions of instruction, the same idiom measure used as the pretest was administered to the groups as the posttest. In order to answer the first question of this study, another t-test was applied to the scores of the posttest. Figure 3 shows the graphic representation of the means and Tables 5 and 6. represent the results of this t-test.
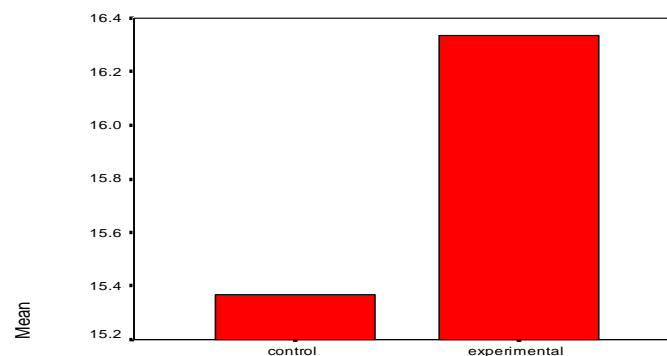
Figure 8.3.The Graphic Representation of the Means on the Posttest

TABLE 5.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE POSTTEST

Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	CODE	
.260	1.426	15.37	30	control group	POSTTEST
.216	1.184	16.33	30	experimental group2	

TABLE 6.
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE POSTTEST

t-test for Equality of Means					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			
Std. Error Difference	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	df	t	Sig.	F		
.338	-.97	.006	58	-2.856	.172	1.913	Equal variances assumed	POSTTEST
.338	-.97	.006	56.107	-2.856			Equal variances not assumed	

As it is displayed in Tables 5. and 6. the amount of t-observed for the effect of teaching etymology on idiom learning is 2.856 at the probability level of .006 which shows a statistically significant difference between the two groups. In

other words, the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on the test of the effectiveness of teaching the etymology of idioms on idiom learning. This result safely rejects the null hypothesis which states that teaching the etymology of idioms has no effect on idiom learning, and it can be claimed that the treatment did affect the participants' idiom learning.

C. Attitudinal Questionnaire

At the end of the study, an attitudinal questionnaire including 15 items that showing the students' and teachers' attitudes towards learning English idioms was administered. In order to answer the second question of this study, the data received from the questionnaire fed into the computer then analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, standard deviation) were shown in Table 7. Comparison between the mean scores of the questions illustrated that the students strongly agreed with questions 1, 3, 6, 11, and 12.

The other questions (2, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 14) showed the students' moderate attitudes towards teaching and learning idioms among these 15 questions (Table 8.7.). In comparison to other questions, Q5 (watching movie clips including the idioms can be important to the students for comprehension of idiomatic meaning) , Q4 (learning the idioms using movie clips can be important to the student because it makes long retention of idioms) and Q15 (learning the idioms using movie clips is important because without learning them masterly, the students feel something is missed) with mean scores of 3.32 , 3.31 , and 3.25 showed low level of having positive attitude towards idiom learning and Q13 (watching movie clips including the idioms can be important because the students can interpret the figurative meaning of the idioms by using visual aids) had the lowest mean in the questionnaire. It might be due to their lack of using films and movie clips including the idioms in their course of schooling.

TABLE.7.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS IDIOM LEARNING   (N = 60)

Items:	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
Q1:	0	3	9	46	2	3.78	0.522
Q2:	0	5	17	34	4	3.61	0.682
Q3:	0	1	15	39	5	3.80	0.588
Q4:	0	2	22	33	3	3.31	0.630
Q5:	0	6	31	21	2	3.32	0.685
Q6:	0	0	7	48	5	3.96	0.430
Q7:	0	2	18	40	0	3.66	0.546
Q8:	0	3	15	38	4	3.72	0.682
Q9:	0	3	19	34	4	3.65	0.678
Q10:	0	7	24	27	2	3.40	0.743
Q11:	0	1	10	45	4	3.86	0.525
Q12:	0	0	16	40	4	3.80	0.503
Q13:	0	5	39	16	0	3.18	0.550
Q14:	0	2	18	37	3	3.68	0.522
Q15:	0	3	39	18	0	3.25	0. 525
Overall mean score						**3.60**	

The overall mean score of 3.60 showed that the students had quite high positive attitude towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms. These results safely reject the second null hypothesis which states that L2 learners have no positive attitude towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms, and it can be claimed that the L2 learners have positive attitude towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, & standard deviation) of the teachers' attitudes towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms were shown in Table 7. Comparison between the mean scores of the questions illustrated that the teachers were strongly agree with questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 12.

TABLE.8.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS IDIOM LEARNING (N = 10)

Items:	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
Q1:	0	0	0	3	7	4.70	0.483
Q2:	0	0	0	4	6	4.60	0.516
Q3:	0	0	0	3	7	4.70	0.483
Q4:	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	0.527
Q5:	0	0	0	6	4	4.40	0.516
Q6:	0	0	0	3	7	4.70	0.483
Q7:	0	0	0	3	7	4.70	0.483
Q8:	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	0.527
Q9:	0	0	0	6	4	4.40	0.516
Q10:	0	0	0	10	0	4.00	0.000
Q11:	0	0	0	2	8	4.80	0.422
Q12:	0	0	1	1	8	4.70	0.675
Q13:	0	0	2	8	0	3.80	0.422
Q14:	0	0	3	6	1	3.80	0.632
Q15:	0	0	2	7	1	3.90	0.568
Overall mean score						**4.41**	

The other questions (5, 9, 10, and 15) showed the teachers' moderate attitudes towards te idioms using movie clips(Table 8). In comparison to other questions Q13 and Q14 obtained the lowest mean scores (3.80) in the questionnaire. The overall mean score of 4.41 showed that the teachers had high positive attitudes towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms. The results of the study safely rejects the third null hypothesis which suggests that L2 teachers have no positive attitudes towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms, and it can be concluded that L2 teachers have positive attitudes towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms so the third hypothesis is retained.

IX. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to explore the effects of teaching the movie clips including the idioms on idiom learning. In this regard, a t-test was conducted to probe the first question in this study. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the means of the experimental and control groups. Therefore, it can be concluded that using movie clips including the idioms has a significant effect on idiom learning of Iranian EFL high school students. In order to answer the second and the third questions an attitudinal questionnaire was administered. The results showed that both students and English teachers had positive attitudes towards the application of movie clips in teaching new idioms.

This finding is compatible with some of the empirical studies conducted earlier and reported in literature review. Wood (1995) mentioned that film communication offers links between classroom, society, and films can help explore cultural context, and they also allow flexibility of materials and teaching techniques. Boer (1992) in his study states that by developing a clear understanding of figurative language, students can further comprehend texts that contain metaphorical and lexical meanings. Simpson & Mendis (2003) in their study found that information on the frequency of idioms in academic spoken American English helped language teachers which idioms might be useful to teach EFL/ESL students.

This finding is also in support of Quiang, H & Wolff (2007) views who suggested that exploring the notion of using films, and exposing students to the language are given the learners the chance to become acquainted with the target language and assimilate simple English sentence structure.. All of these researchers claim that teaching etymology not only facilitates idiom learning but it makes it a meaningful learning experience.

X. CONCLUSION

The results of the present study seem to support the hypotheses formulated in this research. The first one is, the uses of idiom etymologies have positive effect on idiom learning of third-grade senior talented high school students. The results of the questionnaires used in this study supported the second and third hypotheses that the students and the English teachers have positive attitudes towards the application of etymology in teaching new idioms.

The researchers tried to investigate the potential usefulness of idiom etymologies as useful strategy in the inclusion of more practical aspects of idiom learning into language classroom.

APPENDIX SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH LEARNING MOTIVATION SCALE)

Below are a number of statements with which some people may agree and some may not. We would like you to indicate your opinion about each statement by ticking the boxes below which best indicates the extent to which you disagree or agree with that. We would like you to be as accurate as possible since the success of this investigation depends upon it.

Gender: Age: Class: School:

1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Before taking it, please, take the following comments into account:

1) – It is very important that you write down the **_FIRST_** answer that comes to your   mind.

2) – Please, **_DO NOT_** go back to correct the answer you have written.

3) – Please, **_DO NOT_** discuss the questions with other people while completing it.

1. Watching movie clips including the idioms can be important to the students to raise their awareness of idioms.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

2. Using movie clips including the idioms is highly important to the students because the students can use idioms better when keeping in touch with foreign friends and acquaintances.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

3. Applying movie clips including the idioms can be important to the students because it will make the students understand and become more knowledgeable.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

4. Learning the idioms using movie clips can be important to the students because it leads to long retention of idioms.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

5. Watching movie clips including the idioms can be important to the students for comprehension of idiomatic meaning.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

6. Learning the idioms via movie clips is important to the students because it helps a well- educated person to use the idioms more efficiently.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

7. Learning the idioms through movie clips is not a waste of time.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

8. Learning the idioms used in movie clips is important to a person because he can understand English-speaking films, videos, including the idioms better.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

9. Watching movie clips including the idioms can stimulate the students to ' figure out ' the meaning of newly encountered idioms by drawing from movie information.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

10. Watching movie clips including the idioms is important to the students so they can understand more English texts and books, including the idioms.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

11. It doesn't bother the students to use the idioms used in movie clips when speaking.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

12. Watching movie clips including the idioms make the students infer the meaning of unfamiliar idioms from the new situation.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

13. Watching movie clips including the idioms can be important because the students can interpret the figurative meaning of the idioms by using visualizers.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

14. The students can use movie clips including the idioms as a channel for their comprehension of the informal nature of certain idioms.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

15. Learning the idioms using movie clips is important to the students because without learning them masterly, the students feel something is missed.

1 - ☐   2- ☐   3 - ☐   4 - ☐   5 - ☐

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Multimedia College English Teaching: Defects and Countermeasures

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Abstract—**It is a widely accepted belief among college English teachers who have tried Multimedia college teaching that college English teaching under the circumstance of Multimedia makes the English classroom a fascinating place. However, the defects of Multimedia college English teaching are born with its advantages over traditional college English teaching. The present writer intends to make an analysis of its defects and provide feasible countermeasures.**

Index Terms—**multimedia, college English teaching, defects, countermeasures**

I. INTRODUCTION

From the study on linguistics, psychology, physiology and technology (Yang, 2005), we may conclude that computer and Multimedia technology superbly adapt to college English teaching in that it can provide sound, color, graphics, animation, video, and net information---in addition to text---in a matter of second and can satisfy the variety of learning preference or styles, and can deploy different neuro-systems in learning. It is a widely accepted belief among college English teachers who have tried Multimedia college teaching that college English teaching under the circumstance of Multimedia makes the English classroom a fascinating place.

Though, will Multimedia solve all the problems in college English teaching? Will it be another wonder drug, as some people described AV instruction in language teaching in1970s?

Media is media, and there is no wonder drug in language teaching. The defects of Multimedia college English teaching are born with its advantages over traditional college English teaching. "Only when media is subjected to careful consideration and application, can an ideal instructional effect be achieved" (Mei, 1998, P. 13).

For college English teachers, the comprehensive awareness of the defects of Multimedia as well as the countermeasures is of great importance in the application of the new technology to college English teaching.

II. DEFECTS OF MULTIMEDIA COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

A. Teachers' Factors

Either in traditional classrooms or in Multimedia classrooms, the teacher has a large and very important role to play in the teaching-learning process. The most important factor for class effectiveness is teacher's quality. What teachers need to be? "Principals and personnel directors, for the most part, agree on the basis for effective teachers--- qualities that benefit students, improve instruction; and help an organization run more smoothly."[1]In addition, in the Multimedia classroom, the mass of language data available to students is overwhelming and needs to be filtered and systematized so that students actually will be able to make sense of it.

However, the defects of Multimedia somehow hamper the development of teachers' role in the Multimedia classroom and consequently teachers fail to make the most of the Multimedia classroom though they are facilitated with considerable teaching practice.

1. Routine Work in Instruction

Multimedia itself is not liable for the form and development of teachers' routine work in instruction in Multimedia teaching. The responsibility lies in college English teachers.

