

# Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 2, Number 10, October 2012

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# Strategy-based Peer Assistance in EFL Writing: An Alternative to Traditional Peer Correction

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**Abstract**—Peer correction is one of the ways whereby feedback is provided to language learners, especially in foreign language learning situations where meaning-focused instruction is aided by form-focused activities to accelerate the learning process. However, studies on peer correction show that the problems of the practice are more than its advantages. Based on observation of process-oriented EFL writing classes at the university level, we propose strategy-based peer assistance (SPA) as an alternative to traditional peer correction (TPC). SPA enjoys the benefits of TPC and solves most of the problems inherent in it. SPA fosters cooperative and alleviates the teacher's task of correcting students' work. Because it is based on the natural communication strategy of appeal for assistance it is more learner-centered and safeguards against the social, psychological, organization and time constraint problems from which TPC suffers. Hence, TPC should be abandoned in favor of SPA.

**Index Terms**—peer assistance in EFL writing, an alternative to peer correction

## I. INTRODUCTION

In foreign language (FL) learning contexts, language development is frustratingly slow because the students' exposure to the language is confined to a maximum of four hours per week of classroom instruction. In such a situation, meaning-focused instruction is aided by form-focused instruction in the hope of accelerating the learning process. Grammar teaching and error correction constitute the two major components of form-focused instruction. Grammar instruction enhances the natural hypothesis formation process by confirming and modifying the students' tentative self-discovered rules. It also adds new ready-made rules to the already existing stock, (Mahmoud, 1995). Error correction, by definition, only modifies the incorrect hypotheses. This paper focuses on this second component of focused instruction: error correction. Needless to say, in any learning situation, the learners need and expect some kind of feedback – positive or negative – indicating the extent of learning and FL learning is no exception. Thus, error correction is a common practice in FL learning and it is as old as language teaching, (Bolitho, 1995; Saito, 1994).

Despite the debate over the effectiveness error correction (see e.g. Chandler, 2004; Truscott, 1999), the practice persists and it will continue as long as there is no conclusive evidence bearing out its effectiveness or otherwise. For most FL teachers error correction is a pedagogical duty reinforced by their own convictions and their students' needs and expectations. If grammar instruction speeds up the hypothesis formation and testing process as we said earlier, then error correction shares with it the hypothesis modification function. Thus, error correction has a place in the FL teaching and learning process. Accordingly, the debate has shifted from correction or no correction to more complicated issues such as: Which errors should be corrected and how? When to correct and who should correct them? The first three questions are beyond the scope of this paper. Our intention here is to discuss the question of who should correct the errors. Pishghadam and Kermanshahi (2011) list three types of correction: teacher correction, peer correction and self-correction. This study focuses on peer correction because it is the type of correction that generates more debate among FL teaching specialists.

## II. THEORETICAL BASIS

As Hansen and Liu (2005, p.31) say, peer response is supported by a number of theories: process-oriented writing, cooperative learning, and interaction and scaffolding in language learning. It is worth mentioning here that peer feedback is also in line with the learner-centered approach to language learning. For the purpose of this study, we need to underscore the fact that peer response is one of the important language learning and communication strategies. It is this linkage between peer response and communication strategies which constitutes the thesis of this paper. To the best of my knowledge, no study has made this connection so far and none of the definitions of peer response captures it as we will see. Looking at peer response from the perspective of communication strategies might change [1] the essence of the practice, [2] the teachers' and students' attitudes towards it, and [3] the terminology used to refer to what goes on among the students in process-oriented writing.

Communication strategies are the steps taken by a language learner to solve communication problems, (James, 1998; Tarone et al, 1983). Upon encountering a problem when communicating in the FL, learners employ either avoidance strategies (e.g. giving up communication, changing the topic) or achievement strategies (e.g. non-linguistic strategies,

inter-and-intralingual transfer). The strategies that are relevant to the topic of this paper are the social, interactive compensatory ones (i.e. asking for help, clarification, verification or correction, cooperating with others). We will discuss peer response in light of these strategies which, of course, presuppose cooperation, interaction and learner-centeredness in process-oriented writing.

Peer correction is also referred to as peer review, peer feedback, peer editing, peer response, peer evaluation and peer assessment, (Bartels, 2003). According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 390) it is “an activity ... in which students receive feedback about their writing from other students – their peers.” In the same vein, Bartels (2003, p. 34) defines it as an activity where “students read each other’s papers and provide feedback to the writer.” It is clear from the definitions that they refer to feedback in general – positive or negative. Peer correction refers to one type: negative feedback. Hansen and Liu (2005, p. 31) use ‘peer response’ where the students are used as sources of information ... for each other ... commenting and criticizing each other’s drafts.” None of these definitions depicts peer response as a spontaneous achievement strategy employed by the students without any systematic or planned intervention from the teacher. The term ‘peer assistance’ is used in this study to refer to the students’ natural compensatory communication strategy. It refers to the students’ social strategy of appeal for assistance and the concomitant help that they get from classmates before, during or after drafting a piece of writing.

### III. EMPIRICAL BASIS

This study gained impetus from our classroom observation of EFL process-oriented writing classes. Three groups (15 students each) of third semester male and female university students majoring in EFL were observed by their instructor in a post-intermediate essay writing course. The same instructor taught the course for three consecutive semesters. In this course, the students are usually required to write argumentative essays ranging from two and half to three pages. The essays are handwritten in two-hour sessions. The course focuses on process-oriented writing, hence, the students are allowed and encouraged to make use of any sources available (e.g. electronic and paper dictionaries and grammar references) to help them with the composing task. This study was motivated by the students’ natural tendency to use their interactive communication strategies to accomplish the drafting task. The students were observed cooperating with each other in pairs and small groups to solve mainly surface-level problems (i.e. spelling, grammar, style and vocabulary). They would always ask for:

- the spelling of a word or verification of its spelling
- a vocabulary item or verification of its correctness or appropriateness
- the correct form of a word or verification of the usage of a form
- the correct tense of a verb or verification of the usage of a tense
- the syntactic or semantic correctness of a sentence
- a grammar rule or verification of its correctness

In addition to appeal for assistance from classmates, the students were observed using mobile phones, laptop computers and other paper-based sources to solve such problems. It goes without saying that some students – individually or in group – would seek the instructor’s help to provide a linguistic form or verify its correctness. Consultation with a classmate or the instructor in private (i.e. conferencing) is the essence of the strategy-based appeal for assistance. The process is personalized or ‘desocialized’, as James (1998, p. 243) says, since assistance is sought and offered and the writer’s work is reviewed “in private rather than a social context.” Personalization or ‘desocialization’ here refers to the process of confining reciprocation of assistance to classmates with whom the student wants to cooperate as opposed to ‘publicization’ in traditional peer correction where the writer’s work is seen by members of a group formed by the teacher. The difference between the peers and the electronic devices (spelling checkers, grammar-checkers, etc.) is that the latter guarantee full privacy and more accurate feedback on language problems.

In the EFL writing classes observed, the instructor would not interfere in grouping the students. They would always sit in pairs or groups depending on the social relationships between them. Thus, they would interact and exchange assistance with friends and classmates with whom they were willing to work. In very few cases, this peer assistance was uni-directional; a student would seek the help of a classmate who he thought was more competent in the language or in some aspect of it. The students reciprocated assistance throughout the process of composing the first draft. However, none of them asked a classmate to review the whole draft essay most probably because of that continual assistance during drafting or because of time constraints. The students did not ask for help with content or organization because they used to debate the topic in the previous two-hour session, take notes, generate and sort out ideas, and prepare an outline to be developed into an essay in the following session. Thus, the first of the two two-hour sessions of the week was allotted to the selection of an argumentative topic, brain storming through a debate and preparation of an outline. The second session was devoted to drafting and writing up the essay. Hence, the students would come to the writing session with a clear idea about the content and organization of the essay.

### IV. SPA vs TPC

The strategy-based peer assistance (SPA) proposed in this study only enjoys the above mentioned benefits of traditional peer correction (TPC) but it also solves most, if not all, of the problems inherent in it (i.e. in TPC). In this



section, we will discuss some of the problems of TPC and see how SPA can help us guard against them. According to the definitions of peer correction presented earlier and the description of how it is delivered (see e.g. Bartels, 2003; Hansen and Liu, 2005; Pishghadam et al., 2011; Qi, 1993; Sultana, 2009), the process entails dividing the students into small groups and asking them to provide oral or written feedback on each other's drafts following some guiding points or questions from the teacher. According to Bartels (2003, p. 34), "In most cases the questions focus on organization and style, rather than surface-level grammar or spelling mistakes." Hansen and Liu (2005) share the same view. Thus, in TPC, the teacher's role is three-fold: (1) dividing the students into groups, (2) providing them with guiding points or questions, and (3) checking the final version of the composition. The students' task is to respond (i.e. correct, edit, review, assess, etc.) to each other's drafts in light of the teachers' guiding points and produce the final version following their peers' response.

In SPA, the students consult each other and reciprocate assistance during the composing process. Therefore, terms such as 'peer editing', 'peer review' and 'peer correction' may not precisely describe what the students actually do. These terms apply only when the students deal with completed draft compositions. Terms such as 'peer assessment' and 'peer evaluation' imply some sort of measurement; the peers read the completed composition and give scores or grades, (see e.g. Harmer, 2007). As such, the practice is turned into a testing activity where the students focus the score rather than on the learning aspect. Hansen and Liu (2005, p. 31) use the term 'peer response' to refer to the process of "commenting on and criticizing ... drafts." However, this term would be appropriate if it referred to the peer's response to a student's request for assistance during or after the composing process. In this study, we used 'peer assistance' to refer to the response of the peer to a student's appeal for help before, during or after composing. Hence, the term reflects the fact that the assistance is requested by the writer any time during the writing session and that the peer's response is not judgmental or evaluative.

Most researchers (e.g. Bartels, 2003; Hansen and Liu, 2005; Pishghadam et al., 2011; Qi, 1993; Rollinson, 2005; Sultana, 2009) admit that this practice (i.e. TPC) is fraught with problems. In fact, the disadvantages they enumerate are far more than the benefits. Regarding the advantages, Bartels (2003) agrees with Hyland (2000) and Topping et al. (2000) that peer response gives the students the feeling that they write for an audience and that it motivates them and increases their confidence in their writing. They also believe that peer response trains the students to assess their own writing. Mok (2011, p. 231) thinks that "it can facilitate students development of various learning and life skills such as learner responsibility, meta-cognitive strategies, evaluation skills, and a deeper approach to learning." It goes without saying that since the students work in groups, peer response fosters cooperative learning. Peer response can, by definition, alleviate the teacher's task of correcting the students' compositions, especially in large classes. An advantage that is frequently mentioned in peer correction literature (e.g. Hansen and Liu, 2005; Mok, 2011; Pishghadam et al. 2011; Rollinson, 2005; Sultana, 2009) is that it is in line with the learner-centered approach to language learning. Of course, learner-centeredness can be achieved in error correction not only through peer response but also through self-correction guided by correction codes or linguistic explanations provided by the teacher, (Mahmoud, 2011).

According to Johnson (2008) one of the advantages of peer correction is that the teacher is not involved in it. Like Rollinson (2005), he believes that the teacher's correction is threatening and degrading. Rollinson (ibid, p. 24) believes that the students can and do revise effectively on the basis of comments from peer readers." However, Sultana (2009, p. 13) does not subscribe to this view. She contends that the students may not trust their peers' knowledge, so "they do not revise their written works based on their friends' feedback." Lin and Chien (2009, p. 84) report their students' belief that "teachers' correction cannot be totally replaced by peer correction." However, such conflicting views, among other things, render the effectiveness of peer correction questionable. In the strategy-based peer assistance (SPA) proposed in this study, the students refer to their peers in case of problems during drafting and may willingly request them to review their draft compositions. Like TPC, SPA can help in minimizing mistakes and make the teacher's correction of the final versions less arduous. Thus, for peer response to be truly learner-centered, the teacher should not be directly or indirectly involved. He should not impose it on the students by setting up groups, laying down rules and allocating a certain portion of class time for it.

A common concern raised by some researchers is that the students may not be in a position to correct each other's writing because they are similar in their proficiency level in the language. Mok (2011, p. 230), for instance, says that her students believed that their peers were "not good enough" to assess them. Similarly, Rollinson (2005, p. 26) says that the students "may not easily accept the idea that their peers are qualified to act as substitutes for the teacher and critique their writing." However, the students' inability to correct their peers could be due to their low proficiency level in the language. In this case, the peer's feedback could be detrimental to the writer's linguistic health. The writer may be given an incorrect form or his incorrect form could be misjudged as correct. It sometimes so happens that the writer is right and the peer is wrong. In fact, even a teacher can be a source of error, especially in foreign language learning contexts where the teachers are non-native speakers of the language.

Students with higher proficiency levels may be qualified to perform the task. Even if that is the case, the writers might not accept correction because it is embarrassing and makes them feel inferior to the others, (Harmer, 2004; Sultana, 2009) or because the feedback is given in a harsh and humiliating manner, (Bartels, 2003; Nelson and Murphy, 1992). However, in case of SPA, it is the writer who seeks the peer's help and this help is reciprocated out of the students' own free will. As we stated earlier, peer correction lightens the teacher's workload but it does not relieve him

completely. However, Bartels (2003) adds one more burden to the teacher: he or she has to check if the peers give the right kind of feedback. The time and effort spent on checking both the students' final version of the composition and the peers' written feedback could be enough for the teacher to do all the correction by himself. In SPA, the students keep filling in their linguistic gaps and verifying the forms and structures they use with the help of their peers throughout the composing process. The teacher will see only the final version of the composition incorporating all of the forms provided and modifications suggested by the peers.

Some FL teachers may not be in favor of peer correction because they believe that the correction provided by the peers itself may not be correct. However, in a truly process-oriented writing task, the students are free to use their appeal for assistance strategy and seek help or verification from any available source during drafting. The peer who is requested to help can, himself, fall back on other sources (e.g. the teacher, electronic devices) for help if he is not sure of the correctness of his response.

Bartels (2003) agrees with Gearhart and Herman (1998) and Wilhelm (1996) that "peer review can pose problems in assessment because it may not be clear how much of the ideas, organization, or even wording ... are the work of the student being assessed or of the peer providing feedback", (Bartels, 2003, p. 36) This is certainly true if it is a writing test or examination and if the students are allowed to cooperate in such situations. In normal writing exercises, it is learning that counts. The students are expected to make use of their peers' feedback and improve their proficiency level and writing skill. Communication strategies – including non-linguistic ones such as using body language – can lead to learning through feedback, (Bialystok, 1990).

Ur (1996) believes that peer correction saves the teacher's time but the students might not spot all errors. In contrast to Ur, Bartels (2003), Caulk (1994) and Rollinson (2005) believe that peers provide comprehensive feedback. However, it is clear that these researchers are concerned with the completed first draft. In SPA, students usually seek their peers' help in the hope of avoiding or minimizing errors and improving their writing. They engage in a learning experience where they need to fill in gaps in their language knowledge and to verify the correctness or appropriateness of the forms and structures they use. It is not a test for writers nor is it an error hunting contest for the peers.

The issue of spotting errors is related to the relationship between the students. A reviewer may ignore the writer's errors if they are friends, (Carlson and Nelson, 1996; Rollinson, 2005; Sultana, 2009) and he might pick up on every error if he does not like him. Even worse is that TPC which is organized by the teacher may break up relationships between friends and it may aggravate animosity between the students who are not on good terms with each other. However, in SPA, the students rely on their peers for help to solve communication problems and avoid or reduce mistakes as we said earlier. There is no grouping of students by the teacher. Friends and those who are on good terms with each other work together and exchange assistance. Rollinson (2005, p. 26) believes that "most of the potential problems can be alleviated by properly setting up the group and establishing effective procedures." This solution might work if 'proper setting up of the group' means taking into account the relationships between the students. This entails giving them the freedom to choose the classmates with whom they can cooperate and work in harmony during and after writing. Thus, one of the most important requirements of SPA is that the teacher should not interfere in the natural course of the process by grouping students or imposing any work plan on them. Bartels (2003) agrees with Zamel (1985) when she says teacher's comments are "confusing, contradicting or even useless to the students," (Bartels, 2003, p. 36). Rollinson (2005, p. 25) describes teacher's the feedback as "unspecific, incomprehensible, contradictory, inconsistent, inaccurate, meaningless to the students." Be that as it may, it is not a justification for conducting TPC which suffers from drawbacks that are more than those of the teacher's correction. What Rollinson and others say about teacher's correction can also be said about TPC. The superiority of TPC over teacher's correction needs to be empirically verified.

TPC is believed to be time consuming, (Rollinson, 2005). This is true, especially in cases where writing classes are one hour or less. From our personal experience, many students hardly find time to revise their two-to-three-page essays even in a two-hour writing session. That is why we concur with the view that the students should be encouraged to employ their social communication strategies of asking questions and appealing for assistance from their peers (SPA) during the drafting process. The students can review each other's finished drafts if there is any time left. However, peers, electronic checkers and even teachers may make mistakes or overlook them when responding to the writers. Peers and teachers may overlook some mistakes simply because they may not notice them. In case of peers, their proficiency level could be another reason. Electronic checkers, by definition, do not suffer from such human problems but they may still be a source of error because they are not context-sensitive. Thus, SPA can perform the function of TPC without impinging on class time or on the relationships between the students and it does not give rise to the problems of TPC discussed earlier.

One of the guiding principles listed by Hansen and Liu (2005, p. 35) for peer response is to "let students decide on grouping and group rules." Grouping the students and having them correct each other's compositions is a sensitive issue in some socio-cultural settings where rapport cannot be guaranteed and any teacher imposed arrangements may not be welcomed. In such situations, the writer may be embarrassed not only because the others will see his work but also because he might receive some destructive comments from his peers. Even in favorable social contexts some students may not be willing to expose their errors to the others. In SPA, the teacher does not have to worry about grouping the students or planning the activity since students who usually sit next to each other work together and vice versa. They exchange assistance without rules or instructions. Mok (2011) points out that the teacher needs to be trained in peer

response. According to Rollinson (2005) the students also need to be trained as well. In case of SPA, neither the teacher nor the students need to be trained. Appeal for assistance is a natural communication strategy employed by the students spontaneously and all the teacher has to do is to encourage this strategy and offer assistance upon request. Thus, the teacher's role is the same as that of the peers and the electronic devices that can assist the students during and after drafting.

TPC becomes an abominable chore and begets embarrassment when a student is required to read his composition loudly to his peers. Qiyi (1993) thinks that loud reading is useful because it publicizes the student's work. According to Hansen and Liu's (2005) guiding principles of peer response, the peers read each other's drafts and discuss them one by one. However, whether the writer reads his draft loudly or the peers read it silently, the student's work will go public. Publicity is one of the reasons why the students may not be willing to engage in TPC. The brief comparison between SPA and TPC presented in this section shows an important difference between the two practices. SPA is a natural and spontaneous strategy used by the students whereas TPC is an activity organized by the teacher regardless of the students' attitudes towards it.

## V. SPA IN FOCUS

The foregoing comparison between strategy-based peer assistance (SPA) and traditional peer correction (TPC) shows that SPA enjoys all of the advantages of TPC and guards against most, if not all, of its drawbacks. Like TPC, it fosters learner involvement and cooperative work among the students. It also alleviates the teachers' task of correcting the final compositions. It helps the students avoid or minimize errors while they are writing the first draft. In SPA, the students seek their peer's help out of their free will and accept their feedback before, during and after drafting. If TPC is described as being friendlier, more sympathetic and less threatening than teacher's correction, these attributes are more applicable to SPA in view of the good relationships between the students who choose to work together and reciprocate assistance.

Because SPA is based on good relationships between the students, there is no feeling of animosity, inferiority or embarrassment. The students trust the sincerity of their peers' response, appreciate their assistance and value their knowledge. The peers will not pick up on each mistake nor will they make destructive comments. The fact that SPA is given during the drafting process makes it a learning experience rather than a testing and evaluation process. SPA and the help that the students get from electronic devices continue throughout the drafting stage, so it is not time consuming. There is no need to allocate a certain portion of class time for peer correction as a separate activity to be performed after completion of the first draft. SPA is truly learner-centered because the students employ their natural strategy of appeal for assistance. Any intervention from the teacher – by setting up groups, laying down rules or giving instructions – militates against the process. Because SPA is natural and spontaneous, neither the teacher nor the students need to be trained.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Like grammar instruction, error correction is a form-focused activity that is believed to enhance the learning process in classroom foreign language teaching situations. Acknowledging this role of error correction, the debate has shifted from whether to correct errors or not to more complicated issues related to the types of errors that should be corrected, when and how they should be corrected and who should correct them. In this study we focused on the agents of correction and on peer correction in particular. The peer correction studies reviewed for the purpose of this study invariably caution the teachers against the drawbacks of peer correction. Accordingly, we proposed strategy-based peer assistance (SPA) as an alternative to traditional peer correction (TPC). Our classroom observation revealed that SPA does not only enjoy the benefits of TPC but it also safeguards against its numerous problems. SPA fosters cooperative learning and it is more learner-centered than TPC because it is based on the students' natural strategy of appeal for assistance. The teacher's role is to encourage the use of this strategy and, like peers and electronic devices, offer assistance whenever he is consulted. Allowing the students to choose the classmates with whom they want to cooperate and reciprocate assistance solves all of the social, psychological and organizational problems inherent in TPC. Neither the teacher nor the students need any special training in SPA since the students employ a natural compensatory communication strategy and reciprocate assistance spontaneously and willingly before, during and after the composing process. Hence, SPA is not a separate classroom activity to be performed at the end of the writing process. As such, no time needs to be allotted to it, so it does not consume class time. Reciprocation of assistance while drafting also makes for a comfortable learning environment. It safeguards the students against anxiety and frustration that ensue from the feeling of being corrected or assessed by a classmate. In a nutshell, observation of university EFL students' process-oriented writing classes reveals that TPC can be abandoned since the students naturally engage SPA which is less problematic and more learner-centered. Further rigorous theoretical and empirical studies are needed to verify the effectiveness of both TPC and SPA.

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# A Study of Taiwanese EFL Learners' Syntactic Transfer in Verb Transitivity

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**Abstract**—L1 transfer is generally regarded as an important characteristic of L2 acquisition, also one of the sources of learners' errors. One of the primary transfer between English and Chinese lies in the verb usage since verbs that are transitive in Chinese may be intransitive in English, or vice versa. In the previous studies, the investigation on the syntactic transfer in verb transitivity is only one part of the research focus and not all kinds of verb transitivity are put into analysis. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the nature of syntactic transfer in all kinds of verb transitivity from the interlanguage of Taiwanese EFL college students. The subjects were 56 juniors. The instruments included a demographic questionnaire, a translation test with prompts, and a retrospective report. The demographic questionnaire was used to understand the subjects' personal learning background. The test measured four verb transivities: complete verb transitivity, incomplete verb transitivity, complete verb intransitivity, and incomplete verb intransitivity. Test takers translated sentences from Chinese into English by using the prompts. When translating, they had to first mark their familiarity with the verb usage in order to explore the extent to which they employed syntactic knowledge or the guessing skills. Finally, each subject wrote a retrospective report to reflect the possible reasons why they made mistakes in the items whose translations resembled Chinese structures. The difficulty and familiarity level of each item and the percentages of using incorrect verb transitivity were calculated and analyzed. The results showed that the extent of syntactic transfer in verb transitivity is not as large as the previous studies. However, both negative and positive transfers were found in the learners' interlanguage. It is interesting to note that for the verbs which the learners were confident with, they were not even aware that they made errors. It seems that familiarity of the meaning of certain verbs made themselves believe that they have acquired the knowledge of the usage and use of the verb transitivity. This study contributed to a growing understanding of the language transfer in verb transitivity.

**Index Terms**—syntactic transfer, verb transitivity, interlanguage, language transfer

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is assumed that the more similar the languages are, the more likely the first language is to facilitate development in the target language (Kellerman, 1995). There is substantial evidence indicating that the actual distance between the two languages acts as a constraint on transfer (Ellis, 2002). Chinese, the mother tongue of the largest group of English as a foreign language, has been generally perceived as more distant from English and this language distance is one of the sources of learners' errors and difficulties. Although many factors may result in learning difficulties such as developmental sequences and avoidance behavior, language transfer is generally regarded as an important characteristic of L2 acquisition (Odlin, 1989).

Kellerman and Sharwood Smith (1986), Odlin (1989), Kellerman (1995), and James (1998) have redefined Contrastive analysis (CA) and error analysis (EA), which were much discredited during the 1970s and 1980s, and led the field called "Transfer Analysis." Transfer Analysis aims to investigate the discrepancies between the interlanguage-TL, which are likely to result from L1 interference (James, 1998). The term 'transfer' or 'interference' has been argued for its close association with behaviorist theories of L2 learning. However, it is now widely accepted that the influence of the learners' native language cannot be explained in terms of habit formation. Sharwood Smith and Kellerman (1986) suggested a theory-neutral superordinate term: crosslinguistic influence, but the term 'transfer' has persisted (Ellis, 2002). Odlin (1989) offers a 'working definition' of transfer as basis for such phenomena: "Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (1989, p. 27). This definition has been far from the original use of the term in behaviorist theories of language learning and provides an adequate basis for the present study.

In traditional accounts of language transfer, the research focus mainly on the errors, which are likely to result in negative transfer. However, three other manifestations of transfer are suggested to consider: facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance (or underproduction), and over-use (Ellis, 2002). In other words, language transfer may be positive or negative depending on the outcome of learning. As for the errors (negative transfer), there has been a substantial amount of empirical works in SLA research conducted in investigating to what extent errors are the result of transfer or are intralingual in nature such as the language development sequence. However, the considerable variance in the proportion of transfer errors was reported by different investigators (Dulay and Burt, 1973; Lott, 1983).

The learners' L1 can also help L2 learning. Generally, there are two ways to find the facilitative effects. Firstly, Odlin (1989) pointed out that the facilitative effects can only be observed when learners with different native languages are studied and compared. Odlin (1989) believed that facilitation is revealed in a reduced number of errors and in the rate of learning, not in the total absence of certain errors. Secondly, the facilitative effect of the L1 can be adduced by certain types of U-shaped behavior (Kellerman, 1986). Learners may pass through an early stage of development where they have correct use of a TL feature if this feature corresponds to an L1 feature and then replace it with a development L2 feature before finally returning to the correct TL feature. The facilitative effect is evident in the early stages of acquisition. This evidence can be obtained through the longitudinal study of individual learners (Ellis, 2002).

Besides the negative and positive transfer, learners may also avoid using linguistic structures. The effects of the L1 are evidence in what learners do not do instead of what they do (Ellis, 2002). The classic study of avoidance is done by Schachter (1974), who found that Chinese and Japanese learners of L2 English made fewer errors in relative clauses than Persian or Arabic learners because Chinese and Japanese learners produced far fewer clauses. Since the researchers need to look at what learners do not do, it is not an easy job to identify learners' avoidance. Seliger (1989) has addressed that it is only possible to claim that avoidance has taken place when the learner has demonstrated knowledge of form, and when there is evidence that native speakers of the L2 would use the form in the context. Kamimoto, Shimura, and Kellerman (1992) argued that even demonstrating knowledge of a structure is not sufficient and suggested that it is necessary to demonstrate that the structure is not under-used because the equivalent structure is rare in the L1.

The last manifestation of transfer is over-use or 'over-indulgence.' This can occur as a result of intralingual processes such as overgeneralization (Ellis, 2002). For example, Levenston (1979) found that learners may demonstrate a preference for words which can be generalized to a large number of contexts. Over-use can also result from transfer by avoidance or underproduction of some difficult structures and overproduce the other structures. To sum up, the above discussion emphasizes the necessity of considering not only learners' errors, but also such manifestations as facilitation, avoidance, and over-use.

According to Chan (2004), who has conducted a series of studies on learners' language errors, Chinese learners' language transfer has not been the focus of many large-scale studies. In addition to the Yip's work on interlanguage structures of 20 Chinese ESL learners and Chan's (2004) large-scale study on the syntactic transfer from Chinese to English of Hong Kong Chinese ESL learners, there are a number of isolated studies of common ESL errors made by Chinese speakers (e.g., Budge, 1989; Chan, 1991; Jones, 1979; Lay, 1975; Newbrook, 1988; Webster, Ward, & Craig, 1987; Yip & Matthews, 1991). In these studies, different phonological, lexical, and structural patterns were investigated and their results all addressed the existence of negative transfer from Chinese to English.

From the research on the differences between Chinese and English by Contrastive analysis (CA) in sentence structures, one of the primary differences lies in the verb usage, and the transitivity patterns of verbs is especially confusing for Chinese learners of English as verbs that are transitive in Chinese may be intransitive in English, or vice versa. Accordingly, many Chinese ESL learners tend to produce errors in this area. Even though much research has devoted to the analysis of errors and interlanguage by Chinese speakers, only a few studies have been reported on the errors in verb transitivity by EFL learners (Chan, 1991; Chan, 2004).

Among these, Chan (1991) and Chan (2004) separately conducted the investigation on verb transitivity. Chan's (2004) large-scale study collected evidence of syntactic transfer from 710 Hong Kong Chinese ESL learners at different proficiency levels by adopting three methodologies: self-reporting in individual interviews, translation (with and without prompts), and grammaticality judgment. One of five error types she collected is the confusion in verb transitivity. How learners used verb transitivity was realized in the translation task. Two high-frequency English intransitive verbs 'care' and 'listen' but different in transitivity patterns in Chinese were chosen. She found half of the participants (48%) used 'care' as a transitive verb. This misuse of 'care' was more widespread among lower-intermediate students (58%) than among upper-intermediate students (25%). Regarding the verb 'listen,' more evidence for syntactic transfer was found. 72% of total number of participants used the English verb 'listen' as a transitive verb like its Chinese counterpart, 61% from the upper-intermediate and 77% from the lower-intermediate group.

Chan's (2004) result showed that many Chinese ESL learners tended to think in Chinese first before they wrote in English based on the individual interviews, and that the surface structures of many of the interlanguage strings produced by the participants were identical or very similar to the usual or normative sentence structures of the learners' first language (L1), Cantonese. Despite the large number of participants and the variety of the tasks, Chan (2004) admitted the limitations on the number of examples collected for each verb transitivity error. Regarding the verb transitivity, only two verbs were used for the investigation of the learners' confusion of verb transitivity and not all kinds of verb transitivity were examined. Consequently, the results from such a small sample of errors may not be representative enough to warrant reliable conclusions. Finally, the interview questions only ask about if learners have a tendency to think in Chinese, but the study did not attempt to understand how learners perceived their errors and explain the reasons for making errors. The extent of the L1 transfer may be limited due to the nature of the tasks.

Chan's (2004) study presents evidence of syntactic transfer in the confusion of verb transitivity based on data obtained from Hong Kong ESL learners. However, the results of Chan's study may not be generated to Taiwan context as Hong Kong learners do not share the same native language and learning background with Taiwanese ESL learners. Hong Kong ESL learners' L1 is Cantonese, while Taiwanese ones' L1 is Mandarin. Even though these two native

languages share some lexical and structural features, they are generally classified into two languages. Therefore, it can be assumed that the language transfer occurring in Taiwanese ESL learners will be different from Hong Kong learners to some extent. Therefore, to closely look at the syntactic transfer in verb transitivity from the interlanguage of Chinese Taiwanese EFL learners, the aim of this paper only focuses on the transfer in verb transitivity. In total, four types of verb transitivity were examined: complete verb transitivity, incomplete verb transitivity, complete verb intransitivity, and incomplete verb intransitivity. The primary research questions addressed in the present study are as follows:

1. To what extent is the interlanguage produced by Taiwanese college students influenced by their L1 Chinese?
2. Are there any similarities or differences in the syntactic transfer in verb transitivity between the upper-intermediate and the lower-intermediate group?
3. Do the learners have a tendency to think in Chinese before writing English sentences?

It is expected that this study may lead to a better understanding of the extent of syntactic transfer in verb transitivity from L1 (Mandarin) to English and help to suggest why it is that Taiwanese EFL learners produced errors in verb transitivity by multiple tasks. The results of this study could be useful to teachers in identifying and understanding students' errors and proposing effective instruction in verb transitivity.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Subjects

The subjects were 56 junior college students at Applied Foreign Languages Department in central Taiwan. Their average learning length of English was 9.4 years. Out of the 56 students, ten were males and 46 were females. They were divided into two levels based on their performance in a translation test: the upper-intermediate group and the lower-intermediate group. The top 17 students (30%) were classified as the upper-intermediate, while the bottom 17 students (30%) were classified as the lower-intermediate students.

### B. Instruments

The instruments implemented in the study included a translation test with prompts (see Appendix A), a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) and a retrospective report (see Appendix C). The translation test was developed by the researcher based on the test objectives of the verb transitivity patterns of English. Test takers were required to translate Chinese sentences into English by making use of the prompts in each item such as the unfamiliar verbs and nouns. As Kamimoto, Shimura, and Kellerman (1992) argued that it is necessary to demonstrate that the structure is not under-used, the prompts were provided. These prompts can avoid learners using avoidance strategies and encouraged the test takers to translate all sentences by using their knowledge of syntax and verb transitivity.

When the subjects translated each item, they had to first mark their familiarity of the verb usage to show the extent they employed syntactic knowledge, or on the contrary, the guessing skills. A total of 20 items were randomly distributed in the whole test to measure the following four verb transivities: (1) complete verb transitivity (5 items); (2) incomplete verb transitivity (5 items); (3) complete verb intransitivity (5 items); and (4) incomplete verb intransitivity (5 items). Since the purpose of the study was to explore the syntactic transfer in only verb transitivity, the scoring was only on the usage of verb transitivity. The total score in the translation test was 20, one point for each item. If one student had correct usage of verb transitivity in an item, he/she got one point or by contrast got zero for incorrect usage of verb transitivity.

The second instrument was a demographic questionnaire to understand the subjects' personal background, including sex, age, and the length of learning English. Two items eliciting the subject's tendency of thinking in Chinese and the frequency of thinking in Chinese were borrowed from Chan's study (2004) which investigated Hong Kong Chinese ESL learners' syntactic transfer. The results from these two questions were expected to show Taiwanese EFL learners' existing tendency in thinking in Chinese when writing in English.

Finally, the subjects completed a retrospective report for the inappropriate translated sentences which resemble Chinese structures. They needed to give explanation for the reasons why they translated literally or utilized Chinese structures. Learners' explanation can account for the extent of the L1 transfer for each type of verb transitivity.

### C. Data Analysis Procedure

56 tests, questionnaires, questionnaires, and retrospective report were distributed and collected. The descriptive analysis was conducted. The first step was to calculate the descriptive statistics, including the measures of central tendency (mode, median, mean) and dispersion (range and standard deviation). The reliability and validity were calculated and constructed for the quality and fairness of test scores. To further conduct the item analysis of the test, difficulty level and familiarity level were calculated and analyzed. Finally, the percentages of the upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate students using correct verb transitivity in the four types of verb transitivity and the percentages of all the subjects' tendency to think in Chinese by five-point Likert scale were provided for analysis.

## III. RESULTS

TABLE I shows the descriptive statistics of the test scores. In order to compare every test takers' score with mid-point of the distribution, central tendency were employed: mean, median, and mode. The mean score, the arithmetical average of the translation test, is 10.91. Most testees obtained the scores of 11 and the middle testees gained the score of 11. In other words, averagely, students got half of the test right. According to Heaton (1998), one simple way to measure the spread of marks is to calculate the differences between the highest and lowest scores. In this test, the highest score is 16 and the lowest one is 5. The standard deviation of 2.58 is the degree to deviate from the mean of 10.91.

TABLE I  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TEST SCORES

Central Tendency			Dispersion				
Mean	Median	Mode	Total Score	Range	Maximum	Minimum	Standard Deviation
10.91	11	11	20	11	16	5	2.58

#### A. Reliability

In order to realize the accuracy, consistency, dependability or fairness of scores, reliability was calculated and analyzed. Since the score for each item was either 1 or 0, it was appropriate to use Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 to estimate reliability of the whole test. The whole test reliability is .0.93, which is at the acceptable level of reliability.

#### B. Validity

In addition to reliability, another criterion used to judge the quality of a test is the validity of the test. Validity of a test is the extent to which the test measures what it is supposed to measure. The content validity in the present study was built by constructing a table of specification for the translation test (see TABLE II). The test was designed based on two major categories in the cognitive domain of educational objectives: comprehension and application.

TABLE II  
TABLE OF SPECIFICATION FOR THE TRANSLATION TEST

Content	Objective: Comprehension and Application	
	Item number	Weights
Type A: Complete Transitive Verb	5	5
Type B: Incomplete Transitive Verb	5	5
Type C: Complete Intransitive Verb	5	5
Type D: Incomplete Intransitive Verb	5	5
Total	20	20

#### C. Difficulty Level and Familiarity Level

TABLE III shows the results of the level of difficulty and familiarity of each item. Item facility or item difficulty is an index of how easy an individual item was for the people who take it. The difficulty level of the whole test is from 0.02 to 0.89. The average difficulty level is 0.54. According to Oller (1979), items falling between about 0.15 and 0.85 are usually preferred. About 70 % of the items fell in the appropriate difficulty level, including Item 1, 3-7, 9, 11-14, 16, 18, 19 ranging from 0.21 to 0.84. Only two items seemed too easy for the test takers, Item 2 and 8, with the same difficulty level of 0.89, and four items were considered too difficult for testees, Item 10, 15, 17 and 20 from the level of 0.02 to 0.13.

Familiarity level indicates the degree of familiarity of verb usage expressed by testees. Logically, if the subjects were more familiar with the usage of the verbs, the difficulty and familiarity level would be at least above 0.5. However, even though most testees claimed they were familiar with the verbs of Item 10 and 17, most of them did not give the correct translation, which may be the evidence of the negative transfer from L1. By contrast, only about 20 % of the subjects were familiar with the usage of the verb of Item 18, but almost 80% of the subjects got the item right. The possible reason may be that the original Chinese structure was similar with the English one. We may assume that there was a positive transfer. However, there may be some other factors which influenced the results; therefore, the results of analysis of the individual items, Item 10, 17 and 18 in TABLE III were discussed.

TABLE III  
THE ITEMS WITH DIFFICULTY LEVEL BELOW 0.5

Item	1.	3.	10.	15.	17.	18.
Verb Transitivity type	A	C	D	C	A	C
Difficulty	0.39	0.21	0.13	0.02	0.05	0.45
Familiarity	0.29	0.21	0.80	0.14	0.52	0.84

#### D. Percentages of Using Correct Verb Transitivity



TABLE IV indicates the percentages of the upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate students using correct verb transitivity in the four types of verb transitivity. More than half of the upper-intermediate and half of the lower-intermediate students had correct usage of incomplete verb transitivity, but less than half of the two groups had correct usage of the rest verb transivities. Compared to the lower-intermediate students, the upper-intermediate outperformed on in four types of verb transitivity. In order to examine if there is significant difference between upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate groups on the mean percentages of correct usage of four types of verb transitivity, a t-test was employed. However, there is no significant difference between these two groups among the four types with the result of t-test of -0.71.