One of the significant characteristics of Multimedia is that by the instrumentality of floppy disk, hard disk, software, CD-ROM, video and the Internet etc., it can lessen the burden of teachers' meaningless and repetitive work and increase teachers' investment in class. "If you are enthusiastic about teaching, show it! Make learning fun. Your eagerness for teaching will make a difference in the motivation of your students. Beyond the classroom, it helps build a sense of teamwork. Enthusiasm is contagious."[2]

However, the advantage of Multimedia technology, unfortunately, leads to some teachers' dependence on it. In class they fail to show enthusiasm and creation. In some sense, they turn the Multimedia classroom into an expensive bore and what they act in class is nothing but a new generation of button-pusher. Undoubtedly, the lack of creation and

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[1] http//www.teachingforexcellence.com
[2] http//www.teachingforexcellence.com

enthusiasm makes no sense of the technology-enhanced classroom.

2. Poor Classroom Management

Effective teachers are actively involved in classroom management. "They move around. They don't stand around but are busy. They are actively involved with students and other staff."[3]

In Multimedia classrooms, classroom management is not easy to conduct because English teachers are busy with the operation of the machine and with the instruction of the language. What's more, in most cases, teachers are sitting in front of the computer and seldom have a chance to move around. In the classroom which has a poor and unscientific layout, the teacher sitting in the front of the classroom can hardly see students at the back rows. In this case, classroom management is hard to be realized.

3. Loss of Affection

Education is a people business and it is imperative to attract students through good human relation skills. "If people don't like your behavior as a teacher, they will not want to be around you, much less perform for you."[4] The affection built up between college English teachers and students plays an important role in class behavior and latter study.

In the Multimedia classroom, however, the affection between the teacher and students seem to be in danger. On the one hand, teachers are busy with machine operation---computer, VCD/DVD player, overhead projector, courseware, and the change of desktop windows etc---which might even get the proficient teachers busy, let alone those unskilled. On the other hand, sitting in front of the machine without moving about, gesture, eye contact, and body language which are all regarded as vital in class tends to make English class "cool" and the tie between the teacher and students becomes loose and it seems to students that the teacher is caring about the machine and students are focusing on the screen. Thus, the affection, which used to play an important role in class, seems to be dying.

4. Waste by Haste

The amount students learned is related to the opportunity they are given to learn. Students learn the most by doing, not by being fed, or standing in line or sitting motionless. The college English class in Multimedia classroom, however, is conducted in a rush and students seldom get a chance to have their say. What they can do is waiting for the information on the screen. Many reasons result in this phenomenon. One of the main reasons is that teachers get too many things to share with students and at the same time they have little time at their free disposal. Another reason is that the college English class is not well organized and designed. College English teachers may bear this proverb in their mind while preparing and delivering the lesson: Haste makes waste.

B. Learners' Factors

1. Test on Students' Learning Autonomy

Compared with traditional English classrooms, in Multimedia classrooms, more information and resources are available and presented to students. This is considered to be one of the advantages of Multimedia college English teaching. But more language resources do not mean more effective learning. In this sense, students' learning autonomy is being tried. For example, in class when video films are used, both visual and audio information are shown to students. On this occasion, it is up to students to study the detailed information and select those they think important. However, the present college students are the products of modern education system in which learning autonomy is somehow neglected. So in video classes, most of them are watching only for fun, or are only waiting for the target aspects of language instruction from the teacher. In a word, students' wait-to-be-fed habit interrupts the effect of Multimedia language teaching.

2. Physical Fatigue

Presently, there are two kinds of Multimedia classroom: one is the classroom in which everybody operates on a Multimedia PC; the other one is called one-computer Multimedia classroom. No matter which kind of classroom students are in, physical fatigue caused by Multimedia classroom is worth our attention. More than 42% of the interviewees in the open interview (Yang, 2005) admit that the computer screen strains their eyes after watching for about 30 minutes. More than 53% of them feel unwell of their waist and neck after staring at the screen for about 30 minutes. Undoubtedly, the physical fatigue to some extent has a negative effect on students' study.

C. Technological Factors

1. Technology of Multimedia Classrooms

In most universities and colleges, Multimedia is still a new concept. For the AV instruction staff, defects in the design of room layout, installation of facilities, lighting and airing seem to be inevitable because of the lack of experience. For example, for the convenience of students' watching, lecture theatre is preferred by students. But unfortunately, many traditional classrooms are transformed into Multimedia ones by merely facilitating them with certain equipment. In this case, the teacher sitting in the front cannot see the students at the back rows and students at the back rows fail to see the screen clearly and completely.

2. Technology Required of College English Teachers

Currently, owing to the traditional education system, most college English teachers are not good at computer, and

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[3] http//www.teachingforexcellence.com
[4] http//www.teachingforexcellence.com

some of them are even not proficient in typing. This causes great trouble in the design of courseware and application of Multimedia devices. The unskilled operation on computer would inevitably affect the instruction flow, which in turn would de-motivate students if it happens frequently in class. On the other hand, the defects in the presently-used CD-ROM for college English teaching reinforce the operation difficulty for teachers.

3. Technology of Network

Thanks to the fantastic spurt of IT, network, both the Internet and the Local Area Net, is changing with each passing day. More and more practical resources of English teaching and learning can be easily located and are available for college English teaching. Nevertheless, the defects existing in network prevent it from steady and secure application. First, "not everything is on the Internet. For example, only about 8% of all journals are on the web, and an even smaller fraction of books are there. Both are costly!"[5] Second, "It's really a needle in the haystack. The needle is your search, the haystack is the web."[6] Third, Quality control doesn't exist. Some insecure connection to X-rated sites or the information alike might be another reluctance for teachers to use the Internet. Four, the Internet might be a mile wide but an inch (or less) deep. Not much on the Internet is more than fifteen years old. Vendors offering magazine access routinely add a new year while dropping an earlier one. Fifth, the too frequent breakdown of network would hinder the application of the Internet to English teaching and in some degree de-motivate students.

If these problems keep unsolved, it's somewhat hard to make the Internet an ideal tool for English teaching.

III. COUNTERMEASURES

Fortunately, the problems arising from the defects of Multimedia college English teaching do not seem to be incurable. If we conduct properly, many of the problems can be solved, or at least, some of the defects can be avoided or compensated to some extent.

First, responsibility is needed to breed into teachers' mind. Responsibility is the fundamental quality of teachers. If the teacher is of great sense of responsibility, he would know very well what to do to better the teaching-learning process and would know definitely why enthusiasm is needed in language class and would show it in class willingly. In this way routine work in instruction might be avoided and it makes creative and enthusiastic class possible.

Second, continual study and research is an indispensable part of qualified teachers' life. Only in this way can teachers keep up with their fields of expertise. What's more, the research and study enable teachers to find solutions to the problems arising in class. For example, how to promote the classroom management in Multimedia class? Should teachers sit in the front of the classroom all the way? Effective teachers would apply some alternatives to the class---group discussion, free talk, pair work, and teachers would move around occasionally, accompanied with some gestures and body language. Remember: efficient management allows teachers to spend more learning time with students and to engage students. Another thing for college English teachers to learn is the operation of the Multimedia PC and the making of courseware etc.

Third, flexibility is required in the process of teaching. Teaching requires flexibility. Adjust when timely topics come up instead of staying with the lesson plan. Be sensitive enough to students' needs and offer necessary help. Multimedia teaching does not mean sitting there and operating machine. It also involves flexibility. Do not stick to original plan when a bit flexibility might make the difference between boring and interesting. It is communicative skills with people that we are learning, not with machine. Flexibility is the precondition of affection between the teacher and students.

Fourth, universities and colleges may adopt reasonable curriculum. As for the instruction pace in Multimedia classrooms, reasonable curriculum might help some. According to the curriculum of most colleges, students have four hours of English class each week--- two for text and two for exercise. The arrangement makes intensive teaching like duck-feeding and both the teacher and students are on the run in the class. A little change might change the instruction pace from rush to walk.

Sixth, the school management personnel may better the physical condition of Multimedia classrooms. Coziness and cleanliness are typical of Multimedia classrooms. But, that's not enough for effective teaching and learning. Classrooms that are badly lit, poorly aired and overcrowded can be excessively de-motivating, but unfortunately many of them exist in colleges and universities. For the design of Multimedia classrooms, the installation of the screen, music box, the layout of the desks, and the light all should be taken into account. Generally speaking, lecture theatre classrooms are preferred because they enable students at the back rows to have a good view of the screen.

Last, definitely not the least, the training of AV instruction staff is very necessary. Multimedia college English teaching cannot be done without the assistance of AV instruction staff because most of the college English teachers are not good at Multimedia technology and operation. A minor breakdown might lead to the failure of class presentation. In addition, the application of network is still new to college English teachers, even to AV instruction staff. As a result, qualified AV instruction staff members are needed to maintain the machine, ensure the flow of the teaching process and guarantee the stability of network.

IV. CONCLUSION

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[5] http//www.eddigest.com
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If we college English teachers employ various techniques to make Multimedia classes motivating and interesting, if we labor along to explore appropriate pedagogy in Multimedia college English teaching, if we keep an eye on what's going on in our expertise, and if we take care to become dynamic stimulators rather than machine operators, we may be able to overcome the defects of Multimedia and fast-forward our students' learning. There is absolutely no doubt that Multimedia will play a more and more important role in college English teaching, with all the defects overcome and with proper pedagogy deployed.

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Readability Formulas and Cohesive Markers in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—Matching reading materials to learners with the appropriate level of proficiency has been the focus of attention for many scholars. To this end, readability formulas have been developed. Despite being efficient and user friendly, the formulas have not been able to stand to the test of research, thus undergoing some criticism on the grounds that they are not sensitive to the modification in the factors they are based on. Furthermore, they fail to consider other factors which play roles in the comprehension of written materials. Some scholars, based on such criticisms, have noticed the absence of some factors in readability formulas. Some of these factors are cultural origin, structure of theme and core/non-core words, and conjunctions. The present study constitutes an attempt to investigate the relationship between readability of written materials and the learners' performance at two proficiency levels of intermediate and advanced, the relationship between cohesion markers (grammatical markers, conjunctions and lexical markers) and the readability of written materials, and also the relationship between these cohesion markers and the performance of learners of English as a foreign language at the two aforementioned proficiency levels. To calculate the readability of the material, two prominent readability formulas, Flesch and Fog Index, were employed. The results indicated a significant correlation between the readability of passages and the learners' performance at both levels. Only grammatical cohesion markers were shown to be significantly correlated with the readability of the written materials. The learners' performance correlated significantly with grammatical cohesion markers at intermediate level and with lexical cohesion markers at advanced level.

Index Terms—cohesion markers, performance, proficiency, readability formulas, reading comprehension, reading materials

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important issues in the realm of ESL/EFL research has been the match between the materials and the proficiency level of those who receive or use them. This plays a crucial role in material sequencing and gradation. Some methods have been developed to create a match between learners' proficiency and the difficulty level of written materials. This issue acquires even greater momentum with regard to the fact that, in many cases, written material comprises the main source for most language learners, most prominently in academic and higher educational fields. Subjective methods such as teacher or reader judgments have been inadequate due to their very nature. In order to overcome the subjectivity of these methods and its consequences, objective ways have been designed to measure the difficulty level of written materials for the purpose of matching them to suitable level of the readers' proficiency. The dependability of these objective methods has in turn been rightly subject to criticism and research both theoretically and empirically. The present study attempts to investigate whether readers' comprehension is correlated with the difficulty of texts determined by readability formulas. Moreover, it tends to study the relationship between the existence of cohesive markers in texts and students' comprehension of them. This study is of prime importance because readability formulas have received many theoretical and empirical criticisms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Readability Formulas

Readability formulas used for measuring the readability level, "comprehensibility of written text" Homan, Hewitt & Linder (2005), vary in definition. Bruce and Robin (1988) argue that readability formulas are procedures for assigning to a text a numerical estimate of 'readability' which is previously defined by scholars as "ease of reading", "interest", or "ease of understanding" (P.5). A formula is, in fact, a regression equation used to predict comprehension. To obtain a comprehension measure, the variables, namely word and sentence length, should be measured and then fed into the calculation (Baker, Atwood & Duffy 1988). Redish (as cited in Allen, 1985, P. 215) defines the formulas as "mathematical equations for predicting the level of reading ability needed to understand a particular piece of prose".

According to Klare (1963), there have been over 100 readability formulas developed, all based on the same underlying model of reading process, and due to the ease of application, some of them have acquired popular use. Most readability formulas have made use of linguistic elements to calculate readability. These elements include semantic and syntactic complexity. Semantic complexity is measured by the length of words in terms of the number of letters or syllables present or the words' absence or presence in specific word lists. Syntactic complexity is analyzed at the sentence level and its most common measure is the number of words per sentence.

Due to the large number of formulas and the disagreement on their scales, Powers, Summer and Kearl (1958) re-examined four major formulas, namely, *Flesch, Dale-Chall*, *Fog Index* and *Farr-Jenkins-Paterson*, in order to develop consistency among the grades they yielded. Flesch formula, one of the most popular readability formulas in use, uses sentence length in terms of words and the number of syllables per 100 words. Dale-Chall is another formula which considers sentence length and the number of words outside Dale list of 3000 familiar words. Fog Index, another widely used formula, relies on sentence length and the number of polysyllabic words, i.e. words with three or more syllables. Farr-Jenkins-Paterson is yet another readability formula which relies on sentence length and the number of monosyllables for its calculation.

These formulas have been used with some success, but they have also been criticized by some scholars. The criticism on the formulas constitutes two main areas; these areas correspond to the two basic factors that most readability formulas use, that is, word difficulty and sentence length. Urqhart (1985) as well as Anderson and Davison (1988) found that simplifying the text through using simpler words does not result in a better comprehension of the text. Blau's (1982), Anderson and Davison (1988), Baker et al (1988), Davison and Green (1988), and Rezaei (2000) argued that splitting up the complex sentences into simple sentences and thus reducing syntactic complexity does not affect the comprehension of readers.

Such criticisms, which are based on experiments mentioned above, along with the theoretical criticism on the formulas' failure to consider other elements that play a role in comprehension, such as 'discourse cohesion characteristics', 'the number of inferences required', 'the complexity of ideas', 'rhetorical structure' and 'dialect', and also reader-based factors such as background and motivation (Bruce & Robin, 1988), inspired the consideration of the effect of other elements on reading comprehension. Metaphoric language use, in turn, would affect the learners' performance on reading comprehension tasks. Idioms, as a main area of metaphoric language use, constitute a considerable part of any language. The use of lexical items for different concepts hinges on metaphoricity of language and is based on the similarity of objects and concepts.

Jonson (as cited in Carrel, 1987) found that cultural origin was an effective factor in the comprehension of prose by readers. Akbari, Atae and Marefat (1999) considered different kinds of themes and core/non-core words as the possible predictors of comprehension and concluded that clauses as themes are better predictors for advanced learners' comprehension, while non-core words seem to be more suitable for intermediate level learners' comprehension. Geva (1992) carried out a study, investigating the relationship between conjunctions in a text and advanced college students' ability to comprehend the text. He found a high correlation between the conjunctions in a text and the readers' comprehension of it and suggested conjunctions as a predictor of the comprehension of authentic academic materials. His findings inspired the question of whether other cohesion markers, of which conjunctions constitute one type, can also be predictors of comprehension or not.

B. Cohesion Markers

Cohesion, a semantic concept, as Halliday and Hasan (1984) puts it, is the relations of meaning within a text that confers on a stretch of language what make it a text. Cohesion relies on presupposition and occurs when the interpretation of one element is dependent on that of another. When such a relation, a tie, occurs between the presupposing and the presupposed elements, cohesion is created. Cohesion is accommodated in linguistic form in the realm of language. Since sentences, as structures, are inherently cohesive, the concept of cohesion is used to denote the cross-sentential tie and relies on grammatical or lexical means for its existence.

Cohesion encompasses four general categories. Two categories are grammatical, one is lexical, and the last one on the border between grammatical and lexical. Reference along with substitution and ellipsis are grammatical, substitution and ellipsis being one category, for ellipsis is considered as substitution by nothing. Conjunctions are on the border as benchmarks hinting at cross-sentential meaning relations while they impose some grammatical structures. The last kind is lexical and covers the concepts of reiteration and synonymy, the repetition of identical or very similar concepts throughout the text. The repeated or related concepts are amenable to various grammatical forms.

III. THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study aims to investigate whether there is any relationship between readability of texts and students' comprehension of them. Moreover, the existence of any relationship between the number of cohesive markers existing in a texts and the students' comprehension of them is to be investigated. As readability formulas as measures of getting information about difficulty level of texts has been criticized be various experts, investigating their impact on students' reading comprehension is of paramount importance. On the other hand, cohesive markers, signals for creating more coherent texts, can be a serious concern in the process of reading comprehension.

The present study addresses the following research questions.

1. Does difficulty level of texts (determined by readability formulas) significantly correlate with students' reading comprehension?

2. Is there any relationship between ease/difficulty of texts and the cohesive markers in them?

3. Is there any relationship between difficulty level of texts (determined by cohesive markers existing in them) and students' reading comprehension?

A. Participants

The data based on which the analyses in the present study have been done are collected from the total number of 124 participants. These participants included 50 English language learners at Open Center for Art and Cultural Education, an affiliate of Tehran University, 74 MA, MSc and PhD candidates from the University of Tehran, Iran University of Science and Technology and Shahid Beheshti University in the fields of science and humanities. The participants were both male and female students. However, gender factor was not taken into account in this study. It is worth mentioning that both male and female students had taken part in the entrance examination and had equal chance of getting admitted. Moreover, care was taken not to include gender-biased texts for collecting the necessary data. The participants were divided into two groups of intermediate and advanced based on their performance on Nelson Quick Check test.

B. Grouping

Out of these 124 participants, 28 participants were excluded due to their failure to answer all of the questions, 1 for falling below 50 and 2 for falling above 80 on Nelson Quick Check test; these scores were considered outliers, very high or very low compared with other scores and with a rare frequency. Then the remaining 93 scores underwent descriptive statistics and the scores half a standard deviation below and half a standard deviation above the mean were excluded to ensure a considerable difference between the two groups of participants. The number of the participants thus excluded was 31. The number of scores half a standard deviation below the mean was 36 and that of the score half a standard deviation above the mean was 31. The former group was considered the intermediate and the latter advanced. As such, the total number of the scores that entered into the final data analysis was 67; 36 for intermediate level and 31 for the advanced level. The descriptive statistics for the placement of participants are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR NELSON SCORE OF PARTICIPANTS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Nelson Score	93	50.00	80.00	65.9462	8.82482
Valid N (listwise)	93				

In order to make sure of the significance of the difference between the two groups, an independent-samples t-test was run. Since the t-critical for 65 df is 2.000 and the t-value from the t-test is 23.178, much greater than 2.000, the significance of their difference was strongly established. Moreover, the significance value was found to be 0.000, far less than the significance level of 0.05. The results are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST FOR NELSON QUICK CHECK TEST SCORES OF THE TWO LEVELS

		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
Nelson Score	Equal variances assumed	2.451	.122	23.545	65	.000	19.31900	.82053
	Equal variances not assumed			23.178	57.707	.000	19.31900	.83351

C. Material

Ten reading passages were chosen out of five practice tests from Phillips's *Longman Preparation for the TOEFL Test*, (1996). The reading passages were chosen so as to yield as wide a range of readability levels as possible. The criterion for their choice was their mean of Flesch and Fog Index of Readability indices. The passages were ordered from the lowest to the highest in terms of their readability index. Each of these reading passages included ten questions, mounting to 100 questions for the whole test.

Three types of cohesive markers, i.e., conjunctions, grammatical and lexical, were taken into account. There markers were counted in all the ten reading passages. Table 4 presents the relevant the readability indices of the ten passages determined by Flesch and Fog Index of readability. It also shows the number of the above-mentioned cohesive markers in the passages.

TABLE 3
THE READABILITY INDICES AND THE FREQUENCY OF COHESIVE MARKERS IN ALL TEN PASSAGES

Variables / Texts	Flesch	Fog Index	Readability mean	Conjunctions	Grammatical	Lexical
1	5.3	5.3	5.30	2	44	33
2	5.4	5.5	5.45	3	33	48
3	5.6	6.0	5.80	4	24	34
4	5.8	6.2	6.00	6	45	21
5	6.8	6.6	6.70	5	29	24
6	6.6	7.0	6.80	6	27	30
7	7.0	6.9	6.95	2	23	19
8	7.3	7.1	7.20	5	28	20
9	7.8	7.5	7.65	4	24	26
10	8.0	7.8	7.90	8	20	23

D. Data Collection

The participants were asked to read the ten passages and answer the reading comprehension questions. The incompletely answered tests were excluded and the remaining participants were divided into two groups, intermediate and advanced, based on their performance on Nelson Quick Check test. Next, the average score for each reading passage was calculated for each group. In this way, two sets of average scores were obtained, one based on the performances of the intermediate and the advanced groups respectively These average scores subsequently underwent the final data analysis, The scores are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
THE MEAN SCORES FOR THE TEXTS AT TWO PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Level / Texts	Intermediate Level		Advanced Level	
	M	SD	M	SD
1	8.2	1.11	8.5	1.32
2	7.0	0.89	9.4	1.07
3	7.7	1.77	8.9	1.54
4	7.9	1.49	8.2	1.38
5	8.1	0.75	8.4	1.38
6	8.0	1.71	9.1	0.97
7	6.0	1.15	7.6	1.58
8	5.4	1.78	7.8	1.62
9	4.4	0.81	6.3	1.08
10	4.7	2.60	5.7	1.87

IV. RESULTS

In order to check the consistency of the readability indices with the performance of the participants, they were analyzed for correlation. The results showed significantly high correlations at 0.05 and 0.01 for the intermediate and advanced levels respectively. Table 5 presents the correlation between readability grades and the participants' performance at each level.

TABLE 5
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN READABILITY GRADES WITH EACH LEVEL

			Intermediate Level	Advanced Level
Spearman's rho	Readability	Correlation Coefficient	-.758*	-.806**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.005
		N	10	10

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Then, these indices were compared with the frequency of cohesion markers to detect possible relations.

TABLE 6
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN READABILITY GRADES AND COHESION MARKERS

			Conjunctions	Grammatical	Lexical
Spearman's rho	Readability	Correlation Coefficient	.479	-.711*	-.624
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.162	.021	.054
		N	10	10	10

As shown in the table above, only grammatical cohesive markers show a significant correlation with readability indices.

To find whether cohesion markers can be used as reliable predictors of reading comprehension, their correlations with the participants' performance were calculated. . The results are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7
THE RESULTS OF SPEARMAN'S RHO CONDUCTED TO SEE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY AND THE NUMBER OF COHESIVE MARKERS IN TEXTS

		Conjunctions	Grammatical	Lexical
Intermediate Level	Correlation Coefficient	-.117	.644(*)	.333
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.748	.044	.347
Advanced Level	Correlation Coefficient	-.227	.529	.733(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.528	.116	.016

   * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
   ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results show that there are significant correlations between grammatical cohesion markers and the intermediate level participants' performance, and between lexical cohesion markers and the advanced level participants' performance. This can mean that at a lower level of proficiency, grammatical cohesion markers could be reliable predictors of comprehension, whereas at higher levels, lexical cohesion markers could be possible indices for predicting reading comprehension.

V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Many Scholars have criticized readability formulas as these formulas are considered insensitive towards the change in the factors included, word/sentence length and presence in a vocabulary list (Anderson & Davison, 1988; Pearson, cited in Carrel, 1987; Urqhart, 1985; Anderson & Davison, 1988; Rezaei, 2000). The findings of this study, however, confirm the agreement between readability indices and the performance of readers in the passages, and provide probable grounds for the use of readability formulas as a valid basis for ranking the written materials. The noteworthy point is that there is a basic difference between the studies in the literature and the present one. Almost unanimously, the studies criticizing the formulas manipulate and modify the factors used in the formulas to change readability index of the texts and study the consequences in the readers' comprehension, and in so doing, they violate the naturalness of these passages in many cases. The basic semantic foundation of the text does not undergo any or at least considerable modification while the means originally intended for its conveyance does. The overall discoursal impact and function of the passage would change, in some instances, dramatically. The modification or change of the means a writer is intent upon to convey a specific concept would affect the defection of the intended purpose. No recent studies have been reported on the factors per se in their intact state (Anderson & Davison, 1988).

The suggestion made by Akbari et al. (1999) concerning the inclusion of more factors in readability measures proves worthwhile through the establishment of the relation between lexical and grammatical cohesive markers, factors absent from readability formulas, but considered in the present study. This study also provides justification for the claim that the more comprehensive the readability measures in terms of the factors included, the more reliable the measures would be. Such a claim would, of course, make readability formulas cumbersome in a way they would not be of much practicality. What would logically follow is the informed choice of the most determinant in comprehensibility and economical to be included in readability grade research and practice.