The percentages help account for the order of the difficulty level in the four types of verb transitivity. As shown in TABLE IV, the order of the difficulty level from the easiest to the most difficult is incomplete verb transitivity, incomplete verb intransitivity, complete verb transitivity and complete verb intransitivity. In other words, both groups have less difficulty in incomplete verb transitivity, but they confronted more difficulty in complete verb intransitivity.

TABLE IV  
PERCENTAGES OF USING CORRECT VERB TRANSITIVITY

Test content	Correct usage Upper-intermediate n = 17	Lower-intermediate n = 17
Type A: Complete Transitive Verb	42%	37%
Type B: Incomplete Transitive Verb	68%	50%
Type C: Complete Intransitive Verb	25%	19%
Type D: Incomplete Intransitive Verb	52%	48%

#### E. The Tendency to Think in Chinese

TABLE V shows the percentages of all the subjects' tendency to think in Chinese by five-point Likert scale. Totally, 89% of the subjects expressed they had a tendency to think in Chinese before writing English sentences. Almost half of the subjects **sometimes** think in Chinese, while 27% of them **often** and 7% **always** think in Chinese.

TABLE V  
THE TENDENCY TO THINK IN CHINESE

Frequency	tendency	Number
Never	11%	6
Rarely	5%	3
Sometimes	<b>50%</b>	<b>28</b>
Often	<b>27%</b>	<b>15</b>
Always	<b>7%</b>	<b>4</b>
Total	100%	56

## IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to find out the evidence of syntactic transfer in verb transitivity from the interlanguage of Taiwanese EFL college learners. The extent of syntactic transfer in verb transitivity, the similarities or differences between upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate groups, and the tendency to think in Chinese when writing in English were examined.

The results of the present study show that students seem to have more problems in complete verb intransitivity in terms of the lowest percentages on the correct usage (25 % upper-intermediate vs. 19 % lower-intermediate). The upper-intermediate group outperformed the lower-intermediate group in four types of verb transitivity. Nevertheless, there was no significant difference between upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate groups in the correct usage of four types of verb transitivity. Both groups seemed to perform better on incomplete verb transitivity and incomplete verb intransitivity with the percentages of nearly 50%. The order of the difficulty level from the easiest to the most difficult is incomplete verb transitivity, incomplete verb intransitivity, complete verb transitivity and complete verb intransitivity.

Among 56 subjects, 89 % of them perceived their tendency to think in Chinese before producing English sentences. This result is similar to the findings of Chan's study (2004) of Hong Kong college students. In her study, of the 16 lower-intermediate students, 75% reported a tendency to think in Chinese. Of the 26 upper-intermediate students, 73% reported that tendency.

Among the 20 items, only four items provided the evidence of language transfer. Regarding the negative transfer, Item 10 (Type D), 17 (Type A), and 18 (Type C) have low difficulty level (more difficult for most testees) but high familiarity. As for positive transfer, Only Item 4 (Type A) has high difficulty level (easier for most testees) but low familiarity. In other words, the language transfer, either negative or positive, did not frequently occur in learners' interlanguage. This result may be contradictory to the previous studies (e.g., Chan, 2004), which believed learners have a language transfer, especially negative transfer in verb transitivity. In these four items, only incomplete transitive verb (Type B) showed no sign of syntactic transfer, neither positive nor negative.

In order to examine the possible reasons of the results of low difficulty with high familiarity of the verbs, the analysis of the above items were conducted based on both groups' retrospective reports. To categorize two groups' retrospective reports, five explanations were summarized as follows: (1) They did not know they made errors; (2) They believed they made other kinds of errors; (3) They knew the usage, but forgot how to use it; (4) They were not familiar with the verb, so they translated sentences based on syntactic knowledge; and (5) They translated sentences by using the Chinese structures. The percentages of these five explanations of these two groups were calculated.

Item 10: 我妹妹和他們變(become)熟(acquaint).	Difficulty level: 0.13
Answer: My younger sister became acquainted with~	Familiarity level: 0.80

Errors: become acquaint with them  
 my sister is become acquaint with them  
my sister and they become acquaint

Upper-intermediate: reason (1)-41%, reason (4)-35%

Lower-intermediate: reason (1)-41%, reason (2)-17%

The first and second sentences were made with correct English structure, but with wrong use of the verb 'become.' It can be easily found that the last one sentence was literally translated with the same word order of Chinese source text. The interesting part of the subjects' retrospective report was that 41% of the two groups did not know they made mistakes. The second highest percentage for the upper-intermediate group indicated that they admitted their unfamiliarity and tried to rely on their syntactic knowledge of English. By contrast, the lower-intermediate group believed they made other kinds of errors. The learners' retrospective reasons revealed that most of the participants were too confident with their syntactic knowledge, so they were not aware of their errors.

There may be a negative transfer from the source text as the translation looked like the structure of the source text, Chinese. However, none of the participants pointed out they translated sentences by using the Chinese structure. In other words, learners' overconfidence may distract them from identifying their syntactic problem. There is not much difference between two groups' reasons for making mistakes, but the upper-intermediate students seemed to know they could rely on syntactic knowledge when they were not familiar with the usage of the certain verbs. The lower-intermediate, by contrast, were not even aware of the mistakes or believed they made other kinds of errors. We may infer that learners' familiarity of the verbs was limited and may be only on the meanings. Therefore, when translating the familiar verbs, they can not produce correct translation.

Item 17: Tom 試著使自己適應(adapt)新環境(environment)	Difficulty level: 0.05
Answer: Tom tried to adapt himself to the environment.	Familiarity level: 0.52

Errors: make himself adapt the new environment  
let himself adapt the new environment  
try to adapt the new environment

Upper-intermediate: reason (1)-47%, reason (4)-24%

Lower-intermediate: reason (1)-24%, reason (2)-24%, reason (4)-24%

More than half of the 56 subjects believed they were familiar with the usage of the verb 'adapt,' but the difficulty level fell in nearly zero, which means no one were capable of producing the correct answer. Based on the three sentences produced by the two groups, it seems that none of them knew exactly the usage of the verb 'adapt.' The English words in the sentences were ordered based on the Chinese structures. For example, the first and second sentences use 'make' and 'let' for '使 shi' and 'himself adapt' for '自己適應 zji shi ying' instead of 'adapt himself to.' The testees seemed to use avoidance strategies or alternative ways to translate the third word and skip the Chinese words '自己 zji.' Interestingly, 47 % of the upper-intermediate subjects were unaware that they made errors and 24 % of them acknowledged they were not familiar with the verb after the test. As for the lower-intermediate subjects, 24 % of them thought that they made other kinds of errors. Similar to Item 10, learners' retrospections show that they were too confident with their knowledge of the verb 'adapt' and influenced by the source text. The negative transfer is more obvious than Item 10 as all of the translations had the Chinese structures. It seemed that if learners have very limited knowledge of the usage of a verb's transitivity, they are not aware what errors they made and rely more on their L1. However, none of them expressed that they utilized Chinese structures. We may say that this group of students was not aware that they were under the influence of their L1.

Item 18: 這個胸針(brooch)是屬於(belong)我的。	Difficulty level: 0.45
Answer: This brooch belongs to me.	Familiarity level: 0.84

Errors: This brooch is belong to me  
 This brooch is belong to mine  
 This brooch belong mine

Upper-intermediate: reason (1)-18 %, reason (3)-35%, reason (5)-18%

Lower-intermediate: reason (1)-18%, reason (3)-35%

Both groups indicated that they were familiar with the word 'belong.' As we can see from the first and second sentences, they seemed to know they should put the preposition 'to' after the verb, but they still followed the Chinese structures with 'is' for '是 shi' and 'mine' for '我的 wode.' The last sentence consisted of two mistakes. There was no preposition 'to' and they used 'mine' instead 'me.' Both groups (35%) believed that they knew the usage of 'belong to,' but they forgot how to use it. As many students correctly produced the verb phrase 'belong to,' we may infer that they had the knowledge of this verb usage. However, they were still influenced by the source text and produced two-verb translation. The problem may go to learners' use instead of usage as the knowledge of avoiding putting be-verb with another verb has been taught since junior high school and they have produced the correct verb phrase. When analyzing the learners' retrospection, we can see that 35% of the two groups admitted that they knew the usage, and they just forgot how to use it correctly. From this response, we may include that learners' capacity of retrieving syntactic knowledge and the use of verb transitivity is one possible factor.

Item 4: 園丁(gardener)正在用軟管澆 <u>hose</u> 花園。	Difficulty level: 0.79
Answer: The gardener is hosing the garden.	Familiarity level: 0.21

Only 21% of the subjects stated that they were familiar with the verb usage, but the difficulty level was 0.79, which indicates the item was quite easy for most of the testees. The possible reason may be that the English sentence structure was similar to the Chinese one and the subjects tried to translate literally. According to Kellerman (1995), learners may sometimes pass through an early stage of development where they manifest correct use of a target-language feature if this feature corresponds to an L1 feature, which can be seen as a positive transfer.

The current study attempted to present the evidence for syntactic transfer from Chinese to English in verb transitivity and found that the extent of syntactic transfer in verb transitivity is not as large as Chan's study. Four items showed the language transfer, including both negative and positive and they account for parts of the transfer as the learners' retrospections have pointed out other factors. First, for the verbs which the learners were confident with, they were not even aware of making errors. We may say that they have not passed the stage of development in verb transitivity, but they may have high familiarity with the meanings of the verbs, which made them believe they have acquired the use of the verbs. Second, the capacity of retrieving acquired knowledge and the use of verb transitivity should be taken into consideration when giving students exercises. Another possible reason may be the influence by the source text (Chinese), so even though they used right verb phrase, but still made ungrammatical sentences. Future work can adopt the form of oral test to present the source text, so the influence from the written source text can be eliminated. Students' syntactic knowledge of verb transitivity can be more explicitly examined.

From the subjects' retrospective reports, we can see that some subjects were neither aware of their errors nor distinguished the kinds of errors they made. To raise learners' awareness of the anomalous structures, some researchers suggested use form-focused instruction, which has a positive effect on the rate of acquisition of a target structure. Chan (2004) also suggested researchers to conduct corpus-based empirical research to establish a comprehensive taxonomy of interlingual errors-both structural and lexical for teachers' reference. The current study contributed to a growing understanding of the language transfer in verb transitivity. The contradictory results provided the evidence that the other factors may have more influences on learners such as the capacity of retrieving acquired knowledge. The familiarity level innovated in the study did provide a clue for the understanding of learners' existing knowledge of verbs. However, it may be limited to the meaning of the verbs. Therefore, in future study, a grammar test of these verbs can be first given for a deep understanding of learners' syntactic knowledge. The learners' explanation in the retrospective report can serve as a basis for designing a questionnaire for revealing learners' reasons for making Chinese-structure English sentences. Difficulty level in the four kinds of verb transitivity between upper-intermediate and lower-intermediate found in the study can lead to a number of pedagogical implications for teachers. While this study has its limitations in population, it would be beneficial to replicate this study on larger and different populations.

#### APPENDIX A TRANSLATION TEST WITH PROMPTS

This paper aims to investigate your intuitions about the usage of verbs. Your responses to this paper will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

<p>Translation Task</p> <p>(1) If you are familiar with the verb in the item, please put a check in the box <input type="checkbox"/> familiar; if not, put a check in the box <input type="checkbox"/> unfamiliar.</p> <p>e.g., 我們應該關心 <u>care</u> 老人的健康。 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> familiar <input type="checkbox"/> unfamiliar</p> <p>(2) Translate the following 20 Chinese sentences into English. You can use the words in parentheses. In some sentences, tense may be used with little or no change in meaning.</p> <p>e.g., 他打破 (break) 了花瓶 (vase)。 Answer: <u>He broke the vase.</u></p>
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1. 不要把你的想法強加 **inflict** 於我。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
2. 我覺的 **found** 這本書蠻容易的。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
3. 他從事 **engage** 科學的研究。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
4. 園丁(gardener)正在用軟管澆 **hose** 花園。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
5. 牛奶聞起來 **smell** 有酸味了(sour)。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
6. 班上推選 **elect** 海倫為班長(class leader)。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
7. 他不能讓 **make** 別人了解他。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
8. 有些家長認為 **consider** 暑假對學生而言是浪費。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
9. 這痛苦(pain)我無法忍受 **bear**。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
10. 我妹妹和他們變 **become** 熟了(acquaint)。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
11. 請不要騙 **lie** 我。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
12. 這音樂聽起來 **sound** 是十分悅耳的 (pleasing to the ear)。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
13. 我準時到達 **reach** 車站。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
14. 下週她將 **be** 一直待在這兒。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
15. 這女孩對每件事都傻笑 **giggle**。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
16. 他們為嬰孩取名 **name** 莎莉。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
17. Tom 試著使自己適應 **adapt** 新環境 (environment)。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
18. 這個胸針(brooch)是屬於 **belong** 我的。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar
19. Mary 整個晚上一直 **remain** 很安靜。□ familiar □ unfamiliar
20. 善良(Good) 將戰勝 **prevail** 邪惡(evil)。  
□ familiar □ unfamiliar

Answer: Don't inflict your ideas on me.

Answer: I found the book easy.

Answer: He engaged in the study of Science.

Answer: The gardener is hosing the garden.

Answer: The milk smells sour.

Answer: The class elected Helen the class leader.

Answer: He can't make himself understood.

Answer: Some parents consider vacations a waste of time for the students.

Answer: I can't bear the pain.

Answer: My younger sister became acquainted with them.

Answer: Please don't lie to me.

Answer: The music sounds very pleasing to the ear.

Answer: I reached the station on time.

Answer: She will be here all next week.

Answer: The girl giggles at everything.

Answer: They named the baby Sally.

Answer: Tom is trying to adapt himself to the environment.

Answer: This brooch belongs to me.

Answer: Mary remained silent all night.

Answer: Good will prevail over evil.

#### APPENDIX B DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender: □ Male □ Female
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years old now.
3. How long have you been learning English? \_\_\_\_\_ years.
4. Do you have a tendency to think in Chinese first before you write English sentences or compositions?  
□ Yes □ No
5. If yes, how often do you do this?  
□ Never □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

#### APPENDIX C RETROSPECTIVE REPORT

Try to give explanations for the ways you translate the sentences which you did not translate correctly.  
The explanations can be given in English or Chinese.

Item number: explanation  
e.g. For Item 18, I thought the verb [belong] needs an object. I think I used the Chinese structure.

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# Perceptions of Iranian English Language Teachers towards the Use of Discourse Markers in the EFL Classroom

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**Abstract**—This study attempts to examine Iranian English language teachers' perception towards the use of discourse markers (DMs) in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. It is the contention of this study that past research studies have not paid sufficient attention to how teachers perceive the use of discourse markers in the English language classroom. This research extends on Fung's (2011) study and further includes the listening and speaking skills together with the role of DMs in teaching the reading and writing skills. Three research questions are posed in this study. They are 1) What is the perception of Iranian English teachers toward the use of discourse markers? 2) How do Iranian English teachers perceive DMs? 3) Do Iranian English teachers exhibit high, moderate, or low attitudes toward the use of discourse markers? The descriptive method to the data analysis in this study provides better understanding of teacher's perception towards the use of DMs. Forty five Iranian English teachers participated in the study via a questionnaire survey. Results from the analysis of data showed that Iranian English teachers seem to have a moderate attitude toward DMs. Findings also suggest that teachers tend to believe in the pragmatic and practical value of DMs.

**Index Terms**—Iranian EFL teachers, teacher's perceptions, discourse markers, EFL classroom

## I. INTRODUCTION

Various descriptions and terminology are found in the literature to describe and analyze discourse markers. This study adopts Richards and Schmidt's (2002) definition. They define DMs as "expressions that typically connect two segments of discourse but do not contribute to the meaning of either. These include adverbials (e.g. however, still), conjunctions (e.g. and, but), and prepositional phrases (e.g. in fact)". This definition is adopted in this study as literature indicates that it is the most comprehensive in terms of categorization of DMs. Other researchers consider DMs to be words like right, yeah, well, you know, okay (Jucker & Ziv, 1998; Fraser, 1999; Müller, 2004). For instance, Fraser (1999) believed that DMs are not just functioning as textual coherence but also signaling the speakers' intention to the next turn in the preceding utterances.

Over the past 20 years or so, the description of linguistic items related to DMs has been a research focus in many studies related to language learning and teaching. Schiffrin (1987) began writing about the significance of DMs in the 80s, and presented a coherence model which included a semantic, syntactic and discourse-organizing level to investigate how DMs assist oral coherence (Archakis, 2001). A more pragmatic in-depth view later developed and focused more on the functional aspect of DMs. Research studies on DMs can be generally divided into two categories. The first category describes research on DMs through the descriptive analysis of DMs in a particular language as spoken by native speakers (NS) of the language. The researchers in this present study believe that DMs have a substantial role in written language as well as in the spoken form, particularly in non-native writings. The second category describes research on DMs which relate and examine the acquisition of DMs of the target language by non-native speakers (NNS), mostly that of teachers and language learners. The second category of research on DMs has been studied much less and the research seems limited to only second language learners (Müller, 2004; Fung & Carter, 2007).

Most previous research on the study of discourse markers, either DMs in English or in other languages, has focused on their meanings and their corresponding pragmatic use (Schourup, 2001; Matsui, 2002; Tree & Schrock, 2002; Müller, 2004; De Klerk, 2005; Overstreet, 2005; Wang & Tsai, 2005), and on how they help create coherence (Schiffrin, 1987; Redeker, 1991; Risselada & Spooren, 1998). In the educational context, DMs have been found to have a positive role in the classroom as that which can aid effective conversational endeavors (Othman, 2010). Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser

(1990 & 1999) comment that research on the pedagogical importance of DMs in the ESL/EFL classroom has been rather restrictive (McCarthy & Carter (1997); Romero Trillo (2002); Müller (2004); Fung & Carter (2007); Hellermann & Vergun (2007)), and studies on teachers' attitudes towards DMs are virtually non-existent.

Schiffrin (1987) believes that DMs play an important role in understanding discourse and information progression. This implies that it is important that teachers of language be aware of how to use DMs appropriately in their teaching of the language. It is also the role of the teacher to encourage learners to acquire as many DMs as they can and make language learners understand the functional advantage of using DMs in their language use. Unfortunately, it is evident that some teachers do not know how to teach these linguistic items and subsequently are unable to make language learners realize the importance and functionality of use of DMs. It was also seen that course books too fail to define DMs clearly making the teaching and learning of DMs a difficult task for teachers and learners. This may be the reason why some material developers offer a list of DMs in their language learning and teaching materials and suggest that they can be used interchangeably. Fung (2011) also found that teachers under used DMs and this was revealed in their teaching materials. It was also felt that teachers often did not see the need to teach DMs. Thus research studies on teacher's attitude toward DMs have received scant attention. It is therefore timely and important that this study investigates how Iranian English language teachers perceive DMs.

This study aims to examine perceptions of Iranian English language teachers toward the use of DMs in the EFL classroom. As an important contributor to accurate interactional, discourse markers are important and actually possess elements of multi-functionality in the language skills of listening, reading (both being receptive skills) and writing and speaking (both being the productive skills).

The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of Iranian English language teachers with respect to the use DMs and the following research questions are posed:

- 1) What is the perception of Iranian English teachers toward the use of discourse markers?
- 2) How do Iranian English teachers perceive DMs?
- 3) Do Iranian English teachers exhibit high, moderate, or low attitudes toward the use of discourse markers?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fung and Carter (2007) believe that in spoken conversation, the frequency and proportion of DMs that people use is significant compared to the use of other word forms. From the literature it can also be seen that not only are they being used significantly in spoken language, but, they also are being used frequently in written texts by native and non-native language users.

Interestingly too, no agreement on the use of the terminology to describe DMs has ever been reached because of different research perspectives taken by individual researchers (Jucker and Ziv, 1998; Fraser, 1999; Frank-Job, 2006; Cohen, 2007; Han, 2008). DMs have been defined as sentence connectives from the systemic functional grammar perspective (Schiffrin, 1987; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Cohen, 2007), and also as pragmatic markers (Fraser, 1999) from the grammatical-pragmatic view.

From the pragmatic point of view, Fraser (1999) defines DMs as "a class of lexical expressions drawn primarily from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases [which] signal a relationship between the interpretations of the segment they produce" (p. 931). Investigating DMs from the perspective of whether they refer to a textual segment between sentences or discourse segment in structure, Fraser (1999, p. 946) categorized DMs into two major types:

- 1) Discourse markers which relate to messages
  - a. contrastive markers: though, but, contrary to this/that, conversely etc.
  - b. collateral markers: above all, also, and, besides, I mean, in addition etc.
  - c. inferential markers: accordingly, as a result, so, then, therefore, thus etc.
  - d. additional subclass: after all, since, because.
- 2) Discourse markers which relate to topics
  - e.g. back to my original point, before I forget, by the way etc.

Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999) are the two most cited scholars in the study of DMs. The two strands of thought promoted by these two scholars have resulted in a descriptive framework of DMs' as a linguistic entity rather than a framework of DMs categorized according to their function. Other possible labels for DMs which result from different research perspectives, include those which relate DMs to lexical markers, discourse particles, utterance particles, semantic conjuncts, continuatives and so on (cited in Yang, 2011). Richards and Schmidt (2002) define DMs as "expressions that typically connect two segments of discourse but do not contribute to the meaning of either. This definition includes adverbials (e.g. however, still), conjunctions (e.g. and, but), and prepositional phrases (e.g. in fact)". To date, this definition seems to be regarded as a comprehensive one.

Today, studies focusing on the use and teaching of DMs are also becoming more and more popular. The majority of research studies focus on the use of DMs by native speakers. These research studies use and adopt different research designs such as that of the corpus-driven approach and the results of these corpus-driven approach studies are often compared to findings of the use of DMs by non-native speakers. Teachers attitude toward the use DMs, on the other hand, have not been researched much in the literature. Fung (2011) identified seven categories of attitude toward DMs

(see Appendix 1) and teachers' perceptions towards the use of DMs in the EFL classroom are measured against these categories in this study.

### III. METHOD

This study attempts to investigate and examine Iranian English language teachers' perceptions towards the use of DMs in the EFL classroom. The method employed in this study is descriptive in nature and employs the survey method using a questionnaire adapted from Fung (2011). Forty-five Iranian English language teachers were involved in this study. The majority of the participants were male (N=31, 68.9%), whereas 14 (31.1%) were female. As for their level of education, three (6.7%) of the participants had either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree, while 20 (44.4%) of them had a Master of Arts or a Master of Science degree, and 22 (48.9%) of them had obtained a doctorate degree. Some of the participants were pursuing postgraduate degrees. The majority of the participant's field of the study was TEFL/TESL/ELT (80%) and (6.7%) were from English Literature programs. The rest were either from English language translation (11.1%) or from fields other than English. A small number of the participants (2.2 %) were from engineering programs. Only (55.6%) of the participants reported that they had more than 10 years working experience. Some respondents (a total of 22.2%) reported that they had between 1-4 years or 5-9 years of teaching experience.

The instrument used in this study was adopted from Fung (2011) and then adapted considerably to suit the context of the study and the focus of the study. The questionnaire that Fung used highlighted the use of DMs in speaking and listening skills. However, for the purpose of this study, the items were reworded and the role of DMs in relation to other skills was added (see Appendix 2). Further, two new items were added to the whole survey (items 23 and 33) as the researchers believed that they were important elements in the investigation. Participants were asked to state their comments (if they had any) and response to a survey. In Fung's (2011) study, the questionnaires were monitored and trailed by 20 ELT practitioners from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and England who offered comments from an insider's point of view and these practitioners provided feedback on the strengths and shortcomings of the overall questionnaire design. Similarly, in this study, five PhD candidates were enlisted to help carefully examine the modified version of the questionnaire. They then made their comments and then the researchers in this study revised the questionnaire of 50 items before questionnaire administration. The internal reliability (Cronbach- $\alpha$ ) for the questionnaire was (0.75). This was obtained after recoding the negative items found in the initial survey (items 4, 5, 10, 11, 14, 21, 25, 50) (Appendix 2). It was initially discovered that for these items, they wordings used were in the negative and this resulted in participants responding in a different manner compared to items worded in the positive. As a result, the initial internal reliability for the questionnaire was low. However, after rewording of the problematic items, another test of reliability was run and the index obtained indicated that the questionnaire was reliable. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale. Karavas-Doukas (1996) believes that using a Likert scale is a useful instrument in revealing teacher beliefs. The scales were anchored at one end by 'strongly agree' and at the other end by 'strongly disagree', with a mid-3 score expressing uncertainty towards the statement. The questions were pre-coded from 1-5. For positively worded statements, a high score reflects a strong endorsement of an attitude statement, while a low score reflects a weak endorsement.

Fung (2011) conducted a factor analysis to determine the degree to which all the 45 variables could be reduced to a smaller underlying variance structure. In this study, three items from the questionnaire (9,14,19) were not included in the factor analysis because they did not belong to any of the seven categories identified to tie closely to attitudes towards DMs. The questionnaire used in Fung's earlier study was modified in this study. Two new items were also added to the questionnaire. Subsequent to performing a factor analysis, these two new items (23 and 33) were placed under the related category. In effect, seven factors or categories were extracted and factor one named pedagogic value of DMs that included the following items (20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 34, 35, 40, 41). Factor two named identification with the native speaker norm and contained items (31, 32, 33, 42, 43, 44, 48). Factor three named pragmatic (however, in this study this category is named practical) value of DMs is comprised of the value of the following items (1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 27, 29, 30). Factor four named dispensable value of DMs and they are composed of these items (4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13). Factor five named representation of DMs in ESL (EFL) classrooms and contains the following items (15, 16, 17, 18). The sixth factor which named prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purpose and referred to items 36, 37, 38, 39. Finally, - factor seven acceptance of local usage referred to items 45, 46, 47, 49, 50.

Data for the study was collected via an on-line version of the adapted questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was prepared via Google Doc. and emailed to 100 Iranian English teachers. The questionnaire required about 15 minutes of their time in order for it to be completed. Only 45 questionnaires were returned. Excel and SPSS (19) software were utilized to process and analyze the data. After transferring data from an excel file (Google doc provides an excel file of gathered data) to an SPSS file, the data were screened for possible wrong data entry and missing cases using frequency counts. Then, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and frequency analysis were used to analyze the data in order to answer the research questions which direct the study.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Table 1 indicates that the Iranian English teachers surveyed have a relatively moderate attitude toward DMs (mean = 3.52, SD = .27).

TABLE 1:  
OVERALL MEAN OF TEACHERS ATTITUDE TOWARD DMs

Number of Items	Mean	Std.
45	3.52	.27

The results do not indicate an overtly very positive attitude but does indicate merely a moderate attitude. This could be due to various factors. The reason why the attitude toward DMs is not strong or high might be a result of teacher's perception and their own beliefs towards DMs. As one the respondents highlighted:

*It has for long been the concerns revolving misuse of DMs either due to its being perceived a trivial point in English or as a consequence of inappropriate language knowledge of teachers.*

It seems that the Iranian English language teachers surveyed in this study are simply not fully aware of the functionality of DMs in foreign language learning and teaching. Teachers must be made to realize that DMs exist in language; they have a role to play as they bring cohesion into the text (Fraser, 1999 & Müller, 2004).

Another participant in this study believed that

*Cohesive linkers are really able to signpost the road of comprehension of a text and as a result ease the flow of sequence of ideas to be presented. The cohesive linkers do not mean everything in a discourse. Neither are they redundant. Nor are they absolutely essential in any discourse.*

It can be concluded that some of the teacher's perceptions toward DMs in this study differ from that of respondents in Fung's (2011) study. The informants in Fung's study put forward that DMs can bring naturalness to a conversation. Further, they maintained that without DMs, speech would sound blunt and impolite. Furthermore, they rose that the interpersonal and referential role DMs have in communication where speaker's attitude and linkage between statements are displayed. In fact, Watts (1989) discusses that DMs are subtle conversational devices. The findings of this study differ from that of Fungs' also because Fung focused on the listening and speaking skills and the present study has expanded to include the other remaining language skills. This could explain for some of the differences in the findings as reported by the participants from both studies. The results for the second research question are presented in appendix II. The mean scores calculated for each and every item and are subsequently reported. It shows the tendency of teacher's perception for each individual item.

Table 2 shows details of the attitudes of the teachers towards DMs.

TABLE 2:  
ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS

Category	Frequency	Percent
Low attitude	0	0%
Moderate attitude	33	73.3%
High attitude	12	26.7%

As seen in Table 2 above, the majority of the Iranian English teachers (73.3%) adopt a moderate perception toward DMs whereas (26.7%) tends to have a high attitude. It is worthy of comment that none of the teachers hold possess low attitude toward DMs. This finding shows that the issue of having a moderate attitude to DM might be initiated from the beliefs the teachers held about DMs. Another reason could be the sources that they have been using for teaching purposes could have influenced them in some way. That is to say, course books as well as their teacher manuals might have failed to address the teaching of DMs appropriately resulting in them not realizing how important this linguistic element is. It should be noted that almost one fourth of the respondents did have high attitude toward DMs, and this could mean that there is a tendency to consider them as important, possibly both inside and outside of the classroom among this group of participant.

Table 3 illustrates, the highest mean (4.09) is found to be for pragmatic and practical value of DMs (category 4) whereas the lowest means (2.91 and 2.99) were found to be allocated to the dispensable value and pedagogic value of DMs, respectively. Further, as for the attitude of the teachers, the frequency analysis of the seven categories questioned provided for further details of Iranian English language teachers' perception toward the use of DMs in EFL classrooms.

TABLE 3:  
ATTITUDES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS TOWARDS USE AND VALUE OF DMs FROM 7 SPECIFIC CATEGORIES

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
1. Pedagogic value of DMs	45	2.18	3.82	2.99	.306
2. Identification with native speaker norm	45	1.71	4.43	3.46	.560
3. Pragmatic and practical value of DMs	45	2.38	5.00	4.09	.550
4. Dispensable value of DMs	45	1.71	3.86	2.91	.442
5. Representation of DMs in EFL classroom	45	1.50	5.00	3.48	.800
6. Prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purposes	45	2.50	4.00	3.17	.405
7. Acceptance of the local usage	45	2.20	4.40	3.18	.465

The results imply that Iranian English language teachers tend to have a relatively high attitude toward pragmatic and practical aspects of DMs. The findings also indicate teachers' exhibited moderate attitude toward representation of DMs in EFL classrooms and identification with native speaker norm (categories 5 and 2). Their attitude towards acceptance of the local usage and prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purposes (category 7 and 6) was almost moderate, too. Although teachers had a positive and relatively low moderate attitude to pedagogic value of DMs and dispensable value of DMs (category 1 and 4), the lowest mean score was for this category.

The findings for category three is partially consistent with Fung's study. As can be seen from Appendix II, from frequencies and overall means, it is evident that almost two thirds of the participants tend to recognize the pragmatic and practical value of DMs in all the language skills. This was evident from the high mean scores. Therefore, it can be said that the majority of teachers strongly believe that DMs do play an important role in both written and spoken discourse and their function is important. Although there was a minor difference between category five and category two mean scores, teachers are in agreement with the categories of representation of DMs in EFL classrooms and identification with native speaker norms. McCarthy and Carter (1994, cited in Fung 2011) discuss that texts with a more dialogic, interpersonal orientation and DMs are seemingly thematized as a range of more 'personal' features of language. Even with discourse that is transactional in nature (as simple as direction-giving), there are still many other peripheral discourse features which mark interactional functions, the exemplification of which can help learners understand the dynamics of talk. Kennedy (1992, cited in Fung 2011), said, 'because discourse items are not handled well in most dictionaries and grammars, they are not part of traditional language teaching, with consequent effects on the naturalness of learners' English.

There was no difference between findings in category seven and six in both this study and Fung's study. The mean scores illustrates that teachers are uncertain in their acceptance of the local usage and prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purposes. In this study, participants tend to disagree with the Persian style of using DMs in second language and that they should not be taken into account while in Fung's study participants tend to be uncertain. This means that accepting local usage of DMs may not be an appropriate way but they can be used in order to make learners aware of DMs use in their mother tongue. Nevertheless, if the level of DMs in local usage is increased, it may result in overuse, misuse, and underuse for some. For presenting purpose, the majority of the participants believe that the optimal time for teaching DMs is at the early pre-intermediate or intermediate level. The findings for this category seem to be inconsistent with Fung's study. Fung explained that all informants stated the necessity of raising learner's awareness as the first step to master DMs. They believed that awareness-raising teaching and learning strategies can go hand in hand to support learners in their effort to communicate effectively. They recommended that awareness can be developed through cross-language reference where learners can be helped to acquire DMs naturally through real life interaction. In contrast with Fung's informants' claims, participants in this study felt that it would be ideal to present DMs for receptive purposes early at the pre-intermediate level. Learners at that level may not be able to acquire them naturally, thus the teachers' role might require facilitating their understanding regardless of implicit or explicit instruction. Participants in this study do not see the need to delay presenting the teaching of DMs to EFL learners.

The findings for pedagogic value of DMs and dispensable value of DMs categories showed that teachers were reluctant to some extent to using and teaching DMs. This is in contrast with Fung's results in which the respondents tended to agree with instructional value of DM. The reason for the reluctance for Iranian English teachers to teach DMs is unclear and uncertain. Teachers showed positive attitude toward teaching DMs in Fung's study and they believed that desirable L2 performance links communication with DMs, the knowledge of which is in fact an important step in the attainment of native-like fluency. They also maintained that they perceived a need to put DMs into proper focus through explicit teaching in which the learners should not be overloaded. However, Iranian teachers of English expressed a low moderate perception toward teaching DMs. It can be argued that their attitude may be due to their belief regarding DMs as they thought they are not really effective in creating discourse cohesion. In light of these findings it is obvious that pedagogic intervention in an explicit form is required to increase effectiveness of discourse (Fung, 2011). As for category four, teachers reported that they disagree with the dispensable value of DMs. That is to say, they consider DMs to be important to some extent but not totally important. It seems that these Iranian English language teachers are unable to deny the importance of DMs but yet they do not wholeheartedly believe that they should be given utmost priority in English language teaching over other linguistic items.

## V. CONCLUSION

It seems that Iranian English language teachers tend to have a relatively moderate positive perception toward the use of DMs. Some of them expressed that DMs are neither essential nor are they redundant. A detailed analysis of the items investigated in this study provided for further clarification of the teacher's perceptions towards the use of DMs in and EFL classroom. An interesting finding was that the majority of the Iranian English language teachers surveyed tended to agree with the view that DMs had both pragmatic and practical value. Findings of the study suggest that there should be an increased awareness of teacher's perception toward the use of DMs. This increased awareness of DMs for pedagogical uses will benefit both teachers and material developers alike and may even facilitate teachers in the EFL classroom. It is important that teachers and material developers are aware and recognize the importance of DMs in order to aid them better in their teaching and development of teaching material. DMs can be included 'as a part of the most

basic lexical input in a teaching syllabus and teaching material because they are quite simple and straightforward and are often familiar to learners who can recognize them from their basic semantic meaning' (MacCarthy, 1998, cited in Fung 2011). Moreover, teachers need to realize the importance of DMs and need to know when they can use them in the EFL classroom. Although the findings of this study are not generalizable, it still is able to point to the direction for future research. It may be replicated in other EFL situations and further studies could also adopt other data collection methods such as the interview or classroom observation to extract further responses from teachers and their behaviour with regard to DMs.

#### APPENDIX 1: FUNG'S FINDINGS

<b><i>Pedagogic value of DMs</i></b>	<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>
DMs are only small words in conversation and it is not worth the time to teach them.	3.86 (.81)
DMs are redundant and sub-standard features in speech and there is not much teaching value.	3.98 (.72)
It is necessary to create and develop linguistic awareness of DMs and promote proficiency in the actual use of them.	3.92 (.77)
Students should be helped to exploit DMs to improve their speaking and listening skills.	3.95 (.74)
DMs do not carry specific meaning and there is not much teaching value.	3.90 (.70)
There is no need to promote spontaneous understanding of DMs as a fluency device in spoken language.	3.53 (.89)
Students should be left at their discretion to learn to speak with DMs in the future when other interaction opportunities arise.	3.07 (1.02)
It is an appropriate time to highlight DMs in spoken text at upper secondary level.	3.58 (.85)
It is important for students to learn to incorporate DMs in their speech which is an essential speaking skill for the public oral examination.	3.67 (.93)
My students do not need to speak with DMs as frequently as most native speakers do, but only need to progress to a speaking proficiency level capable of fulfilling their communicative purpose.	3.48 (.94)
<b><i>Identification with the native speaker norm</i></b>	
It is realistic to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.	2.70 (1.03)
Students should be taught to speak like a native in order to be a member of the local English speaking elites.	3.05 (1.09)
It is justifiable to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.	3.04 (1.01)
Students should be taught how native speakers use DMs and follow their way of using them.	3.70 (.84)
The British way of using DMs should serve as a model for my students.	3.05 (.86)
The American way of using DMs should serve as a model for my students.	2.71 (.85)
<b><i>Pragmatic value of DMs</i></b>	
Students can understand native speakers better in their future workplace if they know what DMs are.	4.02 (.81)
Knowledge of DMs helps process information in listening.	4.21 (.76)
DMs can display the speakers' attitude.	4.36 (.63)
Students can follow a university lecture better in the future, especially those conducted by native speakers, if they know the meanings DMs point to.	3.83 (.85)
The sequence of the speakers' mental thoughts can be displayed clearly through DMs.	3.61 (.91)
DMs can oil the wheels of communication.	4.33 (.66)
Showing responses with DMs can yield a softening and facilitative effect	4.06 (.77)
Students can benefit in public examinations, especially in listening comprehension, if they know what DMs are.	3.77 (.83)
<b><i>Dispensable value of DMs</i></b>	
Without DMs the conversation is still coherent and interpretable.	2.50 (.88)
I can still understand the conversation using other linguistic clues rather than referring to the DMs.	2.27 (.80)
DMs do not necessarily help to orientate the listener to the overall idea structure and sequence in talk.	3.27 (1.06)
DMs appear to be redundant in the conversation.	3.71 (.89)
It is still an effective listening strategy for listeners to focus closely on the key words in talk without referring to DMs.	2.53 (.98)
DMs are not very useful devices to guide listeners to understand the conversation.	3.69 (.99)
DMs do not necessarily help to signal relationships between ideas in talk.	3.22 (.96)
Without DMs the conversation would become disjointed and incoherent.	3.27 (1.08)
<b><i>Representation of DMs in ESL classrooms</i></b>	
DMs have been presented as a speaking skill in most oral materials I am using.	3.28 (1.12)
DMs have been presented as a listening skill in most listening materials I am using.	3.15 (1.12)
I always highlight DMs in listening lessons.	2.92 (1.10)
I always highlight DMs in oral lessons.	3.02 (1.06)
<b><i>Prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purposes</i></b>	
At secondary level we should prioritize teaching DMs mainly for listening purpose.	2.74 (.91)
DMs as an aspect of speaking skill should be delayed until awareness of DMs as a listening skill has been grasped.	2.88 (.92)
DMs as a linguistic device for both listening and speaking purposes should be introduced at the same time at secondary level.	2.27 (.76)
It is too ambitious to expect students to learn DMs for both listening and speaking purposes at secondary level.	2.47 (.86)
<b><i>Prioritizing teaching of DMs for receptive purposes</i></b>	
At secondary level we should prioritize teaching DMs mainly for listening purpose.	2.74 (.91)
DMs as an aspect of speaking skill should be delayed until awareness of DMs as a listening skill has been grasped.	2.88 (.92)
DMs as a linguistic device for both listening and speaking purposes should be introduced at the same time at secondary level.	2.27 (.76)
It is too ambitious to expect students to learn DMs for both listening and speaking purposes at secondary level.	2.47 (.86)

<i>Acceptance of the local usage</i>	
We should respect and accept a Hong Kong style of using DMs.	3.11 (.91)
It is not necessary to stick to the native speaker norm of using DMs because English language teaching should seek relevance to local culture while trying to enable global transaction.	3.40 (.93)
It can be regarded as a wrong usage when Hong Kong learners use DMs differently from native speakers.	3.07 (.93)
We should help students to recognize and accept different national and regional uses of DMs.	3.87 (.71)
It is necessary to expose students to different varieties of using DMs for purpose of comprehension, though not of production.	3.82 (.81)

## APPENDIX 2: SURVEY AND FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES

Items	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Overall mean</i>
1. DMs can oil the wheels of communication (both in writing and speaking).						4.29
2. Knowledge of DMs helps processing information in listening and reading.						4.29
3. DMs can display the speakers' and writers' attitude.						4.07
4. DMs are not very useful devices to guide listeners and readers to understand the conversation.						1.96
5. DMs do not necessarily help to orientate the listener and readers to the overall idea structure and sequence in talk.						2.49
6. It is still an effective listening and reading strategy for listeners and readers to focus closely on the key words in talk or in the passage without referring to DMs.						3.02
7. The sequence of the speakers' and writers' mental thoughts can be displayed clearly through DMs.						3.64
8. Without DMs the conversation and writing would become bitty and incoherent.						3.96
9. Relationships between the speakers and writer would sound more distant and formal if there are no DMs in the conversation and writing.						3.18
10. I can still understand the conversation and writing using other linguistic clues rather than referring to the DMs.						3.40
11. DMs do not necessarily help to signal relationships between ideas in talk and writing.						2.67
12. Showing responses with DMs can yield a softening and facilitative effect.						3.96
13. Without DMs the conversation and a piece of writing are still coherent and interpretable.						2.91
14. DMs appear to be redundant in the conversation and writing.						2.27
15. DMs have been presented as a listening or reading skill in most listening and reading materials I am using.						3.33
16. DMs have been presented as a speaking and writing skill in most speaking and writing materials I am using.						3.71
17. I always highlight DMs in oral lessons as well as including writing one.						3.51
18. I always highlight DMs in listening and reading lessons.						3.38
19. Students have traditionally been taught to speak in written language form and they seldom display DMs in their speech.						3.51
20. It is necessary to create and develop linguistic awareness of DMs and promote proficiency in the actual use of them.						4.31
21. There is no need to promote spontaneous understanding of DMs as a fluency device in spoken language and writing skill.						2.24
22. Students should be helped to exploit DMs to improve their speaking and listening skills.						3.93
23. Students should be helped to exploit DMs to improve their reading and writing skills.						3.53
24. DMs are only small words in conversation and writing and it is not worth the time to teach them.						1.73
25. Generally, DMs do not carry specific meaning and there is not much teaching value.						1.80
26. DMs are redundant and sub-standard features in speech and writing and there is not much teaching value.						1.87
27. Students can benefit in examinations if they know what DMs are.						4.04
28. It is important for students to learn to incorporate DMs in their speech and writing which is an essential skill for the oral and written examination.						4.20
29. Students can follow a university lecture better in the future and write efficiently, especially those conducted by native speakers, if they know the meanings DMs point to.						4.33
30. Students can understand native speakers better in their future workplace if they know what DMs are.						4.11

31. Students should be taught how native speakers use DMs and follow their way of using them.						4.07
32. Students should be taught to speak like a native in order to become competent speakers.						3.58
33. Students should be taught to write like a native (from the aspect of DMs use) in order to become competent writer.						3.40
34. It is an appropriate time to highlight DMs in spoken text and written text at pre-intermediate and intermediate level.						3.78
35. It is an appropriate time to highlight DMs in spoken text and written text at upper intermediate and advanced levels.						3.89
36. It is too ambitious to expect students to learn DMs for both writing and speaking purposes at pre-intermediate and intermediate level.						2.98
37. At pre-intermediate and intermediate level, we should prioritize teaching DMs mainly for writing and speaking purpose.						3.42
38. DMs as a linguistic device for both listening and reading purposes should be introduced at the same time at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels.						3.62
39. DMs as an aspect of speaking and writing skill should be delayed until awareness of DMs as a listening skill has been grasped.						2.67
40. Students should be left at their discretion to learn to speak and write with DMs in the future when other interaction opportunities arise.						2.62
41. My students do not need to speak and write with DMs as frequently as most native speakers do, but only need to progress to a speaking proficiency level capable of fulfilling their communicative purpose.						2.84
42. It is realistic to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.						3.13
43. The American way of using DMs should serve as a model for my students.						3.36
44. The British way of using DMs should serve as a model for my students.						2.87
45. It can be regarded as a wrong usage when Iranian learners use DMs differently from native speakers.						3.36
46. We should respect and accept a Persian style of using DMs.						2.47
47. We should help students to recognize and accept different national and regional use of DMs.						3.22
48. It is justifiable to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.						3.82
49. It is necessary to expose students to different varieties of using DMs for purpose of comprehension, though not of production.						3.80
50. It is not necessary to stick to the native speaker norm of using DMs because English language teaching should seek relevance to local culture while trying to enable global transaction.						3.09

## APPENDIX 3: FREQUENCY OF SEVEN CATEGORIES

Category 1			Category 2		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Low	1	2.2	Low	2	6.7
Moderate	42	93.3	Moderate	25	55.6
High	2	4.4	High	17	37.8
Category 3			Category 4		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Low	0	0	Low	2	4.4
Moderate	8	17.8	Moderate	41	91.1
High	37	82.2	High	2	4.4
Category 5			Category 6		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Low	5	11.1	Low	0	0
Moderate	19	42.2	Moderate	38	84.4
High	21	46.7	High	7	15.6
Category 7					
	Frequency	Percent			
Low	1	2.2			
Moderate	38	84.4			
High	6	13.3			

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# Language and Sex: The Relationship of Language to Behavior

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**Abstract**—Long before linguists have focused on the role language plays in the position of women in society, they had studied and are still studying the presence of lexical, phonological, and morphological forms that are used only or predominantly by speakers of one sex or the other. Now linguists are interested in sociolinguistic variation: men's and women's speech is investigated along with social status, style, age, and ethnicity. Studies of linguistic variation related to sex in some Arab, American, and British communities reveal the fact that women are more conservative than men in their tendency to standard linguistic forms. Women are sensitive to linguistic variants that are socially stigmatized; therefore, they consistently produce forms which approach those of the standard language. And because women feel socially insecure, they are more status conscious than men are in the equivalent social roles. It follows from this that women tend more than men to use the forms of language that carry higher status connotations. In this paper, the author will attempt to investigate the hypothesis that the same holds true for sex-linked variation not only in highly sophisticated countries but also in still developing and non-developing communities which have been studied.

**Index Terms**—sociolinguistic variation, stigmatized, Whorfian Hypothesis, linguistic provision

## I. INTRODUCTION

Studies on language and sex, i.e. on the relationships between sex and language, are abundant but vary in quality. These studies make up the major issue in the sociolinguistics of speech (cf. Coates 1986). Consequently, linguists were motivated to widen their studies on the connection between the structures, vocabularies, and ways of using particular languages and the social roles of the men and women who speak these languages. The focus of research since the 1970s has been on whether men and women who speak a particular language use it differently; i.e., studies have tried to answer the question 'Are the different uses of language due to its structure?' If the answer to this question positive, this would then prove the correctness of the Whorfian hypothesis that claims that the structure of language influences how its speakers view the world. This, in turn, would justify the question of whether the differences between men's and women's speech reflect the way in which they choose to deal with each other in their society.

Studies on social variables have documented that male speakers differ from female speakers in using socially disfavored variants of sociolinguistic variables more than women do. Women avoid these in favor of socially more accepted variants which are referred to by Fasold (1992) as the 'sociolinguistic gender pattern'. Examples of this pattern were also reported by Fischer (1958), who found that girls in a school used the '-in' variant of the '-ing' suffix less frequently than boys did. Since Fischer's findings, the gender pattern has been observed with some regularity.

It is possible that the consistency of the gender pattern has sometimes been overstated, but it would be wrong to ignore the evidences from sociolinguistic research that demonstrate its existence.

The author of this paper will try to explain the differences between men's and women's speech not only in the Western societies but also in other ones, like in the Jordanian society.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Lakoff's book 'Language and Women's Place' (1975) was the first widely influential study of the difference in language use and that led her to conclude that language used to describe women had the overall effect of submerging a woman's personal identity. That is to say, women's identities are submerged because they are not encouraged to use the means of expressing themselves strongly but only expressions and forms that express uncertainty about what they are speaking. Lakoff described some categories of language use that are sharply differentiated by the sex of the speaker: categories such as lexical distinctions (color terms), strong versus weak expletives, women's versus neutral adjectives, and tag questions. Accordingly, women, for example, are not expected to use 'strong' expletives, such as 'damn', but are encouraged to substitute weaker ones like 'oh dear'. Such a difference in language use between men and women gives men the possibility of expressing strong emotions without being punished, while women are denied this opportunity. Lakoff also notices the difference between women's and neutral adjectives. She observed that there are adjectives in English which express approval and admiration, such as 'great' and 'terrific' which are neutral in the sense that they are readily and appropriately used by either men or women. Other adjectives, like 'adorable', 'charming', and 'divine' can only be expected to be used by women, but not generally in men's speech. For Lakoff, the existence of the

women's words used only for trivial expression suggests that what men have to say is in fact important, because a man says it. Linguistic provision is made for women only to express opinions that are seen immediately to be of no general consequence (cf. Fasold 1992).

According to Lakoff, the frequently used form of tag questions by women is also negatively interpreted by men; namely, as presenting them as unsure of their opinions and thereby as not really having opinions that count very much. So, tag question usage presents one more example of the submersion of women's individualities. Lakoff explains herself in saying that a question like 'when will dinner be ready?', women would tend to answer 'around six o'clock?'. Women would feel obliged to adjust dinner time to suit the convenience of other members of the family. Unlike them, if a man asked 'what time are we leaving for our trip tomorrow?', it would seem natural for him to reply with something like 'At 7.30 and I want everyone to be ready'.

Characteristic of Lakoff's work is that she identifies the linguistic elements which belong to women's speech to confirm that women use them more than men do. Even though Lakoff acknowledges in her later work (1977c) that the individual linguistic elements are, in a way, artifacts of the overall interactional style differences that are developed and used by men and women, Fasold (1992) criticizes her suggestion that tag questions might be a feature of women's style used to request confirmation that the hearer agrees with what she has just said. Fasold says that the question should not be 'What features are used disproportionately more or less by women than by men?' rather it is 'what differences in interactional strategy between women and men are there, and how do they reveal the structure of society with regard to the sexes?' In other words, linguists would make their contribution to the restated problem by discovering how language is used as the major tool for executing these strategies.

Scholars like Valiant (1981) criticize Lakoff's work on gender in language saying that she does not make a clear distinction between language and language use, since early in her original article (1973 a, p. 46), Lakoff anticipates her conclusions in this statement: "We will find, I think, that women experience linguistic discrimination in two ways: in the way they are taught to use language, and in the general way language use treats them". Accordingly, Lakoff seems to be dealing with matters of language use and expressing the view that, since society's changing attitudes play a crucial role in the statuses of a language, societal attitudes (including these towards women) must be included in the linguistic analysis.

However, Lakoff's disinclination to maintain a distinction between language and language use has led to a criticism on methodological grounds. As Fasold (1992) notices, Lakoff's fundamental source of data is that used in the analysis of abstract syntax. The data come from introspection based on her own speech and that of her acquaintances. The introspective method works for syntacticians precisely because they assume that sentences are to be abstracted from language use. If language use is taken as an inherent part of linguistic scholarship, it is far from clear that the introspective method is still appropriate. Some of the work Lakoff's research has inspired was motivated by a desire to base conclusions on more systematically observed and vigorously analyzed data.

The generic uses of masculine forms can also be seen as problematic. This applies to the pronoun 'he' in contexts like 'Each bicyclist must dismount and walk his bicycle across the intersection', where it is not known whether any particular bicyclist is female or male. It also applies to the word 'man', as in 'Man has learned to control his environment to an astonishing extent'.

Vatterling-Braggin (1981, Part III) expresses some doubt about whether or not this generic use of masculine forms is really generic. Many studies have been conducted on people's responses to supposedly generic uses of masculine forms. The results overwhelmingly support the conclusion that this usage has the effect of excluding women (cf. Bodine 1975; Martyna 1980; McKay and Fulkerson 1979). That is, when the pronoun 'he' is used, it will almost be heard as excluding female referents. Regardless problems concerning the generic use of masculine forms, overtones can be noticed that are associated with sex-paired words. For example, Lakoff (1973 a, 1975) makes a strong case for the euphemistic use of 'lady' as opposed to 'gentleman', as if 'woman' were an unpleasant term that ought to be avoided, in addition to bad connotations associated with the woman's term than the corresponding man's term. For instance, a 'bachelor' and a 'spinster' are both unmarried, and one is a man and the other a woman. But, unlike a bachelor who is seen as probably being unmarried by choice and living a happy life, a spinster conjures an image of an old and unappealing woman living an unfulfilled life in consequence of her failure to marry. Unlike with the woman's term, there are usually favorable implications with the man's term. A 'master' is an individual with great ability in some skilled endeavour; you would never use the word, as the word 'mistress is used, to refer to someone's regular partner in adultery (Fasold 1992, P. 113).

It is obvious for those who are interested in the relationship of language to its speakers' linguistic behavior that men's and women's reveal phonological, morphological, and lexical differences. But the differences do not result in different languages. The language with these differences remains the same for both sexes but with noticeable sex-based characteristics (cf. Taylor 1951b). Phonological differences in the speech of the two sexes have been noticed in different dialects of English. One of the earliest studies of English variation was conducted by Fischer's study of the (ng) variable (1958); for example, pronunciations like 'working' versus 'workin'.

A variety of phonological differences is also found in different dialects of Arabic. For example, Standard Arabic /K/, as in 'king, has the colloquial Jordanian Arabic reflex /ts/, as in 'church'. The use of /k/ instead of /ts/ is an attempt to approximate standard Arabic, and it carries a sociolinguistic value as to the background of the speaker. The occurrence



of these two variants in the speech of Jordanian men and women shows that there is a significant difference between them in their use of this variable. Jordanian men and women agree that the use of the standard variant signals the high level of education of the speaker, and it would furthermore mark higher social status. In his study on women's and men's speech in Amman, Jordan, Abd-el-Jawad (1983) notices that women tend to use the standard variant more than men do, and that this because they want to show their high social status, or to give the impression of belonging to a high social class.

Concerning differences between the sexes in the area of morphology and vocabulary, there are also many studies that have focused on English and other languages. Lakoff (1973a) observed that women use color words and adjectives which are used very rarely by men, such as 'beige', 'lavender', 'adorable', 'lovely', 'divine', and 'sweet'.

As a result of the documentation of the differences between the two sexes in the area of morphology, it is now understandable why there is a frequent insistence that neutral words be used as much as possible, as in describing occupations, e.g., 'chairperson', 'salesclerk', and 'actor' in sentences like 'she is an actor'. The documentation of this kind also suggests modifications for old terms, e.g., changing 'policeman' to 'police officer', and 'chairman' to 'chairperson' (cf. Wardhaugh 1987). Certainly, there are sex differences in word choice in various languages. For example, Arab women show that they are women by using a word-final particle 'eh' or 'eton', like 'ameeneh' or 'ameeneton' (both words mean the same, namely, 'honest'), whereas men show that they are men by the use of the word 'ameen' without 'eh' or 'eton'. So, they speak of themselves as 'ameen' (honest) instead of 'ameeneh' or 'ameeneton'.

Different languages seem to prescribe different forms for use by men and women. The Yana language of California, according to Sapir (1929a), contains special forms for use in speech either by or to women. This phenomenon has been found among various aboriginal peoples of Australia, e.g., among the Zulus and Mongols.

Differences in the speech of males and females are also found in the area of grammar. For example, Lakoff (1973a) claims that women may answer a question with a statement that employs the rising intonation pattern usually associated with a question rather than the falling intonation pattern associated with making a firm statement. Lakoff says that this happens because women are less sure about themselves and their opinions than are men. For the same reason women add tag questions to statements.

Other sex-linked differences in the speech of men and women exist. Women, for example, are often named and addressed differently from men. Apparently a wider range of address terms is used to them than to men. Women are more likely than men to be addressed by their first names, or by such names as 'lady', 'miss', 'dear', and even 'baby'. Women are also sometimes required to be silent in situations in which men may speak. In some societies only men are encouraged to talk on all occasions, but the ideal wife is silent in the presence of her husband, and at gatherings where men are present she should talk only in a whisper. Linguists are aware of the fact that social factors could provide explanations for some of these differences.

### III. EXPLANATIONS FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SPEECH DIFFERENCES

Observing how men and women use language in conversations can help find some clues to explain the differences between men and women in their use of language. Men, for example, use language to talk about business, politics, and sports, whereas women speak about social life, food, and life-style. It has also been observed that when men and women interact in conversation, men tend to explain to women, whereas women tend to apologize to men. In cross-sex conversations women ask more questions than men. In addition, women view questions as part of conversational maintenance and men primarily as requests for information. Women tend to discuss, share, and seek reassurance, and men tend to look for solutions and to give advice.

Obviously, men and women in their conversations reveal the normal power relationship that exists in society, with men dominant and women subservient. Maltz and Borker (1982) propose that this is because of the fact that men and women came from different sociolinguistic subcultures. They have learned to do different things with language, particularly in conversation, and when the two sexes try to communicate with each other, the result may be miscommunication. Maltz and Borker conclude that men and women observe different rules in conversing and that in cross-sex talks the rules often conflict. In this view men and women have been brought up to behave differently with regard to language. Lakoff (1973a, p.48) has commented as follows: "The ultimate effect... is that women are systematically denied access to power, on the grounds that they are not capable of holding it as demonstrated by their linguistic behavior along with other aspects of their behavior; and the irony here is that women are made to feel that they deserve such treatment, because of inadequacies in their own intelligence and / or education. But in fact it is precisely because women have learned their early lessons so well that they later suffer such discrimination".

Most of the explanations for the differences in men's and women's use of language were directed at explaining the linguistic behavior of women. Women choose the language they choose because their social status is judged by how they behave linguistically. The approximation of women to the standard variety spoken in the capital of Jordan, Amman, for example, is evident in their use of lexical items associated with it and their avoidance of the non-standard varieties which seem to be socially stigmatized. Jordanian women living in Amman tend to use features from the prestigious linguistic variety in their speech, because they feel that this variety is associated with high social status. This general impression was obvious by the responses of a sample of men and women whose linguistic attitude was checked. They

agreed that women tend to use features from the dialect spoken in Amman more than men do (cf. Abd-el-Jawad 1983). M.R. Key (1975) also suggests that women use favored linguistic forms as a way of achieving status through the use of linguistic features. He says that "It would appear, then, that women have not universally accepted the position in the lower ranks, and that, out-of-awareness, and in a socially acceptable and non-punishable way, women are rebelling" (P.103). In his overview of linguistic sex differentiation, Trudgill (1983a, PP. 167-8) provides a series of related explanations. He writes: "Women are more closely involved with child-rearing and the transmission of culture, and are therefore more aware of the impotence, for their children, of the acquisition of (prestige) forms"...

"The social position of women in our society has traditionally been less secure than that of men. It may be, therefore, that it has been more necessary for women to secure and signal their social status linguistically and in other ways, and they may for this reason be more aware of the importance of this type of signal".

From what was said so far we can infer that the problem of the differences between men's and women's speech is not a linguistic problem but a cultural one. The problem reflects the fact that men and women are expected to have different interests and different roles, to hold different types of conversations, and to react differently to other people. Men and women use language to achieve certain purposes, and so long as sexual difference is equated with differences in access to power and influence in society, such differences can be expected to result in linguistic differences. Power and influence, for both men and women, are also associated with education and social class. That sex differences in language may be social in origin rather than linguistic can be reinforced in a study of norms and norm-breaking in Malagasy by Keenan (1974) according to whom men do not put others into situations in which they may lose face. People in Malagasy try to maintain good communication in their relationships and avoid confrontations. They prefer indirectness as an expression of respect; men's "requests are typically delayed and inexplicit, accusations imprecise, and criticisms subtle" (Keenan 1974, P.141). Unlike men, women in Malagasy openly and directly express their feelings toward others. They can be direct and straight. In the Malagasy society, then, it is the men who are indirect and the women who are direct. In the Malagasy society indirectness is surprisingly prized and regarded as traditional and it is the men who employ it. On the other hand, "direct speech... is associated with a loss of tradition", and it is found among women and children (Keenan, P.142). Women are definitely inferior to men in this society too, for "Where subtlety and delicacy... are required in social situations, men are recruited", but "where directness and explicitness.. are desirable in social situations, women are recruited" (ibid, p.143). Here we can see how the speech of the two sexes reflects their relationship within the total society. These evidences suggest that men and women differ in the kinds of language they use and how they use it because men and women often fill distinctly different roles in society. There seems to be some evidence to support the claim that the greatest differences appear to exist in societies in which the roles of men and women are most clearly differentiated. And in societies in which men's and women's roles are less clearly differentiated, we may expect to find a reflection of this situation in the language that is used. Most of these differences can be explained by the different positions men and women fill in society. Men have more power; women tend to be aspired to a different and better place. Therefore, women appear to be more conscious of uses of language which they regard as being socially superior.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Sex-differences are reflected in language, and some emphasis in research on language and sex has to do with certain linguistic features that women use, apparently in response to dominance by men. These features have been seen as reflecting 'female register' which is closely related to the study of cross-sex conversation. To some extent, the results of conversational research provide explanations for the features of female register.

Another aspect of language and sex raised by Lakoff is the matter of how language refers to women and men. A central issue in this area is the so-called 'generic masculine', in which compounds are supposed to refer to people of both sexes when the sex of the referents is not known. Besides the supposedly generic use of masculine forms, sex-related differences emerge in the case of pairs of words which are denotatively the same. Almost always, there are connotations associated with the female-referring item that are either euphemistic ('lady' compared to 'gentleman'), or detrimental to women ('witch' versus 'warlock'), often imputing sexual immorality to the female referent ('mistress' versus 'master').

Many studies on language and sex suggest that men's and women's speech differs because boys and girls are brought up differently, and men and women often fill different roles in society. However, men and women know this and react in different ways, for example seeking 'prestige' differently. Women prefer 'overt' prestige and men 'covert' variety.

The author will conclude his paper with the claim that it is possible to free language from whatever is 'sexist' in it thorough child-rearing practices and role differentiations which are less sexist.

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# ‘Defending a Thesis’: Pragmatic Acts in Contemporary Christian Apologetics

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**Abstract**—In this paper, I argue that the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’ characterises Christian apologetics and that the various pragmatic acts performed are instantiations of this generalised situation type. Linguistic efforts have not really dealt with Christian apologetics generally, and specifically from a pragmatic perspective. This is the gap this paper hopes to fill. Furthermore, in the literature on pragmeme there is no study that focuses on the issue of ‘defending a thesis’. For data, ten purposively selected texts from five prominent and contemporary Christian apologists were studied and representative excerpts were analysed using insights from the theory of pragmeme/pragmatic acts. The study concludes that the various individual practs- *arguing, substantiating, disclaiming, authenticating, challenging, defending*- in Christian apologetics are instantiations of the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’.

**Index Terms**—pragmeme, pract, pragmatic force, Christian apologetics, argument

## I. INTRODUCTION

Studies on religious discourse have focused on its various shades and from different theoretical perspectives. For instance, Crystal (1965), Crystal and Davy (1969) consider the language of religion from a linguistic stylistic perspective; Samarin (1976) relying on Hymes’ (1962) Speaking grid examines the sociolinguistic constituents of typical religious community. Babatunde (2007) is a speech acts analysis of evangelical Christian sermons in Nigeria; Odebunmi (2007) is a stylistic analysis of electronic advertisements and Taiwo (2007) looks at tenor in electronic media discourse in Nigeria. Similarly, within the literature on pragmatic act theory no effort exists on its application to the analysis of Christian apologetics. Departing markedly from previous studies, therefore, the current paper examines pragmatic acts in Christian apologetics as means of realising the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’. To the best of my knowledge the only linguistic endeavours on Christian apologetics are Inya (2010) and Inya (in press) which investigate the Generic Structure Potential of the discourse, among other things. The current paper is another original attempt to analyse Christian apologetics from the perspective of pragmeme/pragmatic act (Mey, 2001; Capone, 2005).

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows: Section 2 presents an overview of Christian apologetics. Section 3 provides the theoretical base of the paper, which focuses on the theory of pragmeme/pragmatic act. The method adopted for this research as well as analysis appears in Section 4. This is afterwards followed by Section 5, the conclusion.

## II. CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: AN OVERVIEW

“Apologetics” is described as the defence of the Christian faith (Ken and Bowman, 2005). The word is derived from the Greek word *apologia*, which was originally used to refer to a speech made in defence of oneself or an answer given in reply to an accusation. In ancient Athens, it referred to a defence made in the courtroom as part of the normal judicial procedure. After the accusation, the defendant would be allowed to refute charges with a defence or reply (*apologia*). The accused person would then attempt to “speak away” (*apo*—away, *logia*—speech) the accusation. The classic example of such an *apologia* was Socrates’ defence against the charge of preaching strange gods, a defence reported by his most famous pupil, Plato, in a dialogue called *The Apology*.

In the literature, apologetics is said to have at least three functions or goals. Beattie (1903, p. 56) presents them as *defence* of Christianity as a system of belief; a *vindication* of the Christian worldview against its assailants such as atheists, agnostics etc., and a *refutation* of opposing systems and theories such as atheism, pantheism, deism etc. Reymond (1976, p. 5-7), however, presents four functions of apologetics. The first three are essentially the same as Beattie’s (1903). According to Reymond (1976), apologetics addresses objections to the Christian position; it provides an account of the foundations of the Christian faith by examining the theology and, epistemology of Christianity; thirdly, it challenges non-Christian systems, particularly in the area of epistemological justification; and finally, it seeks to persuade people of the truth of the Christian position.

## III. THEORETICAL BASE

### *Pragmeme and Pragmatic Acts*

The theory of pragmatic acts, a socio-cultural interactional view on pragmatics was proposed by Mey (2001). Generally, this approach is an alternative to the cognitive-philosophical perspective to pragmatics represented by neo-gricean pragmatics, relevance theory and speech act theory (Kecskes, 2010). Specifically, it is based on the premise that the speech act theory is “thought of atomistically, as wholly emanating from the individual” (Fairclough 1989, p. 9) and that it lacks an action theory. In other words, the seeming action in speech act stems from the individual’s intentions and the strategies they employ in achieving them. This, however, is idealistic as the ideal individual lives in a social world with opportunities and limitations that have bearings on their intention. Thus, as a socio-cultural interactional orientation towards language use, the pragmatic act theory promotes ‘the priority of socio-cultural and societal factors in meaning construction and comprehension’ (Kecskes, 2010, p. 1) and focuses heavily ‘on the interactional situation in which both speakers [writers] and hearers [readers] realize their aims’ (Mey, 2009, p. 751).

Mey (2001) describes this interactional situation as: ‘the environment in which both speaker and hearer find their affordances such that the entire situation is brought to bear on what can be said in the situation as well as what is actually being said’ (p. 221). From the foregoing, it implies that utterance or speech act is only one factor which must work in concert with other situational/contextual factors for meaning realisation or for the performance of a pragmatic act. Thus, Mey (2001) argues that “there are no speech acts but only situated speech acts or instantiated pragmatic acts” (p. 218), as such the emphasis is on characterising a general situation prototype, which is called a *pragmeme*, and can be realised through individual pragmatic acts (Mey 2001, p. 221).

Mey (2001) presents this theory in a model of *pragmeme*:

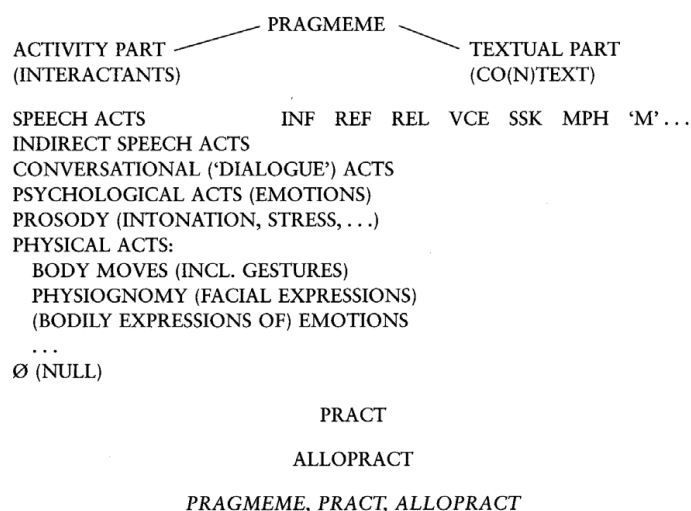


Figure 1: A Model of Pragmatic Acts (Mey 2001, p. 222)

In the model above, the column to the left itemises the various choices available to the language user for their communicative purposes. The column to the right represents elements found in the texts: 'INF' stands for 'inference', 'REF' for 'establishing a reference', 'REL' for 'relevance', 'VCE' for 'voice', 'SSK' for 'shared situation knowledge', 'MPH' for 'metaphor' and 'M' for 'metapragmatic joker'. It is the interaction of the elements on both sides of the schema that realises the pragmatic acts. The abstraction of a pragmatic act is the *pragmeme*, the instantiated or realised form is the *ipract* or *pract*. Mey (2001, p. 221) argue that "every *pract* is at the same time an *allopract*, that to say a concrete instantiation of a particular *pragmeme*".

According to Capone (2005), “A *pragmeme* is a situated speech act in which the rules of language and of society synergize in determining meaning, intended as a socially recognized object sensitive to social expectations about the situation in which the utterance to be interpreted is embedded (p. 1357). He further indicates that a *pragmeme* requires three types of embedding:

- The embedding of an utterance in a context of use, with an aim to determine the referential anchors that complete the propositional form of the utterance;
- the embedding in rules that systematically transform whatever gets said in a context into whatever is meant there, in conformity with the social constraints and rules bearing on the utterance in question;
- the embedding in the cotext, whose features are transferred onto the utterance by eliminating semantic or otherwise interpretative ambiguities and enriching further its (range of) interpretations, by making them more specific (Capone 2005, p.1357).

This requisite embedding of an utterance in the cotext and context is largely an interpretative process that enriches the propositional form of such utterance and assigns a particular contextual configuration that will make the meaning of the utterance more specific, as such discarding other alternative interpretations that may not be inferable from such a situational configuration. It is a norm of utterance interpretation that relies on the societal context of the utterance and

other cotextual elements. In the words of Capone (2005): “the norms for the interpretation of pragmemes come from a societal perspective on language” (p.1358).

Capone (2005) and Mey (2001) construe pragmemes as transformations utterances go through when acted upon by the forces of context, transformations that “reshape the original illocutionary value of a speech act by adding contextual layers of meaning, or even may change the illocutionary value of the speech act” (Capone, 2005, p. 1360). Such transformations according to Capone (2005) ‘are based on knowledge of a number of principled and conventional interactions between utterance meaning and certain contextual and situational configurations’ (p. 1360). Capone (2001) provides ample examples of the transformative effect of context on certain utterances and claims that within the context of a court, for instance, a declarative utterance, which should merely provide an assertion, can be transformed into a speech act with legal implications. Further examples of pragmemes are presented in Capone (2005), for instance, he illustrates how the utterance ‘I saw you’ when used in a classroom situation by a teacher to Michealango who whispers the answers to a question to his desk mate can be transformed into the pragmeme ‘stop prompting’.

Kecskes (2010, p. 2894) argues that ‘pragmemes represent situational prototypes to which there may be several pragmatic access routes (practs)’ and proposes that situationa-bound utterances (SUBs) are instances of pragmatic acts. He indicates that the pragmeme ‘inviting someone to take a seat’ can be concretely realised by the following SUBs: ‘Why don’t you sit down, Please take a seat; Sit down, please’.

Odebunmi (2006, 2008) have applied the theory of pragmatic acts to the analysis of proverbs in literary texts: Yerima’s *Yemoja Attahiru* and *Dry Leaves on Ukan Trees* as well as Ola Rotimi’s *The Gods are to Blame*. Odebunmi (2008) claims that the proverbs in *The Gods* are used between a speaker and a hearer, and that they are roughly divided into: crisis motivated proverbs (CMP) and non-crisis motivated proverbs (NMP). The paper then focuses on CMP, which comprises social crisis-motivated proverbs (CMP: soc) and political crisis-motivated proverbs (CMP: Pol) ‘the reason being that the events in the play are predominantly crisis-driven’ (Odebunmi, 2008, p. 78). The users of the proverbs draw on psychological acts, which interact with contextual features such as reference (REF), metaphor (MPH), inference (INF), shared situational knowledge (SSK), shared cultural knowledge (SCK) and relevance (REL) to produce the following practs: *counselling, cautioning, accusing, challenging, veiling, persuading, prioritizing, encouraging, threatening and admitting*.

The current paper departs from the foregoing as it applies the theory of pragmeme/pragmatic acts to Christian apologetics. I argue here, as I did elsewhere (Inya, 2010 and Inya, in press), that Christian apologetics belong to the context/discourse type of argumentation as such the pragmeme of ‘defending a thesis’ is strongly privileged. Therefore, the various pragmatic acts or practs performed in Christian apologetics are instantiations of the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’. This argument will be substantiated presently.

#### IV. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

For data, ten purposively selected texts from five prominent and contemporary Christian apologists: Robert J Morgan, Ravi Zacharias, William Lane Craig, Thompson Bert, and Josh McDowell were used. The underlying motivation for the selection laid in the fact that these apologists addressed certain key issues privileged in Christian apologetics such as: the uniqueness of the person of Christ; the reliability of the Bible; the question of creation; evolution; and the Christian response to certain contemporary philosophical and religious worldview. As for the analysis, Figure 3 below presents a schema of the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’ and its constituents practs:

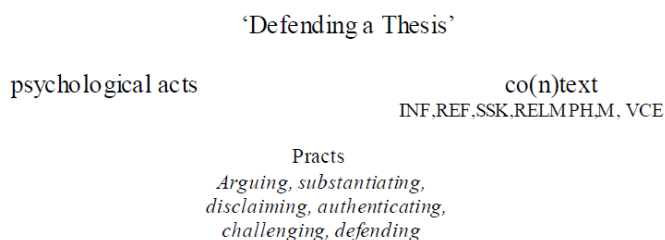


Figure 2: A diagrammatic schema of the pragmeme of ‘defending a thesis’ and its constituents practs

Fig. 2 basically indicates that the writers employ psychological acts in their attempt to appeal to the readers’ sense of reason and judgment. The privileging of the psychological act is predicated on the fact that the writers’ utterances are products of an inner motivation to establish some truth derived from a strong persuasion about the Christian worldview. Different co(n)textual elements interact to generate the pragmatic acts in the discourse. These elements include: Reference (REF), Relevance (REL), Inference (INF), Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK), Metaphor (MPH) and Voice (VCE). The practs performed from the union between the psychological acts and the various co(n)textual elements are: *arguing, substantiating, disclaiming, authenticating, challenging* and *defending* and they are all realisation of the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’, as each of the pract is an attempt to defending a particular thesis developed by the apologist. I shall illustrate from the data how the interaction of these elements produce the practs identified above:

The pragmatic act of *arguing* is generally privileged in Christian apologetics and a foremost ‘realiser’ of the pragmeme ‘defending a thesis’. The act is produced by the interaction of the following contextual items: REF, REL, INF, SSK and MPH. The examples below will illustrate this interaction:

#### Ex. 1

Early in the nineteenth century, it became fashionable in some circles to discount the uniqueness of Christ by questioning His very existence in history. In Germany some of the higher critics openly doubted the historicity of Christ, suggesting that the stories about Him were myth like those of the Greek and Roman gods, or perhaps shadowy legends like those of King Arthur and Camelot.

(TUC; Morgan, 2003, p. 61-265)

In Ex. 1 above, the writer reports that in the nineteenth century, the German higher critic questioned the very existence of Christ. They *argued* that Christ is a legendary figure by making reference to the Greek/Roman mythology and gods, and the legend of King Arthur and Camelot. The relevance of these references and the inference to be drawn is assisted by SSK. This point will be explored using the reference to the legend of King Arthur and Camelot. Camelot features in Arthurian legend, as the favourite castle of King Arthur, a legendary British king of ancient times. In Arthurian stories, Camelot is a centre for social, administrative, military, and religious activities. It is also from Camelot that knights leave on the quest for the Holy Grail, the sacred cup used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper (Lacy, 2009). This brief contextual information, which should be a shared situational knowledge (SSK), brings to the fore the higher critics’ pract of *arguing* that the existence of Christ is also a legend like those of King Arthur and Camelot.

#### Ex. 2

Christians also have a founding document on which our spiritual faith and freedom are based, one more fabulous than even the Declaration of Independence. It is the Bible, composed over 1,600 years in sixty-six installments, written in three languages on three continents. It has a central theme and a unifying scheme; and Christians, believing it inspired by God, consider it infallible, inerrant, and sufficient for all human need.

(TRTBD; Morgan, 2003, p. 79)

Here again the writer engages REF, REL, INF, and SSK to generate the pract of *arguing* for the reliability of biblical documents. The apologist makes reference to the Declaration of Independence, the founding document of the United States of America, and compares it with the Bible. Given the SSK that this is the most important document to Americans, and the *argument* of the writer that the Bible is even “more fabulous”, the reader is led along to infer that the Bible must be a very reliable document. This inference is further accentuated by the writer’s reference to other qualities of the Bible: written over a period of 1,600 years in 66 instalments, in three languages, on three continents, yet has a unifying theme, and is believed by Christians to have been inspired by God. In another context these might be considered mere information and nothing more. In apologetic context, however, these are pieces of information with the intent to ‘defend a thesis’, namely: the Bible is a reliable document.