The possible existence of any meaningful relationship between the frequency of conjunctions in a passage and its comprehensibility was not exhibited in the present study. In the literature, on the contrary, however, Geva (1992) indicated the relationship between conjunctions and comprehension of authentic academic materials and justified the use of conjunctions as reliable predictors of comprehension. Findings of the present study, nonetheless, manifested no such relation. The low frequency of this type of discourse markers could be possible culprit; it varied between two and eight, a frequency much lower than that of other types of discourse markers considered here. Statistically, this rather short range decreases the variance, and a lower variance stands a lesser chance of comparing well. Further studies can illuminate the role of conjunctions in comprehensibility.

Cohesive markers and readability indices are, by their very nature, not necessarily expected to display any significant correlation. In the present study, however, a significant correlation between the readability indies and the set of grammatical cohesive markers is displayed. The practical validity and the nature of such a correlation should be further researched before being employed as a basis for readability judgment. Nevertheless, the different nature of readability indies and cohesive markers, by no means, obviate the inherent correlation each group is expected to have with the subjects' performance on reading comprehension tasks. The relationship between cohesive markers and comprehensibility at the two levels establishes the role of these factors in reading comprehension and verifies them as neglected factors that should be included in readability measures.

The relationship between the subjects' performance and different subsets of cohesive markers at the two levels can provide us with clues as to the nature of reading comprehension and, with due caution and consideration, to its developmental process. The significant correlation between the intermediate participants' performance and the grammatical cohesive markers would be indicative of connectedness of reading performance with, or its partial dependence on the grammatical indices knitting the passage together as a link running through different parts of the passage. The significant correlation of the advanced level's performance with lexical cohesive markers hints at a strong engagement of the advanced level readers with the meaning aspect of a passage, which is regulated and systematized through the lexical cohesion markers.

With the very nature of these two types of cohesive markers in view, valuable insights would be drawn from the present findings, as to the developmental process of language, or to be precise, interlanguage. On these findings, one can claim that language learners resort to grammatical indices to get at the decoding of the whole passage at earlier stages, but as they proceed, their main point of reliance for comprehension is, at least partially, shifted towards lexical indices.

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Religious Belief in Sonnet 55 of Shakespeare

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Abstract—**In many poems of Renaissance, there is a dominant theme that poetry can overcome time and eternize a person with his virtues. As a Christian, some poems of Shakespeare reflect not only this theme, but also his religious belief. In Sonnet 55, Shakespeare praises the power of poetry over material world, shows the power of love to eternize a person, and hints a challenging belief to his contemporary theme that God is the actual source of eternal life.**

Index Terms—**Shakespeare, sonnet 55, religious belief, time**

In Renaissance England, there is an opinion that poetry can immortalize a person with his virtues, whether the person praised, or the author. Many poems of great poets of this period reflect this theme, such as Sonnet 75 of Spenser, Sonnet 18 and 55 of Shakespeare, etc. With the same theme, different poets have different ways to show their opinions and their attitudes. Philip Martin, in his study of sonnets of Shakespeare and others, concludes three kinds of attitudes: first, most poets says man is immortal in his poem; second, Spenser steps ahead that "you are immortal in my poem, from which our love will reach out to enhance later lives"; third, Shakespeare goes further to say "you are immortal in my poem, and in yourself, and you will live in the poem, in yourself and in the eyes of later lovers." (qtd. in Hammond, 1981, p. 71) Even in his own poems, the poet shows his different thoughts about the same theme. Some poets try to resolve it with the secular love. Tracing back to Petrarch, Maclean (1993) finds that lovers created by poet "cannot reconcile love for God with sexual longing for the women they love" (p. 639). The conflict between secular love and divine love is hard to resolve. Spenser refers to the Christian liturgy (Maclean, 1993, 639). Shakespeare may hint the love of God.

When Shakespeare wrote sonnets, he tried to reconcile such conflict. He is a Christian. Even in the second line of Sonnet 1 he suggests there is a paradise: "That thereby beauty's rose might never die" (Vendler, 1997, p. 46). Sonnet 18 and 55 of Shakespeare all discuss the theme of power of poetry, which overcomes time and eternize a person. As Rowse (1984) states, in Sonnet 18, that love will bring the immortality of his verse (p. 39), Shakespeare praises the virtues of a man, and claims he will have an eternal life in the poem. With last two lines, it seems that poet suggests the secular love can prolong the life of the person praised. It says: "So long as man can breathe, and eyes can see." It means in the poem the fame of a person can last as long as human being. But it does not give an interesting answer: if he can live after human being? For at that time, people still believes in God and the eternal life. Among all immortalizing sonnets, Sonnet 55 is most confident in eternity for six "shall" verbs in it (Hammond, 1981, p. 72). It confirms the power of poetry over time, discusses in what way poetry outlive the material world, overcomes time, shows that secular love can make a man eternal, and hints that only with belief of God one can get a real eternal life. It reflects the religious belief of Shakespeare.

There are 154 sonnets of Shakespeare. The sonnets published in 1609 are most important works with attention next to Hamlet. From the first critic, George Chalmers, to present critics, Auden, etc. those sonnets receive high praises throughout the English literary history. Many critics believe that 1-126 sonnets are addressed to a Fair Young Man (Lowers, 1965, p. 12). The identification of the young man is open to debate. Among them, Sonnet 55 is one of the most famous sonnets in the sequence with the treatment of Time in a tone of solemn dignity (Lowers, 1965, p. 54). It is believed that this young man is actually a young aristocrat (Lowers, 1965, p. 21).

Sonnet 55 is a typical Shakespearean sonnet, with three quatrains and a heroic couplet in iambic pentameter. Vendler (1997) suggests that the keyword in the poem is live, and couplet tie is live and eyes (p. 269). It suggests that in the poem, the theme is life about a person and love of man. In reading the poem, there may be two lives of a person. One is the life of person himself, which is divided into two parts, the physical one and the spiritual one. Another is the fame of the person. It is also divided into two parts, the fame before and after last judgment. Following the above points, each quatrain discusses one topic. Finally, the poem reaches the resolution of eternity for different kinds of life of a person. In the first quatrain, the poem outlives the material world, and the person in the poem will have fame brighter than that of stones. In second quatrain, comparing with statues and the work of masonry, the poem is indestructible to the destructive forces. In third quatrain, the poem overcomes time to the last day in the eyes of posterity, which is the result of human love. The person praised gains a fame in the history of man. In last two lines, the heroic couplet, the person

not only comes back to life with salvation of God, but also has an eternal fame among the people, who follow him to love God, believe in God, and have the eternal life as him. It hints that with belief in God, man can really gain an eternal life, even the fame.

In first quatrain, the poem directly raises the question, and claims that poetry outlives the material world. Vendler (1997) praises the technique of poet connecting the beloved to grandeur and ordinary objects to squalor. The memorial edifices are grand when they are compared to man praised in the verse. But they become "unswept stones" when they are connected to "sluttish time" (p. 268). It is a sharp comparison that gives the reader a shock. When a person died, a monument is erected to memorize him. In natural world, some stones, such as marble, and metals, such as gold, can resist the corrosion of air and water, and last a long time. The "marble" or "gilded monuments" may last one hundred years, or two hundreds years, and still be read by people. It is a good way to record a person. But those monuments are short lived compared with "this powerful rhyme." "This powerful rhyme" represents this poem. It shows the dominant theme in Renaissance England, that poetry can overcome time. Comparing with the poem, the material world has a short duration. Within "these contents," lines in the poem, the person, praised in the poem, has fame over those stone monuments. It is the fame different from those engraved on the stones or monuments. When people read the poem, he is once more praised and refreshed. For the stone monuments stand at a fixed place, and are read by passengers only. In the region of time, they grow dirty. In tradition, time is "personified as a winged old man with an hour-glass or scythe" (Car-Gomm, 1995, p. 211). It often represents the destructive forces. It is interesting that the word time is used seventy-eight times in Sonnets 1-126. It acts as an important theme in them. (Lowers, 1965, p. 30) Here, time is personified as a "sluttish" servant to those monuments. "Sluttish" has the meaning of casual and unrestrained in sexual behavior. It suggests that Time is unfaithful. Its duties are to clean those monuments. But it fails to fulfill its duties. As the daughter of Time is Truth (Car-Gomm, 1995, p. 211), it reveals that, though how brilliant the monuments may be, they will be left "unswept" and grow dirty in the river of time. In another sense, if a man is not faithful in his love, love to man and God, he deserves no fame and will be cursed by others. Though he may use some materials that last long time, his memory is left only in those monuments which are unclean. It cannot compare with the fame of virtue in the memory of people. The virtue praised in the poem is superior to the material world.

In the second quatrain, the poem presents several destructive forces that destroy the material world. Vendler (1997) mentions that the change of earlier "wasteful war" to "war's quick fire" and "broils" to "Mars his sword." The earlier "contents" becomes "living record of your memory" (p. 268). The "wasteful war" will overturn the statues. "Wasteful" means destructive. After a war, there remains the ruined houses, dead people, etc. The statues of past are overthrew in the war. So the war is a force that can destroy everything. And also, in tumults, "the work of masonry," buildings, is destroyed. Those material things, "statues" and "the work of masonry," are generally believed that they are strong enough and can last a long time. But under the destructive force of war and broil, they are frail and easy to be crashed into fragments. Comparing with the frail material world, the poem, "the living record of your memory," is indestructible. Mars is Roman war god, equating with Greek Ares, son of Zeus and Hera. It is believed that under his influence, warrior is merciless. (Powell, 2001, p. 673) So Mars represents the cruel person, or alike. Even facing with such destructive force, the poem can last a long time. In another sense, Mars may also represent the heresy which will cause war. In history, many wars are caused by religious conflicts. The well-known Crusade in the Middle Age is based on the thought of Christian to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims (Peterson, 2002, p. 146). It causes much violence and death. After the religious wars, the temples and statues of gods of other religions are all destroyed. So Mars also resembles the cause of war. In the poem, the "sword" and "fire" represent the merciless destructive forces. In tradition, they are two forces linked together. When God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, he placed the cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, "and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life" (Gen. 3.24). They represent the destructive forces to all things. But such forces can never destroy "the living record of your memory," the virtues of man who is praised. When the sword kills people and fire burns the buildings, they cannot erase the impression the poem gives to all the people who read it. Commenting this poem, Rowse (1984) mentions two fires in London in the history and confirms the eternity of poetry (p. 113). Otherwise all people die; there is none to read the poem anymore.

In the first two quatrains, there remains a question: the person keeps alive in the lines, or only there is a record of him (Vendler, 1997, p. 268). What the real immortality in this world? How to achieve it? In third quatrain, the man praised faces other two destructive forces.

The first one is death. Death brings the dissolution of man's body. To everyone, death is the most terrible that one can image. When the first man lives in the Garden of Eden, he is immortal. Having eaten "the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste / Brought death into the world" (Milton, 1975, p. I.1-2), man is driven out of Eden, and becomes mortal. Since there is death in the world, this conception is very comprehensive. Plato believes that soul is immortal, but Aristotle insists that soul perishes together with body (Stumpf, 1993, p. 97). In views of totemism, death is a process of rebirth of a person (Frazer, 1963, p. 905). In Christianity, death shows Jesus is man, and resurrection shows he is divine (Carmody, 1983, p. 35). The Christian believes that death is the result of sin, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6.23). Even in Christianity, when talking about death, different theologians have different opinions. Martin Luther, in his Lectures on Roman, says death is two folds, temporal one and eternal one. Temporal death is the separation of body and death. It is much like the concept of Plato. It means perish of body. Eternal death is also two folds. "One is a very great

good. It is the death of sin and the death of death, by which the soul is freed and separated from sin and the body from corruption, and the soul is united by grace and glory with the living God." "The other death is eternal and a very great evil. It is the death of the damned" (qtd. in Marius, 1999, p. 106-7). As a Christian, in order to get an eternal life, man must fight against his sin and serve God. Man has "been freed from sin and enslaved to God," and "the end is eternal life" (Rom. 6.22). So it is easy to understand that man cannot avoid the dissolution of physical body. But he can have an eternal spirit. So first he forces against physical death.