In the examples below, the authors cast their *argument* on the uniqueness of the Bible, in very poignant metaphors, and they rely heavily on SSK, REL INF and MPH to pract. The persuasive import of metaphors has been observed by Charteris-Black (2005) and Maalej (2007). Charteris-Black (2005, p. 13) argues that metaphor has very strong persuasive orientation as ‘it mediates between these conscious and unconscious means of persuasion- between cognition and emotion- to create a moral perspective on life (or *ethos*)’. Charteris-Black (2005, p. 13) further indicates that metaphor activates ‘unconscious emotional associations and it influences the value that we place on ideas and beliefs on the scale of goodness and badness’.

#### Ex. 3

A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone, and committal read. But somehow the corpse never stays put.

No other book has been so chopped, knived, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified. What book on philosophy or religion or psychology or *belles lettres* of classical or modern times has been subject to such a mass attack as the Bible? with such venom and skepticism? with such thoroughness and erudition? upon every chapter, line and tenet?

(TUTB; McDowell, 1999, p. 11)

As indicated above, the author employs MPH, SSK, INF, REL, and REF to produce a pract of *arguing*. The author uses the metaphor of death and its various accompaniments: death knell, funeral, and tombstone to describe the fate the Bible has being put through ‘a thousand times over’ by its attackers. The shocking thing however is that the Bible has refused to stay dead and buried. The author sustains his argument by the use of violent metaphors in describing the actions of the attackers of the Bible: ‘so chopped, knived, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified’. The pragmatic force of this *argument* is bifocal: to project the Bible as a resilient, extra-ordinary document, and cast its attackers in a bad light as very violent and inconsiderate. The metaphorical expression has the overall objective of leading the readers into accepting the writer’s claim about the uniqueness of the Bible. The metaphors employed take on strong moral connotations as they present the church/Bible in a positive light and cast its attackers in a bad light. The metaphors also conceptualise the church/Bible as victims of violent attacks. Such metaphorical polarisation has a strong persuasive force as it might appeals to the sense of *ethos* (morality) and *pathos* (emotion) of the reader, and hence an emotionally-laden means of ‘defending the thesis’ of the uniqueness of the Bible.

The next pract that realises the pragmeme 'defending a thesis' is the pract of *substantiating*. The following example provides an illustration:

**Ex. 4**

The first is philosophy's move to the existential. The power of a Jean Paul Sartre or an Albert Camus was significant in the decades of the '60s and the '70s. Historian Paul Johnson points out the devastating impact of Sartre upon the intellectuals of the Angka Loeu movement in Cambodia that destroyed the lives of hundreds of thousands in that "Gentle Land." Indeed, a tremendous power was unleashed as philosophers through drama and literature handcuffed the intellect of society's powerbrokers. Stories were introduced to tell us that "Man was the measure of all things," but they never paused to tell us the entailments of evil men who wrested power and means to destroy their own people. (AAMTMPPM, *Zacharias*, 1998, p. 3)

The writer, in example 4, produces the practs of *substantiating* the argument about the profound effect of postmodernism on philosophical thinking and its devious impact on the lives of the people of Cambodia. He makes reference to Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus the powerful proponents of existentialism, the philosophical stance that asserts that 'human existence is characterized by nothingness, that is, by the capacity to negate and rebel' (Redmond, 2009). He also refers to historical events: the wars in Cambodia, the ironical "Gentle Land", which were as a result of Sartre's existential orientation. Through a metaphor of domination, signified by 'handcuffed', the writer observes that the intellect of society had been suppressed by the hegemonic structures of drama and literature. The writer goes through these motions to *substantiate* his argument against postmodernism and by this subtly disclaims the worldview. The intention of the argument is this: if a worldview could promote the killings of innocent people, then it should not be identified with. The following example illustrates the pract of *disclaiming*:

**Ex. 5**

Space restricts the very tempting critique of Wilson's book, but enough to say that the blunders of fact made by him are too numerous to mention. He is not a scholar in this field of study. In the book **Who Was Jesus?** Oxford Professor N.T. Wright takes Wilson's argument apart piece by piece, showing its academic poverty. (TWTO; *Zacharias*, 1994, p. 3)

Here, in order to *disclaim* the position put forward by Wilson the writer refers to the fact that Wilson is not a scholar in this field of learning. The relevance of this statement is that it leads the reader to infer that Wilson is not qualified to make valid arguments in this area of scholarship. The writer further strengthens this pract of *disclaiming* as he refers to the fact that an "Oxford Professor" also *disclaims* Wilson's argument. The reference "Oxford Professor" is pragmatically strategic as the University of Oxford is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities of the English-speaking world. It has a long standing record of unprecedented scholarship. Thus, if an "Oxford Professor" takes an argument apart, then it is not worthy of any meaningful scholarly attention. Given this SSK, the relevance of this reference becomes very forceful and the pragmatic act of *disclaiming* very poignant. Furthermore, the nominal group 'Oxford Professor' does not merely describe or introduce the referent 'N.T. Wright' as would be the case in a classroom situation or any other non-argumentative contexts. In the contextual configuration of Christian apologetic, such an expression is used to provide authentication for the sources of the arguments presented by the author. More on this in the next paragraph:

The other pragmatic act observed in the data is that of *authenticating*. Its prevalence in Christian apologetics is necessitated by the fact that this form of discourse is an argumentative one and the authenticity of the source of the arguments referenced is very important. The more credible and authentic the source, the more valid the argument may be considered to be.

**Ex. 6**

Luke was undeniably brilliant, possessing remarkable literary abilities and a deep knowledge of the Greek language. He was the only non Jewish author of the Bible. Yet he wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else-28 percent. He was a physician and a scientist. He was a writer and a medical missionary. He has proved himself a historian of first rank. Here he tells us that before writing his Gospel, he did the work of an investigative journalist, recording his findings in an orderly manner based on careful investigation: "It seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:3-4).

(TRTBD; *Morgan*, 2003, p. 81)

In the example above, the writer contextually engages the elements of REF, REL, and INF to produce the pract of *authentication*. The writer makes reference to Luke's brilliance, literary and linguistic abilities; he also gives us a list of the credentials of Luke: 'a physician and a scientist', 'a writer and a medical missionary', 'a historian of first rank', 'an investigative journalist'. The pragmatic relevance of itemising Luke's credentials is to *authenticate* the Gospel of Luke.

Other instances of this pract can be illustrated from the data:

**Ex. 7**

Raymo, professor of physics and astronomy at Stonehill College in Massachusetts, has written a weekly column on science for the *Boston Globe* for more than a dozen years, and was reared as a Roman Catholic. (TMFU; *Bert*, 1999, p. 21)

**Ex. 8**



Professor M. Montiero- Williams, former Boden professor of Sanskrit, held this perspective. After spending forty-two years studying Eastern books, he compared them with the Bible and said: ....

**Ex. 9**

Earl Radmacher, retired president of Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, quotes Nelson Glueck (pronounced Glek), former president of the Jewish Theological Seminary at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and one of the three greatest archaeologists: ....

**Ex. 10**

Elie Wiesel, renowned novelist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient

(*TUTB; McDowell, 1999, pp. 4, 11-12, 14*)

In the examples above, the writers employ the following elements to produce the practice of *authentication*: REF, REL, INF and SSK. References are made to the professorial status of the sources: 'Raymo, professor of physics and astronomy'; 'Professor M. Montiero- Williams, former Boden professor of Sanskrit'; the office of the referents as well as their years of experience and height of achievements: 'retired president', 'former president'; 'more than a dozen years' as a columnist for scientific journal, and 'forty-two years' of studying Eastern books, 'one of the three greatest archaeologists', 'renowned novelist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient'. The academic status, office, experience and achievements of the sources of the writers' arguments qualify them to make very valid statements and arguments about the reliability of the Bible. Thus, these writers pragmatically co-opt the readers into reaching the conclusion. In other words, through merely providing these pieces of information about their sources and relying on SSK, the writers create the pragmatic environment for the practice of *authenticating* their sources.

In the data, it is observed that this pragmatic strategy is used by some writers but to a different pragmatic end: to produce the practice of *challenging* the positions contrary to the writers'. The following examples will illustrate this point:

**Ex. 11**

In 1989, Richard Dawkins, renowned atheist and evolutionist of Oxford University, released the second edition of his book, *The Selfish Gene* in which he discussed at great length the gene's role in the naturalistic process of "survival of the fittest." Dawkins admitted that, according to the evolutionary paradigm, genes are "selfish" because they will do whatever it takes to ensure that the individual in which they are stored produces additional copies of the genes. In commenting on the effects of such a concept on society as a whole, Dr. Dawkins lamented: "My own feeling is that a human society based simply on the gene's law of universal ruthlessness would be a very nasty society in which to live" (1989b, p. 3, emp. added).

**Ex. 12**

The eminent humanistic philosopher, Will Durant, went even farther when he admitted: By offering evolution in place of God as a cause of history, Darwin removed the theological basis of the moral code of Christendom. And the moral code that has no fear of God is very shaky. That's the condition we are in.... I don't think man is capable yet of managing social order and individual decency without fear of some supernatural being overlooking him and able to punish him (1980). (*TMFU; Bert, 1999, pp. 14, 15*)

In these examples, like the ones above, the writer engages the contextual elements of REF, REL, INF, and SSK to *challenge* the positions of his opponents and consequently defend his own. For instance, he refers to the opponents as 'renowned atheist and evolutionist of Oxford University' and '[t]he eminent humanistic philosopher'. The relevance of this is made obvious when the writer presents the arguments of these opponents which are antithetical to their position, and reveal the ethical danger inherent in accepting humanism. For instance, the 'renowned atheist and evolutionist of Oxford University' expresses his fears that a society that lives by the dictates of the naturalistic worldview would be a 'nasty' one and the 'eminent humanistic philosopher' similarly reports that the existential ramification of his worldview is an immoral society, and he worries that man is not capable of handling such a state of affair. The pragmatic force is felt when it can be inferred that this antithesis and the ethical danger of this worldview, which inadvertently accentuates the position of the writer, are expressed by eminent adherents of humanism. Thus, the implication of the apologist's strategy can be succinctly captured: what better arguments can you put forth when the eminent men in your camp have clearly presented the ethical questionability of your position. By this the writer *challenges* the opponents and sets up the readers to undermine this worldview.

The stance that the apologist adopts is the voice (VCE). The voice is a contextual element that furnishes us with the goal of the writer, his/her persuasion and position in an argument. **Ex. 13** below illustrates the point. Upon reading the extract, the reader is able to infer that the writer is a Christian apologist, who tries to *defend* the existence of God and does this by arguing that the universe, which may have resulted from the Big Bang singularity, has its cause in God. Thus, if the Big Bang singularity from which the universe emerged must have a cause, the writer's position is that God is that Cause or Creator.

**Ex. 13**

All one needs is a way of distinguishing cause from effect in the specific case. Now in the case of the hypothesis of theological creationism, we have, as I noted, a logically airtight means of distinguishing cause from effect, namely, it is *metaphysically impossible* for God to be caused by the world, since if God exists, His nature is such that He exists necessarily, whereas the world's existence is metaphysically contingent (as is evident from its beginning to exist). That entails that there is *no possible world* in which God is caused by the Big Bang singularity. Hence, it is easy for the theist

to explain in what sense God is causally prior to the universe or the Big Bang: God and the universe are causally related, and if the universe were not to exist, God would nevertheless exist, whereas there is no possible world in which the universe exists without God.

(*ARGCBBC*; Craig, 1994)

Finally, through engaging the various co-textual features and particularly VCE, the pragmatic act of *defending* the existence of God as well as His being the creator of the universe is inferred.

## V. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have examined various pragmatic acts performed in Christian apologetics and argued that these individual practs are concrete realisations of the pragmeme 'defending a thesis'. What this means is that the practs identified *arguing*, *substantiating*, *disclaiming*, *authenticating*, *challenging* and *defending* are the various ways apologists defend the thesis of their argument. These acts are recovered as the utterances are embedded in the context and the cotext such as MPH, SSK, INF, REL, and REF, which enrich the logical forms of the utterances and yield the appropriate practs. The contributions of this paper are theoretical and pedagogical: it furthers the literature on pragmeme and can be of pedagogical help to apologists in particular and practitioners in argumentative discourse in general. Future research can concentrate on a comparison between practs performed in Christian apologetic discourse type and other argumentative discourse types such as academic, legal, parliamentary and political discourses.

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# Language Raising, Empowerment and Development: The Case of Shona Language at Great Zimbabwe University

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**Abstract**—Many academic papers have been written by African scholars calling for the greater use of African languages in all facets of communication in Africa. Politicians in many African countries have called for a greater role for African languages in developmental programmes in Africa. This research attempts to move away from the usual moaning that has characterised many conferences on African linguistics where a lot of time is spent on lambasting the lack of political will in implementing language policies that promote African languages. This study argues that the best way to promote indigenous languages is not to spend too much time “talking about promotion of indigenous languages” but to provide tangible products that enable the speakers of these languages to transmit traditional as well as modern knowledge in these languages. Such products include dictionaries, glossaries, electronic corpora and other reference works. This paper looks at one of these developments that have significantly contributed to the promotion and development of indigenous languages in Zimbabwe. It discusses the efforts by one institution that has played a major role in the promotion of indigenous languages in Zimbabwe, that is, the Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo, Zimbabwe. The main focus is on the challenges faced by this institution and the strategies being employed in the efforts to develop terminologies that equip the indigenous languages with the abstractive powers that are needed for people to be able to teach all Shona courses at tertiary level in the medium of Shona. The article argues that the use of these languages at tertiary level will result in them playing a much bigger role at national level.

**Index Terms**—language raising, language empowerment, language development, translation, common underlying hypothesis, code switching and code-mixing

## I. INTRODUCTION

This article takes a close look at the crucial question of which language(s) to use for teaching and learning at tertiary institutions especially in former colonial countries because it is the key to the access of knowledge. Taking the Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) as a case study, this article highlights some of the problems of language development that linguists face in their bid to empower a language. The article explores some of the strategies the linguists at GZU have adopted in dealing with the critical issue of language prioritization for development within the context of a difficult linguistic background.

What spurred this research is the realization that, “universities in Zimbabwe have not yet reached a consensus as to which medium to use when teaching African languages...” (Chapanga and Makamani, 2006, p.386). It is intriguing that the situation obtaining at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) and Midlands State University (MSU) where lectures continue the use of English as medium of instruction in teaching indigenous languages, while at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) the medium of instruction for similar courses is Shona (Chapanga and Makamani, 2006). The GZU approach, which is now widely known as the Great Zimbabwe University model, is already teaching indigenous languages using the mother tongue as medium of instruction. The present efforts at Great Zimbabwe University to use Shona language as a medium of instruction in all Shona courses is an act of language raising in the way they give the language abstractive powers that it needs to describe itself. This is a way of empowering indigenous languages like Shona which have been downgraded to the informal and unofficial domains in the colonial and post-colonial dispensations.

Language raising refers to the elevation or upgrading of a particular language so that the language can assume several functions previously not assigned to it, for example, that of educational instruction and general government administration. Language raising in this paper is taken to mean, “the upliftment of the status of a ‘low variety’ language by diversifying its functions to cope with development and modernization to the level where it can be used in sectors which were previously the preserve of a ‘higher variety’ language like English, in the case of Zimbabwe...”

(Chimhundu: 2005a, p.1). Anyidoho (1992), Ngugi (1987) and Uju (2008) present similar opinions on language as a liberating force to reckon with in terms of empowering its speakers if it is empowered.

The general understanding that goes with the use of the term, language development, is that, “the communicative function of the developed language is enhanced and its status is raised...” (Chabata, 2008, p.16). It can be noted that the use of Shona as a medium of instruction at GZU plays a very significant role in the process of the development of the Shona language. This research argues that, the project of developing and empowering Shona language to a level where it can be used in modern science and technology is a process which needs a long term strategy. The foundation on which the process has to be constructed should be supported by, terminography, translation, development of study materials and the general expansion of lexical to incorporate ideas borrowed from other languages. The conceptualization of the research comes from the realization that knowledge that has been developed in the many different languages today was initially in a language that was later translated to another language.

## II. BACKGROUND

Great Zimbabwe State University has pioneered the use indigenous languages as media of instruction in indigenous languages courses. The use of indigenous languages as media of instruction is a University policy which is in line with the vision and mission of the university. The vision is to provide a learning environment for the search of new knowledge and experiences through creativity and cultural enrichment as a strategy for solving real life developmental and existential problems. The mission is for the university to be the centre of excellence in creative arts, culture and technology as a basis for reclaiming our heritage and our rightful position in a globalised world (Great Zimbabwe University Information services). The Great Zimbabwe University seeks to play a dominant role, not only in the restoration and preservation of Zimbabwean culture, but also in using culture as a basis upon which to build the future within the context of current global and local imperatives. The university's curriculum reflects those elements that promote our culture, reinforce our dignity and self-confidence and underpin national unity.

Efforts at Great Zimbabwe University to use Shona as a medium of instruction in academic studies are centred on the creation of relevant terminology to use in all the courses on offer in the Shona subject area. Lecturers and students at GZU have to meet the demands of having to read and refer to sources written in English and satisfy the requirements of lecturing, learning, writing assignments and exams in Shona. There is need to strategise to create terms at the moment before a planned process through, borrowing, indigenous systems and linguistic engineering. Although the transition from English to indigenous languages as medium of instruction in education helps to destroy the myth that knowledge of English is necessarily a pre-requisite for transmitting modern knowledge, there are difficulties like the absence of technical terms, textbooks and proficient lecturers.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research is guided by Cummins' Language Transferability theory or Additive Model of Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) in language learning. According to Cummins (1984), effective learning is facilitated when the student's mother tongue is allowed to further develop whilst using a second language to understand certain aspects. Cummins's model is applicable in bilingual contexts like the one at Great Zimbabwe University, where both Shona and English are instrumental in the transmission of knowledge. The Shona language is the primary medium of instruction and English only comes in for judicious purposes to complement the primary language and at the same time using the second language in ways that meet the students' needs. Several studies have shown that overall academic achievement is higher among bilingual students whose mother tongue is more positively incorporated into the educational system (Hamers and Blanc, 1989). As Cummins (2000) states, “conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language comprehensible...” (p.38). Kroll (1990) quotes Cummins claiming that, “there is an “underlying cognitive/academic proficiency” common to languages and this enables transfer of literacy related skills across languages...” (p.95). In this regard, students are not expected to give up their language and identity and replace them with new ones, but they are expected to add a second language to their repertoire which shows the additive nature of this principle. Cummins argues that when concepts are learned in one language, they can later be expressed in another language without having to be relearned. This means if a student understands the concept of ‘Afrocentricity’ in one language, all the student has to do is acquire labels of these terms in another language. A child who has learned the concept of ‘Afrocentricity’ in one language would not need to be relearning the same concept in another language. As a matter of policy, the Shona language should be the primary medium of instruction. However, English continues to be used alongside Shona until such a time when Shona is ready to have independent existence. A more progressive way of looking at the situation is whereby systems should allow and encourage more interdependence between English and Shona language the approach embraced by the Common Underlying Proficiency hypothesis.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

In order to carry out this research, written sources, questionnaires, interviews and observations were used. This method of collecting data in many different ways was chosen because the use of varied instruments enabled the researcher to gather useful information from respondents to validate the findings of the study. The design borrows from

both the scientific and interpretive paradigms and the results are triangulated for validation of results. This is a desirable measure “to cross-check the validity of data and the derived conclusions” (UNESCO, 1999, p.11). It is hoped that this provides a clearer picture of the challenges of the use of Shona as a medium of instruction at university level. The representative data collected through questionnaires, interviews, written sources and observations was helpful in as far as it provided recurrent patterns for conclusions to be drawn and theories or generalizations to be made. The overall aim in using the research methods outlined above is to help substantiate and also analyze the observations that were made during the course of this study.

## V. CHALLENGES

### A. Problem of Failing to Use Shona Exclusively in the Deliverance of Lectures and Strategies Being Taken

Although the elaboration and modernization of African languages would enable them to be used as languages media for the teaching of African languages in their own medium, the necessary terminology to ensure efficiency in this process is lacking. English terms and foreign terms continue to be adapted and adopted where indigenous terms do not exist. This has been highlighted by Ngugi (1994) when he said that, “the language of the African child’s formal education is foreign, the language of the books he reads is foreign and this has left the children without a language in the classroom...” (p.15). **Code switching** is one of the strategies being adopted at Great Zimbabwe University to rectify this problem. Studies of code switching in Kenya (Ogutu, 2006) have shown that learners and instructors may switch to another language during learning when they want to do the following:

- (a) Facilitate student comprehension
- (b) Enhance student interest, response and participation
- (c) Break classroom tension
- (d) Prevent boredom and fearfulness
- (e) Facilitate self expression and communication
- (f) Reprimand or correct faults. (p. 43).

There are situations whereby the concepts being learnt are first introduced to the lecturers and students in English, these concepts are more easily accessible in English than in Shona. All the lecturers in the ChiShona subject area learnt all the concepts they teach in English, and they experience difficulties in articulating them using Shona only. These concepts are new to lecturers and students and do not have translations for them in the indigenous language because the technical vocabulary includes words that are specific to particular disciplines like phonetics, phonology, dialects, lexicography or translation. The lecturers and students have a double task of concept learning and meaning making. This problem is worsened by the fact that, there are no textbooks yet in Shona language for university learning, so lecturers and students research in English texts, but use Shona in lectures. Lecturers and students then resort to code-switching and code-mixing because of lack of ability in using Shona alone.

The majority of interviewees admitted that, although the university policy categorically states the need for the exclusive use of indigenous languages in learning, African languages at Great Zimbabwe University, there is a general tendency to use Shona and English in learning Shona. It is difficult to quantify the extent of lecturer’s switch to English language during their lectures, because the amount of English used tends to vary with the type of course content being taught. To show this variation, the study presents two tables from two different lecture observations. A tape recorder was used to capture the data below during lecture observations;

TABLE 1  
THE EXTENT OF THE USE OF ENGLISH AND SHONA IN A PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY SHONA LECTURE

Number	Type of sentences	Frequency	Percentage
1	All Shona	252	64.95
2	All English	10	2.58
3	Shona mixed with English	126	32.47
4	Total number of sentences	388	100

Table 1 show that the Phonetics and Phonology Shona lecture contains 64.95 % of all Shona sentences and about 2.58 % of all English sentences and about 32.47 % of Shona mixed with English sentences. Four out of six interviewed lecturers and forty out of fifty students who responded to questionnaires see nothing wrong in using English to explain technical terminology but, a few others informed by a ‘purist’ view, are against the mixture of languages in university learning. In all of the lectures on Phonology and Phonetics observed by this researcher, the lecturers alternated Shona and English within the same lectures so often. Following is Table 2 which presents results for the observation for a lecture on literature, ‘uvaranomwe’:

TABLE 2  
THE EXTENT OF THE USE OF ENGLISH AND SHONA IN A LITERATURE SHONA LECTURE

Number	Type of sentence	Frequency	Percentage
1	All Shona	252	86.2
2	All English	18	6.2
3	Shona mixed with English	22	7.6
4	Total number of sentences	292	100

Table 2 above shows that, the literature lecture contains 86.2% all Shona sentences, 6.2% all English sentences and 7.6 % of Shona mixed with English sentences. It can be noted from the two tables that, the extent of the use of English language in Shona lectures vary depending on the nature of the lecture being conducted. A general observation is that, lectures of courses with more technical terms like phonology, phonetics and translation tend to have more frequency of code switching and code-mixing than lectures with fewer technical terms like the literature lectures. The questionnaire results in the table below show how course content determines language of instruction preferences:

**Question: Which language should be used to teach you the following course content in your university studies?**

TABLE 3.  
RESPONSES TO STUDENTS' CHOICE OF LANGUAGE TO BE USED IN TEACHING DIFFERENT COURSES AT GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY

Course content	English	Shona	Both	Total
Uvaranomwe (Literature)	0 (0%)	90 (90%)	10 (10%)	100
Zvidzidzo zvekuturikira (Translation)	20 (20%)	30 (30%)	50 (50%)	100
Kuumbwa kwemutauo (Grammar)	25 (25%)	40 (40%)	35 (35%)	100
Fonoroji nefonetikisi (Phonology and phonetics)	50 (50%)	5 (5%)	45 (45%)	100

Some of the reasons of the above-preferred choices of language of instruction to be used in different courses are shown below:

TABLE 4  
REASONS FOR PREFERRED CHOICES OF LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Language Preferred	Reasons for the choice
Shona	Shona terminology in literature and grammar is now available.
English	English have terminology in translation, phonology and phonetics, which Shona does not have.
Both	English complements Shona on literary terms which Shona does not have.

The above table shows that the major reason for switching to English language during Shona lectures is primarily because of lack of relevant terminology in Shona on technical terms. English language represents the dominantly used language in academic disciplines explaining the reason why technical terms exist only in (H) form. Sometimes it happens that, the idea is not easily expressible in Shona as it is in English. Other instances are on the use of repetition whereby content is repeated by switching to another language with the intention of emphasizing and making an explanatory choice. The lecturers use the indigenous code and then assesses the students' reaction then use the English code and decide which one of the two receives the more favorable response. Generally lecturers choose a language which students comprehend on a particular instance in their learning. The purpose of this is to find out whether the use of both Shona and English in a lecture assists the eradication of alternate conceptions and acquisition of technical knowledge.

Observations made in lecture deliverances illustrate how Shona is interlaced with English. In one of the lectures in translation, the researcher observes instances of code-switching and code-mixing. When the lecturer asks students, '*ndekupi kudyidzana kunofanirwa kuvapo pakati pemutauobviwa nemutauronangwa?*' (What relationship must be there between source language and the target language?) students cannot understand the gist of the question. When the lecturer rephrases it to; '*Ndati, source language netarget language zvinodyidzana sei?*' that is when students started giving positive responses. Code switching is taken as an extra resource by lecturers for lexical items that may not be available in the Shona language such as words like *aspiration*, *vocal tract*, *supraglottal* and several others. New concepts originating in English language are usually better understood by bridging the gap between the source language and the target language. In literature lectures instances of code-mixing are equally prevalent. A lecturer was observed saying; '*p'Bitek anoti, the artist is the ruler, kureva kuti munyori anotarisirwa kupa mutongo akamira pachokwadi.*' (P'Bitek says, the artist is the ruler to mean that the writer is expected to give a judgment based on the truth.) Another lecturer was also observed saying, '*Mungoshi ane defeatist attitude nokuti haapi masolutions kumaproblems anobudiswa nevatambi vake.*' (Mungoshi has a defeatist attitude because he does not give solutions to problems depicted by his characters.) It is clear that; code-switching or code-mixing becomes the lecturers' strategy for coping with content unfamiliar to students. Since students learn better when they understand what the lecturer is saying, code-switching becomes a useful resource to get the subject matter across. In this context, code-switching seems to be

motivated by a need to approach learning from the known to the unknown. Observations from these different lectures show that English and Shona are two complementary languages.

There is an advantage in bilingual contexts of offering students a choice. It is consistent with Cummins' Common Underlying Proficiency Model which offers a refreshing sociolinguistic perspective regarding motivation for the choices speakers make in terms of the back and forth movements across languages within bilingual contexts. Cummins' Language Transferability Theory addresses issues related to topic where deficiencies noticeable in a particular language are covered for by the other language thus highlighting the interdependent relationship between languages. Code switching and code mixing mostly occur where the syntaxes of the languages align in a sentence, since even unrelated languages often align syntactically. This confirms Cummins's argument that, there is an "underlying cognitive/academic proficiency" common to languages and this enables transfers of literacy related skills across languages. If native speakers feel a foreign word is an appropriate designation, they may accept it even if they do not know its etymological origins.

#### *B. Challenges in the Creation of Lexicon to Teach Chishona in Shona at University Level and the Strategies Being Taken*

At present, there is no adequate vocabulary in Shona language of concepts being studied at university level. According to Hadebe (2006), "one of the problems that deny indigenous languages their rightful function among its people is the politics of terminology or lack of it which is used as a pretext to keep indigenous languages out of the domain of modern technology confining them to informal roles in society..." (p.225). Term-creation efforts at GZU involve a number of ways of developing terms to be used in Shona lectures. That means creating lexicon to teach Shona in Shona at university level is indeed a necessary prerequisite for the successful use of Shona as media of instruction. Vocabulary acquisition is important in all language teaching and language enhancement activities and even more important in the use of these languages as media of instruction in education.

Once vocabulary growth in the use of Shona has been increased through term-creation, then, the ability of using the language confidently and understanding certain concepts is easy. But, there are certain dangers when terminographers work in isolation or employ new coinages unofficially because it results in lack of uniformity and consistency with regard to the new terms and their application. This causes confusion, so independent and individualistic term creation should be followed by standardization. It is possible that localized term creation efforts may be too artificial and end up imposing new terms on speakers resulting in an exclusive short-lived lexicon which may not be acceptable. The legitimacy of the developed terminology may be questioned since most of the terms are not published, so their use remains confined to the particular institution without any official recognition. This is quite a challenge to lecturers, since term creation is the responsibility of trained terminologists.

Although various ways can be implemented, all should have the ultimate goal of creating terms that are clear, understandable, apt and accepted. Sager (1990) points out that terms which scientific or technical concepts, must fulfill certain conditions or specific international guidelines formulated by ISO (The International Standards Organization). Some of the guidelines are;

- There should be a one- to- one relation between any given term and the concept it represents i.e. any term should ideally refer to one concept and one concept only. This implies that there should be no synonyms and morphological or spelling variants for any specific term.
- A term should conform to the morphology, spelling and pronunciation conventions of the language for which it is intended.
- Without sacrificing precision, terms should be concise and not contain unnecessary information.
- The meaning of the term should be independent of context... (p. 89).

Although Sager (1990) regards the above guidelines as highly idealized and can only be realized in a highly controlled environment, their application to term-creation activities at Great Zimbabwe University helps in assessing the credibility of the efforts from a general perspective. Most term creation strategies at Great Zimbabwe University align towards paraphrasing and borrowing which are 'problematic' ways in as far as the accepted term creation methods are concerned. The Great Zimbabwe University linguists decided to use an additive or incremental approach whereby in the case of limited, terms they borrow or engineer them. It would be more economic, practical and reasonable to build on the resources that already exist. Such an arrangement would broaden and expand the functions of African languages. The efforts by Great Zimbabwe University of language raising face difficulties of lacking standardized terminology which force the lecturers to create their own terminology that is not approved by any central authority. However, it should be noted that, in most cases, if lecturers come across terms that do not have an equivalent in the available dictionary and terminology list they do not have any option but must create new words on the spot.

While the general policy of the ChiShona department is to promote the use of indigenous words over adoptives as much as possible, it's not practical or realistic to prohibit the use of loan words from other languages. **Borrowing** is one of the methods used at GZU in creating terms to be used in teaching students at university level. Chimhundu (2002) has identified borrowing and compounding as adoption and adaptation. Loan words are accommodated and expressed in the local language structure, in the phonology of the beneficiary. This has to be done in a manner where the created term would relate directly to the concept being referred to and express it clearly. In borrowing both sound and meaning of the adopted English language are accepted although with changes that should follow the Shona orthographic rules so as to



avoid violating the natural word formation techniques of the Shona linguistic community. Great Zimbabwe University provides a diglossic socio-linguistic situation which may have resulted in borrowing from a language of influence like English. But, observations made show that, the borrowing at Great Zimbabwe University has been necessitated by both the absence of relevant terminology and prestige. Instances of borrowing are resorted to in cases where the linguists come across a concept or object which they have no equivalent word in Shona language. For example, the following words show borrowing:

TABLE 5  
BORROWING AS A RESULT OF NEED

Chishona	English
Ogani	Organ
Fokasi	Focus
Chikoro	School
Fonoroji	Phonology
Fonetikisi	Phonetics
Semandiki firidhi	Semantic field

The above table shows that the process of borrowing takes place in bilingual contexts in situations where there is need to convey new concepts introduced through the medium of English. Chimhundu (1983) says, “While Shona is undoubtedly a very rich language in other areas, it has had to borrow a lot on matters that relate to material culture and technology.”(p.34). University lecturers at GZU come across several English technical terms they need to convey to their students in their Shona equivalents but they fail to find relevant equivalents so they resort to borrowing. If borrowing involves semantic, morphological and phonological categories, then it is additive rather than subtractive to the learners. In adopting the English terms, Cummins’ Transferability Theory of Common Underlying Proficiency between two languages in bilingual contexts can be applied here. Shona and English have different phoneme inventories and syllable structure hence the need to rephonologise English terms to make them fit into the phonological structure of Shona. The words denoted by the English terms are transferred to the Shona forms. English words, which are borrowed, are adapted to the Shona language in a way that makes them appear to be original Shona words. For example, the English word ‘school’ has been adapted to Shona and is now realized ‘chikoro’, also ‘policeman’ has been adapted to Shona and is now realized as ‘mupurisa’. It is noticeable that the adopted English words undergo structural changes and now have a Shona CVCV structure. This demonstrates that, “borrowing is not a random or unsystematic linguistic practice, but a systematic process that operates within the rules that govern the Shona language...” (Mheta, 2007, p.142). This also shows that Shona language modernizes most loan words so that morphophonologically they behave like the native Shona language. Prah, (2002) uses King’ei who contends that, “borrowing between languages is a scientific and cultural phenomenon and is therefore not an indication of deficiency in a language at all.”(p.115). But, in other cases some English words have not undergone any structural changes on being adopted into Shona. This is direct adoption with slight phonetical changes of foreign loans

Suffice to say that most general languages do borrow, but borrowing becomes a challenge when terms from the source language fail to undergo metamorphosis which makes them distinguishable from it. The resultant words created through borrowing in the target language are nearer, shorter but meaningless. “A mere adoption of the words phonetics and phonology would produce ‘fonetikisi’ and ‘fonoroji’ which are pronounceable in ChiShona, concise and precise but they are meaningless...” (Makaudze, 2005, p.6). The ‘Shonalised’ terms are accepted because they are nearer to English, shorter but meaningless. Borrowing should be done with caution if apt terms have to be created in various areas of the subject. The creation should limit cases of subordination of ChiShona conceptual formulations to those of the language where they come from. According to Makaudze, (2005), “care must be taken to ensure that the practice does not degenerate into ‘head-calling’, that is, mere creation of terms that are meaningless in ChiShona by merely ‘Shonalising’ English into...” (p.6). Every proposed term must be carefully related to the entire matrix or other terms and the Shona people cultural background so that they are intelligible to the speakers of the language. In other words, direct borrowing from European or other languages should be done with caution since such borrowed words do not convey the any meaning initially and such a method produces clumsy sounding words.

Even in cases where ChiShona has its own terms, GZU ChiShona subject area accepts the borrowed counter-parts as in the cases below:

TABLE 6  
BORROWING AS A RESULT OF PRESTIGE

Chishona	English
Purofesa/muzvinafundo	Professor
Motokari/hambautare	Motor car
Chipunu/Chihwepura	Spoon
Zvidzidzwa zvekuumbwa kwemaduramazwi/Rekisikirogirafi	Lexicography
Kuturikira/Tiranzireshehi	Translation
Nzvimbotaurwa/Puresi ofu atikuresheni	Place of articulation
Mutinihiro wemumhuno/nazari	Nasal

The above table shows that, “the co-existence of English language as a prestigious medium of communication with Shona language has had some effects on the borrowing of technical terms...” (Mheta, 2007, p.111). The above cases show borrowing motivated by the diglossic notion of prestigious preference of English than Shona because it has more influence than the indigenous language. Mheta (2007) contends that; “Words are usually borrowed from the prestigious language, not because equivalents do not exist in the borrowing language, but because they are considered to be more prestigious than the existing indigenous words.”(p.111). It is also observed that the borrowed terms are more popular than the indigenous coinages because they are more precise and more specific in reference (Mheta, 2007). The English items are consistently rated as less difficult and more familiar than the Shona items because English has been the language frequently used in academic and vocabulary tasks all along than Shona language. Most words would enter Shona language as foreign, but with time they may settle by changing their linguistic characteristics in order to fit into the new linguistic environment. Once words stabilize, they are conventionalized and become part and parcel of the Shona language and might not be perceived as foreign.

In most cases, coining one word to cater for a concept or word from another language fails to capture the whole sense leading to the method of paraphrasing or compounding. **Compounding** is combining two or more words to form one word which is a compound or a complex nominal construction. Examples of paraphrased and compound words created at GZU are in table 7 below;

TABLE 7  
COMPOUND WORDS

Chishona	English
Zvidzidzo zvebhiiitaurwa	Study of speech sounds(Phonetics)
Zvidzidzo zveurongwa hwemutinhiri yemabhii	Phonology
Mapazi anoumba mitauro	Dialects
Nzvimbo inodudzwa bhiiitaurwa	Place of articulation
Kugadzira maduramazwi	Lexicography
Madudzirirwo ebhiiitaurwa	Manner of articulation

The above combinations show that it is important to create words that are combinations of what is found in the existing vocabulary so as to enhance understanding. The terms above have been created by using words that are already existing in the language as well as a few that have been coined but are apt descriptions of what they convey. For example, the term, *bhiiitaurwa* is a new term coined from the words *bhii* which literally means sound/letter and *taurwa* which literally means spoken. If the two are brought together, they produce spoken sound/letter, something close to the phonetic word ‘speech sound’. As can be seen by the above illustrations, compounding is a productive way of creating terms because it effectively conveys the source language concepts.

These terms are too long and clumsy; although the meaning of the original term is not lost. The length of the multi-lexical items pose a problem when one wants to make constant use of it in writing. Chiwome, (1992) in his discussion on term creation in Shona notes that, “heavy lexical loading, a result of paraphrasing and compounding, leads to undesirably long terms which are user-unfriendly”. (p.68). Chimhundu (2002) also notes that, “compounds are arrived at by indirect means hence they are less specific than labels given to new things to the language of the inventors.” (p.78). Multi-lexical items are also difficult when it comes to entering in general dictionaries, thereby posing a problem for terminology development. This may explain why Shona speakers prefer borrowed terms, which are equivalent to compounds because they are shorter and easier to use.

**Translation** has also been a common way of rendering words and concepts in one language into another used at GZU (Makaudze, 2005). Translation is a process of transferring meaning from the source language to the target language by maintaining balance of meaning in the two languages. The common way has been to find word and conceptual equivalents in the target language. The question is whether the technical vocabulary can well be represented in the mother tongue without necessarily compromising the learning of basic concepts and facts. The practical reality in this case study appears to be that, transfer is not occurring easily and readily because of unfamiliar content. It is difficult to have 100% accuracy in translating an English text to Shona form. Translation equivalence is not wholly achievable owing to the absence of cultural relevance of some Shona and western terms in the Shona terms. Take *donzo* for instance, it glosses as main aim, but in Shona grammar it is used to denote mood. No stretch of imagination can show compatibility between these two concepts. One needs to know the significance of mood in English first before one could accept *donzo* as its Shona equivalent. Adopted words could prove to be difficult in the way they lead to ambiguity. The difficulty in achieving translation equivalence in Shona is due to the fact that the translated Shona items are drawn from the unfamiliar content of English items. The Shona word ‘gadza’ is to make someone sit or put something on fire or put someone in a position of responsibility. It is derived from /-gar- (sit), but it has acquired new meanings which are not easily traceable to ‘gara’ since besides sitting, the word has acquired more senses that have nothing to do with sitting as it is expressed in ‘gara’. This observation is consistent with the idea that, transfer of language skills is facilitated by familiar content.

Since English has been the first language in which most of the ChiShona concepts have been taught, ChiShona can create its own terms by finding out the necessary equivalents in her own language. According to King’ei in Prah (2002), “translation is a very crucial tool for not only enriching the lexicon of the receptor language, but also adding to its body

of literature, accommodating specialized forms of learning.” (p.110). There is linguistic or word for word equivalence sometimes called literal or structural translation. Examples of translation are in table 8 below:

TABLE 8  
STRUCTURAL TRANSLATION

Chishona	English
Nzvovera	Vowel
Nzvanyira	Consonant
Bhasera	By sale

The above illustrations entail looking for substitutes in the ChiShona language of terms used when instruction is done in English. The other strategy is textual/syntagmatic equivalence where everything is sacrificed in order to achieve message accuracy. This is illustrated in table 9 below:

TABLE 9  
SYNTAGMATIC TRANSLATION

Chishona	English
Rushizhiro	Glottis
Nharembosha	Cellphone
Chitokoroshi	Memory stick
Kunanzva maoko	Asking for a wife

The above illustrations show that language can be made simpler and accessible to all learners in their own mother tongue for effective teaching and learning through unpacking technical language and content for pedagogical purposes.

In translation, English technical terms are transferred to the familiar content of Shona traditional culture and settings. The intention is to find out if concepts encountered and learned in English could be used in academic tasks in Shona language. The familiar indigenous knowledge domains given to the Shona terms facilitate the transfer of English concepts. However, it is important to come up with equivalent terms, which do not lose their original English meaning. Translation is consistent with Cummins' Common Underlying Proficiency theory because the process involves the movement of the translator in and out of English and Shona language to find the equivalent terms. This means that, the process of translation requires the understanding of both English and Shona languages and also their cultures. Observations at Great Zimbabwe University ChiShona department show that it can be done as long as the vocabulary is accepted by all and captures the course's essentials.

Despite the above challenges of term creation, GZU ChiShona subject area has been very innovative in expansion of Shona language vocabulary by adding new words to cater for new concepts and new forms of discourse through **composition and semantic extension**. According to Makaudze, (2005) “composition means the conversion of root morphemes into names of concepts. In this case, known morphemes are converted into significant terms for use.” (p.2) The root morphemes that exist in ChiShona include among others, verb roots, where examples are *-sek-*, *-chem-*, *-taur-*, *-nong-*, etc. A course like Phonetics and Phonology can have terms created using composition. Root morphemes like; *-zevezer-* (whisper), *-tamb-*, (dance), *-sund-* (push), *-honyer-* (murmur/buzz) can be used to create terms for use in phonetics.

TABLE 10  
COMPOSITION OF TERMS

Root morpheme	Created Term	English Term	Examples
-zevezer-	(nzvanyira) zevezerwa (whispered consonant)	Voiceless consonant	t, -tamba p, -pora
-tamb-	(nzvanyira) nhamba (dancing consonant)	Trill	R, -ronga r, -rakaraka
-sund-	(nzvanyira) sundwa (pushed consonant)	Flap	v, -kovo-o
-honyer-	(nzvanyira) honyerwa (murmured consonant)	Breathy-voiced consonant	m, -mhara n, -nhaka

Adapted from Makaudze, G. (2005, p.2)

It should be noted that the composition above seems to make more sense when the created term is preceded by the word 'nzvanyira' (consonant). “It is hoped that, with the consonant use, the terms *zevezerwa*, *nhamba*, *sundwa*, *honyerwa* and others of a similar creation can be understood as referring to the given consonants with the juxtaposed use of the term *nzvanyira*” (Makaudze, 2005, p. 2).

**Semantic extension** is one other useful method of term creation being employed at Great Zimbabwe University. This is the extension of existing terms to designate new concepts whereby terms that already exist in a language and are used to refer to certain aspects and concepts can have their meanings widened to include the new concepts that are coming into the language. For example, most of the terms used for the organs of speech in English can have equivalent names extended in Shona, though the terms are not phonetic. These 'natural' terms can have their meanings extended to include even the phonetic references. In English lips are phonetically known as labials or bilabial, the teeth as dentals

(Makaudze, 2005). For Shona, the common terms' meanings can then be used to mean the concept as given in table 11 below:

TABLE 11  
SEMANTIC EXTENSION

Chishona	English
miromo(miviri)	labials/bilabials/lips
Mazino	dentals/teeth
Chidikwadikwa	Velum
Rushizhiro	Glottis
Mukanwa	oral cavity

The terms created are derived from the function of the signified concepts. There are advantages realized in extending the use of common words to include phonetic concepts. Since the words are already in use in the indigenous language, they are common and accessible to most of the Shona speakers. Their use in phonetics will therefore, spark little if any controversy. Again, the existing literature already carries some, if not all of these terms such that, "to opt for totally new and different terms just for want of something 'phonetic' would not just warrant speakers' outcry, but would also be counter-productive..." (Makaudze, 2005, p.3). The use of semantic extension to create terms for various concepts also seems easy and is being helpful in the various Shona courses at GZU.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS OF GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY' EFFORTS

It is being recognized that, the Shona language, as a result of language raising efforts, is being used more in business, central and local government, commerce, industry, mining, agriculture, education, advertisements, broadcasting and television. Several socio-cultural, economic and political factors have resulted in the use of Shona, once a low variety in a diglossic relationship with English in Zimbabwe. The factors include Black empowerment/indigenization, the local content policy in broadcasting and the Education Act.

In education, the teaching of Shona in high schools and some tertiary institutions is now in the medium of Shona. Public examinations for Shona in high schools are now being set and written in Shona. All instructions for these examinations are in the same language. There is Shona for Beginners, Intermediate Shona and Advanced Shona being offered at Harare Polytechnic and Specis College. According to Mapara and Nyota, (2007) "these developments point towards the growth and expansion of Shona. This is diglossia leakage because Shona is now used in some formal sectors which previously were the preserve of English in Zimbabwe..." (p.385).

In the advertising industry Shona has encroached into an area where English has traditionally been dominating. The impact of language raising efforts is seen in Shona advertisements as can be seen in electronic and print media or even billboards. Mapara and Nyota (2007)'s research in advertisements has discovered that, "both multinational corporates and indigenous ones show an increased interest in Shona advertisements helping them to reach out to the bulk of the Shona population. The success of diglossia leakage in advertising points out to the possible use of Shona in other areas besides education and local government that were also once dominated by English..."(p.394). The National Cultural Policy of 1996 notes that Zimbabwe's indigenous languages constitute a rich linguistic and literary heritage for all people and should provide fertile ground to prove that any language is capable of rising to a dominant position. There are now numerous advertisements in Shona and Ndebele languages which is an area that focus must be put as this tends to show how the country's economy operates.

Mapara and Nyota(2007) argue that, radio and television broadcasts now have 75% local content, but in the majority of cases it is only music that dominates the indigenous language sphere since there are few indigenous programmes in drama, soap and films. Zimbabwe's Radios 2 and 4 have Shona and Ndebele dominating while Radio 4 also broadcasts Chewa, Kalanga, Shangani, Tonga and Venda (2 hours 15minutes) per week. The language composition in the print media has since changed greatly with the local languages being given much space. The newspaper *Kwayedza/Umthunywa* has since been separated into two newspapers, namely *Kwayedza* (for Shona) and *Umthunywa* (for Ndebele.)

## VII. CONCLUSION

This paper sets out to explore possibilities of using Shona language as a medium of instruction at university level as a way of considering empowerment through language. Findings in this research show that, lack of relevant terminology was identified as the major challenge in the use of Shona as a medium of instruction at university level. This research has confirmed that, the use of mother tongue at university level may lead to its use in the public domains empowering indigenous speakers to participate in the activities of their nation. The use of indigenous languages in wider domains elaborates the languages bringing in new technical terms.

A multilingual approach whereby indigenous languages are recognized and enhanced without downgrading ex-colonial languages is proposed because it upholds the principle of unity in diversity. It is the recommendation of this research that empowerment of the indigenous languages should not translate into exclusion of English. Such a scenario would bring about reverse discrimination, which is a bad practice. Empowerment through language should simply

translate into taking advantage or capitalizing on all the languages a nation possesses. In a developing country like Zimbabwe, English and local languages complement each other (Ngara, 1982).

This research has been helpful in shading light to the pitfalls in the use of the mother tongue in learning at university level. It has shown that given resources, time and will, Shona can be used successfully as a medium of instruction at university level. The issue of change in the medium of instruction needs a gradual approach rather than a radical one. It is therefore encouraged that further investigations be carried out to build on evidence already gathered which could be used to influence the policy makers. Although lecturers and students have some problems in implementing the coined and borrowed terms, it is evident that given time, this problem becomes insignificant. The findings from this study confirm that despite these problems, given time and adequate resources, mother tongue instruction can be used at university level in learning Shona. The success of Somali language in Somalia, Creole in Seychelles (Brock-Urtne, 1993), successful experimentation of Yoruba in teaching Biology, Mathematics and History in Nigeria (Bamgbose, 1991) are all evident to the possibility of using mother tongues in education and even across the curriculum.

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# Recent Development of Wiki Applications in Collaborative Writing

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**Abstract**—Wiki is increasingly gaining popularity in language learning. Some researchers suggest that wiki is a useful tool that enhances collaboration among students. Moreover, collaborative writing through wiki is an effective strategy for improving students' writing skills. This review summarizes findings of empirical research studies on the application of wiki in collaborative writing from 2005 till 2011. Some directions for future research related to the use of wiki for collaborative writing are also suggested.

**Index Terms**—wiki, collaboration, collaborative writing, empirical studies, ESL/EFL

## I. INTRODUCTION

Among the four language skills, writing is the most important. It is believed that writing is a means for communicating, organizing, and developing of ideas (Alagoa & Roberts, 2006) and is a major cognitive challenge (Kellogg, 2001). Moreover, it forces a powerful type of learning to take place (Ratcliffe, 2007). Although the importance of writing has been acknowledged, many EFL and ESL students are not competent in their writing skills and this has impacted on their academic progress. In order to improve students' writing skills, other strategies, besides having a competent writing teacher, should be considered, and using wiki for collaborative writing may be an effective one (Lin, 2005).

Collaborative writing involves more than one author to produce a written text. These authors can collaborate on all aspects of writing: content, structure, and language (Storch, 2005). Different research studies on L1 and L2 writing have demonstrated the usefulness of collaboration in promoting writing skills. Research conducted in L1 settings (e.g., Higgins, Flower & Petraglia, 1992) has shown that collaborative writing is a good way to encourage reflective thinking, particularly when the learners need to explain and defend their ideas to their peers. Research on L2 writing also has demonstrated that the process of peer response or peer review helps language improvement at both micro and macro levels (e.g., Hu, 2005). Moreover, it is believed that collaborative writing promotes interaction and mutual support among co-workers (Chao & Lo, 2009).

With technology advancement, computer-mediated communication (CMC) increases the chance of writing for students to communicate after class without time or location constraint. Online learning can be achieved through CMC open resources and tools so that learning is not confined to within an institution. To select a suitable CMC tool, the ease of using the tool is considered a critical criterion (Chao & Lo, 2009). One easy to use CMC tool is wiki, designed and promoted by Cunningham in 1995. He offers a web space for using wiki in social interaction and collaboration (Godwin-Jones, 2005). Moreover, the application of wiki to support writing instruction is possibly the most general use of wiki (Lamb, 2004).

In view of the perceived significance of wiki in recent studies, this paper reviews the empirical studies on wiki use in collaborative writing, and the objective of the paper is to address the question: What do empirical research studies conducted from 2005 to 2011 reveal about the extent of usefulness of wiki in collaborative writing?

The following sections present a brief discussion of wiki and its functions followed by the methodology, findings, and suggestions for future research.

## II. DEFINING WIKI

The first wiki, with the name WikiWikiWeb, was developed in 1995 by Ward Cunningham. The software developer was from Portland, Oregon. Because Cunningham was dissatisfied with conventional word processing programs, he searched for a new documentation system that would better suit the needs of programmers. His goal was to create a relatively simple software that would enable collective work on software codes that could be published immediately (Ebersbach et al., 2008).

Today, wiki means a piece of software that permits users to freely create and edit the content of Web pages (Mak & Coniam, 2008). “Wikiwiki” is a Hawaiian word that means “quick” or “hurry”. The name shows the quick programming features of wiki. Content in wiki can be made available in a quick and uncomplicated manner. There are further developments of the first Wiki, such as MediaWiki, TWiki, Bitweaver, and ProWiki (Ebersbach et al., 2008).

Wiki can be used to collaboratively produce web pages that can be written and re-written multiple times by anyone, anytime, and anywhere with a computer connected to the Internet. All wikis also offer some technical core functions such as editing, links, history, recent changes, sandbox, and search functions. Employing wiki requires each paper linking to other papers, which can shape a new network structure and all previous versions or adjustments of any single page can be saved. Wiki offers instructions and introductions on its homepage to facilitate working with the system. Most wikis also offer a classic full-text or title search for wiki pages (Ebersbach et al., 2008).

## III. METHODOLOGY OF REVIEW

The data for this review paper were collected through online searches in reputable electronic databases. Since wiki is a quite a new technology, empirical research studies done on wiki applications in collaborative writing may have been initiated from 2005. Therefore, the searches were conducted to cover empirical studies published from 2005 to 2011. The journal e-databases consulted were the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Scopus, Science Direct, Springer Link, and Sage. The key words used for the searches were: wiki, collaboration, collaborative writing, application, ESL, EFL, and empirical study. The searches yielded a total of 686 articles. The abstracts of these articles were then examined to retain only studies that researched into both collaborative writing and wiki. Only 21 articles were found to be relevant and selected for the meta-analysis (see Appendix A). These papers were then read carefully to identify common themes. Two broad themes then emerged. The first was about wiki applications for collaborative writing, and the second was about the effects of collaborative writing on wiki.

## IV. FINDINGS

Previous researchers have investigated the use of wiki technology for different purposes. This review paper focuses on the different uses of wiki in collaborative writing. Findings from related studies are organized in two categories: (i) applications of wiki for collaborative writing, and (ii) effects of wiki for collaborative writing in English as first or second language contexts.

### A. Applications of Wiki in Collaborative Writing

In reviewing the empirical research studies on wiki and collaborative writing, the following studies were identified and chosen that show various wiki applications for collaborative writing.

#### 1. Wiki for English for Specific Purposes

A research study reports on how a wiki is applied in two tertiary-level ESP courses (Kovacac et al., 2007). The subjects were undergraduates at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. To conduct the study, two groups of student were chosen. One of the groups was 85 first-year students who attended an English Language course and another group was 28 second-year students who attended a Business English course. In the study various web-oriented learning activities (e-tivities) were used: Hotlist, Zip/unzip files, Brain Writing, Chain Letter, The Debate, and Storyboard. The results of the evaluation show a positive outcome of the wiki application and the helpfulness of most of the e-tivities studied.

#### 2. Wiki for Report Writing

An empirical study was carried out to measure the knowledge of report writing by two groups of student in the first year Griffith University statistics class (Neumann & Hood, 2009). The same data set from both groups was analyzed, but one group submitted the results by jointly writing a practice report with wiki and another group submitted the results in a practice report they wrote individually. The study found that both approaches enhanced report writing knowledge and did not vary much in the marks achieved when written reports were submitted for assessment later. There was no confirmation that the wiki used enhanced learning outcomes over and above related work conducted on an individual basis. The outcomes of the Neumann and Hood’s (2009) study fall in between former reports of wholehearted success



(e.g., Guzdial et al., 2001) and disappointing failure (Ebner et al., 2008) when wiki was applied to support students learning. Future research studies are required to show how individual preferences and the teaching context influence the effectiveness of wiki in educational applications.

Another study is a multi-literacy project that includes students collaboratively creating a multimodal information report applying the affordances of a wiki (Zammit, 2010). The study employed multiple cases using qualitative research techniques. Two primary classes, Years 5 and 4 (10 and 11 years old), were chosen as subjects in the study. The findings show that the students' experience is very satisfying. The content, process of learning, and the application of technology were mentioned as the best aspects of the project.

The next related research is a case study done in a Hong Kong postsecondary institute (Coniam & Kit, 2008). The study describes groups of learner who produced a report based on survey data they had gathered. In general, the project was successful in a way that groups produced better documents from groups who had worked with pen-and-paper. However, from this project some issues arose that need to be addressed for collaborative writing through wikis. The authors of the paper have mentioned two interesting points regarding using wikis: computer expertise and ability in English. Wiki is a user-friendly tool which requires slightly more expertise than using a word processor and an Internet browser. Moreover, in the study students' English language level was around IELTS level 4. This shows that the level of language proficiency cannot be an obstacle for using wiki. Wiki users should know that in order to use wiki appropriately, suitable tasks should be chosen to fit students' interests and language level.

### **3. Wiki for Authentic Writing**

In a study on authentic writing through using wiki with Year 7 ESL learners in a secondary school in Hong Kong over a period of two months, students provided a description of their secondary school (Mak & Coniam, 2008). The project is related to task-based approach to English language learning (Ellis, 1997) through a writing process. The writing in the study is considered authentic writing because the students' final drafts developed into a printed brochure of their 'new' school to be given to their parents. However, the data size was not sufficient to validate a higher generalizability of the research.

### **4. Wiki for Collaborative Storytelling**

In a case study, wiki was used for storytelling by primary level students (D'Ésilets & Paquet, 2005). The researchers of the study aimed to investigate if and how young children could employ the wiki tool collaboratively to identify probable usability problems with the tool and to examine whether this sort of activity was interesting or not for girls as well as boys. Moreover, D'Ésilets and Paquet wanted to see if non-linear narratives were simple to grasp by children at that age. The three collaboration modes employed in the study were co-located synchronous, co-located semi-synchronous, and pair-editing. Three strategies for the division of labor were used in the research: random walk, page-based and role-based. The results show that the teams of 2 to 5 students at the primary level can use wiki for collaborative web-based storytelling. The study provides insights into the collaborative process that children experience when using wiki for collaborative storytelling. It also reveals that both genders perform quite similarly in web-based storytelling. Future research studies can be conducted to reveal the complexity level of stories produced by wiki users. In addition, future research can investigate how existing activities can be modified in order to generate more engagement for wiki users.

Another study was conducted to propose a hypermedia approach to allow students to incorporate the episodes written by others to develop various branches of stories (Liu et al., 2011). The study examined how hypermedia and linear approaches influence the collaborative learning experience of 57 third graders with a mean age of 10 years at a suburban elementary school in Taipei. Linear and nonlinear approaches make developing stories easy in a completely different manner. Therefore, students' perceptions of hypermedia and linear approaches are different in their collaboration mechanisms. The findings show the superiority of the students' performance in the hypermedia group compared to the members in the linear group. The study reveals that a hypermedia approach can improve collaborative storytelling in social media and the improvement can be obtained by facilitating the collaborative process, ensuring a sense of authorship, and enhancing peer support of the stories. Remix and derivation are two strategies to support the creativity of work (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008). One of the positive results of the study is that the design of social media can influence a child's tendency to use such strategies in collaborative storytelling. Future studies can be conducted to investigate how students at different ages and levels of study apply these two approaches in their collaborative storytelling experience.

### **5. Wiki for Creating Electronic Books for Children**

In investigating advantages and limitations of using wiki in a foreign language course and to investigate participants' perceptions on the quality and quantity of collaboration with wiki, a study was conducted with 17 university learners of intermediate Spanish (Moreno, 2009). The participants formed groups of 4-5 members. They were instructed to produce an electronic children's book in which the readers actively participated in the story plotline. In general terms, the wiki, in the form of a branching story, was proven to be a positive experience. As far as social and collaborative aspects of the project are concerned, it is found that although the majority of participants commented that they had worked well together in groups, many of them asserted a strong dislike for group work. The discomfort with working collaboratively in the project might be caused by the teacher who evaluated the participants' final product with only one grade for the

group. Those participants who were more active in the project might have felt that the scoring system was not fair enough in evaluating each participant's contribution.

#### **6. Wiki for News Writing**

In a case study, a group of 23 undergraduate journalism students used wiki to write news reports together (Ma & Yuen, 2008). The analysis of the student journalists' replies to the open-ended questions shows that revision is the central processing capability of wiki. The motivational factors to the revision through wiki include: accuracy, personal interest to the news topic, and story enrichment. The study shows that wiki is a unique learning environment that makes writing easy and it increases learning during the writing process. Wiki also provides a platform for individual learners to work alone and community members to interact with each other. When community members interact, they can learn much through revising each other's written work. The qualitative data shows that the learners valued the process and they had tried well to manage the complexity of shared editing.

#### **7. Wiki for Knowledge Sharing**

The ways an authentic learning community is made through wiki for advanced group collaboration and knowledge sharing were discussed in a research study conducted by Lin et al. in 2007. The participants were 51 freshmen from very diverse backgrounds. The participants had various roles in the experiment. They were required to submit their homework twice, before the midterm and after the midterm. Before the midterm, students submitted their individual work once every two weeks from September 2005 to January 2006. Then, they were divided into 10 groups based on their test scores. After the midterm, each group had to complete a game project. The results show that the method used in the study increased the participants' academic knowledge and peer support through using wiki.

#### **8. Wiki for Language Learning**

A ready-to-use wiki server, Sushiwiki, was used in a study that involved 43 college students in Taipei (Wang et al., 2005). The study aimed to investigate the wiki tool used in an English as a Second Language (ESL) course in Taiwan. Data on the students' usage and learning achievement was gathered and analyzed. The findings show that the wiki technology is naturally beneficial to learning. However, many factors were also present related to the use of wiki that inevitably remained uninvestigated. Therefore, more study is needed to explain new ways and approaches of using wiki.

#### **9. Wiki for Scaffolding Collaborative Writing among Students**

In a case study design, quantitative and qualitative data were used to investigate how wiki helped to scaffold L2 writers (Woo et al., 2011). The researchers of the study investigated the wiki's affordances in order to find out how they might assist in scaffolding students throughout their collaborative writing project. Results show that the application of wiki was perceived positively and in general, it was believed that wiki promoted teamwork and improved writing. The findings also show that wiki's key affordances facilitate students' collaborative engagement in creative problem solving and peer critiquing. This may have helped to scaffold students in using their critical thinking and creative reasoning skills during the analysis and evaluation of their writing to construct comments and revise based on their peers' comments. As a result, wiki may have helped to generate more creative content in the students' writing.

#### **10. Wiki for Effective Communication**

A study that was conducted with 14 students at Stockholm University focused on the application of wiki in the course on Effective Communication in English. In this course, wiki is employed to teach writing for academic and professional purposes (Kuteeva, 2011). The study aimed to analyze the impact of applying wiki on the writer-reader relationship, and the research techniques used are self-reporting questionnaire, participant observation, and text analysis. The results show that writing on the wiki can help to enhance students' awareness of audience which will result in more reader-oriented texts. By using the wiki for writing activities, students seem to pay more attention to grammatical correctness and structural coherence. High uses of engagement markers (questions and commands, personal pronouns) by the students in their writing further confirm the extent of the writer-reader interaction. The paper also describes the way wiki can be applied in the teaching of traditional academic writing skills such as paragraph structure and text organization in a collaborative environment of learners.

#### **11. Wiki for Topical Writing**

Mediawiki was used in a study that involved 31 students in a high school in Norway (Lund, 2008). The researcher of the study investigated the kinds of interdependent activities that learners engaged in. Besides, the effect of wiki on collaborative work in a foreign language learning classroom was also investigated. The study shows a change in the students' viewpoints about learning processes from individualism to collective production. Moreover, the results show that wiki can be a practical instrument for supporting collective language skills.

#### **12. Wiki for Assessment**

In a research study comparing the effects of two peer assessment methods, 232 undergraduates were chosen through convenience sampling (Xiao & Lucking, 2008). The research also investigated student satisfaction with peer assessment within a wiki environment. Validity and reliability of assessment scores were examined as well. The findings show that students in the experimental group had greater improvement in their writing than those in the comparison group, and students in the experimental group were more satisfied with the peer assessment method both in peer assessment structure and peer feedback. Furthermore, the findings show that the validity and reliability of student assessment scores were high. Providing an online collaborative learning environment and using wiki interactive software to facilitate peer

assessment can enhance the value of peer assessment. The research provides rich implications for readers in relation to peer assessment method.

Another study examines the potential of applying wiki to increase teacher capabilities in teacher-education programs. The study was initiated in 2008. Later, the researchers conducted a second study in 2009. The second case study used the former study's design but with more participants (Lai & Ng, 2011). Specifically, the study investigated what teachers are capable of learning in wiki-based activities, the possibility of integrating self-assessment and peer assessment with wiki-based activities, and whether wiki-based activities are an effective and successful means of developing teachers' capabilities. Findings show that the students mastered different skills throughout their collaborative activities and peer learning, such as collaboration skills, ICT skills, and organizational skills. Moreover, the study found that wiki-based activities gave teachers a new way of teaching that could be a superior alternative for traditional classroom-based learning. Researchers also found that assessment rubrics were a possible way to grade wiki sites and there was a need for change in the way teachers used assessments.

After reviewing the above research studies, several inferences can be made. Firstly, wiki is a useful tool that helps students take more responsibility of their own learning. Second, since wiki can be used anywhere and anytime, it can be used for various purposes. Third, although all the research studies discussed are empirical which are of great importance in determining the acceptability of a new tool, these studies have their own limitations. More studies on wiki need to be conducted with larger numbers of student. Fourth, in future studies on wiki the sequencing of tasks in the study should be considered. Fifth, the comparison of various tasks may reveal more applications of wiki for collaborative writing.

### *B. Effects of Wiki on Collaborative Writing in English*

Researchers have conducted studies on the use of wiki to develop the writing of ESL/EFL learners and to considering the effects of wiki on peer correction, process writing, and synchronous interactions (Lin, 2005; Franco, 2008; Chao & Lo, 2009; Kessler, 2009; Turgut, 2009; Elola & Oskoz, 2010). The studies are discussed in the following sections.

#### **1. Effects of Wiki on Peer Correction**

The results of a study conducted in a college in central Taiwan show that collaborative writing with the use of wiki improves writing skill, increases awareness of the forms and functions of English language, and enhances contribution to peers (Lin, 2005). Moreover, the findings demonstrate that wiki can be a useful tool for lower proficiency students to learn and contribute more in writing processes. However, the study is a pilot and therefore requires further research to make convincing claims about the usefulness of wiki for collaborative writing.

Another study was conducted to investigate the relationship between wiki application and collaborative learning with the purpose of peer-correction and writing improvements (Franco, 2008). The study found that the students were interested to interact in an online community with a higher degree of motivation. The study also found increased opportunities related to writing and developing learners social skills. However, the study was carried out with a group of 18 Brazilian students only, and the findings are not generalizable to other age group, gender or geographic context.

In a study conducted by Kessler (2009), the aim was to determine the degree that participants initiated to correct their own and their peers' writing. Besides, the degree of accuracy that they achieved in their collaborative writing was determined. The researcher also investigated the students' attention to grammar revision versus content revision. Forty non-native pre-service teachers in a large Mexican university were observed in an online content-based course for 16 weeks. The purpose was to improve the teachers' language skills while they were studying about the cultures of the English-speaking world. The main part of the course was a wiki that was created, developed, and revised collaboratively throughout the course. The teacher candidates in the study mentioned that they liked to use such tasks in their own classes with perhaps an inclusion of teacher intervention. May be regular programs of using activities that focus on content and accuracy help students improve their accuracy in writing. More research studies should be conducted in order to validate the usefulness of wiki for improving accuracy in writing skill.

In another study conducted in a college in Turkey, the researcher used a specific wiki tool called PB wiki for commenting on essays and peer editing (Turgut, 2009). An analysis of 77 student compositions was discussed. The study produced three results: First, improvement in the students' writing skills; second, improvement in the students' sharing of ideas, confidence, and critical feedback; and third, motivation to take part in the activities.

All the above studies in this section seem to point to the various degrees of effectiveness of wiki on peer correction in collaborative writing.

#### **2. Effects of Wiki on Process Writing**

The instructional design of applying a wiki-based collaborative writing project that helps EFL learners to complete a collaborative writing task is a study that demonstrates how process-oriented writing can be enhanced and adapted for L2 learners (Chao & Lo, 2009). The five-staged process used in Chao and Lo's study included: collaborative planning, partitioned drafting, peer-revising, peer-editing, and individual publishing. Procedural scaffolding and collective scaffolding were also employed to support the instructional design. Besides, three pedagogical principles were used in the study, namely, task-oriented learning, process-oriented teaching, and collaborative learning. The findings indicate a high percentage of students' satisfaction and show positive perceptions of using the wiki-based collaborative writing environment. The instructional design of applying the writing project helps EFL learners to complete a collaborative writing task with less time constraint. Besides, the instructional design offered in the study can be used as a useful guide for teachers and students. Although the study proposes a useful approach to the writing process for EFL learners and

presents fruitful findings, it suffers from a shortcoming as well. In the study, data were collected through four questionnaires only including a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and three open-ended questionnaires. The only data collection technique in the present study was questionnaire which does not add enough depth to the study.

### 3. Effects of Wiki on Synchronous Interactions among Students

Investigation was also carried out to explore L2 learners' approaches to the writing task on wiki by analyzing learners' individual and collaborative writing. Elola and Oskoz (2010) examined learners' synchronous interactions when they talked about the content, structure and other aspects of their writing tasks. Moreover, the perceptions of learners about individual and collaborative writing and their impressions of applying social tools in the first language writing class were investigated. Participants of the study were eight Spanish majors at a U.S. community mid-sized East Coast University. In the study, learners wrote two argumentative essays, the first one collaboratively and the second individually. Findings show that learners' interactions with the text varied when working individually or collaboratively. Further, an analysis of learners' approaches to group writing through applying social tools demonstrates that wiki and chat permit learners to focus on writing components in various manners based on whether they interacted in the wiki or on the chat. Although the study presents useful information, it has some limitations such as the small number of participants. Future studies should be done with more participants and better sequencing tasks that may affect the results should be considered.

Reviewing the empirical studies in this section leads to an informed view of how to use wiki for collaborative writing in order to achieve better results. To do so, first, students should be completely familiar with wiki before they start to write in groups. Second, for minimizing the possibility of students feeling discomfort about group members' corrections and comments on wiki, some face-to-face activities should be developed to acquaint students with their group members before using wiki; otherwise, students may become frustrated and hence cannot achieve the desirable results.

## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this paper, the empirical research studies conducted from 2005 to 2011 were discussed. The empirical research studies were organized into two categories: i) applications of wiki for collaborative writing, and ii) effects of wiki for collaborative writing in English as a second and first language context.

With regard to the application and effects of wiki for collaborative writing, results of various studies generally suggested that wiki can be considered a useful tool for learning, particularly language learning. Wiki provides an interest collaborative writing platform to online community and is a useful and effective tool for the improvement of students' writing skills. Moreover, the usefulness of wiki for peer collaboration and peer assessment were achieved in the reviewed studies. Besides, a high percentage of students' positive perception of using the wiki-based collaborative writing environment was found.

Despite positive findings, several limitations were present and should be considered in the research studies. First, the research found that the applications of wiki were limited to certain areas only. Second, the studies were conducted with small numbers of participant. Therefore, the results and findings cannot be generalized to other similar contexts. Third, most of the students in these studies used wiki for the first time. It meant that they were not familiar with wiki and the unfamiliarity might have affected the research result. Fourth, the duration of research is another limitation identified. Most of the research studies were conducted within a short period of time. If future studies can be conducted over a longer period of time, the results may be different. Consequently, the limitations might have influenced the achieved results.

The review of the empirical research studies can serve as a guide for teachers and students who are interested in using wiki for various pedagogical and learning purposes. This review can also be beneficial for researchers who are interested in conducting studies related to the use of wiki as it highlights recent studies done on wiki and provides some insights into potential areas that could be explored in the future.

Since wiki is relatively new and until now there is only a small body of research on different aspects of using it, more studies should be conducted to reveal more useful applications of wiki for collaborative learning and writing. Moreover, future research may investigate the effects of gender and culture of different students with various levels of proficiency. More studies with pre-test and post-test design should be conducted to confirm the usefulness of wiki for collaborative writing.

## APPENDIX A SUMMARY OF REVIEWED STUDIES

Study	Participants	Purpose of the Study	Type of Data	Findings
Désilets and Paquet (2005)	Primary level students (grade4-6) used wiki for collaborative story telling.	To investigate how young children can use wiki for collaboration, and to see if the activity is equally interesting for girls and boys.	Observation, wiki.	Primary level students are able to use wiki for collaborative web-based storytelling. Guidelines were given to help teachers apply wiki in classroom

Lin (2005)	EFL Learners studying in central Taiwan colleges.	To investigate the effectiveness of wiki for collaborative writing.	Survey, Interview, Online discussion, learning logs, and reflective diary.	Collaborative writing enhances writing ability, promotes contribution to peers, and increases awareness of the forms and function of English.
Wang et al. (2005)	43 freshman level students studied English as a second language at a public college in Taipei.	To examine the application of wiki in English as a second language course.	Web servers' access log, wiki	The wiki technology is "naturally" beneficial to learning.
Kovacic et al. (2007)	Two groups: one group with 85 first-year students who learned English language and the other 28 second-year Business English students.	To evaluate e-tivities and the overall use of the wiki.	Evaluation, Survey	Positive outcome of the wiki and the usefulness of most of the e-tivities .
Lin et al. (2007)	Freshman from very diverse backgrounds and roles.	To investigate how an authentic learning community is constructed by wiki for advanced collaboration and knowledge sharing.	Observation	The method raised the students' knowledge and peer supports by using wiki.
Franco (2008)	18 students from a private language school located in Brazil.	To investigate the relationship between wiki and collaborative learning focusing on peer-correction and writing improvements.	Writing and comments posted on a private wiki, questionnaire	The online community had a higher degree of motivation. There was increased opportunity related to writing and developing learners' social skills.
Lund (2008)	EFL learners of Hillside senior high school.	To examine wiki for the notion of collective zone of proximal development and sociogenesis.	Wiki , Videotaped transcripts of learner interaction	A shift in the students' perspectives regarding learning processes from individualism to collective knowledge construction. Wiki is viable to support collective language skills.
Ma and Yuen (2008)	23 undergraduate journalism students.	To investigate the process of collaborative news writing and learners' perceptions on applying wiki.	Open-ended survey	Wiki is a unique learning environment that makes writing easy and increase learning during the writing process. Wiki provides a platform for both individual learners and community.
Mak and Coniam (2008)	Year 7 ESL learners in a secondary school in Hong Kong.	To investigation authentic writing through using wiki.	Qualitative and quantitative data through 3 stages.	Impact is significant in two ways: the task's real outcome (the brochure) increased students' confidence as writers and it taps students' creative skills.
Xiao and Lucking (2008)	232 undergraduates.	To compare the effects of two peer assessment methods and to investigate students' satisfaction with peer assessment.	Rubric for academic papers, survey questionnaire, comparing two sets of rating score	Students in the experimental group show greater improvement in writing than the comparison group. Findings indicate that the validity and reliability of student generated rating scores were high. Using the Wiki interactive software and providing an online collaborative learning environment added value to peer assessment.
Chao and Lo (2009)	51 L2 learners at a university in central Taiwan.	To investigate process-oriented writing among L2 learners.	Cross-referencing open- ended questionnaires, descriptive statistics.	High percentage of student satisfaction of applying wiki. The instructional design of the project with the five-stage writing process helped EFL learners to complete a collaborative writing task in less time.
Kessler (2009)	40 NNS pre-service teachers from a large Mexican university.	To determine the degree that participants correct their own and peer correction. To determine the degree of accuracy and their attention to grammar revision vs. content revision.	Wiki, Interview	Participants contributed in the form of peer and self-editing. They considered a web-based collaborative activity less demanding. Overall tendency among participants was to focus on meaning rather than form.
Moreno (2009)	17 university learners of intermediate Spanish whose first language was English.	To create an electronic children's book and to investigate the learners' perception on language gains and group work success.	Wiki, post-task questionnaire	The branching story in wiki shows positive experience generally. Learners were satisfied when they were able to use the grammar learned in the project. Majority said they had worked well in groups, but some declared strong dislike for group work.

Neumann and Hood (2009)	First year Griffith University statistics class.	To measure learning outcome, knowledge of report writing, attitude toward statistics, engagement with other students of two groups of students.	Wiki, questionnaires	Both approaches increased report writing knowledge. Wiki approach makes higher engagement with other students. Student engagement, not performance on assessment, maybe increased when wiki is used to support learning in higher education.
Turgut (2009)	77 students of a college preparatory writing course in Turkey.	To use wiki for peer editing and for commenting an essays.	Wiki, open-ended questions, Semi-structured interviews	Improvements in the students' writing skills and sharing of ideas, critical feedback and confidence.
Elola and Oskoz (2010)	8 Spanish majors at a U.S. mid-sized east coast university. They enrolled in an advanced Spanish writing course.	To explore L2 learners' approaches to the writing tasks on wiki; to examine learners' synchronous interaction and to describe learners' perception of individual and collaborative writing.	Essay draft, questionnaires, wiki drafts and chats	Learners' interactions with the texts differ when working individually or collaboratively. Learners' approaches to collaborative writing show that wiki and chat allowed them to concentrate on writing components differently.
Zammit (2010)	A Year 5 (11 years old) class, and Year 4/5 (10 and 11 years old class).	To involve students to work collaboratively on wiki in a multi-literacy project to create multi-modal reports.	Questionnaire, interview	Working with wiki gives opportunity for students to engage with 21 <sup>st</sup> century literacy practices. It provides an alternative pedagogical practice in the conventional curriculum.
Kuteeva (2011)	14 students (eight female and six male).	To investigate how the course wiki was used to teach writing for academic and professional purposes, and to analyze what impact the wiki had on the writer-reader relationship.	Participant observation, text analysis, self-report questionnaire	Writing on the wiki can contribute to increasing awareness of the audience and enhancing the use of interpersonal meta discourse.
Lai and Ng (2011)	First group: students from full-time Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Secondary); second group: students from part-time (Secondary) program, in Hong Kong	To examine the potential of using wiki in teacher-education programs to develop teachers' abilities.	Content of the wiki, comments posted by the students, assessments of the wiki site, self and peer-assessment, reflective reports	The students mastered different skills throughout their collaborative activities and peer learning such as collaboration, ICT and organizational skills. Wiki based activities are useful in developing a diverse range of teacher capabilities.
Liu et al. (2011)	57 third graders (28 in hypermedia group and 29 linear group) from a suburban elementary school in Taipei.	To investigate how hypermedia and linear approaches influence the collaborative learning experience.	Pre-questionnaire, questionnaire, activity logs, Camtasia.	Performance of students in the hypermedia group was superior to that of members in the linear group.
Woo et al. (2011)	38 Year-5 students from Chinese primary schools and their English teacher.	To explore the challenges and benefits of wiki for students and teachers. To examine how the affordances might scaffold students in the collaborative writing projects.	Questionnaire, semi-structured interview, focus-group discussions, recording.	The use of wiki was perceived positively and wiki was interesting for students. In general, wiki helped foster teamwork and improved writing.