Concerning all sonnets of Shakespeare, 1-17 sonnets reserves a major argument drawn from the Biblical "Parable of Talents" (Math. 25.14-30). It is a parable that tells people not to store what God has given him. As he is beautiful, his beauty will disappear if he does not produce children who would preserve his beauty for future generation. (Violi, 1965, p. 11) To pursue beauty and preserve it is to fellow what God shows to people. In Renaissance England, Protestants preferred married sexuality above celibacy (MaClean, 1993, p. 638). In Sonnet 4, it keeps this idea: "Nature's bequest gives nothing but doth lend, / And being frank she lends to those are free" (lines 3-4). From Sonnets 18 to 126, Shakespeare, together with his contemporaries, shows this theme in various ways (Violi, 1965m, p. 12). A man should love and marry a woman, and give birth to a child. It is a way to preserve his beauty and virtues. This way conforms to the will of God. With the descendant, one can be memorized till the last judgment. In this quatrain, "all posterity" suggest the children of the lovers. Through love, man can conquer physical death and preserve his virtues. The love of man is emphasized.

Another destructive force is oblivion. If there is only a record of a man, it is easy to be forgot. Even a man achieves fame, he faces the destructive force of record – oblivion. How can a man overcome the obliviousness? For oblivion is a thing both good and bad. In Hell, Satan intends to let his followers "lie thus astonished on th'oblivious pool" in order to "call them not to share with" them their unhappiness (Milton, 1975, I.266-7). It is good to forget the unhappiness, but it is bad that one will forget the poetry. If all people forget this poem, the virtues of the man disappear. It requires the poem to be read time and time again. With these virtues, the man is praised forever. So he must fight "all oblivious enmity." In the next sentence, the poem suggests it will be read till the last day, "the ending doom." No matter, people will praise him forever. For man will "wear this world out to the ending doom." The continuous life of human being is regeneration. Man and woman love each other and give birth to their descendant. The human society can last as long as possible. Here, the love of man is emphasized again. Anyhow, the fame of man can last long. But there still remains the question: what about after last judgment? For people believes Christianity at that time. What is the possible resolution? The answer is hinted in the final couplet.

In the couplet, the love of man and love of God are repeated. Many critics criticize it weakens what has already been said in the three quatrains (Violi, 1965, p. 63). Instead of weakening, the repetition here gives an emphasis of how the person can achieve an eternal life. Poetry can outlive marble, gilded monuments, war destruction, and death. But the end of time is the last day of human being, "the ending doom." What will happen after the last day of human life? At the judgment day, "the dead, great and small," stands up before the book of life and wait for them judgment (Rev. 21.12). The man serving God is saved and has an eternal life. The person praised in the poem will rise also. As he believes God and serves Him, he receives God's salvation and achieves an eternal life. So it is the eternal life of spirit. The story of this man's services to God and eternal life is recorded in the poem. The lovers who read it and learn from it to serve God gain the same eternal life. With the eternal life of lovers, the person gains another eternal life – the fame among all people who have an eternal life. The person praised here has two eternal lives: the eternal life of himself, and the eternal fame in all people who are saved.

So there are two eternities. One is the eternity before the last judgment. It is gained through poetry recited by the descendant of man. It is a limited one. Another is the eternity after last judgment. It is the eternity given by God. It is a limitless one. It transcends all. The love of man, or secular love will ensure man to live to the last day. With the life of man, the poetry can last long as the life of human being. The love of God, or faith of God, can give one eternal life. It is the real eternity that can surpass all. In this sense, the couplet in fact enforces the theme of this poem, and gives a hint to the real resolution to the problem. The person praised has defeated Death because he has transformed from his march towards "death and all oblivious enmity" to arising of himself on the Judgment Day. He defeats both physical and spiritual death. Those who memorize him are lovers instead of all posterity. The record of him also changes from physical success to spiritual success. All changes are due to the salvation of God mentioned above. The poet may be conscious of limitation of poetry, and finds that only God can give an eternal life that he cannot.

With above mentioned points, poetry can transcend the material world, destructive force, and death itself. It will make a person immortal. In Sonnet 55, there is no definite answer that man only can get eternal life through love of God. It is more challenging to state such a theme under the dominant theme of the time. But as a Christian, Shakespeare may use words, such as "ending doom," and "judgment," to hint the eternal life is only given by God in the case man must serve Him.

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On the Features of Female Language in English

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Abstract—**Language is a means of verbal communication. People use language to communicate with each other. In the society, no two speakers are exactly alike in the way of speaking. As a form of social behavior, language like other social behaviors, entertains gender difference as well. This paper tries to describe the major features of female language from these perspectives: phonology, vocabulary, grammar, conversational topics and styles. The factors that shape the features of female language are not only because of the influence of physiology and psychology, but also because of the influence of the society and the culture. From the discussion of the features of female language, more attention should be paid to language use in social context.**

Index Terms—**female language, gender difference, features, factors**

I. INTRODUCTION

People of different social groups have their own unique language, the language they use is called social dialects. Social dialect refers to a variety of language that is commonly found among a certain group of people who have some social, cultural or economic features in common, and that may inform on the speaker's social positions accordingly. Male and female language is different. Women, as a social group, have their own language characteristics. In the early 1970s, female language was paid more attention by the linguists, psychologists and sociologists. And "female language" was also used to describe the differences due to gender differences in the phenomenon of language.

Language and gender studies is a subfield of sociolinguistics, which deals with linguistic gender differentiation reflected in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, as well as women's and men's speech interaction patterns. Additionally, sexism in language is also a topic widely studied.

II. MAJOR FEATURES OF FEMALE LANGUAGE

Female language, whether spoken or written language has its own unique characteristics. The following tries to describe the major features of female language from these perspectives: phonology, vocabulary, grammar, conversational topics and styles.

A. In Phonology

Famous phonetician O'Conner (1973) has pointed out that pronunciation was once a marker of social status and Kuwabara (1984) also stated that verbal signal is a complex acoustics activity and it conveys not only the content of language, but also the information regarding the speaker's identity, personality and feelings.

In Phonology, features of women's language are mainly present in pronunciation, pitch and tone.

a. Pronunciation

Pronunciation provides the best evidence of gender-based language forms. In general, women's pronunciation tends to be more "correct", more standard than men's. This idea can be illustrated with the following examples.

Example 1.The suffix-ing has different pronunciations in male and female usage. In Norwich (east England), women pronounce-ing, phonetically transcribed as [ŋ] while men pronounce [n].Women pronounce the word working as ['wɜ:king] while men pronounce this word as ['wɜ:kin].

Example 2.Men and women's pronunciations are different when they pronounce the initial [h].As for the word home, women pronounce [hɜum] while men pronounce ['ɜum]. In a word, many studies have shown that women's pronunciation generally approximates more closely to those of the standard language than do men's pronunciation of the same social background, age and so on.

b. Pitch

Numerous documents have shown that high pitch is one of the distinguished features of women's language and women usually speak in higher pitch than men. Robin Lakoff asserted that women use "a peculiar sentence intonation pattern---which changes a declarative answer into a question".

Sometimes women are inclined to use the rising pitch to answer the general questions. For example, when the husband asks his wife, perhaps the wife answers: When do you want to go to the store? /Oh…about four-thirty?

Obviously the intonation, which the wife uses, contains hesitance and inquiry.

c. Tone

Women's changeable tone can express their rich emotions and sounds more gentle and affectionate. Especially in British and American society, women usually use reverse accent, which greatly shows the gentleness of women's tone.

They often use rising tone when answering men's questions. This speech style will make people feel at ease and comfortable. For example:

Husband: When will dinner be ready?

Wife: of…around six o'clock↑?

In this example, obviously wife is cooking and she knows when the dinner can be ready, but she answers her husband with rising tone, thus this tone has shown the wife's gentleness.

B.   In Vocabulary

In vocabulary, the features of women's language are mainly seen in using intensifiers, extravagant adjectives, swear words, expletives, euphemism, and polite expressions.

a. Intensifiers

Women are likely to use such intensifiers as so, much, quite, vastly and etc. (Key, 1972)

Numerous documents show that women, compared with men, use more intensifiers to strengthen what they want to express. Some adverbs, like awfully, pretty, terribly, vastly, nice, quite and so, are more easily found in women's language.

b. Adverbs and Adjectives

Jespersen said that there are greater differences in the way the sexes use the adverb than the way they use the adjectives. He suggested that "the fondness of women for hyperbole will very often lead the fashion with regard to adverbs of intensity, and these are very often used with disregard of their proper meaning"(Jesperson, 1922, p.250)

And he also found that women like to use such kind of expressions:

He is so charming! It is so lovely! Thank you so much! Do you know that you look such a duck this afternoon? (Jesperson, 1922)

Like using more intensifiers, women like to use more hyperbole adjectives. For example, a lady expressed her thanks to the hostess for one dinner like this:

"It's a gorgeous meal. Thank you."

Researches show us that adjectives, like adorable, cute, divine, dreamy, gorgeous, heavenly, cool, great, lovely, terrific, wonderful and so on, are more frequently heard from women's mouths.

c. Expletives

When male and female use expletive, female is more careful and they avoid using crude words. These expressions such as my dear, my goodness, Goodness often appear in women's language. On the contrary, these words and sentences such as "God damn it","damned and shit" are often found in the men's language. These crude words and sentences are taboos. When men use the word "shit", women often use "Oh, dear" to express their intensive feelings.

d. Euphemism and Polite Expressions

Additionally, women use euphemism and polite expressions more frequently. Euphemism, in fact, is one way to use one implicit, vague expression to substitute for unpleasant expressions.

According to Jespersen, women are euphemistic, exercising "a great and universal influence on linguistic development through their instinctive shrinking from coarse and gross expression and their preference for refined and veiled and indirect expressions". (Jespersen, 1922, p.246)Women use euphemistic substitutes. For example, women say "the other place" instead of "hell", say "My period now", "My friend came," "My grandmother has come to stay", "My auntie has come to stay", or "I fell off the roof", to express "menstruation". They use "the small of one's back" instead of "buttocks", "stout" instead of "fat", and "vestal virgin" instead of "spinster".

Similarly, in interactions, euphemisms are also preferred by women. For instance:

Babara: What do you think of the color of my coat?

Nancy: It's interesting.

In this simple dialogue, Nancy's answer "It's interesting", in reality, is designed to express the unpleasant implication: I don't like the color of the coat.

Women are more likely to speak politely. They often use expressions with polite implications, like "thank you", "please", "you are so kind", "would you please…", "Would you mind…", "Would you kindly…" and the like.

C.   In Grammar

Although, so far, there is no enough evidence to prove that some grammar structures are solely used by women, yet through the analysis of the linguistic materials collected by linguists, women are indeed found to use the following grammar structures more.

a. Tag Questions

In ayntax as well as usage, a tag question is midway between a statement and an outright question:

The way prices are rising is horrendous, isn't it?

Lakoff proposed that tags are used when a speaker is atating a claim but has less than full confidence in the truth of the claim. In some situations, then, a tag question would be perfectly legitimate sentence form.

She proposed that women used one particular type of tag question more than men. The type in which the speaker's own opinions are being expressed, as in the example above. The effect is to convey uncertainty and lack of conviction.

b. Hedges

Hedges are words that convey the sense that the speaker is uncertain about what he or she is saying, or can not vouch for the accuracy of the statement, such as "kind of", "sort of", "you know", "I think", "I suppose", and "I guess" and etc.

Hedges seem to appear more often in women's speech. There is another justifiable use in which the hedge mitigates the possible unfriendliness or unkindness of a statement, that is, for the sake of politeness. Besides, in contrast with men, women usually apply embedded imperatives to ask someone to do something. "Will you please open the window?", "Please close the door", "On your way back, could you please bring that here?" and so on are usually used by women.

c. Hypercorrect Grammar

This involves an avoidance of terms considered vulgar of coarse, such as "ain't" and use of precise pronunciation, such as sounding the final g in words such as "going" instead of the more casual "goin". This characteristic is related to "superpolite" language.

D.   In Conversational Topics and Styles

In the early 1970s, famous sociolinguist Hymes has once stated that in any speech community, the speech act is very likely to be the gender marker of the community members. Thus, women's speech act will speak for women's gender identity and their linguistic features in conversations will help us know more about women's social realities and gender identity.

a. Subjects

Males and females seem to be different even in the things they talk about. Usually men are not familiar with the words, which are related to cloth, color, sewing and the style of women's dresses. Women are not familiar with the words which are related to the reparation of cars, the equipment of pipes and sports. Topics that are considered trivial or unimportant are women's domain. There are also many tabooed subjects for women. Tabooed subjects can vary widely: sex; death; excretion; bodily functions; religious matters, and politics.

b. Discourse

For women, conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus. They try to protect themselves from others' attempts to push them away. Life, then, is a community, a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation. Though there are hierarchies in this world too, they are hierarchies more of friendship than of power and accomplishment. The difference involves the preferred relations between speaker and addressee. Men are said to prefer this pattern, where a single speaker has the rest of the group as audience, while women tend to break a larger group into a number of smaller conversation groups.