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# The Effect of Advance Organizers on Enhancing the Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Reading English in Iran is regarded as a very important skill in academic world, where English is learned as a foreign language (EFL). Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to examine the influence of Advance Organizers (AO) on enhancing reading comprehension of students of English as a foreign language to check if there is any correspondence between activating background knowledge and listening- while-reading tasks as two AOs for enhancing reading comprehension. To carry out this study, three intact classes consisting of 58 intermediate students studying English in Atiehsazan English Institute in Dehaghan, Isfahan, Iran were selected. Each intact class was randomly divided into two experimental groups including (1) background knowledge questioning; (2) listening-while-reading; and one control group. Background knowledge activation strategy was taught, based on CALLA instructional model, developed by Chamot & O'Malley (1994). Results showed an increase in students' performance in reading comprehension due to the effect of background knowledge activation strategy and listening-while-reading task. In addition, the results also indicated that activating the students' background knowledge about the topic they are reading can significantly better enhance the learners' reading comprehension than forcing students to listen while they are reading simultaneously. These findings have a profound implication for instructional design, particularly because this research study targeted English language learners who have not mastered the English language fully, therefore, instructing them in the use and monitoring of reading strategies is an effective practice.

**Index Terms**—background knowledge, formal schemata, advance organizers (AOs), EFL

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the last three decades, according to Horwitz (1987), there has been a shift in focus in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) from teaching methods to learner characteristics. He points out that it has become clearer that much of the responsibility for success in language learning may rest with the efforts of individual learners. learner's beliefs can play a role in bringing about this change. Further, particular sets of techniques and strategies are that individual learners use to learn a target language also significant in this change (Oxford, 1990). Rigney (1987) defined strategies operations or steps used by a learner to facilitate the acquisition, storage, or retrieval of information.

On the other hand, according to Karbalaie and Rajyashree (2009) teaching reading skills has been a foundation of adult-level EFL reading for at least the last two decades. In more recent years, skilled-based instruction has become increasingly popular in higher-level English as a foreign language (EFL) context as well, due to the attention it has received in EFL contexts. According to him, while in a general sense reading skills may refer to a variety of things including word-recognition and other "bottom-up" decoding skills, beyond the beginning levels the focus tends to have been on "top-down" or meaning-focused strategies which proficient readers have been found to employ in numerous second language (L2) descriptive studies.

On the other hand, in recent years, there has been a growing interest in general research on the mental images, thoughts, and processes L2/FL learners and teachers utilize during teaching or learning, respectively. It is believed that mental processes provide "interpretation frames which both groups use to understand and approach their own learning and teaching" (Richards, 1996, p.1).

As far as using skills and strategies for better reading comprehension is concerned, a body of research from the perspective of schema theory has shown how readers' perspectives and prior knowledge are important in comprehending and remembering what they read. Anderson and his colleagues (Anderson, 1978; Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977). For example, Bransford and Johnson (1972) came to this conclusion that readers' background knowledge and the previews suggested for readers, as well as the titles selected for

ambiguous passages can have an influence not only on remembering information by readers but also on what they can comprehend from the written text.

Previous exposure and knowledge to new concepts may help to improve reading comprehension and subsequently performance on recognition tasks (Rinehart et al., 1991). Advance organizers (AO), or "introductory material" that "bridges the gap between what the learner already knows and what he needs to know before he can successfully learn the task at hand" (Ausubel, 1977, p. 168), are common methods for affording this exposure to individuals. Guided discussion is also effective in helping individuals acquire this prior knowledge (Rinehart & Welker, 1992).

During the past years, researchers have done a lot of studies regarding Advance Organizers; however, few studies have researched the effects of AOs in enhancing the reading performance of EFL learners. Since a brief, general discussion might be effective in improving exam scores, considerations for its use along with AOs seems plausible. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine the influence of Advance Organizers (AO) on enhancing reading comprehension of students of English as a foreign language to check if there is any correspondence between activating background knowledge and listening- while- reading tasks as two AOs for enhancing reading comprehension.

#### *A. Roles of Schemata in Comprehension*

A schema (plural schemata) is defined as a knowledge framework that represents a class of things, events and situations (Anderson, 1978, as cited in Song, 2011). A reader's understanding can be improved when a schema provides a kind of framework, which is interpretable and assists learners interpret data, retrieve information from memory, and determine goals and sub goals (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Rumelhart, 1981). For example, Rumelhart (1981) puts an emphasis on the importance of schemata by recognizing three reasons that readers might not be able to comprehend a passage correctly. First, readers do not possess correct schemata. Second, a text cannot be fully understood if the clues in the passage are not enough to activate the readers' schemata. Finally, at the same time, however, if readers bring schemata to their reading that are not the ones the author intended, they will have a problem understanding the passage.

Furthermore, schemata can pave the way for understanding. The way readers understand a passage hinges on what kind of information they have. Readers who have correct schemata about the reading material can easily connect between what they are reading and what they know. Therefore, schema specialists argue that a reader's schema can provide a framework for interpreting the discourse available to them, and that schema theory can explain how familiar situations are easily understood more (Anderson, Wang, & Gaffney, 2006; Freebody & Anderson, 1983).

In conclusion, according to Anderson (1994), schemata are essential for discourse comprehension because the processes of activating schemata that gives a good account for events in a text can play a significant role in understanding discourse.

#### *B. Purposes of the Study*

During the past years, the researcher has encountered some beginners of English who are interested in adding a new variety in their life by learning English as their foreign language because they believe that they can communicate with people around the world if they learn English. Among them, most of them have experienced learning English at guidance or high school but their improvement has been insignificant. However, the majority of the beginners of English, in the case of EFL context, where the researcher taught English, had little previous experience of L2 learning. The fact is that, unfortunately, they have not started to learn the new language systematically during these years. By considering the above mentioned points, it is particularly challenging for the teacher to keep their learners engaged and motivated in the process of L2 learning.

The first issue which is taken into account in this study is examining the skills or strategies that learners apply in their learning. Of course, we should know that because different learners have different ideas for learning, we cannot achieve to a consensus in reporting the strategies or skills used by all learners.

Therefore, the main purposes of this study were to examine the influence of Advance Organizers (AO) on enhancing reading comprehension of students of English as a foreign language to check if there is any correspondence between activating background knowledge and listening- while- reading tasks as two AOs for enhancing reading comprehension.

#### *C. Research Questions*

Referring to the primary objectives of the study, the main research questions raised here are interrelated as follows:

1. Does activating background knowledge as a pre-reading task have any impact on EFL learners' reading comprehension performance?
2. Does listening-while-reading task have any impact on the learners' reading comprehension performance?
3. Is there any significant difference between the effect of background knowledge activation task and listening-while-reading task on reading comprehension?

#### *D. Research Hypothesis*

To investigate the above research questions of the present study, the following hypothesis are addressed:

1. Activating background knowledge as a pre-reading task can have an influence on Iranian EFL students' performance in reading comprehension.

2. Listening-while-reading task can have an influence on Iranian EFL students' performance in reading comprehension.
3. There is no significant difference between the effect of background knowledge activation task and listening-while-reading task on reading comprehension.

## II. METHOD

### A. Participants

The participants in the study were selected from three intact classes consisting of 58 intermediate students studying English in Atiehshazan English Institute in Dehaghan, Isfahan, Iran. They were fifty two female students whose age ranged from 14 to 28 years. Their level of English proficiency was determined on the basis of their scores on the Nelson proficiency test. Each intact class was randomly selected to two experimental groups including (1) background knowledge questioning; (2) listening-while-reading; and one control group. Because some of the students were absent during the implementation of one of the tests, they were excluded from the main subjects resulted in 17, and 16 subjects in the respective experimental groups and 19 in the control group.

### B. Materials

The following instruments were used for the purpose of this study:

#### 1. Language proficiency test (Nelson)

This test comprised of 50 multiple-choice reading passage, vocabulary, and grammar sections. In order to test the reliability of the proficiency test, a pilot study was carried out on 20 students. Its reliability through the K-R21 formula turned out to be .71, which was appropriate to take the next step.

#### 2. Reading passages for pretest and posttest

The textbooks of English Reading Comprehension (Gupta, 2008) were adopted for this study. The topics of the passages are varied and the possibility of coming through something 'unheard of before' is not remote. It covers some issues such as science, sports, ethics, education, religion, culture, health, technology, business, politics, entertainment, environment, etc. The selected texts for the purpose of this study were grade level reading materials selected to meet each group's instructional level and were linked to the reading and content learning objectives set by the selected subjects in this study. The texts opted for the present study were short, interesting, evocative, culturally relevant, and appealing to EFL readers at intermediate level. By considering the level of the participants, five listening passages, along with their multiple-choice questions, were selected. These passages were piloted for 10 students at the same class before doing the main study. By considering the results of the piloting, these passages were selected on the basis of potential interest and hypothesized unfamiliarity. Internal consistency reliability for the instrument was estimated by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The overall test Cronbach's alpha was .70. This implies that the test has sufficient internal consistency in measuring the construct under investigation. In addition, as far as the validity of these topics is concerned, the files were sent to two EFL teachers, read them and judged the topics to be natural. The features of each passage were evaluated with respect to the number of words, the duration of topics, and the average word rate. Another criterion considered in this study for selecting the reading texts was the kind of strategy which should be adopted by the students to respond to the questions in posttest stage. It should be mentioned that the texts implemented for pretest and posttest were the same.

#### 3. Instructional Design

The strategy-based instructional approach selected for this research was the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), developed by Chamot and O'Malley (1994). The CALLA instructional model was designed to develop students' understanding of the value of reading strategies. In this study, it was utilized for the purpose of background knowledge activation strategy. The time spent on teaching this strategy was 90 minutes. As far as the procedure for practicing this strategy is concerned, before reading the text, students were instructed to determine the purpose of reading. They learned how the information in the text was organized. Before they started to read the main text, they were forced to read a short paragraph related to the main text in order to activate their background information or knowledge about the text they were going to read. They were also instructed to suggest some questions based on the short paragraph they read so that they could be able to find their answers after reading the main text. Altogether, encouraging students to generate questions about the text stimulate their background knowledge, to connect with the text, and to assess about what they had learned were the main purposes behind this strategy training.

### C. Procedure

The present study was experimental in nature and therefore the researcher had to select her participants in a way they would be homogeneous in terms of language background. They were selected from among language learners in Atiehshazan English Institute. Students studying English at intermediate level from three intact classes were selected for the purpose of this study. They were fifty two female students whose age ranged from 14 to 28 years. First, they were given a Nelson Test as a placement test. Then they were classified into three groups, one control group and two experimental groups.

After the subjects were classified into three groups, one control group and two experimental groups, all groups were given a reading comprehension test as a pretest. The scores obtained from this test were analyzed to see whether there is any difference between the three groups or not before intervention program.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After data were collected, they were analyzed by using paired sample t-test and ANOVA in the following tables by considering the research questions.

#### Does activating background knowledge as a pre-reading task have any impact on EFL learners' reading comprehension performance?

In order to answer the first research question, data were analyzed and the following tables were elicited.

TABLE 1  
MEAN PRE- AND POSTTEST OF BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION SCORES FOR SAMPLES IN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP

Group	Test	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Background Knowledge	Pretest	13.06	17	2.410	.585
	Posttest	17.06	17	2.076	.503
Control	Pretest	12.32	19	2.626	.602
	Posttest	12.37	19	2.712	.622

TABLE 2  
PAIRED SAMPLE TEST FOR PRE- AND POSTTEST BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION AND CONTROL GROUP

Group	Pair	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Background Knowledge	Pre- and posttest	-4.000	1.000	.243	-16.492	16	.000
Control	Pre- and posttest	-.053	1.224	.281	-.188	18	.853

As it is evident from Table 2, there is no significant difference between pre- and posttest in control group in Iranian EFL context ( $t=.188$ ;  $P=.853$ ) while with regard to the effect of activating background knowledge of learners about the topic they are going to read before reading a reading passage, results of data analysis (t-test) in table 2 above indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between students' performance in reading comprehension in pretest and posttest ( $t=16.492$ ;  $p<.001$ ). In other words, according to Table 1, subjects scored higher in posttest ( $M=17.06$ ,  $SD=2.076$ ), when their background knowledge about the topic was activated before reading the main text, than pretest (without activating their background knowledge) ( $M=13.06$ ,  $SD=2.41$ ). With respect to this point, the first hypothesis (Activating background knowledge as a pre-reading task can have an influence on Iranian EFL students' performance in reading comprehension) is accepted. In other words, activating background knowledge related to the topic play a significant role in developing the level of the learners' reading comprehension. It should be pointed out that this knowledge can be activated by asking some preview questions or reading a paragraph about the topic they are going to cope with during their reading comprehension.

This result can be regarded as a support for some other researches done in this area. For example, Pearson, Hansen, and Gordon (1979) demonstrated the importance of existing knowledge instudents' comprehension levels. The concluded that students receiving an AO, which included related concepts found in a short story before they read the unfamiliar story, did better on a recall test than a control group, suggesting that indeed AOs improve reading comprehension(Rinehart et al., 1991; Rineheart& Welker, 1992).

On the other hand, the result of the research done by Gutkind (2012) was against the result of this study. He investigated the schema strategy uses of fourth grade boys with reading challenges; specifically, their ability to understand text based on two components within schema theory: tuning and restructuring. The findings of this study indicated that the fourth graders with reading challenges displayed overall inefficient types of strategies when attempting to comprehend printed text, which was categorized as an inefficient comprehender.

#### Does listening-while-reading task have any impact on the learners' reading comprehension performance?

TABLE 3  
MEAN PRE- AND POSTTEST OF LISTENING-WHILE-READING TASK SCORES FOR SAMPLES IN LISTENING-WHILE-READING AND CONTROL GROUP

Group	Test	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Listening-while-reading	Pretest	12.81	16	2.834	.708
	Posttest	14.56	16	2.828	.707
Control	Pretest	12.32	19	2.626	.602
	Posttest	12.37	19	2.712	.622

TABLE 4  
PAIRED SAMPLE TEST FOR PRE- AND POSTTEST IN LISTENING-WHILE-READING AND CONTROL GROUP

Group	Pair	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Listening-while-reading	Pre- and posttest	-1.750	1.183	.296	-5.916	15	.000
Control	Pre- and posttest	-.053	1.224	.281	-.188	18	.853

As it is evident from Table 4, there is no significant difference between pre- and posttest in control group in Iranian context ( $t=.188$ ;  $P=.853$ ) while with respect to using listening-while-reading task, it is clear from this table that students

had a better performance in reading comprehension when the students were listening to the main text while reading (posttest) when it was compared to the results of students' performance during pre-test without listening while reading (pretest) (means 14.56 and 12.81 respectively). According to table 4, the "t" value of 5.916 was found to be significant at .001 level. Therefore, the second hypothesis (Listening-while-reading task cannot have an influence on Iranian EFL students' performance in reading comprehension) is rejected. In other words, listening to the main text while reading enhanced students' performance on reading comprehension.

The result of this research can be considered as a support to what Sticht and James (1984). They concluded from an analysis of 44 studies that the gap between the two skills gradually narrowed and agreed with Durrell that around the seventh or eighth grades the reading and listening abilities become similar. They also advised that reading instruction should include activities that bridge the gap between listening and reading. Miller and Smith (1990) did their research on silent reading, oral reading, and listening proficiency of poor, average, and good readers. They indicated some differences by ability level for listening and reading. For poor readers, they found that oral reading and listening comprehension was both superior to silent reading.

On the other hand, the result of this research question is against what Holmes and Allison (1985) did in their research. They showed that subjects in their study, 48 fifth-grade students, did not benefit from the listening-while-reading treatment. Furthermore, good readers seemed to be negatively affected by the listening-while-reading tasks.

#### **Is there any significant difference between the effect of background knowledge activation task and listening-while-reading task on reading comprehension?**

In order to answer the third research question, the collected data related to background knowledge activation group and listening-while-reading group were compared and analyzed as following:

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION, AND LISTENING-WHILE-READING GROUP

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Background knowledge	17	17.06	2.076	.503	12	20
Listening-while-reading	16	14.56	2.828	.707	9	20
Total	33	15.85	2.740	.477	9	20

TABLE 6  
RESULTS OF ANOVA FOR MEAN POSTTEST SCORES OF SAMPLES IN BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION, AND LISTENING-WHILE-READING GROUP IN IRAN

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	51.364	1	51.364	8.430	.007
Within Groups	188.879	31	6.093		
Total	240.242	32			

As it is evident in table 6, all the differences among the groups are significant between listening-while-reading and background knowledge activation group ( $p=.007<0.05$ ). Therefore, there is a significant difference between the means of the two experimental groups. As a result, the third hypothesis (There is no significant difference between the effect of background knowledge activation task and listening-while-reading task on reading comprehension) is rejected. In other words, there is a significant difference between background knowledge activation strategy and listening-while-reading task in enhancing EFL learners' listening comprehension. In addition, by looking at Table 5 above, since the mean of the background knowledge activation is greater than that of the listening-while-reading group ( $17.06>14.56$ ), we conclude that activating the students' background knowledge about the topic they are reading before reading main reading comprehension test can significantly better enhance the learners' reading comprehension than forcing students to listen while they are reading simultaneously.

By considering all of the above result, we can come to this conclusion that an important aspect of studying reading comprehension is to investigate both the products of comprehension and the processes as they are occurring. In this study, the products of comprehension indicated that activating prior knowledge and listening while reading as two effective tasks can increase the level of the learners' reading comprehension. In other words, the processes of comprehension were possibly changed, covering up the effects of background knowledge and listening-while-reading on the learners' reading comprehension in an EFL context.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Conclusion

Supporting students as they read to learn is an important instructional goal throughout the curriculum. Research studies have clearly established the importance of background knowledge to reading and understanding texts. Research studies also provide direct evidence that instructional strategies designed to support the accumulation and activation of prior knowledge can significantly improve student reading comprehension of informational texts. These studies suggest that by implementing instructional strategies to support students' background knowledge, teachers can better support students' content area learning.

The best-supported approaches emerging from this review are direct instruction on background knowledge, students' reflection on recording background knowledge, and activation of background knowledge through questioning. However, there are other promising approaches, including the computer-supported approach CONTACT-2 (Biemans et al., 1996), which merit additional research. The impact of such approaches on general literacy is another issue worth further study. Although a few studies support the effectiveness of background knowledge instruction for improving student comprehension of narrative texts, more research is needed. Another important conclusion that emerges from the research is the importance of considering student characteristics, including their familiarity with a topic area and the accuracy of their prior knowledge.

Generally, Iranian EFL students have various obstacles to achieving proficiency in all of the language modalities: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. An unfamiliar script, a new sound system, and different cultural and social contexts all suggest a potentially bewildering array of new skills to be acquired. Among these skills, listening and reading comprehension is often allotted the least attention in the classroom. Generally, instruction focuses more on teaching grammar and vocabulary for the development of reading and writing skills. While it is important for students to become proficient readers and writers of English, the importance of strong listening and reading skills should not be understated.

In conclusion, the present study adds to the previous research regarding the importance of pre-reading activities. Pre-reading activities that activate EFL learners' content and formal background knowledge and require them to predict and interact with the reading passage enhance their reading comprehension performance. Finally, this study sheds some light on the importance of teaching EFL learners how to read, and focus on the reading process rather than the reading product. Such an approach to reading may reduce students' anxiety when carrying out a reading activity as they are not pressured to give correct answers, but rather, they engage in different activities which enhance their level of reading comprehension.

#### B. Recommendations

Research has shown (Anderson, 1994; Afflerbach, 1990; Rumelhart, 1984; Wade, 1990) that schema is an important element in reading comprehension. The current research has validated and expanded on the importance of schema, specifically schema strategy and its association with reading comprehension. Based on the results outlined in this research, the researcher suggested four important implications that relate to understanding and teaching adult learners how to comprehend printed text efficiently. First, this study validated the importance of using schema strategizing for successful comprehension of printed text. In addition, some evidence of inefficient strategy use was noted in all the participants in this study at the beginning of the study regardless of their reading comprehension levels, suggesting a need for teaching schema strategizing. Metacognitive strategies, such as the use of schema self-awareness, can be incorporated into the instructional methodology. Teachers ought to actively engage students in verbalizing their schemata, and discussing how their schemata changes to match new and incoming information from printed text.

The second implication of this study relates directly to curriculum and environment in the classroom. Currently, curriculum programs do not address schema strategies as part of the instructional learning process in reading comprehension. Most of the existing reading programs highlight the instruction of certain reading comprehension skills (i.e., main idea, inferences, drawing conclusions, etc.) but do not instruct on how to strategize these skills. It is evident, based on the results of this study that all students, regardless of their comprehension level, need to learn how to strategize in order to become successful and efficient comprehenders. Curriculum developers need to re-think the process of teaching reading comprehension by instituting daily practices in schema strategizing within the reading comprehension curriculum.

Third, there was some evidence of inefficient schema strategy use in all the various reading comprehension levels within each group. Therefore, teachers need to be responsive to the diverse needs of the students' various reading comprehension levels by adjusting the classroom environment. Incorporating differentiated instruction with small and flexible grouping enables the teacher to reach all students, regardless of their academic level, by maximizing their capacity to learn (Tomlinson, 2005).

Fourth, the results of this study also have implications for classroom teachers as they indicate that teachers need to pay more attention to helping students make connections between their existing knowledge and new material through introducing appropriate pre-reading activities. Teachers should also recognize that even though it might take them more time to prepare for pre-reading activities, the benefits gained from these activities may well merit the effort as the activities would improve learners' reading comprehension performance and thus contribute to enhancing their overall L2 language ability.

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# Reciprocal Teaching Strategies and Their Impacts on English Reading Comprehension

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**Abstract**—Whenever teachers are faced with the problem of students who do not have adequate comprehension skills, they need to be able to train those students to use metacognitive strategies; otherwise, these students will continue to read texts emphasizing only words and not meaning. One set of metacognitive strategies are the reciprocal teaching strategies used to improve students' reading comprehension. Reciprocal teaching involves four main metacognitive reading strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. The aims of this paper are to define the key terms, explain the models of reading process, review reading process and reading strategies, discuss cognitive and metacognitive strategies and reading comprehension, elaborate reciprocal teaching and its theoretical framework, mention the related research on reciprocal teaching, and state relationship between reciprocal teaching and reading comprehension. The findings indicated that reciprocal teaching had a significantly positive effect on the English reading comprehension and usage of the four main metacognitive reading strategies of EFL students.

**Index Terms**—reciprocal teaching, reading comprehension, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, models

## I. INTRODUCTION

To communicate efficiently, learners need the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but of all these four skills, reading is regarded as the most vital and necessary for students in both a classroom context and an extracurricular environment (Carrell, 1989; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Reading is even more important for high-school students since they have to be highly competitive in the English entrance examination. Therefore, the ability to read and comprehend texts efficiently is crucial for EFL students. In addition, because of the demanding expectations for academic success in all areas of learning, high-school students, as English foreign language (EFL) learners, need to develop their English reading comprehension abilities to a stronger, more advanced level (Soonthornmanee, 2002).

Although every student knows how to read, many have never learned good reading skills (Royse, 2001). This lack of good reading skills is exacerbated by the central role of reading comprehension in higher education success. According to Hart and Speece (1998), "one of the greatest demands on students attending post-secondary institutions is the comprehension of many different and difficult texts" (p. 670). One solution to this problem of poor reading comprehension skills is the explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies to both undergraduate and graduate students (e.g., reciprocal teaching, SQ4R, induced imagery). Explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies is an effective means for improving reading comprehension in adults. Unfortunately, explicit instruction in reading comprehension is rarely taught at the higher education level (Wilson, 1988; Pressley, Woloshyn, Lysynchuk, Martin, Wood, & Willoughby, 1990). In this paper, the researchers discuss the key terms, the models of reading process, reading process and reading strategies, cognitive and metacognitive strategies and reading comprehension, reciprocal teaching and its theoretical framework, the related research on reciprocal teaching, and relationship between reciprocal teaching and reading comprehension.

## II. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### A. Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching has been defined in many different ways. According to Rosenshine and Meister (1994), reciprocal teaching is an instructional strategy that directly teaches students to apply metacognitive thinking as they make meaning from a text. According to Carter (1997), reciprocal teaching parallels the new definition of reading that describes the process of reading as an interactive one, in which readers interact with the text as their prior experience is activated. Using prior experience as a channel, readers learn new information, main ideas and arguments. Most important, readers construct meaning from the text by relying on prior experience to parallel, contrast or affirm what the

author suggests. All excellent readers do this construction. Otherwise, the content would be meaningless, alphabetic scribbles on the page. Without meaning construction, learning does not take place. Reciprocal teaching is a model of constructivist learning.

Klingner and Vaughn (1996, p. 275) reported the following definition of reciprocal teaching defined by Lysynchuck et al., (1990): "The reciprocal teaching model has been used to improve comprehension for students who can decode but have difficulty comprehending text." Palincsar and Brown (1984) added in an article reported by Hacker and Tenen (2002) "Reciprocal teaching is an instructional procedure in which small groups of students learn to improve their reading comprehension through scaffold instruction of comprehension-monitoring strategies" (p. 669). It consists of four main strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. It occurs in the form of dialogues between teachers and students. At first, the students learn the four key strategies and practice them. Second, the teacher models the entire process step by step using structured dialogues. Third, the teacher gives the students a chance to get involved and coaches them on how to ask appropriate questions, write adequate summaries, and so on. Gradually, the teacher's role as a leader decreases. Finally, the students take on greater responsibility to carry out the whole process.

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching is a scaffolded discussion method that is based on reading comprehension strategies, scaffolding and modeling, and social interaction. This instruction allows a teacher to model and give the students enough practice on those four main strategies to construct the meaning of a text in a social setting. The students monitor their own thinking through the reading process. Reciprocal teaching develops reading comprehension and promotes readers to be better in reading and helps them reach the most important goal of reciprocal teaching, becoming independent readers.

### *B. Reading Comprehension*

Reading comprehension has been defined in many ways over the years. Nuttall (1996) suggests that the overriding purpose to reading is to get the correct message from a text – the message the writer intended for the reader to receive. Allen (2003) stated that the idea of reading has changed and moved from what was considered a receptive process to what is now an interactive process. Reading can be done using a number of processes that can be divided into two main categories: bottom-up processing and top-down processing. Bottom-up processing refers to the reader obtaining meaning from the letters and words of a text and reconstructing the intended message that way. Top-down processing refers to the reader's ability to look at a text as a whole and to connect and relate it to his existing knowledge base. Both processes are needed to obtain a message from a text.

### *C. Reading Comprehension Strategies*

They refer to the conscious and flexible plan that students apply and adapt to a text when they face problems while reading. Readers use reading comprehension strategies, both cognitive and metacognitive, to better understand reading texts and in order to learn to read independently (Allen, 2003).

### *D. Metacognitive Strategies*

They refer to the set of reading tactics through which learners are capable of becoming aware of their mental process. It involves thinking about the mental operation used in the learning process, monitoring or controlling learning while it is taking place, solving problems, and evaluating learning after it has occurred. The metacognitive strategies the learners may use when they read include: planning the task and content sequence; focusing on key words, phrases, and ideas; asking questions to clarify meaning; deciding which strategy to use to solve the reading problems; checking whether the predictions/guesses are correct; and evaluating their own progress and whether the goal is met (Oxford, 1990).

## III. MODELS OF READING PROCESS

Reading is a cognitive process that consists of a reader, a text, and the interaction between the reader and the text. There are three models for the second-language reading process: the bottom-up model, the top-down model, and the interactive model.

### *A. The Bottom-up Model*

This reading model focuses on the smaller units of a text such as its letters, words, phrases and sentences. Then, a syntactic and semantic processing occurs during which reading reaches the final meaning. In this model, the reader reads all of the words in a phrase, or a sentence before being able to understand. The bottom-up reading process begins with decoding the smallest linguistic units, especially phonemes, graphemes, and words, and ultimately constructs meaning from the smallest to the largest units. While doing this, the readers apply their background knowledge to the information they find in the texts. This bottom-up method is also called data-driven and text-based reading (Carrell, 1989). The disadvantage of this model is that the readers will only be successful in reading if they accurately decode the linguistic units and recognize the relationship between words. It is impossible for the readers to store in their memory the meaning of every word in a passage. It is also difficult to relate one word to the other words. It can be concluded that there are some arguments against the bottom-up model. In the reading process, the readers understand that what they have read is the result of their own constructions, not the result of the transmission of graphic symbols to their understanding, and that without their background knowledge, they cannot comprehend the texts.

### B. *The Top-down Model*

The top-down model was first introduced by Goodman (1967). He proposed the idea of reading as a “psycholinguistic guessing game” in which the reader uses his background (prior) knowledge or textual schemata to connect with a text and to relate these to new or unexpected information found in the text in order to understand it. This model focuses on linguistic guesswork rather than graphic textual information. The readers do not need to read every word of a text, but rather, they concentrate on predicting the next group of words. They concern themselves with guessing the meaning of the words or phrases. Readers might start predicting from the title of the reading text, something that allows them to limit the scope of their reading. While reading, they may hypothesize the message the writer wants to convey and modify their hypotheses according to what they read in the text. Comprehension begins with higher levels of processing (making hypotheses), and proceeds to the use of the lower levels (Nuttall, 1996).

### C. *The Interactive Model*

This model is built on the interaction of the bottom-up and top-down models. Nunan (1990), Rumelhart (1977), and Grabe (1991) argue that efficient and effective reading requires both top-down and bottom-up decoding. L2 readers, for example, may use top-down reading to compensate for deficiencies in bottom-up reading. To achieve meaning, they use their schemata to compensate for the lack of bottom-up knowledge. Stanovich (1980) argued that the interactive model is a process based on information from several sources such as orthographic, lexical, syntactic, semantic knowledge, and schemata. While reading, decoding processes can support one another in a compensatory way. If, when reading word by word, readers with good bottom-up skills do not comprehend the texts, they need to use their prior knowledge (schemata) to assist them. Readers who rely on the top-down model use textual clues and guess wildly at the meaning, but they need to compensate for deficits such as weaknesses in word recognition and lack of effective bottom-up processing. The interactive model, which is the combination of the bottom-up and top-down processes, leads to the most efficient processing of texts. Knowing that the interactive model can help L2 readers in achieving successful reading, teachers should find reading instructions based on this model to promote L2 readers' abilities. The reciprocal teaching approach is a type of reading instruction that is based on the interactive model. It covers four main reading strategies.

## IV. READING PROCESS AND READING STRATEGIES

There appears to be a consensus that reading is a highly complex cognitive process that involves the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text (Kern, 1989). In the reading process, the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning from it using various kinds of background knowledge: linguistic knowledge of words, sentences and paragraphs, and cognitive abilities (Carrell, 1989). Reading comprehension then involves a complex combination of the reader's cognitive process, language proficiency, and metacognitive processes (Cohen, 1998). The reader has to make inferences on the context of a text or on the end of a story by using information from various sources: the title, the illustrations, or generally from the previous paragraphs. Readers have to monitor their reading behavior and find out whether they understand the text (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). When a text is difficult, the reader might reread it (parts of it or the whole of it), or he/she can ask questions about it (Paris, Cross & Lipson, 1984). The reading comprehension processes occur when the reader understands the information in a text and appropriately and meaningfully interprets it (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Reading strategies are conscious and flexible plans that readers apply and adapt to a variety of texts. Reading strategies indicate how readers understand a task, what textual clues they attend to, how they make sense of what they have read, and what they do when they do not understand the reading texts. In order to help students to comprehend reading texts, it is necessary for the teachers to teach reading strategies in the English classrooms. That is, the teachers need to teach reading strategies with the proper steps (Graves, Connie, & Bonnie, 1998). The effective reading process is divided into three stages: (a) pre-reading, (b) while-reading, and (c) post-reading. These steps of the reading process help students systematically practice reading strategies (Cohen, 1998).

To begin with, in pre-reading, the readers need to apply specific strategies, including scanning and guessing, to survey the type of text they are going to read and to recognize its difficulties. They then read the title, link it to their schemata, and predict the content. These strategies help them create a narrow picture of the text and check whether their prediction is right or wrong (Cohen, 1998; Mejang, 2004). In the while-reading stage, the learners also need strategies such as self-questioning, self-monitoring, and problem-solving (Allen, 2003; Cohen, 1998). Students should be trained in questioning skills so that they can ask themselves questions on the salient points of a text. For example, they can ask a question about the main idea, the supporting details, or the conclusion. Self-monitoring is a strategy that readers use to check their comprehension (Cohen, 1998; Allen, 2003). It is an ongoing activity which involves two components: evaluation and regulation (Wenden, 1999). Evaluation refers to the readers' realization of a comprehension failure and to their assessment of comprehension progress, whereas regulation relates to the strategies used to remedy any comprehension breakdown (Zabrocky & Ratner, 1992). Cohen (1998) suggests the teacher should teach the useful strategies of summarizing, clarifying, rereading, and guessing so that the students possess a model of reading to solve the problems while reading. These strategies help the students find solutions to their difficulties when they are confronted with reading problems. Finally, in the post-reading stage, readers need to evaluate the strategies they used and the quality of their comprehension, and they need to respond to this self-evaluation by asking themselves what they

try to do, how they plan to do it, and how well they can do it. All of these questions help them evaluate whether their course of action is effective or not (Alderson, 2000).

Less proficient readers with insufficient knowledge of cognitive strategies cannot make sense of a text they have read because they fail to control or monitor their own reading process (Baker & Brown, 1984). Proficient readers, on the other hand, can apply appropriate cognitive reading strategies to facilitate their comprehension. They are also aware of their own reading process through which they apply regulatory mechanisms, the so-called metacognitive strategies proposed by Baker and Brown (1984), to control and monitor their reading behavior, in order to facilitate effectively the reading process (Baker & Brown, 1984). To achieve reading comprehension, the readers need linguistic knowledge, the ability to understand or comprehend a text by applying both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and an interactive relation between their prior knowledge and the information presented in the text. That is, reading comprehension occurs when skilled readers balance and coordinate many abilities in a very complex way to make comprehension proceed smoothly and more rapidly (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Reading in the first language (L1) is different from reading in the second language (L2). Second languages differ from first languages in their way of creating meaning and in their writing systems, so L2 reading, which involves two languages, is more complex than L1 reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). L2 reading comprehension is highly complex, dynamic, multi-componential, and multi-dimensional. L2 reading comprehension involves multiple interactions among readers. L2 readers perform the same functions as L1 readers, but their reading process could be slower and less successful (Phakiti, 2003). Reading proficiency in L2 does not develop as completely or as “easily” as it apparently does in one’s first language since many components are involved. The reading process is not passive, but highly interactive, and reading comprehension does not occur automatically. Good readers are active readers who construct meaning through the integration of prior knowledge and new knowledge, and the use of a variety of strategies to control, regulate, and monitor their own reading comprehension (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

#### V. COGNITIVE AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES AND READING COMPREHENSION

According to Dole et al., (1991), reading comprehension is a constructive process by which readers use both cognitive and metacognitive strategies to build their understanding of a text. Cognitive strategies include the target language and have different methods such as summarizing and deductive reasoning, predicting, using organization, taking notes on the main points, using prior knowledge, and guessing meaning from the context (Oxford, 1990). Metacognitive strategies are actions that allow readers to control their own reading; in other words, they are strategies based on “thinking about thinking.” That is, the readers know when and how to use these strategies and adapt them to suit their reading purposes. Metacognitive strategies involve planning, evaluating, and regulating one’s own skills. These include such skills as determining the reading task, evaluating the predictions, focusing on important information, relating important information, ignoring unimportant new words, checking the effectiveness of guessing meaning, re-reading relevant information when failure in understanding, and checking the effectiveness of achieving the whole reading task (Oxford, 1990).

Many researchers on reading strategy instruction According to Duffy (2002), Salataci and Akyel, (2002), state that metacognitive strategy training improves students’ reading comprehension. It gives students a chance to plan before reading, control their reading process, organize their own rules, and evaluate themselves. Metacognitive strategy training shapes the students to become independent readers which is the goal of reading. Thus, in the reading classrooms, students should be trained to use metacognitive strategies to help them comprehend texts. The reciprocal teaching approach is one of the reading instruction methods which covers both cognitive and metacognitive strategies and helps students improve their reading comprehension and thus become independent readers. The teachers guide their students towards the right strategies to be used and instruct when and how to use them. Following this, the students will construct their own knowledge and make their own rules while reading texts. In the end, they will be able to apply these strategies and, from their application within cooperative groups, to perform reading tasks without any help from others.

#### VI. RECIPROCAL TEACHING AND ITS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The reciprocal teaching method is one of the effective approaches that teach learners to become responsible for their reading and employ metacognitive reading strategies over cognitive reading strategies (Cohen, 1998). The reciprocal teaching method has been recognized as a valuable teaching method by many researchers, reading teachers, and educators because it is a form of systematic training in strategies that help less efficient readers improve their reading comprehension and become independent readers (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Duffy, 2002; Soonthornmanee, 2002; Adunyarittigun & Grant, 2005).

Theoretically, reciprocal teaching is based on Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (1978) and the proleptic model of teaching (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976, as cited in Manning & Payne, 1996). According to Vygotsky’s concept, children can develop their learning to reach a level of actual development by independently solving problems, and another level of potential development under adult guidance or expert scaffolding and in collaboration with more capable peers. For language teachers, it is necessary to provide the learners the tools that involve effective intervention and language learning strategies, and gradually remove these as the learners use them on their own.

The aim of reciprocal teaching is to instruct students with particular strategies that they can apply to new texts. According to Palincsar and Brown (1984), reciprocal teaching is an instructional approach that can be best characterized by three main features: (a) the scaffolding and explicit instruction which a teacher uses and which include guided practice and modeling of comprehension-fostering strategies, (b) the four main reading strategies of predicting, generating questions, clarifying, and summarizing, and (c) social interaction which provides opportunities for learners to improve their cognitive, metacognitive and affective strategies and offers them chances to share ideas, increase confidence, and learn from their more capable friends. These three features help improve the students' ability to resolve comprehension difficulties, reach a higher level of thinking, build metacognition, and increase motivation. Consequently, students create new knowledge from what they internalize and develop their reading potential. From these three features, students promote their metacognitive awareness: planning before they read, comprehension-monitoring or control of their own reading process while reading, and self-evaluation while reading and after reading, and if their self-evaluation points to any difficulties, effective readers fix those problems using the same process: planning, controlling, and evaluating.