III.   POSSIBLE FACTORS THAT SHAPE THE FEATURES OF FEMALE LANGUAGE

The factors that shape the features of female language are not only the influence of physiology and psychology, but also because of the influence of the society and the culture. The difference of social work distribution, cultural factors and social psychological factors are all responsible for the appearance of these characteristics.

A.   Social Factors

As language is closely related to social attitudes and it reflects language's, creators' and users' thought as well as attitudes and cultural values. And people's attitudes are affected by social ideology and their own value orientation, which will, in turn, have great influence on people's evaluations about objects. Therefore, early linguists' attitudes towards women's language are inevitably influenced by their social ideology and value orientation. Specifically speaking, their evaluation about women's language is based on several social factors: women's social status, women's sex role socialization and dominant gender system.

a. Women's Social Status

Industrialized capitalism has sharpened a division between the labor of women and men, and a separation in the location of their activities. Men are more visible in, and ideologically defined by, the public sphere while women are relegated to the domestic sphere. Women have always been and are increasingly among the wage laborers, but even employed women are primarily defined by their family roles.

Women's supposed speech style is often ridiculed and is not considered an acceptable style for either men or women in public affairs. As is mentioned in his 1922 chapter "the Woman", O.Jesperson presents women's language as an aberration of men's language. Women's vocabulary is, he claims, less extensive, their sentences are not as complex as men's, they talk more rapidly and with less thought than do men.

b. Sex Role Socialization

Concerning the sex roles socialization theory, Pamela Fishmen has ever described like this:

"Discussions of the way women act often rely on some notion of a female 'personality'. Usually, socialization is used to explain this personality. Women are seen as more insecure, dependent and emotional than men because of the way that they are raised."(Fishmen, 1980, p.127) In analyzing men's and women's speech style with this socialization theory, Lakoff (1990)clearly pointed out: "Language patterns into which women are most frequently seen as having been socialized include hesitance,insecurity,indirectness,weakness,deviousness,politeness,and hypercorrection, which is itself sometimes appealed to an indication of a feeling of inferiority with one's own way of speaking…Men, on the other

hand, are perceived as having been socialized into strong, dominant, forceful, and direct ways of talking." Based on the above statements, socialization process has stereotyped women's personality and their language use.

B. Culture Factors

The relationship between language and culture is interactive and language is one expression, one mirror and carrier of culture. Thus, the image of women's language, of course, is closely linked to cultures, like sex discrimination, western women's subculture and Bible, so is the early evaluations about western women's language. On the whole, in the sense of culture, their evaluations are affected by such factors, like gender culture, gender ideology and gender stereotypes.

a. In Gender Culture

Gender functions in social relations and material conditions through gender systems. In the United States, there are two quite different gender systems operating. One of them is the more publicly known: the dominant system of cultural practices found throughout middle-class European society. That is, in this gender system, males have dominance over women and they are breadwinner status, political participants and so on.

Women's culture, as one subculture of gender culture, has been formed within the division of labor. That is to say, due to the division of labor, women are only subordinated to men. Anthropologists argued that in all cultures women are seen as closer to nature than men by virtue of their involvement in the biological reproduction of the species, while men are seen as closer to culture. Culture, In turn, is more highly valued by humans in their efforts to distinguish themselves from the rest of the animal world. This also provides a basis for the assertion of male superiority over women. This cultural tradition can date back to "Bible". "Bible" claims that man creates the world, while woman is just one rib taken from man. "Bible", to a large extent, advocates patriarchy and emphasizes women's subordinated social status. For example:

Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the lord.

Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man.

b. In Gender Ideology

Ideology is the system of beliefs by which people explain, account for, and justify their behavior and interpret and assess that of others. Gender ideology is the set of beliefs that govern people's participation in the gender order, and by which they explain and justify that participation.

Lakoff's (1973) claimed that the ways in which particular semantic and morphological processes are carried conveyed negative attitudes toward women. In particular semantic field, it is easy to find that some words have negative meaning against women, like spinster, bitch, widow, etc. Thus, gender ideologies and gendered speaking patterns were closely related and to some extent, the latter has helped a lot in shaping gender ideology.

IV. CONCLUSION

Gender differences are a fundamental fact of human life and it is not surprising to find them reflected in language. It should be noted that the distinction between men and women's language is a symptom of a problem in our culture, not the problem itself. Basically it reflects the fact that men and women are expected to have different interests and different roles, hold different types of conversations, and react differently to other people. From the discussion of the features of female language, more attention should be paid to language use in social context. What's more, the linguistic phenomena in speaking community can be understood more thoroughly. Thus, this paper "On the Characteristics of Female Language in English" not only describes and explains these features but also discloses language and social relationships.

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Corrective Feedback Provision: Mixed Pattern vs. Separate Pattern

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Abstract—One of the suggestions that advocates of process writing approaches to second language writing pedagogy have made is that teachers should attend to content in preliminary drafts before switching to focus on form on later drafts. Although the reasons advanced for separating form-content-focused feedback onto different drafts seem sensible enough, some criticized this separation on several counts. Building on the implications of these suggestions, the present article investigated whether the mixed pattern is superior to separate pattern of content first then form feedback? The research sample was divided into two major groups of 40. The first group received direct written teacher commentary on content in the first draft and indirect CF on form in the second draft and the students in the second group received mixed pattern of direct written teacher commentary on content and indirect teacher written corrective feedback on form in the first draft and mixed pattern of direct oral commentary and indirect oral corrective feedback in the second draft of the second group. The findings revealed that there is not any superiority of mixed pattern of written/oral CF over separate patten of WCF. Finally implications were drawn for teachers and L2 writing instruction.

Index Terms—process writing, separate patten, mixed pattern, WCF, OCF

I. INTRODUCTION

Corrective feedback as directly related to productive skills, especially writing, is the most frequently cited type of feedback in the literature. The term negative feedback, negative evidence and corrective feedback are usually used interchangeably in SLA literature to refer to any indications of learners' non-target like use of the target language (Gass, 1997 cited in Kim, 2004). Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) draw our attention to the fact that corrective feedback differs in terms of how implicit or explicit it is. In the case of implicit feedback, there is no overt indicator that an error has been committed, whereas in explicit feedback types, there is. Chaudron (1988, p.141) posits that corrective feedback may be message-focused or code-focused; it may be self- or other- initiated; corrective feedback may occur implicitly in the form of comprehension and confirmation checks, recasting and the like, or explicitly in the form of provision of the correct form by teacher, peer, or native interlocutor; it may be accompanied by an explanation, especially in the classroom setting. He further mentions that in the classroom setting more attention is apparently given to discourse and content errors than to either lexical, grammatical, or morphological errors.

As Ellis (1994) points out, the role of corrective feedback in language acquisition has been extensively debated. There has been a considerable body of research into the nature of teacher's correction in language classrooms. However, there have been few studies that have investigated what effect if any; formal corrections have on language acquisition.

The mater of how to correct errors is very much complex. Research on error correction methods is not at all conclusive about the most effective method or technique for error correction. It seems quite clear that students in the classroom generally want and expect errors to be corrected (Cathcart & Olsen, 1976 cited in Brown 2000). Brown (2000 cites Baily, 1985) who suggested taxonomy of error treatment options in second language classrooms. There are 7 options in the taxonomy. The basic options are: 1 to treat or to ignore, 2. to treat immediately or to delay, 3. to transfer treatment to other learners or not, 4. to transfer to another individual, a subgroup or the whole class, 5. to return or not to the original error maker after treatment, 6. to permit other learners to decide to initiate treatment, 7. to test for the efficiency of the treatment. Brown (2000) argues that all of the basic options are viable modes of correction in the classroom. The teacher needs to develop intuition through experience and solid eclectic theoretical foundations for ascertaining which option or combination of options is appropriate at a given moment.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Error correction has been one of the key issues in second language writing faced by both teachers and researchers. There has been controversy as to whether error feedback helps L2 students to improve the accuracy and overall quality of their writing (Truscott, 1999; Ferris, 1999). Truscott (1999; 2007) held a strong view against error correction. He

argued that all forms of error correction of L2 student writing are not only ineffective but also harmful and should be abandoned. He further emphasized that although most L2 students clearly desire grammar correction, teachers should not give it to them. Ferris (1999) rebutted this claim by arguing that Truscott had overlooked some positive research evidence on the effects of grammar correction. With the existing data (Hyland, 2003; Bitchener, 2008), it is still too early to have a conclusive answer to the question of whether error correction is effective in improving the accuracy of L2 writing in the long term for learners of all levels. Therefore, L2 writing teachers simply cannot dismiss students' strong desire for error feedback.

A. First WHY. Why Content First Then Form? (Separate Pattern)

According to Ashwell (2000), advocates of a process writing approach to second language writing pedagogy have made various suggestions about the best ways teachers can respond to their students' writing. One of these suggestions is that teachers should attend to content in preliminary drafts before switching to focus on form on later drafts. The supposition is that by doing so the teacher can encourage revision (making large-scale changes to content) on early drafts before helping the student with editing (making small-scale changes to form) on the final draft. One assumption is perhaps that focusing on form too early in the writing process can dissuade students from revising their texts. Another assumption is that giving advice that is intended to encourage revision too late in the process requires students to take risks when there is no chance for redress. It is also assumed that revision and editing need to be dealt with separately. It is still unclear, however, whether the content-then-form pattern of teacher response is in fact more effective than other patterns. The researcher in the first group separated content and form and gave much attention to content in the early drafts.

B. Second WHY. Why Mixed Pattern of CF on both Content and Form in the Same Draft? (Why Avoiding Content and Form Separation?

Although the reasons advanced for separating form- and content-focused feedback onto different drafts seem sensible enough, Ferris (2003) criticized this separation on several counts. First, there is no empirical evidence to support the assertion that simultaneous attention to content and form inhibits students from working on both during revision. On the contrary, in several studies in which teachers gave global and local feedback on the same text, L2 students showed the ability to improve their texts in both content and form during revision (Ashwell, 2000; Ferris, 1997). A possible explanation for this divergence from L1 composition research is that L2 student writers are well aware that they have linguistic deficits and make errors as they write, but they also know that improving their ideas is important as well (Ferris, 1995; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994, both cited in Ferris, 2003). Thus they are motivated to address any and all writing problems as attention is called to them.

Second, as Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) state, the distinction between content and form may well be a false dichotomy, as content determines form, at least to some extent, and faulty form can obscure meaning for a reader. Such issues could properly be considered rather as a continuum, and rigid and somewhat arbitrary prescriptions about the types of comments teachers should give to their students at various stages of the writing process may well be inappropriate and unhelpful. Third, teacher feedback should be constructed according to the most critical needs of individual student writers (Ferris et al., 1997; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999). If a student writes a first draft that is exemplary as to ideas, development, and organization, but that is crying out for careful editing, it would seem foolish for the teacher to turn himself or herself inside out trying to find constructive content-based comments to give to the writer merely because it is the first draft and attention to form is judged premature. Or, at the opposite extreme, a student's first draft may be so riddled with language problems that the teacher cannot possibly provide useful (or even accurate) meaning- based commentary until he or she has more clarity about what the student is trying to say (which may well be achievable only through a face-to-face conference, as discussed later in this chapter). In contrast, as any experienced writing instructor knows, a student may still be very much in need of content-focused response even on a penultimate essay draft. To ignore this need because it is "time" to focus only on grammar again seems counterproductive.

A final argument against waiting until the end of the writing cycle to give language- related feedback is that L2 student writers have a tremendous need for expert feedback on their written errors. Students in many contexts will fail their writing courses or university writing proficiency examinations solely because of language errors. The linguistic deficits that many bring to the writing class are real and substantial (Silva, 1993; Leki, 1990, both cited in Ferris, 2003) and it is critical that their instructors address them. Choosing to only give form-focused feedback on a few drafts throughout a writing course could be argued to deprive students of critically needed input on an issue that could ultimately make or break them.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the present study was to carry out a study to compare the effects of mixed pattern versus separate pattern of feedback provision. To test the research hypotheses, the students from separate group received written content feedback on their first drafts and written form feedback on their second drafts. The students from the mixed pattern group applied the mixed pattern of written content and form feedback on their first drafts and oral feedback on

content and form in the second drafts. Given such theoretical underpinnings, this study sought to explore the following research question.

Are there any significant differences between the results of separate pattern and mixed pattern of CF provision?

IV. METHOD

A. Research Setting and Participants

Participants for experimental study comprised 80 EFL students who were nonrandomly selected from 140 EFL students of Islamic Azad University. The students had similar educational backgrounds in that they had been exposed to Basic Writing as prerequisite to Writing Course (I).They were all TEFL students taking Writing Course (I) at Islamic Azad University. They had a two-hour writing English class every week. Both groups received treatment during the whole semester, sixteen sessions, and their language development was tested both at the end and during the semester.

B. Collection and Analysis of Data

The sample was divided into two major groups of writing class I and II. Each major group included 40 participants and each one was exposed to experimental treatment as follows:

Class One: Received written corrective feedback (WCF)

Draft 1: Direct written teacher commentary on content

Draft 2: Indirect written corrective feedback on form

Class Two: Received both written and oral corrective feedback (WCF & OCF)

Draft 1: Mixed written direct teacher commentary on content and indirect CF on form

Draft 2: Mixed oral direct teacher commentary on content and indirect CF on form

In this stage, the researchers operationalized the treatment conditions of the study within two major groups (Group I and Group II). A related aspect of this study was to compare the separate pattern of written content feedback followed by written form feedback in Group I with mixed written content and form feedback followed by mixed oral content and form feedback in Group II.

In each Group, the students were required to write four revised paragraphs of descriptive, narrative, opinion, and comparison and contrast genre with two drafts for each ($4 \times 2 = 8$). The number of exchanges between teacher and students, both written and oral, was as follows:

Group I

40 = the number of students

8 = the number of written feedback for each student

320 = total number of exchanges between students and teacher in the form of WCF.

Group II

40 = the number of students

8 = the number of written or oral feedback for each student

320 = total number of exchanges between students and teacher in the form of WCF or OCF.

V. RESULTS

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate the degree of significance for the acceptance or rejection of the research question formulated at the beginning of the study. The data analyzed for experimental stage were based on both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings from the experimental stage are presented by the fillowing hypothesis.

Research Hypothsis: Priority of Mixed Pattern over Separate Pattern of CF Provision

Advocates of mixed pattern state that the distinction between content and form may well be a false dichotomy, as content determines form at least to some extent, and faulty form can obscure meaning for a reader. Such issues could properly be considered rather as a continuum, and rigid and somewhat arbitrary prescriptions about the types of comments teachers should give to their students at various stages of the writing process may well be inappropriate and unhelpful.

Table 1 shows comparison between group 1 and 2 in terms of draft 1, draft 2, post test 1, and post test 2. The result of chi-square indicated that, there are not significant differences between total number of feedbacks in group 1 and 2 in terms of post test 2, post test 1, and drafts 1 &2 respectively (P = 1.000>.o5).

TABLE 1
COMPARISON BETWEEN GROUP I AND II

		Group I			Group II
Draft 1	Content	1804	Draft 1	Content	1345
	Form	0		Form	3068
	Total	1804		Total	4413
Draft 2	Content	0	Draft 2	Content	393
	Form	3823		Form	845
	Total	3823		Total	1238
	Total No. of Feedback in Group 1	**5627**		Total No. of Feedback in Group 2	**5651**
Post 1	Content	80	Post 1	Content	64
	Form	200		Form	200
	Total	**280**		Total	**245**
Post 2	Content	80	Post 2	Content	56
	Form	160		Form	169
Total		**240**		Total	**225**

VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

As table 2 illustrates, in terms of 5 areas of content in both Groups I and II, the researchers' feedback follow a rational order. That is, the highly provided feedbacks are "ability to communicate" and "purpose of paragraph" and the least emphasized one is "supportive ideas". In terms of 3 areas of form, Group I is similar to Group II (Draft one: written CF) but they are different from oral CF (draft 2 and draft 3). Written CF on form follows "Grammar", "vocabulary", and "mechanics", while in oral corrective feedback; the order is "grammar", "vocabulary", and "mechanics". This indicates that teachers are not potential enough to provide oral CF in mechanical areas of form.

The result of this study uncovered the following:

1. There are not significant differences between total number of feedbacks in group 1 and 2 in terms of post test 2, post test 1, and drafts 1 & 2 respectively

2. Regarding the differences between Group I and II, as Table 2 shows, although the numbers of feedback in both drafts in terms of content and form are completely different, the total number of feedbacks is approximately the same

TABLE 2
DIFFERENT AREAS OF CONTENT AND FORM IN GROUP I AND II

Content areas	Group1/Draft 1 WCF on Content	Group1/Draft 2 WCF on Form	Group 1/Draft 3 Sustained errors Content & form	Group 2/Draft 1 Mixed WCF on content and form	Group 2/Draft 2 Mixed OCF on content & form	Sustained errors Content & form Group 2/Draft 3
Ability to communicate	452		73	347	107	51
Purpose of paragraph	401		61	322	97	41
Smooth ideas	378		41	232	67	28
Logical organization	319		55	277	77	35
Supportive ideas	254		27	167	45	23
Form areas						
Grammar		1812	220	1389	578	330
Vocabulary		374	95	352	215	57
Mechanics		1627	191	1327	52	35

A. Implications for Teachers

Reform of education is not simply reform of school system but reform of the behavior and thinking of the wider social teaching-learning process that guides moral-political ideas and behavior. Far-reaching curriculum innovation involves fundamental shifts in the values and beliefs of the individuals concerned (Burns, 1996).

Decisions related to EFL writing will affect teachers and EFL writing instruction. Teachers should feel confident about providing direct teacher commentary on content and indirect CF on form. For L2 writer, teacher's indirectness, especially when provided on content may add another layer of difficulty. In order to avoid the mentioned shortcomings, the researcher used direct metalingistic CF in the form of marginal and end direct commentary.Form has three clear divisions of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Each of them is further subdivided into different clear-cut divisions such as prepositions, tense, agreement, spelling, etc. The clarity of form allows the corrector to provide indirect CF which requires the student to engage in "guided problem-solving" (Laland, 1982, cited in Ferris, 2003, p. 51)

Teachers should apply indirect codeded CF. On the practical level, it is much easier, faster, and more accurate for teachers to simply mark an error by highlighting, circling, or underlining it than to decide what error type it is and attach the appropriate code or verbal signal. On the other hand, it could be argued that *coded* feedback is more helpful to students than simple error location because it helps them to access metalinguistic information they may have learned (e.g., about verb tense rules or subject–verb agreement), giving them more tools with which to solve problems.

EFL teachers should use Mixed Pattern of CF on both Content and Form in the same draft. As Ferris and Hedgcock, (2005,) state and as the findings of this study show, the distinction between "content" and "form" may well be a false dichotomy, as content determines form, at least to some extent, and faulty form can obscure meaning for a reader. Such issues could properly be considered rather as a continuum, and rigid and somewhat arbitrary prescriptions about the types of comments teachers should give to their students at various stages of the writing process may well be inappropriate and unhelpful.

B. Implications for L2 Writing Instruction

EFL students are often anxious about writing and need to be encouraged to see it as a means of learning, rather than demonstrating learning. Instead of considering writing as a goal of language instruction, it would be better to focus on it as a means of developing language competence in such a way that the emphasis shifts from learning to write and moves in the direction of writing to learn. Teacher-students interactions through feedback is a kind of collaborative group work that may lead to greater opportunities for students to negotiate meaning as they work with peers in improving a written text. In pedagogical practice, viewing writing as a process-oriented activity encourages students to engage in multiple drafting and consider writing as occurring in stages that may differ to some extent among different writes.

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On Special Semantic Meaning of Securities English

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Abstract—**This paper argues that securities English has its own semantic meaning especially nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs have their unique semantic meaning that can't be owned by their common words and that it is imperative this linguistic features be grasped in order that this kind of English should be faithfully and correctly understood and translated and proficiently applied.**

Index Terms—**securities English, semantic meaning, linguistic features, linguistic sense, culture**

Securities are defined as any note, stock, treasury stock, security future, bond, debenture, certificate of interest or participation in any profit-sharing agreement or in any oil, gas, or other mineral royalty or lease….(Section 3a item 10 of the 1934 Act). In Collins Cobuild English Dictionary, securities are defined as stocks, shares, bonds, or other certificates that you buy in order to earn regular interest from them or to sell them later for a profit. Therefore security includes note, stock, treasury stock, security future, bond etc. Securities English words have special semantic meaning, so we are to pay special attention to the semantic meaning of securities English. If we want to understand correctly securities English, we are to learn securities English, because we can't get the meaning of securities English by referring to dictionaries. Here I sum up the main features of the semantic meaning of securities English.

I. Nouns Have Special Semantic Meaning

1 The **red herring** is an initial prospectus containing all the information about the company except for the offer price and the effective date, which aren't known at that time. With **red herring** in hand, the underwriter and the company attempt to hype and build up interest for the issue. They go on a road show where the big institutional investors are courted.

Here red herring does not refer to the fish that is smoked and dried by people but an initial prospectus of a company that is going to go public because on its cover of the prospectus there is a passage of red words to note that the prospectus has not gone into effect and is to be perfected or revised.

2 Investors usually focus on weekly and monthly charts to spot long-term trends and forecast long-term price movements. Because long-term charts cover a longer timeframe with compressed data, price movements do not appear as extreme and there is often less **noise**.

Here noise is not sound but the price fluctuation on daily charts that interfere with your correct judgment of the long-term trends of the stock.

3 The console is getting no IPO allotment may be a blessing in disguise. After all, IPOs may prove too risky for individual investors. In the days of dot-com mania, investors could throw money into an IPO and be almost guaranteed **killer** returns. Now the tech bubble burst and the IPO market returned to normal.

Here killer means much profit.

4 International direct investment commonly involves the movement of production factors, while in the case of international **portfolio** investment, investors simply purchase shares or bonds issued by a foreign company, which can be liquidated at market prices at any time.

Here portfolio investment refers to securities investment.

Here are some other nouns that have special semantic meaning: maturity (the money you have invested is ready to be paid), note (an official document with a particular purpose), correction (adjustment), share (any of the units of equal value into which a company is divided and sold to raise money. People who own shares receive part of the company's profits), futures (goods or shares that are bought at agreed prices but that that will be delivered and paid for at a later time), exchanges (a building where people meet to buy and sell stocks) etc.

Because of **flipping**, it's a good rule not to buy shares of an IPO if you don't get in on the initial offering. Many IPOs that have big gains on the first day will come back to earth as the institutions take their profits.

Here flipping means staging i.e. buying shares of an IPO.

II. Adjectives Usually Have Special Semantic Meaning

Adjectives are used to describe or modify nouns. They play a vital role in modifying nouns. In securities English, we can't make sense of adjectives solely by their literal meanings. For example:

1 **Private companies** try to go public or perform an "Initial Public Offering"(IPO) to sell shares of their stock to the public in order to raise money for the company. **Public companies** have thousands of shareholders and are subject to strict rules and regulations. They must have a board of directors and they must report financial information every quarter and they must be overseen by governing bodies similar to SEC -- Securities Exchange Commission.

Private companies here do not refer to companies that are owned by a private person but companies that have not gone public or been listed, so we can't buy or sell the shares of their stock of the companies. Obviously some state-owned companies that have not gone public / been listed are still private companies. Public companies are not companies that are owned by the public but that the shareholders can buy or sell the shares of their stock of the companies. Some public companies are still owned by a private person or some private people although these companies have gone public or been listed.

2 A daily candlestick is based on the open price, the intraday **high** and **low**, and the close.

Some investors consider the closing level to be more important than the open, **high** or **low**. By paying attention to only the close, intraday swings can be ignored. Line charts are also used when open, **high** and **low** data points are not available.

Here high means the highest and low the lowest.

3 Futures price have a price change limit that determines the prices between which the contracts can trade on a daily basis. The price change limit is added to and subtracted from the previous day's close, and the results remain **the upper and lower price boundary** for the day. Say that the price change limit on silver per ounce is $0.25. Yesterday the price per ounce closed at $5. Today's **upper price boundary** for silver would be $5.25 and the **lower boundary** would be $4.75. At any moment during the day the price of futures contracts for silver reaches either boundary, the exchange shuts down all trading of silver futures for the day.

Here the upper means the top or highest and lower the lowest.