The reciprocal teaching approach is one of the reading instruction methods which cover the necessary reading strategies: predicting, generating questions, clarifying, and summarizing. It helps students improve their reading comprehension, and thus become better readers. The aim of reciprocal teaching is to use discussion to improve students' reading comprehension, develop self-regulatory and monitoring skills, and achieve overall improvement in motivation (Allen, 2003). Its theoretical framework is based on three sociocultural theories namely, the zone of proximal development, proleptic teaching, and expert scaffolding (Brown & Palincsar, 1984). The zone of proximal development refers to a learner's potential ability to learn with help from an expert or a more capable partner. It is Vygotsky (1978) who pointed out that all learners have two levels of thinking development: an actual development level and a potential development level. The actual development refers to the thinking level at which children are able to solve problems by themselves, and the potential development refers to the thinking level at which learners need help from an expert or a more capable partner. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is the distance between the actual development and the potential development. Learners can push themselves from the actual development level to the potential level or learn beyond their actual development level with explicit scaffolding through social interaction until they internalize the strategies (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994).

The second concept that forms the theoretical ground of the reciprocal teaching is called proleptic teaching and refers to procedures most often found during apprenticeship instruction in which a teacher shapes a student until he or she is ready to perform the task independently (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). The significant feature of proleptic teaching is the transfer of responsibility from teacher to students. The teacher explains and models the process for solving problems, and while decreasing his or her role, transfers the responsibility of solving problems to the students (Rogoff & Garner, 1984). The last concept is called expert scaffolding. The expert acts as a guide, shaping the learning efforts of the students and providing support for the learning until the students do not need it (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994). Scaffolding procedures include limiting the tasks to make them manageable, motivating students, pointing out critical features, and demonstrating solutions to problems and explaining them to the students (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). These procedures help students to learn how to perform a task, how to solve problems, and they support them in their attempt to learn until they can perform the task independently. According to Greenfield (1984), scaffolding teaching is adapted to the learners' current learning state; when the learners' skills are developed, the teacher's scaffolding is decreased, and if the text is difficult, greater assistance and feedback are given to the students in order to shape their understanding. The teacher acts as a facilitator after the students do not need much help. Scaffolding is eventually internalized and thus promotes the independent performance of reading skills.

These approaches provided the background theories to reciprocal teaching in which: (a) the teacher guides the students into the right use of the four key strategies and gives them a chance to practice them; (b) the teacher acting as an expert models the whole process of the reciprocal teaching approach for the students' benefit; (c) the students, supported by expert peers, work in cooperative groups as the teacher decreases support in order for the learners to develop independent reading competence (Adunyarittigun & Grant, 2005).

## VII. RELATED RESEARCH ON RECIPROCAL TEACHING

In first language (L1) classrooms, research on reciprocal teaching and its effects on the reading abilities of different levels and groups of students has been extensively conducted: with primary and college students (Palincsar & Brown, 1986; Palincsar & David, 1990; Fillenworth, 1995), and with students with learning disabilities (Lederer, 2000). The results of these studies showed the positive effects of reciprocal teaching on the participants' reading comprehension abilities. Few studies have been conducted on reciprocal teaching. Adunyarittigun (2004), Ratanakul (1998), and Soonthornmanee (2002) studied the effects of reciprocal teaching on the reading comprehension of university students. The results showed that it had a positive effect on the participants' self-perception and reading performances. Konpan (2006) compared the effects of the reciprocal and communicative language teaching techniques on twelfth-grade students' reading comprehension. The results of this study revealed that the English reading comprehension of the reciprocal teaching group was significantly higher than that of the communicative language teaching group. The results

of the studies on reciprocal teaching in Thailand have also showed that it has positive effects on students' reading comprehension.

### VIII. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RECIPROCAL TEACHING AND READING COMPREHENSION

Palincsar and Brown (1984) explained that the purpose of reciprocal teaching is to promote the readers' ability to construct meaning from texts and facilitate the monitoring of their path to comprehension. It is based on a sociocultural method through which readers are modeled, explained, and guided in acquiring strategies within a social, supportive environment. The four main strategies of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing promote and enhance reading comprehension (Dole et al., 1991). Baker and Brown (1984) and Palincsar and Brown (1985) stated that those four main strategies were based on the following criteria: 1) the successful readers employ these strategies; 2) these strategies support both comprehension monitoring and comprehension fostering; 3) each strategy is applied when there is a problem in reading a text; 4) these strategies are regarded as metacognitive strategies. For these reasons, the readers who are taught through reciprocal teaching are more aware of their own thinking and reading process. They build effective reading plans such as setting a purpose to the reading, hypothesizing on what is being read, and drawing and testing hypotheses, interpretations, and predictions; they monitor and control their thinking process and check whether they understand; and they evaluate their own reading process, problem solving skills, and comprehension. Reciprocal teaching builds in the readers a metacognitive awareness of the active nature of reading, of task demands, and of self-regulating, in order to succeed in reading comprehension. It can be concluded that reciprocal teaching is a method providing vital reading strategy instruction that emphasizes on metacognitive awareness. Its goal is to improve readers' reading comprehension and to facilitate their becoming independent readers. It offers three features: scaffolding and direct instruction, practice of the four main strategies, and social interaction. It has been influenced by Vygotsky's developmental theory.

### IX. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, reciprocal teaching has a significantly positive effect on the English reading comprehension and metacognitive reading strategies of students. Reciprocal teaching enhances the reading ability of both the proficient and less proficient students. Students use the four key strategies and know what strategies to use, and when, why, and how to use each of them. They learn to predict, to generate questions, to identify the main idea of a paragraph, to clarify unclear words, phrases, or sentences, and to summarize their reading. The four key strategies help students overcome difficulties when reading texts as they plan and monitor their comprehension, and evaluate their planning and its outcome. For these reasons, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching is a kind of reading instruction that facilitates the teaching of English reading comprehension. Reciprocal teaching is one of the reading strategy instructions that improve readers' metacognitive awareness. It leads students to think about their reading process, develop a plan of action, monitor their own reading in order to construct their own knowledge, and self-evaluate their reading process. They are able to become independent readers, which is the goal of teaching reading for EFL students. To sum up, reciprocal teaching provides effective metacognitive reading strategy instructions because it incorporates scaffolding and explicit teaching of the four main strategies, which creates an environment that facilitates productive information processing and reading comprehension. There are many important pedagogical implications for teachers, students, and educators in an EFL reading context. The most obvious pedagogical implication is that reciprocal teaching is one of the reading strategy instructions which enhances the student readers' reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness. In practice, these findings can be applied in English reading classrooms as follows:

1. To teach EFL students to use the four main reading strategies of reciprocal teaching, the teachers should provide appropriate explanations, explicit modeling, and on-going guidance. Reciprocal teaching requires the teachers to model explicitly and step by step the process and the use of the metacognitive strategies. The students have to know what the four key strategies are and when, why, and how to use them. They need a lot of time to practice each strategy and they need consistent practice of all of them. Time is also a concern when learning is involved. Students should be given enough time for each step. Since it is not always easy for them to accept and understand the four main reading strategies and the steps of reciprocal teaching, they need time to implement them all, to work in groups, to adjust to the leading role, even with the help of their friends, to get used to the steps of reciprocal teaching in general, and to use them automatically in their individual reading. The teachers could help the students to understand the process and procedure of reciprocal teaching by checking their understanding in their native language in order to make sure that they understand and know these process and procedure. This would help students to be confident to work on their own in cooperative groups.

2. The teachers should increase their students' responsibility by gradually decreasing their prompts and modeling, as their role changes to facilitators. They need to be flexible and attentive to help each student. If the learners have problems, the teachers should provide support and guidance to ensure success during the teaching activities.

3. To help students while they are working in cooperative groups, the teachers should circulate around the room and listen to the students' interactions. If the learners need help, they should be taught in their groups using appropriate mini-lessons.

4. Teachers should choose materials based on their readers' ability, interest, and level of learning. The students might be given a shorter passage at the beginning and, with enough practice, they might be given a longer passage to help them feel more comfortable in their learning.

5. Reciprocal teaching can help students become more aware of metacognitive strategies through explicit instruction with social interaction, so they can learn gradually and control their own learning process. Reciprocal teaching has been shown to offer greater advantages over skill-based teaching. It is one of the successful metacognitive reading strategy instructions for EFL students. Thus, reciprocal teaching should be taken into consideration in order to adapt its implementation in the English reading class.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi, Alizadeh, and Babaei for their extensive and insightful discussions.

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# Emotional Intelligence and Its Relationship with English Teaching Effectiveness

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**Abstract**—This paper studied the responses of 1704 learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) to the Persian Characteristics of Effective English Language Teachers (CEELT) questionnaire and their 95 teachers' self report on Persian Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) in order to replicate Ghanizadeh and Moafian's (2009) study with a more homogeneous sample. In contrast to the significant and *positive* correlation found between teacher effectiveness as measured by the CEELT and emotional intelligence as measured by the EQ-I ( $r = .39, p < .05$ ) in their study, a significant but *negative* relationship was found between the two measures in this study ( $r = -.05, p < .05$ ). However, the findings of this study showed that among the five competencies comprising the EQ-I, i.e., *Intrapersonal*, *Interpersonal*, *Stress Management*, *Adaptability*, and *General Mood*, only *Interpersonal* relates significantly not only to teacher effectiveness but also to its five underlying factors, i.e., *Rapport*, *Fairness*, *Qualification*, *Facilitation* and *Examination* as does its *Empathy* component. Similarly, out of the remaining 14 components, *Social Responsibility* of *Interpersonal* competence correlates positively and significantly with the CEELT and its *Rapport*, *Fairness* and *Examination* factors. The implications of the study are discussed and suggestions are made for future research.

**Index Terms**—teacher effectiveness, emotional intelligence, factors, competencies, components

## I. INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a *foreign* language (EFL) requires *formal* education because it cannot be acquired naturally in a context such as Iran where no one speaks it either for communicative or for educational purposes. However, English is spoken as a *second* language in countries such as India to fulfill both functions. This very distinctive feature not only questions the position of scholars such as Yule (2006) who employ the expression “second language learning” (p. 163) interchangeably with EFL learning but also puts a largely neglected variable in language education, i.e., EFL teachers, into spotlight.

Moafian and Pishghadam (2008) were among the first researchers who developed a questionnaire to study teacher characteristics. By adding eight characteristics to 39 selected from 14 studies by Suwadee (1995), they designed a 47-item questionnaire called VIZHEGIHAYEH MODARESSAN MOVAFAGH ZABAN ENGLISI (p. 127), i.e., characteristics of successful English language teachers. By administering the questionnaire to 250 Persian EFL learners in Mashhad, Iran, and utilizing Principle Axis Factoring (PAF) along with Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization, Moafian and Pishghadam extracted twelve factors, i.e., *Attention to all*, *Examination*, *Commitment*, *Learning boosters*, *Creating a sense of competence*, *Teaching boosters*, *Physical and emotional acceptance*, *Empathy*, *Class attendance*, and *Dynamism*.

Birjandi and Bagherkazemi (2010) renamed Moafian and Pishghadam's (2008) questionnaire as the “Successful Iranian EFL Teacher Questionnaire (SIETQ)” (p. 135) and tried to explore its relationship with critical thinking. Similarly, Khodadady (2010) renamed it as *Characteristics of Effective English Language Teachers* (CEELT) and explored its factorial validity with a more homogenous sample. While Moafian and Pishghadam validated it with 250 young and adult EFL learners whose age ranged between 14 to 36 (mean = 17.07), Khodadady administered it to 1469 high school EFL learners aged 14 (17.8%), 15 (33.6%), 16 (15.7%), 17 (17.8%), 18 (11.8%) and 19 (3.2%) with a mean of 15.82 and standard deviation of 1.40. He extracted only five factors called *Rapport*, *Fairness*, *Qualification*, *Facilitation* and *Examination*. The extraction of five instead of twelve latent variables from the CEELT paved the way to explore the relationship not only between teacher effectiveness and emotional intelligence (EI) but also between factors that underlie these two educationally important constructs. The EI was chosen to be explored with the CEELT for two reasons. First, it has attracted attention from almost all fields of social sciences. Fernandez-Berrocal and Extremera (2006), for example, reviewed the first 15 years of EI history and declared that it has gained popularity because a large number of professionals have acknowledged its importance in their fields in general and its contribution to evaluative and formative tasks in particular (e.g., Caruso & Salovey, 2004; Feldman-Barret & Salovey, 2002). After reviewing 69 independent studies Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) declared that the EI has become “one of the most topical areas in organizational research” (pp. 71-2).

Two basic models are generally followed to measure the EI, i.e., ability (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, Brackett & Salovey, 2006) and self-rating report (Bar-On 1997, 2006). The first forms the basis of *Mayer-Salovey-Caruso*

*Emotional Intelligence Test* (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002; Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001; 2003) which assesses the perception and understanding of simple and complex emotions in people and artistic products, assimilating emotions in thinking and decision making and regulating one's and others' emotions to achieve desired goals. Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) believed that the ability-based EI measures "are less susceptible to faking than other measures that are more transparent" (p. 72).

Eysenck (1975), however, reviewed the research dealing with emotion measurement and declared that it has been achieved through three parameters, i.e., physiologically by measuring heart rates, introspectively via self-report, and observationally through studying behaviours. He concluded that "the evidence suggests that verbal report, far from being a throwback to pre-behaviouristic days, is in many ways the preferred method of measuring and indexing states of emotional arousal" (p. 441).

Instead of measuring the EI through abilities such as perceiving and understanding emotions, Bar-On (1997, 2006), therefore, designed his own EQ-I through which test takers could rate certain verbal reports as a measure of their own EI. In order to establish the EQ-I as a distinct measure of intelligence, Bar-On (1997) administered it along with the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) and found no significant relationship between them ( $r = .12$ ,  $n = 40$ ) and thus concluded that the EQ-i had divergent validity. Similarly, Derksen, Kramer, and Datzko (2002) could not find any significant relationship between the EQ-i and the General Adult Mental Ability Scale (GAMA). However, the EQ-I scales of stress and general mood were significantly but weakly related to GAMA ( $r = .10$  and  $r = .12$ , respectively,  $n = 489$ ).

The second reason for exploring the relationship between the EI and the CEELT was to replicate the study of Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2009) [henceforth G & M] with a more homogenous sample. They administered the EQ-I along with their "Characteristics of successful EFL teachers" questionnaire, i.e., CEELT, to 826 EFL learners whose age ranged between 14 and 66 ( $M = 22.15$ ,  $SD = 5.73$ ). Their educational level was as divergent as their age in that it "varied from high school to PhD" (p. 3). The participants of the present study were, however, high school students only whose age ranged between 14 and 19 ( $M = 15.82$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ). This study was conducted to find out whether the CEELT and the EQ-I would correlate significantly with each other as they did in G&M's study, i.e.,  $r = .39$ ,  $p < .05$ . It also investigated whether the competencies and components of the EQ-I would correlate significantly with the factors underlying the CEELT.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

Two groups of people took part in the present study: English language learners and English language teachers

#### 1. English Language Learners

The CEELT was administered to 1704, 682 (40%) male and 1022 (60%) female, high school students. They were majoring in general courses ( $n = 699$ , 41%), accounting ( $n = 19$ , 1.3%), computer, ( $n = 30$ , 1.8%), experimental sciences ( $n = 346$ , 20.3%), humanities ( $n = 219$ , 12.9%), and mathematics ( $n = 391$ , 22.8%) at grade 1 ( $n = 690$ , 40.5%), grade 2 ( $n = 348$ , 20.4%), grade 3 ( $n = 278$ , 16.3%) and pre-university ( $n = 388$ , 22.8%). Out of 1704 learners, 980 (57.5%) were studying English at 21 public high schools in the sixth educational district of Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan-e-Razavi province, Iran. The rest, i.e., 724 (42.5%), studied English at beginning, intermediate and advanced English language proficiency levels at four private language institutes in the same city. The learners' age ranged between 14 and 19 (Mean = 15.84,  $SD = 1.39$ ). They conversed in Persian as their mother language.

#### 2. English Language Teachers

Ninety five teachers of English in public high schools ( $n = 47$ , 49.5%) and private language institutes ( $n = 48$ , 50.5%) participated in the study voluntarily. Sixty seven (70.5%) were female and 28 (29.5%) were male in gender. Their age ranged between 20 and 52 (Mean = 33.92,  $SD = 7.52$ ). The teachers held BA/BSc ( $n = 74$ , 77.9%) and MA/MSc ( $n = 21$ , 22.1%) in applied mathematics ( $n = 1$ , 1.1%), arts ( $n = 1$ , 1.1%), engineering (3, 3.3%), English language and literature ( $n = 38$ , 40.0%), English translation ( $n = 8$ , 8.4%), linguistics ( $n = 10$ , 10.5%) and teaching English as a foreign language ( $n = 34$ , 35.8%). The teachers all spoke Persian as their mother language.

### B. Instruments

Two instruments were used in the present study, i.e., Characteristics of Effective English Language Teachers (CEELT) and BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I).

#### 1. CEELT

The Persian CEELT comprised two parts. The first raised five multiple choice and short-answer questions related to participants' gender, age, English language achievement, field and year of study. The second, however, called for reading the 47 statements and indicating whether the participants' English teachers possessed the specified characteristics and exhibited certain behaviours in the class on the basis of a five-point Likert scale, i.e., completely agree, agree, to some extent agree, disagree, and completely disagree. The scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, were assigned to these points, respectively. Both sections of the CEELT were presented in Persian in this study to avoid possible misunderstandings on the part of English language learners. (The English version of the CEELT is given as Appendix 1).

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the CEELT and its underlying latent variables extracted by Khodadady (2010) with PAF and rotated via Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. As can be seen, the CEELT enjoys an excellent reliability level, i.e.,  $\alpha = .97$ . Among its five factors, *Fairness* and *Qualification* are the most reliable, i.e.,  $\alpha = .92$  and  $.90$ , respectively. The lowest reliability coefficient belongs to *Examination*, i.e.,  $\alpha = .72$ . However, considering the fact that all acceptably cross loading items have been removed from the factors and *Examination* comprises only two characteristics, this level of reliability sounds acceptable.

TABLE 1.  
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CEELT AND ITS FIVE FACTORS

Factors	# of item	Loading Characteristics	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Alpha
Rapport	7	3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 24	5.961	12.1%	.83
Fairness	15	25, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47	5.499	11.5%	.92
Qualification	14	1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32	4.910	11.2%	.90
Facilitation	9	10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 26, 27, 37	4.020	9.6%	.85
Examination	2	19, 20	1.964	4.2%	.72
CEELT	47		-	48.6%	.97

## 2. EQ-I

The EQ-I developed by Bar-On (1996) and translated into Persian by Dehshiry (2003) was employed in this study. It consists of 133 positively or negatively-keyed items presented on a Likert Scale of five points. The EFL teachers were required to decide whether each statement was 1) very seldom, 2) seldom, 3) sometimes, 4) often, or 5) very often true of them or not true of them. A value of 0 was also assigned to any statement whose application to the respondents was not specified.

The self-report EQ-I measures five broad areas of skills or competencies and 15 factorial components, i.e., intrapersonal intelligence (emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, independence); interpersonal intelligence (empathy, interpersonal relationships, social responsibility); adaptability (problem solving, reality testing, flexibility); stress management (stress tolerance, impulse control); and general mood (happiness, optimism). Higher scores indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 1997, 2003). Fahim and Pishghadam (2007) administered the Persian version of the EQ-I to 508 university students of English and reported an alpha reliability coefficient of  $.86$ . They did not, however, report any reliability estimates for the competencies measured by the EQ-I.

## C. Procedure

After securing the approval of English language teachers and learners and setting a certain date for the administration of questionnaires, the researcher attended the classes in person and had the learners take the CEELT while their teacher completed the EQ-I. All the directions were given in Persian and both the learners and teachers were encouraged to raise questions if they faced any problems understanding any statement. The participants were asked not to write their names so that their identity remained anonymous. Some teachers, however, showed interest in the EQ-I and asked the researcher to provide them with the results whenever available. Upon scoring the test these teachers were contacted either in person or on phone and their scores were reported.

## D. Data Analysis

The reliability of the CEELT and EQ-I was estimated by employing Cronbach Alpha. The relationships among the factors underlying the CEELT and the competencies measured by the EQ-I were explored via Bivariate Pearson Correlation coefficients. In determining the descriptive statistics of the CEELT and correlating its five underlying factors with each other, the highest acceptable loading of a cross loading characteristic on a given factor was accepted arbitrarily as its main contribution to that particular factor and its acceptable cross loadings on other factors were removed. All the statistical analyses were conducted by utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 19.0 to test the following five research hypotheses.

H1. The magnitude of significant correlation found between the CEELT and the EQ-I will be similar to the one reported by G&M.

H2. The CEELT will correlate significantly with the five competencies of the EQ-I.

H3. The five factors underlying the CEELT will correlate significantly with the five competencies of the EQ-I.

H4. The CEELT will correlate significantly with the fifteen components of the EQ-I.

H5. The five factors underlying the CEELT will correlate significantly with the fifteen components of the EQ-I.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, reliability and correlation coefficients of factors underlying the CEELT. (The descriptive statistics of the answers given to 47 items comprising the CEELT and the rounded percentage of five points chosen by 1704 EFL learners are given in appendix 2.) As can be seen, the CEELT is a highly reliable measure of teacher effectiveness, i.e.,  $\alpha = .97$ . The alpha of its lowest reliable factor ( $.72$ ), i.e., *Examination*, is noticeably higher than the lowest reliable competence on the EQ-I, i.e., Interpersonal ( $\alpha = .62$ ). The difference becomes more outstanding

when it is pointed out that *Examination* consists of only two items whereas *Interpersonal* comprises 24. *Examination* also shows the lowest significant relationships not only with the CEELT ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ) itself but also with other four factors, i.e. *Rapport* ( $r = .41, p < .01$ ), *Fairness* ( $r = .50, p < .01$ ), *Qualification* ( $r = .49, p < .01$ ), and *Facilitation* ( $r = .52, p < .01$ ).

TABLE 2.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RELIABILITY AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF FACTORS UNDERLYING THE CEELT

	# of items	Mean	SD	Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Rapport	7	28.22	6.722	.83	1	.77*	.76*	.73*	.41*	.87*
2 Fairness	15	60.47	12.898	.92	.77*	1	.83*	.80*	.50*	.95*
3 Qualification	14	60.37	9.666	.90	.76*	.83*	1	.78*	.49*	.92*
4 Facilitation	9	31.56	8.344	.85	.73*	.80*	.78*	1	.52*	.90*
5 Examination	2	7.27	2.532	.72	.41*	.50*	.49*	.52*	1	.58*
6 CEELT	47	187.90	35.932	.97	.87*	.95*	.92*	.90*	.58*	1

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

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics, reliability and correlation coefficients obtained among the five competencies of the EQ-I. It must be noted that out of 133 items comprising the EQ-i, fifteen, i.e., 5, 12, 25, 34, 41, 50, 57, 65, 71, 79, 94, 101, 109, 115, and 123 have been inserted by their designer to secure positive impression, negative impression and response validity only. The final item, i.e., 133, is also a self-report on honesty of responding and is included neither in its five competencies nor in its fifteen components. (The descriptive statistics of the answers given to 56 positive and 61 reverse items comprising the EQ-I and the rounded percentage of five points chosen by 95 EFL teachers are given in Appendix 3.)

TABLE 3.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RELIABILITY AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF COMPETENCIES UNDERLYING THE EQ-I

EQ-i and its Scales	# of items	Mean	SD	Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Intra-personal	40	151.65	18.2	.91	1	.42*	.59*	.73*	.71*	.89*
2 Inter-personal	24	115.97	12.5	.63	.42*	1	.28*	.44*	.45*	.62*
3 Stress Management	18	63.76	9.9	.88	.59*	.28*	1	.69*	.61*	.78*
4 Adaptability	26	98.16	12.1	.88	.73*	.44*	.69*	1	.71*	.90*
5 General Mood	17	68.91	7.7	.83	.71*	.45*	.61*	.71*	1	.83*
6 EQ-i	117	446.85	44.8	.94	.89*	.62*	.78*	.90*	.83*	1

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

As can be seen in Table 3, the 117-item EQ-I is highly reliable, i.e.,  $\alpha = .94$ , as is its *Intrapersonal* competency, i.e.,  $\alpha = .91$ . Among the five competencies, *Interpersonal* has the lowest reliability, i.e.,  $\alpha = .63$ , which might be attributed to its three cross loading items, i.e., **23**, **31**, and **62**, contributing to *Intrapersonal* and *General Mood* competencies as well. Similarly, Item **11** contributes to both *Intrapersonal* and *General Mood*, **20** to *Stress Management* and *General Mood*, **35** to *Intrapersonal* and *Adaptability*, **88** to *Intrapersonal* and *Adaptability*, **108** to *Stress Management* and *General Mood*, respectively, indicating that the five competencies comprise 125 items whereas the EQ-I itself consists of 117.

As it can also be seen in Table 3 above, in addition to the inter correlation coefficients among the EQ-I and its five subscales, their reliability and descriptive statistics are given in this study. They are also reported as the total score, the validity score and 15 components in the literature (see Hemmati, Mills, & Kroner, 2004). However, G&M have reported only the descriptive statistics of the EQ-I as shown in Table 4. As can be seen, G&M did not specify how many items of the EQ-I they included in their descriptive, reliability and correlation analyses. However, it can be inferred from their result that they included all 133 items in their analysis otherwise more than half of their participants must have chosen *often true of me* having the value of 4 for all 117 items. If we multiply 117 by 4, the result would be 468, which is lower than the reported mean by G&M, i.e., 470.16, supporting the inference made in this study.

TABLE 4.  
CONTRASTIVE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE EQ-I OBTAINED IN THIS STUDY (TS) AND G&M

# of items		Minimum		Maximum		Mean		SD	
TS	G&M	TS	G&M	TS	G&M	TS	G&M	TS	G&M
117	-	327	349	548	572	446.85	470.16	44.80	53.68

It seems that G&M have unknowingly included the positive impression (PI) scale, negative impression (NI) scale, and inconsistency index (II) in their correlational analysis of the data obtained on the EQ-I and CEELT. These scales and indices are inserted in the EQ-I to determine the validity of the individual scores. The PI is, for example, developed to

... detect dissimulation or the feigning of enhanced emotional functioning. When these scores are elevated, the respondent may have consciously attempted to give a positive impression or engage in self-deception, show lack of self-insight, or possess an unwillingness to face his or her limitations. Sometimes a high PI score could also mean a need for social conformity, approval, self-protection, or avoidance of criticism (Butler & Chinowsky, 2006, p. 121).

Bar-On (2003) himself, for example, reported the performance of an individual on the EQ-I and concluded that “the validity indicators are all in the acceptable range suggesting valid responses and results that are not unduly influenced by response style” (p. 11). Bar-On (2002), however, questioned the performance of a group of five people on the EQ-I because of markedly high scores on the PI scale and announced that “the scores provided in this report may not accurately represent the emotional functioning of this group. Use additional sources of information to further analyze/verify these results (p. 22)” Since no interpretation of scores are *usually* intended in research projects some scholars like Batool (2009) and Batool and Khalid (2011) excluded validity items from their study. In the present study, these items have, nonetheless, been included in the inventory itself but excluded from statistical analysis.

The reliability coefficient obtained on the 117-item EQ-I in this study, i.e.,  $\alpha = .94$ , is far greater than the coefficient obtained by G&M, i.e.,  $\alpha = .80$ , highlighting the fact that the administration of the same test to a relatively larger sample, i.e., 95 vs. 89, and excluding its validity and honesty items increases its reliability. Although the inclusion of more items and making inventories like the EQ-I longer usually renders them more reliable, the coefficient reported by G&M is noticeably lower.

Table 5 presents the correlation coefficient obtained among the EQ-I, CEELT and their competencies and factors. As can be seen, there is a negative but significant relationship between the CEELT and EQ-I ( $r = -.05$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This finding is in sharp contrast to that of G&M ( $r = .39$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and thus disconfirms the first hypothesis that *the magnitude of significant correlation found between the CEELT and the EQ-I will be similar to the one reported by G&M*. While this study shows that the EQ-I does not explain more than 0.25% of variance in the CEELT, it amounts to 15.2% in G&M’s study. Furthermore, the direction of relationship is different in the two studies. The correlation coefficient obtained in the present study shows that the more emotionally intelligent the EFL teachers are, the less effective they will be in their classes and thus contradicts G&M’s finding.

TABLE 5.  
CORRELATIONS AMONG THE COMPETENCIES OF EQ-I AND FACTORS OF CEELT

EQ-I and its five competencies	CEELT		CEELT factors				
	This study	G&M	Rapport	Fairness	Qualification	Facilitation	Examination
EQ-i	-.05*	.39*	-.07**	-.05*	-.01	-.09**	.04
Intrapersonal	.00	-	-.04	.00	.06*	-.03	.05
Interpersonal	.07**	-	.08**	.07**	.08**	.01	.10**
Stress Management	-.16**	-	-.18**	-.14**	-.14**	-.16**	-.06*
Adaptability	-.11**	-	-.12**	-.10**	-.07**	-.13**	.01
General Mood	-.03	-	-.03	-.03	-.00	-.04	.02

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

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

The results obtained in this study, however, show that there is a positive and significant relationship between the *Interpersonal* competence of EI and the CEELT ( $r = .07$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Similar to the EQ-I, however, its *Stress Management* ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and *Adaptability* ( $r = -.11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) competencies correlate significantly but negatively with the CEELT. Although these findings provide 60% of confirmation for the second hypothesis and shows that the CEELT correlates significantly with *three* competencies of the EQ-I, only *Interpersonal* (20%) correlates positively with the CEELT. The amount of variance in the CEELT which is explained by this competency, i.e., 0.49, is almost twice the variance explained by the EQ-I itself, i.e., 0.25.

Among the five competencies of the EQ-I, the *Interpersonal* correlates positively and significantly with the *Rapport* ( $r = .08$ ,  $p < .01$ ), *Fairness* ( $r = .07$ ,  $p < .01$ ), *Qualification* ( $r = .08$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and *Examination* ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < .01$ ) factors underlying the CEELT. As the second scale of the EI, the *Intrapersonal* competency correlates positively and significantly *only* with one factor, i.e., *Qualification* ( $r = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These results largely *disconfirm* the third hypothesis that *the five factors underlying the CEELT will correlate significantly with the five competencies of the EQ-I*.

As can be seen in Table 4, the highest *positive* relationship obtained between the EI competencies and CEELT factors is between *Interpersonal* and *Examination*, indicating that the more interpersonally intelligent the EFL teachers are, the more favorably their learners rate their examination activities. This finding is, however, in sharp contrast to what Khodadady and Mirjalili (2012) found in their administration of the CEELT and the NEO-FFI to 1260 EFL learners and their 118 teachers. They found a negatively significant correlation between the *Extroversion* dimension of teacher personality and *Examination* ( $r = -.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ), requiring a closer examination of components comprising the *Interpersonal* competency of the EQ-I.

Table 6 presents the correlation coefficients (CCs) obtained among the fifteen EQ-I components and the CEELT as well as its five factors. As can be seen, the CEELT correlates positively and significantly *only* with two components, i.e., *Empathy* ( $r = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and *Social Responsibility* ( $r = .05$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These results *disconfirm* the fourth hypothesis that *The CEELT will correlate significantly with the fifteen components of the EQ-I*.

TABLE 6.  
CORRELATIONS AMONG THE COMPONENTS OF THE EQ-I AND RAPPORT (R), FAIRNESS (FAIR), QUALIFICATION (Q), FACILITATION (F) AND EXAMINATION (E) FACTORS COMPRISING THE CEELT

Competencies	Components	CEELT	R	Fair	Q	F	E
Intrapersonal	Self-Regard	-.00	-.03	-.01	.03	-.03	.05*
	Emotional Self-Awareness	.04	.01	.03	.06**	.01	.08**
	Assertiveness	-.01	-.05*	-.03	.06*	-.03	.04
	Independence	-.03	-.06*	-.02	.02	-.05*	-.01
	Self-Actualization	.02	-.02	.03	.06*	-.01	.03
Interpersonal	Empathy	.11**	.10**	.11**	.10**	.05*	.08**
	Social Responsibility	.05*	.06**	.05*	.05	-.01	.12**
	Interpersonal Relationships	.04	.04	.02	.07**	.00	.05
Stress Management	Stress Tolerance	-.19**	-.21**	-.18**	-.14**	-.16**	-.10**
	Impulse Control	-.11**	-.12**	-.08**	-.10**	-.12**	-.01
Adaptability	Reality Testing	.014	-.02	.01	.03	.01	.06*
	Flexibility	-.16**	-.16**	-.14**	-.12**	-.19**	-.04
	Problem Solving	-.13**	-.13**	-.12**	-.09**	-.16**	-.00
General Mood	Optimism	.01	-.02	.01	.04	-.01	.04
	Happiness	-.05*	-.03	-.05*	-.04	-.06*	.00

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

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

Among the 15 components, Stress Tolerance shows the highest significant but negative correlation with the CEELT ( $r = -.19, p < .01$ ). Furthermore, it correlates negatively and significantly with *Rapport* ( $r = -.21, p < .01$ ), *Fairness*, ( $r = -.18, p < .01$ ), *Qualification*, ( $r = -.14, p < .01$ ), *Facilitation* ( $r = -.16, p < .01$ ), and *Examination* ( $r = -.10, p < .01$ ), indicating that the more stress tolerant the EFL teachers are, the less effective in general and the less communicative, fair, qualified, facilitative and evaluative they will be in particular in their teaching! Similar negative but significant relationship was found between the other component of Stress Management competency of the EQ-I, i.e., Impulse Control, and the CEELT ( $r = -.11, p < .01$ ) and its *Rapport* ( $r = -.12, p < .01$ ), *Fairness*, ( $r = -.08, p < .01$ ), *Qualification*, ( $r = -.10, p < .01$ ), and *Facilitation* ( $r = -.12, p < .01$ ) factors, indicating that more effective EFL teaching in Mashhad requires less Impulse Control.

The negative but significant relationship between Stress Management and EFL teacher effectiveness can be attributed to certain features unique to the job. For example, in response to the reverse item 27, i.e., *when I start talking, it is hard to stop*, 2 (2.1%), 9 (9.5%), 24 (25.3%), 44 (46.3%), and 16 (16.8%) teachers accepted that it is very often, often, sometimes, seldom and very seldom true of them, respectively. Their responses might hold true as far as their personal life is concerned, however, the researcher's experience as an EFL teacher shows that most of the talking in EFL classes is done by the teacher.

As it can also be seen in Table 6, *Empathy* is the only component of the EQ-I which correlates positively and significantly with all the five factors underlying the CEELT, i.e., *Rapport* ( $r = .11, p < .01$ ), *Fairness* ( $r = .10, p < .01$ ), *Qualification* ( $r = .10, p < .01$ ), *Facilitation* ( $r = .05, p < .05$ ), and *Examination* ( $r = .08, p < .01$ ). These results *disconfirm* the fifth hypothesis that *the five factors underlying the CEELT will correlate significantly with the fifteen components of the EQ-I*.

Among the three components comprising the *Interpersonal* competence of the EQ-I, it is *Social Responsibility* whose magnitude of correlation with the CEELT is the same as the EQ-I and CEELT but in a positive direction ( $r = .05, p < .05$ ). These results indicate that the EQ-I as a whole measures a trait whose constituting components reveal directionally opposite relationships with teacher effectiveness with the same degree of relationship or even higher. While out of 15 components of the EQ-I, two correlate positively with the CEELT, i.e., *Social Responsibility* ( $r = .05, p < .05$ ) and *Empathy* ( $r = .11, p < .01$ ), five correlate negatively, i.e., *Happiness* ( $r = -.05, p < .05$ ), *Impulse Control* ( $r = -.11, p < .01$ ), *Problem Solving* ( $r = -.13, p < .01$ ), *Flexibility* ( $r = -.16, p < .01$ ), and *Stress Tolerance* ( $r = -.19, p < .01$ ).

Similar to Reverse item 27, item 58, *People tell me to lower my voice in discussions*, provides another example which explains the negative but significant relationships found between *Impulse Control*, a component of Stress Management, and the CEELT. Three (3.2%), 8 (8.4%), 31 (32.6%), 24 (25.3%), and 29 (30.5%) EFL teachers accepted that the statement is very often, often, sometimes, seldom and very seldom true of them, respectively. These results show that while 44.2% of EFL teachers do very often, often and sometimes, raise their voices in discussions with people in general, they have to do so most of the time, say 90% or even more, in order to have all learners hear them in oft-crowded EFL classes, hence a negative relationship between *Impulse Control*, the CEELT and its *Rapport*, *Fairness*, *Qualification*, and *Facilitation* factors.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

By administering the two Persian CEELT and EQ-I questionnaires to 1704 EFL learners and 95 teachers of the same learners in Mashhad, Iran, the relationship between EFL teacher effectiveness and their emotional intelligence was explored in this study by replicating G&M's study which had established a relatively strong and significant relationship between the two. The results of this study did not, however, support their finding in terms of the magnitude and

direction of relationship. As two distinct measures employed in EFL learning and teaching, the CEELT and EQ-I do not reveal consistent relationships with each other in terms of their underlying constructs, competencies, components and factors.

As two constructs, the CEELT and EQ-I correlate significantly and negatively with each other and explain *only* a tiny amount of variance in each other, i.e., 0.25%. Although this significant relationship is very low, it does show that the more emotionally intelligent the EFL teachers are, the less effective they will become in their teaching in Mashhad. This conclusion is, however, challenged because of the complexity involved in the structure of the EQ-I and the nature of its items.

Structurally, the EQ-I contains cross loading items which contribute not only to two different competencies but also to two different components. Item 11, *I feel sure of myself in most situations*, is, for example, a part of General Mood and Intrapersonal competencies and their Optimism and Self-Regard components, respectively. It is, therefore, suggested that factorial studies be conducted on the Persian EQ-I with specific samples such as EFL teachers to find out whether items such as eleven would cross load on more than one factor. These cross loading items should have contributed to the degree and type of relationships found in this study.

Ontologically, the EQ-I contains validity items such as item 94, *I have not broken a law of any kind*, which have been designed to measure positive impressions. The inclusion of validity items seem to have resulted in obtaining high correlations between the CEELT and EQ-I such as the coefficient reported by G&M. In addition to making the EQ-I too long, the contribution of these items to the assessment of EI is questionable, at least in research contexts where the respondents remain anonymous and thus their tendency to leave a positive impression on researchers becomes irrelevant if not meaningless. It is therefore suggested that the validity items be removed in future studies.

In addition to the construct measured by the EQ-I, its five competencies relate differently to teacher effectiveness. While *Intrapersonal* and *General Mood* do not relate significantly to the CEELT, the magnitude of significant correlations found between *Interpersonal*, *Stress Management*, and *Adaptability* competencies and the CEELT was higher than that of EQ-I and CEELT. However, among the three significantly correlating competencies, only *Interpersonal* shows positive relationship with the CEELT, indicating that the more interpersonally intelligent the EFL teachers are, the more effective they will be in their teachings.