4 Penny stocks are extremely speculative stocks. Investors in speculative stocks are "high rollers". Investors anticipate a dramatic increase in the earnings of a company even though there is little or no business performance track record or there is a record of erratic earnings. This hope may arise for a variety of reasons such as the company is developing a new product or service that shows early signs of success, or there is evidence that a market has seen the bottom and is poised to take off into a **bullish phase**.

Bullish phase refers to the phase in which the stock will rise.

Point & Figure Charts focus on price movements, which is easier to identify support and resistance levels, **bullish breakouts and bearish breakdowns**.

Bullish breakouts refers to the fact that the stock has broken through and has been in the trend to rise while bearish breakdowns is just the opposite that the stock has broken through and has been in the trend to go down.

5 A private company can get publicly-listed in a very relatively short time period by **reverse merger**. The private company that has strong prospects and is eager to raise financing buys a publicly-listed **shell company**, usually one with no business and limited assets. Together the two companies become an entirely new public corporation with tradable shares. There are others like rebound, collapse, be hung up, come out handsomely, reversal, peak out, bottom out, thinly traded.

Reverse merger refers to the fact that a private company goes public by buying a publicly-listed shell company.

6 The target company's management may seek out a **white knight** who will offer an equal or higher price for the shares than the hostile bidder.

White knight refers to a friendly company the target company looks for to make a tender to fight against hostile bidder.

7 High turnover in excess of 100% is also a **red flag** for high brokerage costs.

You should choose a fund that has been well-managed by the same manager over a period of time. Funds that play musical chairs with their managers should **raise red flags**.

Here red flag refers to warning, because red implies danger.

8 A daily candlestick is based on the open price, the intraday high and low, and the close. **White (clear)** candlesticks form when the close is higher than the open and **black (solid)** candlesticks form when the close is lower than the open. The white and black portion formed from the open and close is called the body (white body or black body). The lines above and below are called shadows and represent the high and low.

But in china we use red candlesticks instead of white to express the fact that when the close is higher than the open, and green instead of black when the close is lower than the open.

9 The **accumulated earnings** of the stock are two dollars per share.

Accumulated earnings refer to the earnings that has not been allotted.

10 The **bottom line** of the stock this year is 220,356,300 dollars.

Bottom line refers to net earnings, for in the annual report the bottom line is net earnings.

11 The listed company has a **classified loan**, so the stock of the company is weak.

A classified loan is a loan that is not paid in due time.

12 After a steep, rapid decline of the stock price, **dead cat bounce** appeared.

Dead cat bounce refers to a moderate strong bounce.

13 An upside gap is followed by a downside gap, which is considered a major top reversal signal, which is called **abandoned baby pattern**.

Abandoned baby pattern refers to the signal in the candlesticks that the price of the stock will reverse to rise.

III. ADVERBS

1 Some new dot-com millionaires in Silicon Valley cashed in on their latest IPO. The phenomenon spawned the term "siliconaire" which described the dot-com entrepreneurs who suddenly found themselves **living large** due to IPOs from their Internet companies.

Living large means living a very rich life.

2 With an initial margin of $2,000 in June, Joe buys one September contract of gold at $350 per ounce, for a total of 1,000 ounces or $350,000. By buying in June, he is **going long**, with the expectation that the price of gold will rise by the time the contract expires in September.

Here going long means being a patient investor who holds the view that the trend of the futures will be rise and will not sell in a short period of time. Along position involves inflows greater than outflows in a currency.

3 Suppose that with an initial margin of $3,000, Sara sold one May crude oil contract at $25 per barrel for a total value of $25,000. By March, the price of oil had reached $20 per barrel and she bought back the contract which was valued at $20,000. By **going short**, she made a profit $5,000.

Here going short means the fact that the investor anticipates that the price of the stock will be in a down trend, and he sells the stock first, and then he buys the stock when its price has fallen and will be up.

4 The investors may **buy low and sell high** if the company does well. (Mingyao Chen, Fagong Liu, 2003: 58)

Here buy low means buy when the stock price is low, and sell high means sell the stock when its price is high.

IV. VERBS

1 The government tried to **bull** the market to stimulate investors to put their money to the stock.

To bull the market means to make the price of the stock rise.

2 Some speculators attempt to **bear** the stock market.

To bear the stock means to go short in the stock market.

3 By technical analysis profits can be made in any market by **positioning** ourselves in the direction of the price trend.

To position oneself means to build position in the stock market.

From we can see that securities English has special semantic meaning. We should pay special attention to the special semantic meaning of the securities English in order to correctly understand, use and translate securities English.

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Language Variation and the Implication for Language Teaching

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Abstract—**Teaching English as a foreign language in China has many problems, among which the biggest one is students' incompetence in language use. In order to help Chinese learners have a better idea of language use, this paper takes a sociolinguistic view at language variations and offers suggestions for language teaching.**

Index Terms—**sociolinguistic, language variation, regional difference, social class, style**

I. INTRODUCTION

Language, in fact, is a body of knowledge or rules, which human beings use for the purpose of communication or social activity. Since we human beings can not live without society or to be more specific, without communication with each other, so language, as a vehicle of our communication, shows its importance in society. Up to now, 'language' is regarded as a general term in our discussion. However, we might have noticed, for example, such phenomenon that speech varies considerably from region to region or from lower social class to upper social class. This is what we call 'language variation'.

II. LANGUAGE VARIATIONS

A. Regional Differences

This is what we most familiar with. Regional difference refers to the different use of language, such as pronunciation, lexicon or even syntax, in different areas. So we have British English, American English, Asian English, etc. in terms of microscope; and London dialect, Oxford dialect, etc. in terms of microscope. Now, let's take American English and British English as an example. The difference between American English and British English is an obvious manifestation of language variation in different areas. American English is brought in America by English immigrants. Because of geographical estrangement and political independence these immigrants seldom contact with people in their homeland. Thus their spoken English is different from that of people in their homeland, with time passing by, a regional language variant came in being—American English. In American English, if the suffix "-l" is an unstressed syllable, it should not be doubled, such as "traveler", but English people always spell it as "traveller". British people say "autumn", but Americans say "fall".

It is worth noting that the longer an area is inhabited by a population speaking the same language, the more dialect diversity we can expect to find. Thus, the differences among the various regional dialects in Britain are more than those found in such countries as the United States, Canada, South Africa, etc. Similarly, if we look at the regional differences within the United States, we see that the greatest distinctions are to be found along the eastern seaboard, the area which has been inhabited by English speakers for the longest period of time.

Although regional differences in pronunciation, lexicon and even syntax may be quite pronounced, these distinctions between the English of one area and that of another are not usually great enough to prevent mutual intelligibility, because enough linguistic structure and basic vocabulary are shared for mutual comprehension to take place. Most important of all, in the 20th century, public education, geographic mobility and the distribution of radio, television have worked against the development of regional dialects into separate, mutually unintelligible languages.

In spite of mutual intelligibility of various dialects, there is a problem existing between dialects and Standard English. Wherever English is spoken as a native language, dialect differences will emerge. The idea of a standard is, in many respects, an abstraction rather than a concrete reality. If we accept the idea that standard speech is equivalent to the speech of the educated or the prestige group, we are left with the fact that educated people come from virtually everywhere in the English-speaking world and therefore speak in many different regional dialects. Thus, we must recognize that if we apply the notion of a standard to spoken English, we are dealing with an ideal in terms of syntax rather than with any specific model of pronunciation. In most language communities where a more or less rigid standard speech is assumed to exist, the very word 'dialect' is derogatory since it refers to an uneducated or quaint way of speaking. But, to linguists, the term 'dialect' has no such pejorative meaning since it is understood that each regional and social group has its own set of features of pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax.

When we turn to the written language, we are on much firmer ground in speaking of a standard. Although a few small differences exist in the orthographies of English and the United States, the rules for written Standard English are well

established and vary little from region to region.

B.   Social Class Difference

We all know that lower class speakers use different language forms from upper class people. It is part of the communicative competence of the native speaker to recognize differences in social class based on speech behavior. For this reason, it is important for language learners to have some familiarity with the ways in which social class is manifested in speech.

Social class differences in speech intersect with regional differences in such a way that features which are used by the prestige group in one region may well be regarded as markers of low socioeconomic status in another. A particular well known example is the pronunciation of the (r) sound after the ends of words. In England and in the Boston area of the United States, (r)-less speech is part of the pronunciation pattern of the prestige group. At present, however, the exact reverse is true. For this reason, studies which seek to investigate social class variation must focus on specific dialect areas or even speech communities.

Social class variation also has relations to Standard English and nonstandard English. It is widely accepted that upper class people speak Standard English, while lower class speakers' English is nonstandard. When you ran across the sentence: "I can't do nothing!" in the novel Uncle Tom's cabin, you may think it was misprinted. But the main character Tom in this novel is a black, uneducated person. He can only speak in this way. While the standard English should be: "I can do nothing" or "I can't do anything". So different dialects and accents are related to differences of social class background.

To put it in another way, language is heterogeneous and full of variability. One of the major factors influencing linguistic differences within a speech community is the socioeconomic background and educational level of the speakers. The variety of a language spoken by those who have wealth, power, and education is generally regarded as the prestige variety by the entire community. When the prestige variety becomes codified in written form, with dictionaries and grammar books which prescribe 'correct' usage, and when it becomes the variety used by government, courts of law, the mass media, and the school, it is referred to as the standard variety or the standard language. Once the language of the prestige group becomes codified and given official recognition in textbooks, dictionaries, and grammar books, forms which differ from it are regarded as incorrect. Since the varieties of English which are called nonstandard are those spoken by people at the lower end of the social scale, it is clear that a social rather than a linguistic distinction is at the heart of the judgment. If what the lower classes speak is considered 'bad English' because it is spoken by the lower classes, then there is really no way out of the trap except for the lower classes to learn to use the prestige or standard variety. This is the major reason it is considered important for children to be taught 'good grammar' in school.

Studies show that nonstandard varieties of English have long histories, just as the standard does, and that the same kinds of historical forces have operated to change and form both standard and nonstandard varieties of the language. It is a historical accident that certain forms of English have come to be codified and therefore to carry more prestige than others. There is nothing more or less pure about one variety of English over another. Nevertheless it must also be recognized that although the use of Standard English is not better in any objective sense than the use of any other variety, it occupies a privileged position because it is considered better by society. From a linguistic point of view, then, any variety of English which is systematic or consistent in its grammar is good English. From the point of view of society however, Standard English is the only good English. From the point of view of school achievement, we are also faced with the undeniable fact that the tests given nationwide in the United States are heavily biased in favor of middle and upper class children who come to school speaking Standard English.

C.   Style

In many ways this is the most critical of all, since stylistic variation intersects with social class differences such that speakers speak differently depending on the social identity of their interlocutor as well as on the speech situation in which they happen to find themselves. What is important in the study of style is that no one who is communicatively competent speaks the same way all the time. While the social class and educational background of speakers will have a strong influence on speech patterns for everyone and in every situation, it is still the case that part of the communicative competence of every native speaker is the ability to alter patterns of speech behavior to suit the situation, including the identity of those who are listening. We shift styles to indicate varying degrees of social distance, for example, we do not speak the same way to intimates as we do to strangers. The speech event in which one is participating also has a very strong influence on the style of speech used. For example, the same person in a casual conversation may be addressed in a style which indicates little social distance. An hour later, involved in a professional meeting with other in attendance, the same interlocutors may use a far more formal style. On the other hand, individuals engaged in telling a personal narrative, for example, may well use very different styles when engaging in conversation with a close friend than they would use with someone who is a distant acquaintance or a total stranger.

III.   IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

After an analysis of language variations, several suggestions can be made for Chinese English learners. First, English listening and speaking should be given more importance. Teachers could use materials relevant to daily communication

such as recorded clips from BBC or VOA and spend at least one class a week on speaking. Second, cultural background needs to be taught together with vocabulary. This helps them to build a stable vocabulary ready for effective use.

Attention should also be paid to one of the difficult problems faced in teaching English as a foreign language, that is, the variety of English to be taught. The variety of English taught will depend heavily on who is doing the teaching. Obviously, teachers have social and regional identities and whether or not they are native speakers of English, they come from a great variety of national and geographic origins. As we have seen, languages vary greatly from region to region and, within regions, from social group to social group. Since these differences involve pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax, it is clear that not all English teachers can be expected to present all students of English with the same linguistic model on which to pattern their speech. So, for us, as foreign learners, we should try our best to learn English well, but we may never reach native-like English. It is nothing to be regretful, as long as we are able to communicate with native English speakers well, our English study then, cannot be regarded as an unsuccessful one.

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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.

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