The *Interpersonal* competency of the EQ-I also correlated positively and significantly with the *Rapport*, *Fairness*, *Qualification* and *Examination* factors of the CEELT. The *Intrapersonal* was the other competency which did the same with the *Qualification* factor of the CEELT only. These results indicate that the more interpersonally intelligent the EFL teachers are, the more effective they become in establishing rapport with their learners, implementing fairness, applying their qualification to teaching and including examination as an integral part of teaching. They also indicate the more qualified the EFL teachers are, the more intrapersonally intelligent they become.

Among the fifteen components comprising the five competencies, only those belonging to the *Intrapersonal* and *Interpersonal* competencies correlate positively and significantly with the five factors constituting the CEELT. While seven out of fifteen components comprising the EQ-I correlate significantly with the CEELT, five of these seven components show negative relationships with the CEELT, i.e., *Impulse Control*, *Problem Solving*, *Flexibility*, *Stress Tolerance*, and *Happiness*. Only *Empathy* and *Social Responsibility* correlate positively and significantly with the CEELT. The findings of this study thus challenge the assertion that the EI is “an array of emotional and social abilities, competencies and skills that enable individuals to cope with daily demands and be more effective in their personal and social life” (Bar-On, Tranel, Denburg, & Bechara, 2003, p. 1790). They indicate that EFL teacher effectiveness as measured by the CEELT requires less *Impulse Control*, *Problem Solving*, *Flexibility*, *Stress Tolerance*, and *Happiness* unless they are measured by a different scale. It is therefore suggested that either the EQ-I and CEELT be modified or different measures of EFL teacher effectiveness and emotional intelligence be employed to explore the relationship.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Ali Shariati Faculty of Letters and Humanities at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad funded this study via grant coded 2/15545. The author wishes to acknowledge the support of its authorities and express his gratitude for their approval of the grant in session 167 on November 2, 2010.

#### APPENDIX 1 CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS (CEELT)

Directions: There are 47 statements in this questionnaire. Read each statement carefully and decide whether you completely agree (CA), agree (A), to some extent agree (SEA), disagree (D) and completely disagree (CD) with it. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer. Each statement simply reflects your views, feelings, and attitudes towards your English teachers.

My English teacher ...	CD	D	SEA	A	CA
01 Has a good knowledge of subject matter.					
02 Has up to date information.					
03 Is friendly towards learners.					
04 Respects learners as individuals.					
05 Understands learners well.					
06 Has the ability to manage the classroom well.					
07 Is good-tempered.					
08 Is patient.					
09 Has a sense of humour.					
10 Is aware of new teaching methods and strategies.					
11 Uses extra instructional materials such as tapes, movies, etc.					
12 Enjoys teaching.					
13 Is interested in the subject matter he/she is teaching.					
14 Has self-confidence.					
15 Has the ability to stimulate learners in learning.					
16 Knows his/her learners well (talents, abilities, weaknesses).					
17 Uses good learners to help weaker ones.					
18 Gives sufficient number of assignments.					
19 Holds adequate number of tests.					
20 Is prompt in returning test results.					
21 Is well-prepared for the class.					
22 Is careful and precise in answering learners' questions.					
23 Emphasizes important materials and points.					
24 Is a dynamic and energetic person.					
25 Pays attention to all students.					
26 Is willing to help learners in and out of the classroom.					
27 Encourages learners in different ways.					
28 Speaks clearly with a correct pronunciation.					
29 Has clean and tidy appearance.					
30 Presents materials at learners' level of comprehension.					
31 Enters the classroom on time.					
32 Leaves the classroom on time.					
33 Respects all ideas.					
34 Accepts constructive criticisms.					
35 Has the subject matter well-organized according to the number of sessions and hours					
36 Is impartial in grading.					
37 Has creativity in teaching.					
38 Involves all students in learning.					
39 Creates equal opportunities for learners' participation in the classroom.					
40 Creates opportunities for discussion and asking questions.					
41 Avoids discriminating against learners.					
42 Attends to the learners problems in learning.					
43 Divides class time appropriately for the different language skills according to the purposes of the course.					
44 Avoids making fun of the learners.					
45 Avoids being too strict.					
46 Creates self-confidence in learners.					
47 Emphasizes the presence of students in the classroom.					

## APPENDIX 2

Descriptive statistics of the answers given to 47 items comprising the CEELT Questionnaire and the rounded percentage of five points chosen by 1704 EFL learners



Item	Mean	SD	Missing	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Disagree omewhat	Agree	Completely Agree
1	4.40	.904	1	1	1	11	27	60
2	4.17	.975	0	2	4	15	32	47
3	3.99	1.218	1	5	7	18	22	48
4	4.28	1.050	1	2	4	14	21	59
5	3.85	1.206	1	5	7	20	28	38
6	4.22	1.085	1	3	4	12	26	54
7	4.20	1.153	1	4	4	14	20	57
8	4.10	1.172	1	4	6	15	23	52
9	3.71	1.396	1	11	9	17	21	42
10	3.85	1.193	2	4	7	20	32	36
11	2.72	1.554	2	31	15	17	15	19
12	4.24	1.007	0	2	4	13	27	53
13	4.32	.884	1	1	3	11	32	53
14	4.45	.850	1	1	1	8	27	62
15	3.74	1.276	1	7	9	19	28	36
16	3.82	1.242	2	5	7	19	29	38
17	2.93	1.453	3	18	20	22	17	20
18	3.85	1.347	2	7	8	16	22	45
19	3.57	1.444	3	9	10	18	25	35
20	3.69	1.425	3	8	8	17	25	39
21	4.30	1.083	1	2	3	11	23	59
22	4.29	1.090	1	3	3	10	23	59
23	4.40	1.019	1	2	3	9	21	64
24	4.09	1.201	1	5	7	13	24	52
25	3.90	1.283	1	6	7	17	23	45
26	3.63	1.317	2	7	10	22	27	33
27	3.31	1.388	2	12	15	22	24	25
28	4.19	1.189	1	5	5	11	21	57
29	4.46	1.003	1	2	2	8	17	69
30	4.15	1.112	1	3	3	13	30	49
31	4.46	.956	1	1	2	8	20	67
32	4.30	1.114	1	4	4	8	22	61
33	3.98	1.239	1	5	7	14	27	46
34	3.79	1.327	2	7	8	17	27	40
35	4.07	1.173	2	3	5	15	27	48
36	4.13	1.273	2	5	4	12	20	57
37	3.72	1.336	2	7	9	17	28	37
38	3.99	1.223	1	5	8	14	26	47
39	3.92	1.260	2	4	7	17	27	44
40	4.05	1.254	2	5	6	14	22	52
41	4.09	1.262	1	5	6	12	21	55
42	4.02	1.240	2	4	5	16	24	49
43	4.00	1.306	2	5	6	14	22	50
44	4.22	1.220	1	5	5	10	18	61
45	4.08	1.255	1	7	5	12	23	53
46	3.83	1.307	1	7	7	17	25	42
47	4.40	1.046	1	2	3	10	16	67

## APPENDIX 3

Descriptive statistics of the answers given to 56 positive and 61 reverse (R) items comprising the EQ-I Questionnaire and the rounded percentage of five points chosen by 95 EFL teachers

Item	Mean	SD	Missing	Very Seldom	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
I001	4.31	.670	0	0	1	8	49	41
I002R	3.79	.933	0	21	48	21	7	2
I003R	2.39	1.085	2	5	9	23	45	15
I004	3.89	.765	0	1	2	22	56	19
I006	4.45	.649	0	0	1	5	41	53
I007	3.83	.834	0	0	7	22	51	20
I008	3.94	.885	0	1	6	17	49	26
I009	4.08	.794	0	2	2	8	60	27
I010R	3.71	1.030	0	23	41	21	13	2
I011	4.05	.843	0	0	5	17	45	33
I013R	3.08	.871	0	5	22	53	16	4
I014R	3.32	1.132	0	19	22	36	18	5
I015	4.19	.803	1	0	2	7	55	35
I016	4.67	.554	0	0	0	4	24	72
I017R	4.18	.945	0	47	31	15	7	0
I018R	3.69	1.112	4	21	44	26	4	0
I019R	3.06	.836	0	5	20	53	20	2
I020	4.16	.776	0	0	1	20	41	38
I021R	3.68	.948	0	19	44	24	12	1
I022R	3.68	1.065	1	22	40	28	4	4
I023R	3.26	1.169	2	15	29	32	18	4
I024R	3.97	1.134	1	42	27	20	7	2
I026	3.91	1.011	2	1	2	22	44	28
I027R	3.66	.941	0	17	46	25	9	2
I028R	3.98	.850	0	29	43	24	2	1
I029	3.95	.855	1	0	4	16	56	23
I030R	4.36	.999	1	60	24	12	1	2
I031	3.92	.781	0	2	1	19	59	19
I032R	4.12	.977	1	41	39	13	6	0
I033	3.37	.923	0	2	15	37	37	9
I035R	4.00	.838	0	31	43	22	4	0
I036R	3.79	1.110	2	27	43	15	13	0
I037	3.34	1.017	0	2	21	31	34	13
I038R	3.58	1.135	0	21	40	21	12	6
I039	3.87	1.034	0	2	7	25	32	34
I040	4.38	.760	0	0	2	11	35	53
I042R	3.43	1.048	0	17	31	36	13	4
I043R	3.56	.754	0	8	45	41	4	1
I044	3.99	.751	0	1	1	19	56	23
I045	4.22	.814	0	0	4	12	42	42
I046R	3.36	1.031	3	5	51	26	14	1
I047	4.09	.813	0	2	3	6	60	28
I048R	3.62	1.113	0	27	27	27	16	2
I049R	2.94	1.050	0	5	26	35	24	9
I051R	3.96	.922	0	31	43	19	6	1
I052R	3.60	.950	1	16	42	31	11	0
I053R	3.18	.978	0	5	35	40	13	7
I054	4.61	.607	0	0	0	6	26	67
I055	4.09	1.022	1	2	3	15	38	41
I056R	4.11	.928	0	41	35	19	4	1
I058R	3.72	1.088	0	31	25	33	8	3
I059	3.87	.925	1	1	3	23	47	24
I060	4.07	.878	1	0	3	15	48	33
I061	4.37	.800	0	0	3	11	33	54
I062	4.19	.719	0	0	2	12	52	35
I063	4.12	.616	0	0	2	7	67	23
I064R	3.29	.977	0	9	33	41	12	5
I066R	4.05	.927	0	37	40	15	8	0
I067	3.54	1.009	2	1	7	35	40	15
I068R	3.68	1.034	1	22	40	25	11	1
I069	3.76	.953	1	2	4	24	49	19
I070R	3.88	1.175	2	37	34	16	11	1
I072	2.79	.999	1	6	35	31	25	2
I073R	3.41	1.067	0	14	38	31	12	6
I074	3.41	.819	0	2	7	45	38	7
I075R	3.58	.963	0	17	39	32	11	2
I076R	3.76	.884	0	21	42	28	8	0
I077R	4.03	1.015	0	42	27	24	4	2
I078	3.64	.811	0	0	8	32	47	13
I080	3.81	.842	0	1	5	24	51	19
I081	4.32	.937	2	0	0	12	35	52

I082R	3.03	1.096	1	11	25	24	38	1
I083R	3.69	1.053	0	22	43	21	9	4
I084	3.92	.871	0	2	3	20	51	24
I085	4.00	.887	0	3	1	17	51	28
I086R	3.47	.977	0	16	33	37	13	2
I087R	3.24	.964	1	8	32	39	19	1
I088	4.11	.856	1	0	3	12	52	33
I089	4.00	.957	2	0	3	15	51	29
I090	4.57	.781	1	1	0	1	32	65
I091R	3.89	1.086	1	34	37	19	7	2
I092R	3.53	.944	0	17	34	35	15	0
I093R	2.94	1.128	2	11	16	41	24	6
I095	4.55	.726	0	2	0	1	35	62
I096	3.87	.789	0	0	4	25	49	21
I097R	3.55	.931	0	14	42	32	11	2
I098	3.93	.902	1	0	4	21	47	26
I099	4.32	.570	0	0	0	5	58	37
I100	4.15	.863	0	1	4	12	45	38
I102R	3.54	1.080	1	18	38	31	8	4
I103R	3.40	.916	1	9	37	41	11	1
I104	4.26	.775	0	0	1	17	37	45
I105	4.14	.906	0	3	1	13	45	38
I106	3.97	.994	1	2	3	18	44	32
I107R	3.98	.956	1	31	46	17	4	1
I108	4.24	.680	0	0	0	14	48	38
I110R	2.81	1.065	1	5	23	27	37	6
I111R	3.89	1.005	0	35	29	27	7	1
I112	3.92	1.069	2	1	5	18	42	32
I113	4.20	.807	0	0	3	15	41	41
I114	3.97	.831	0	0	6	17	51	26
I116R	3.52	1.080	1	19	34	33	11	3
I117R	3.74	.902	1	19	43	34	2	1
I118	4.12	.886	1	0	1	20	40	38
I119	4.48	.784	1	0	1	4	35	59
I120	4.20	.766	0	0	2	15	44	39
I121R	3.56	1.039	0	19	35	35	6	5
I122R	3.71	.988	0	22	39	29	6	3
I124	4.57	.679	0	1	1	1	34	63
I125R	3.93	.937	1	28	44	21	5	0
I126R	3.43	1.068	0	17	33	32	15	4
I127R	3.83	.871	0	21	48	25	3	2
I128R	3.74	1.084	1	25	41	20	11	2
I129	4.05	1.004	2	1	1	17	43	36
I130R	3.53	.955	0	14	41	33	9	3
I131R	3.47	1.287	5	18	44	19	11	3
I132R	3.73	1.036	1	25	36	28	8	1

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# An Analysis of Social Proverbs from the Perspective of Cultural Semiotics

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**Abstract**—Social proverbs contain life philosophies and experience as well as moral standards; aspects of social life are reflected in the mirror of social proverbs. Social proverbs are of both language and culture. Because of their abundant cultural information, social proverbs have been studied from the point of culture in many researches. Modern semiotics has been widely applied to cultural studies as an effective approach whose theories and methods can be generally and successfully used to interpret the meaning process of various social-cultural phenomena. Bakhtinian semiotic theory seizes a crucial position in Russian semiotics which features the cultural tradition. Because of the purpose of this paper to study the relation of social proverbs to culture, Bakhtinian semiotic theory mainly coping with such issues as the essence of utterances and the functions of ideological signs is chose as the major analytic tool of this study. Bakhtin Circle takes the utterance as the typical ideological sign. Social proverbs are special utterances and can therefore function as ideological signs. Ideology in Bakhtin Circle is the totality of reflection and refraction of natural and social reality in the human brain, which is greatly influenced by such cultural patterns as world views, belief and value systems which originate from the deep structure of culture. Ideological signs actually contain the content of the deep structure. The deep structure is the core of culture. In this sense, ideological signs are cultural signs. Social proverbs show a direct link with the deep structure; many conceptions composing the latter are revealed in them. Consciousness takes shape in the material of ideological signs. The deep structure, taking form of social proverbs, penetrates into the consciousnesses and shape individual mind; abstract cultural concepts are transformed into concrete perception and behaviour so that culture can endure.

**Index Terms**—social proverbs, cultural signs, Bakhtinian semiotic theory

## I. INTRODUCTION

“Proverbs bear age, and he who would do well may view himself in them as in looking glass.” This proverb itself perfectly demonstrates the essence of the proverb; it preserves the wisdom of humankind throughout generations and serves as a guide to acceptable behaviour.

Joanna Wilson (1982), in the preface of *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, says that proverbs may date “probably from the time when the wisdom and percept were transmitted by story and song” (p. v). Experience and knowledge gained in life and production by ancestors used to spread without the help of written language. Therefore, proverbs, as compressed expressions easy to memorize, emerged. Nowadays, proverbs may confront general rejection and deteriorate into vulgar sayings, but “every day we still hear proverbs, many of ancient origin, many transmitted in print, many debased to clichés...” (ibid). Proverbs, still winning popularity, form a linguistic and cultural phenomenon which can not be ignored.

The use of proverbs is centuries old. They have undergone changes of human societies but maintained the core of culture. As Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter and Lisa A. Stefani (2000) suppose in *Communication between Cultures*, cultures can be learned through proverbs (p. 39); they are culture-loaded expressions. This study focuses on the cultural dimension of the proverb.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Definitions of the Proverb

With the structure, content, purpose and other characteristics so varied, proverbs do not form a categorized genre with distinctive features and clear boundary. Thus, defining the term “proverb” seems an insurmountable task for either common people or scholars. Although the task of defining the proverb is tough, scholars, from ancient times to nowadays, take constant effort to fulfill it. Early Greek scholars including Plato and Aristotle in particular wrestled with the question of what constitutes a proverb. According to Mieder (1989), Aristotle might be the first one in the West to give a concise definition that expresses the essential aspects of the proverb. In his description of metaphor in *Book 3, Rhetoric*, Aristotle (2005) defines proverbs as “metaphors from one species to another” (p. 141). Actually, some folk adages using metaphor and simile to describe events or matters are also contained in the category of proverbs which has a broader territory before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.(Simpson & Speake, 2001)

As a master proverb researcher, Archer Taylor used an entire book—his famous classic study *Proverbs*—to define the

proverb, and he finally reached a conclusion proverbial itself:

The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking.... An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to identify positively a sentence as proverbial... Let us be content with recognition that a proverb is a saying current among the folk.

(qtd. in Mieder, 1989, p. 14)

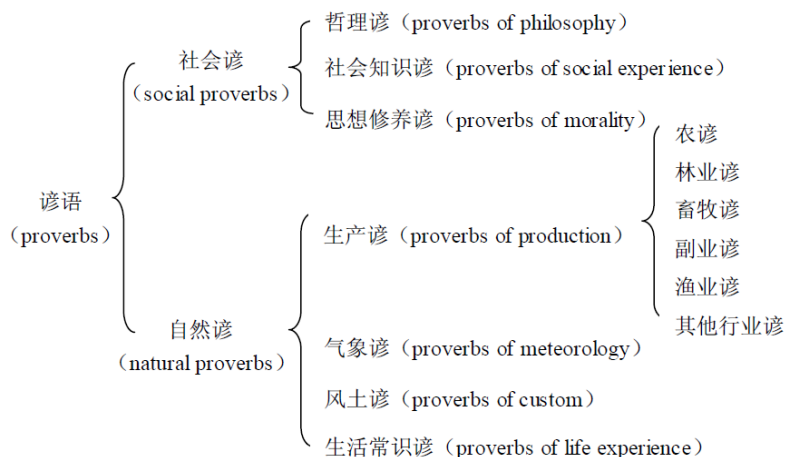
So many scholars afterwards agreed and cited Taylor's statement of the impossibility of defining proverb precisely when dealing with the definition problem.

After Taylor's proverb definition and others with resemblance by taking proverbs as carriers of truths, wisdom, experience and common sense, especially after the founding of modern linguistics, scholars gave more and more complex definitions of the proverb to "unlock the secrets of 'proverbiality'" (ibid).

Major authoritative English dictionaries all provide definitions of the proverb, which to some extent vary from each other but also share some similarities. According to *Webster's Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (1979), a proverb is "a short saying in common use expressing a well-known truth or common fact ascertained by experience or observation; a maxim; an adage." The definition in *Longman Modern English Dictionary* (1976) gives more details on the content of the proverb, a proverb is "a brief familiar maxim of folk wisdom, usually compressed in form, often involving bold image and frequently a jingle that catches the memory".

### B. Typology of Proverbs

The typologies of proverbs like definitions of the proverb, vary from different angles. This paper aims to study proverbs mainly from cultural perspective, so the classification by Wen Duanzheng is adopted. Wen (2005) classifies proverbs in terms of their contents or subjects; comparing with other typologies, this one is comprehensive:



Wen Duanzheng classifies proverbs into two major categories: Natural proverbs contain experience of production and relevant knowledge about production, e.g. "犁地要深, 耙地要平". Social proverbs are about social life of people. They can be further categorized into proverbs reflecting philosophical thoughts, e.g. "无风不起浪", proverbs preserving social experience, e.g. "言多必失", proverbs serving to strengthen morality, e.g. "宁伸扶人手, 莫开陷人口". (ibid, p. 36-49) This paper focuses on social proverbs.

## III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The majority of Bakhtinian thoughts on the sign are expressed in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* with the signature of V. N. Voloshinov, and other parts in essays such as "Towards a Methodology of the Human Science". Recent archival researches suggest that *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* by Voloshinov is largely or even totally created by Bakhtin, because "Voloshinov's work on language was based on intellectual sources quite distinct from those of the early Bakhtin" (Bostad et al., 2004, p. 5). "Clark and Holquist's impressive biography of Bakhtin" assumes that "the works of Voloshinov and Medvedev were actually written by Bakhtin himself" and "the Marxism advocated therein being mere 'window dressing' to secure publication". (ibid, p. 4) Some more detailed evidences can support the assumption above, e.g. the hostility towards structuralist linguistics, the insistence on the interactive character of individual consciousnesses in society with language as a shared medium, etc. However, Voloshinov's own analysis of verbal interaction was accepted by Bakhtin and combined with the latter's ideas of intersubjectivity so that the social-institutional force within the linguistic medium were considered to study the interaction among individual consciousnesses. (ibid, p. 5-6) Therefore, "Bakhtinian" instead of "Bakhtin's" is used in this study to stress Bakhtin's determinative influence on this semiotic theory, which is of Bakhtinian style, without ignoring the contributions by other colleagues in Bakhtin Circle.

The semiotic thoughts of Bakhtin Circle are summarized by scholars afterwards; "Bakhtin Circle semiology" is even

used to name this incomplete set of theories. To be prudent, such terms as semiotics or semiology are avoided in this paper to refer to Bakhtinian theory on signs; instead, it is considered as a theory or a mode of a particular school. Because the theory is concerned with the realization of signs in social context as well as the reflection or refraction of ideological signs to social reality, it is taken as of cultural semiotics according to the typological criteria by Li Youzheng(2007).

#### A. *Bakhtinian Theory on Sign, Ideology and Consciousness*

Bakhtin supposes that signs are created among individuals associated in society to serve their interactions; objects that signs refer to are contained within particular areas which attract attention of the society in certain periods and need to be emphasized. Signs only emerge in the process of interaction among individuals. (Voloshinov, 1986) Bakhtin puts emphasis on the social nature of the sign; he thinks that the sign is created based on the society and for the need of interaction in the society. The premise of the emergence of the sign is the existence of something that men want to exchange their ideas.

The secure link between the sign and ideology is highlighted in Bakhtinian theory of semiotics. In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Bakhtin Circle claims that “the domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs...everything ideological possesses semiotic value.” (Voloshinov, 1986, p. 10) There is no ideology without signs. Everything ideological attains a meaning; it reflects or stands for something else, that is to say, it is a sign.

Ideological signs are not only shadows or reflections of reality but themselves material segment of reality. “Every phenomenon functioning as an ideological sign has some kind of material embodiment...a sign is a phenomenon of the external world.” (ibid, p. 11) Bakhtin Circle emphasizes that “signs are partly material...but in no way does it follow the materiality that signs are ‘things’ in the normal sense”, why signs being taken as material objects is that as so they can be “assigned their function as signs by their specific, but recurrent connection with human beings”. (Bostad, et al., 2004, p. 9) The reality of the sign lies in the fact that the sign is also the phenomenon of the outer world which people can observe, perceive and treat as an object.

Ideological signs do not always reflect the reality faithfully, they also refract the reality. (Voloshinov, 1986) It may distort the truth. Differently oriented accents intersecting in every ideological sign is the cause for the refraction. (ibid) The term “accent” in Bakhtin Circle refers to every distinct voice from groups or individuals. Accents, no matter dominant or recessive, affect and interact with each other to make ideological signs dynamic and developing, although the ruling class spares no effort to stop the social multiaccentuality to make signs stable or even permanent.

Though Bakhtin Circle stresses the material character of the sign, the connection between the signifier and the signified is actually at the heart of the theory. Taking the sign and ideology together into consideration implies the close link of the sign to human mind in Bakhtinian semiotic theory. Ideology is a fundamental but complex concept in cultural studies. It is commonly used to refer to a more or less coherent set of beliefs. (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2008, p. 171) The term “ideology” is coined in the eighteenth century by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy to denote the science of ideas; but it becomes popular and important with Marx. In Marxist sense, ideology is related with class struggle and political interests. Bakhtinian view on ideology, according to Lachmann (2004), is different from those of traditional Marxists but assumes that ideologies or world views are something “inherent in any semiotic system” (p. 74). Bakhtin Circle sees ideology as a social phenomenon. According to Bakhtin Circle, ideology is the whole totality of reflections and refractions in the human brain of social and natural reality, as it is expressed and fixed by man in word, drawing, diagram or other form of sign. (Voloshinov, 1986) Obscure the definition is, the mental nature of ideology in Bakhtin Circle is obvious. Ideological signs in Bakhtinian semiotic theory are foremost signs about human mind.

Saussure believes that the connection between the signifier and the signified of the linguistic sign lies in the convention; however, he chiefly deals with the form or structure of the signifier rather than the connection. Bakhtinian semiotic theory develops Saussure’s assumption into a more detailed one by studying how the signifier reflecting or refracting the signified. Different accents in society collectively determine the connection between the signifier and the signified of an ideological sign.

Bakhtin Circle insists that “consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs” (Voloshinov, 1986, p. 11). Consciousness becomes consciousness only when being filled with ideological signs and only in the process of social interaction. By means of interactions among individuals as social members, the content of signs eventually becomes the content of individual consciousnesses:

Consciousness takes shape and being in the material of signs created by an organized group in the process of its social intercourse. The individual consciousness is nurtured on signs; it derives its growth from them; it reflects their logic and laws. The logic of consciousness is the logic of ideological communication, of the semiotic interaction of a social group. (ibid, p. 13)

Ideology of Bakhtin Circle is the totality of reflections and refractions in human mind of social and natural reality. Thus, individual consciousnesses are essentially composed of those reflections and refraction carried by signs. The refraction is caused by arguments among accents, the accents, borne by signs, enter and echo in individual consciousnesses. In this sense, individual consciousness is a social-ideological fact. However, individual consciousnesses can affect ideologies in turn. Only when ideological signs enter individual consciousnesses, they become real signs which can be communicated and understood.

Bakhtinian theory of individual consciousnesses and ideologies combine Saussure’s and Peirce’s models of the sign.

Saussure, highlighting the signs as a part of social life, supposes the conventional nature of the connection between the signifier and the signified; while Peirce emphasizes the formation of the connection as a psychological process in individual mind. In a word, the nature of the sign in Saussure is social but in Peirce is individual. In Bakhtinian semiotic theory, individual consciousnesses are containers of signs of social ideologies; signs, created by individuals to satisfy the need of social interaction, in turn convey ideologies shared within society to individual consciousnesses and help to form them. The conventional nature of signs is the result of interactions among individuals in society, and the psychological process to understand or create a sign, because of its operation in the consciousness, is inevitably affected by pre-existed social ideologies. No matter social or individual, they are two sides of the nature of the sign; one depends on the other for existence.

#### B. *Bakhtinian Theory on Sign and Utterance*

In Bakhtin Circle, the utterance is the basic unit of the “concrete reality of language” (Voloshinov, 1986, p. 93); it covers all forms of language uses from written texts to spoken words. According to Bakhtinian semiotic theory, the utterance is both dialogic and social. (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2008, p. 373) By dialogic, it means an utterance is an element in a “continuous process of verbal communication” (Voloshinov, 1986, p. 95); by social, it indicates that an utterance is determined, oriented and situated socially. The dialogic and social characters of the utterance overlap with each other; only the utterance dialogic in essence can be affected by social ideological factors.

The utterance, as being dialogic, is oriented to an addressee; the addressee can be presupposed as a representative of a social group rather than an actual person. (ibid, p. 85) In Bakhtinian semiotic theory, the utterance is theorized as a reciprocal product co-authored equally by addresser and addressee. (ibid, p. 86)

Utterances prevail society and are connected with their surrounding social milieus; wherever there is an interaction or communication there must be utterances. Only in interactions among members of society can an utterance carry out its functions well.

The utterance reflects or refracts natural or social reality through its verbalized components. Thus, the utterance stands for something else, i.e. it is a sign. The reality of utterance entirely lies in its essence as a sign. Moreover, it is a typical ideological sign, as it is filled with ideological content of every aspect of society. As a sign, the utterance perfectly performs its ideological functions. Many ideological signs have been specialized for some particular areas, but utterances can satisfy any ideological requirement. They accompany ideological conduct from creation to perception.

### IV. SOCIAL PROVERBS AS CULTURAL SIGNS

#### A. *The Mechanism of Social Proverbs as Cultural Signs*

Social proverbs reveal the social dimension of culture and contain wisdom for the masses to conduct in accordance to the requirements of the society.

##### 1. Social Proverbs as Ideological Signs

The reality of language consists of utterances. Any language use, spoken or written, can be taken as an utterance. According to this conclusion, utterances belong to parole rather than langue.

Social proverbs are fixed sentence-level idiomatic expressions; they form a unique part of lexicon. In this sense, they should be considered as a part of langue. However, by analyzing the definitions and examples, the essence of utterance can also be found in social proverbs.

First, social proverbs come from language uses and still function so. Proverbs are mainly of folk origin; they come from common people's daily talks and get the proverbiality through oral transmission. Moreover, the completeness of a proverb as a statement allows it the possibility and convenience to function a language use. Thus, comparing with other elements of lexicon such as words and set phrases which primarily serve to construct language uses, proverbs themselves are complete language uses. For example, “有钱能使鬼推磨” and “money makes the mare go” are directly and generally quoted in people's conversations as complete language uses without major alternations.

Second, as any other utterances, a social proverb is oriented towards an addressee. In Bakhtinian theory, the “addressee” needs not to be an actual person but can stand for a social group. The utterance is created by its addresser in the attempt to exert his influence on some individual or group; this attempt also helps to form the utterance. This feature is perfectly revealed in proverbs. Proverbs, either from the general public or classics, are for and towards common people. They convey ideologies, views on society and nature, to the broader masses. The colloquial characteristic of proverbs is one of the results of their creators' efforts to affect the public perception. The proverbs “力微休负重，言轻莫劝人” and “eat leeks in lide, and ramsons in may and all the year after physicians may play” contain folk wisdom on some social and nature reality and transmit it by means of colloquial expressions.

Last but not least, social proverbs are closely linked to social milieus and therefore determined and situated socially. Social feature is one of the utterance's crucial essence. Every utterance is formed in a social context and as a result bears its mark. On proverbs, especially social proverbs, the brand of society is obvious. In such social proverbs as “万般皆下品，惟有读书高” and “百业农为本”，the link to their social surroundings is apparent.

In conclusion, by owning close relation to language uses and being towards addressees, social proverbs fulfill the primary need of the utterance as being dialogic; obviously influenced by society, social proverbs attain the feature of the



utterance as being social. Thus, social proverbs, to a certain extent, can be regarded as utterances. According to Bakhtinian semiotic theory, an utterance is a typical ideological sign, so social proverbs can as well function as ideological signs.

## 2. Ideology and the Deep Structure of Culture

### a. Defining Culture

Generally speaking, definitions of culture can be categorized into two groups: definitions in the narrow sense and that in the broad sense. Culture in the narrow sense, also called culture with a small “c”, contains only intellectual and spiritual creations including customs, laws, achievements in arts and science, etc. The definition of culture given by British anthropologist Edward B. Taylor belongs to this group. In *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, Tylor (2005) defines culture as a complex entity comprising knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by men as members of society. The early definitions of culture are for most of this kind. Culture in the broad sense, called Culture with a capital “C”, is an all-embracing concept; it can refer to both spiritual and material things created by human beings. The descriptive definition proposed by D. G. Bates and F. Plog (1990) is of this kind and contains the major territory of culture, “Culture is a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of a society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning” (p. 28).

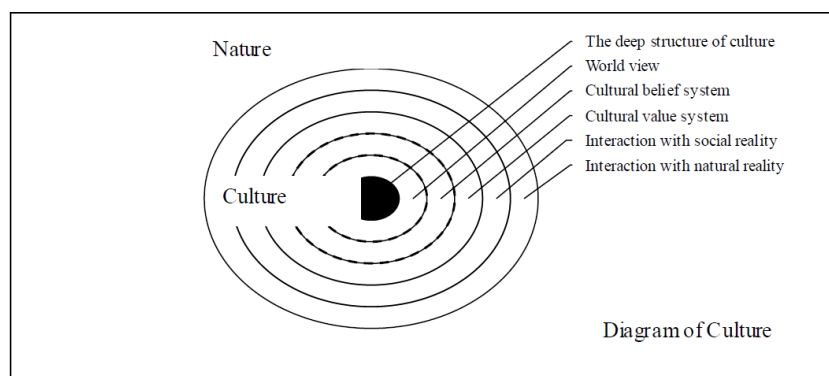
### b. The Deep Structure as the Core of Culture

According to Samovar et al. (2000), the deep structure of culture refers to such issues as the relation between God and man, the individual and the group, among families, as well as differing views of the relative importance of liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy, rights and responsibilities. Those issues together construct the deep structure of culture, which endures for centuries and helps define the certain culture.

In the deep structure can each culture find the source for its unique way to view the world. “World view is a culture’s orientation toward God, humanity...and other philosophical issues that influence how its members perceive their world.” (ibid, p. 88) It deals the questions about the meaning of life and man’s existence. The world view originates in the deep structure of culture and lies at the heart of the cultural system. It can influence all aspects of perception. (ibid)

As the central cultural element, the world view consequently affects cultural belief and value systems. Belief systems are people’s beliefs to truth; they tell people how the world operates. (ibid, p. 58) Based on belief systems, value systems can be formed. A value can be defined as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to another.” (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5) A value system is “a learned organization of rules for making choices and for resolving conflicts.” (ibid, p. 161) It is a set of criteria to judge behaviour, which represents people’s requirements, expectation, and prohibition. Any culture, although with different individual beliefs and values, contains cultural ones permeating the entire milieu. Belief and value systems, together with other patterns including norms, attitudes, etc of a culture influence its members’ perception of reality and finally shape their behaviour—their reaction to the world.

Based on the presentation above, a diagram of cultural system can be drawn as follows:



In this diagram, the part outside the circle of culture is nature. The part of nature can be considered as the background of culture, because culture is built on the basis of nature. The cultivation of nature is the foundation of culture; when human beings surpass their natural inheritance, culture begins. Nature is in contrast with culture; the latter is the world created by man.

The circle of culture contains three main layers: The innermost layer can be further divided into four sub layers, which are the deep structure of culture, the world view, cultural belief and value systems from inner to outer. Dotted lines are used here as the dividing line of them. As the author of the thesis has presented, the relation of the inner ones like the world view to the outer ones like beliefs are kind of determination. The deep structure, as the source of those outer layers, is used a black solid circle to indicate, which implies its stability and decisive force as the core of culture. The innermost layer of culture determines people’s perception and behaviour to reality. The layer in middle is that of man’s interaction with social reality, the result of which contains the patterns of behaviour including customs, laws, and

etc. The outermost one is the layer of humankind's interaction with natural reality. Artifacts such as tools, constructions, works of art as well as skills and techniques handed down throughout generations to make artifacts are all results of man's direct interaction with natural reality.

From outer to inner, elements of culture is becoming more stable. The outermost part of artifacts changes dramatically due to the development of science and technology and the middle layer of behaviour is also dynamic because of the never-ending social activities, while the deep structure is enduring.

Ideology in Bakhtinian Circle is "the whole totality of reflections and refractions in the human brain of social and natural reality". That is to say, ideology is the collective perception of the outside world. According to the previous analysis, human perception is greatly affected by such cultural patterns as world views, belief and value systems which are closely connected to the deep structure of culture. Thus, it is justifiable to say that Bakhtinian ideology, nearly equaling the innermost layer of culture about human mentality, is originated from the deep structure of culture; the content of ideology can find its root in the deep structure. Ideological signs in Bahtinian semiotic theory, bearing ideologies of culture, in essence reflect or refract the deep structure of culture.

The deep structure is the core of culture; it is its most essential and stable part. Other elements of culture at outer layers are determined by and originated from this deep structure. The whole cultural system is in essence a broader projection of its deep structure. In this sense, ideological signs, functioning as carriers of the deep structure of culture, actually convey the information related to the overall culture. As utterances, social proverbs are typical ideological signs and then carriers of the content of the deep structure of culture. Components ranging from artifacts to customs are all linked with cultural information revealed by social proverbs. Social proverbs, therefore, can be taken as cultural signs.

#### *B. The Functions of Social Proverbs as Cultural Signs*

As argued in the preceding sections, social proverbs can be taken as ideological signs or cultural signs. According to Bakhtin Circle, ideological signs reflect or refract the natural and social reality and preserve social ideologies, which as the author of the paper just pointed out directly originate from the deep structure of culture. Social proverbs, as ideological signs and with the ideological content, reflect or refract the deep structure of culture and help shape individual consciousnesses.

##### *1. Social Proverbs Reflecting or Refracting the Deep Structure of Culture*

Bakhtin Circle points out that signs are created among members of society to meet their need of interaction. Signs are used to talk about their common interest. Also only in interactions can utterances carry out the ideological functions successfully and completely. Social proverbs mainly comprise those of life philosophy, morality, as well as social experience. People, as long as they live in a society, have to face and deal with those issues and are willing to share on them their thoughts and feelings. Social proverbs, bearing folk wisdom handed down from ancestors about social life, are convenient and effective tools for communication relevant to those topics.

As presented in the preceding sections, the ideology in Bakhtin Circle reflects or refracts natural and social reality; the reality transforms into the subjective reality during the perception influenced by cultural patterns. Among those cultural patterns, world views as well as belief and value systems closely originated from the deep structure of culture wield decisive influence. These crucial cultural patterns can be generally found in social proverbs.

The world view on such issues as God and men, life and death, individual and group, parents and children, equality and hierarchy etc. are straight reflected or indirectly refracted in social proverbs, for example:

God is above all.

生死有命，富贵在天。

Better bend than break.

好死不如赖活着。

If you want a thing well done, do it yourself.

众人拾柴火焰高。

The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children.

父母之命，媒妁之言。

Jack is as good as his master.

小鬼斗不过阎罗王。

Originated from the world view, cultural belief and value systems also present themselves in social proverbs to exert their influence on the masses:

God is where he was.

离地三尺有神灵。

Heaven's vengeance is slow but sure.

不是不报时候未到。

Do well and have well.

善有善报，恶有恶报。

多行不义必自毙。

Every one must carry his own cross.

The philosophies or morality contained in social proverbs depending on which men conduct and the society operates lie at the heart of social life; they reveal the deep structure of culture. Comparing with other cultural phenomena, due to their close link with world views as well as cultural beliefs and values, the reflections or refraction in social proverbs are much more obvious.

## 2. Social Proverbs Influencing Consciousnesses

According to Bakhtinian theory on the connection between social ideologies and individual consciousnesses, consciousnesses arise only with the embodiment of ideological signs. Ideological signs emerging in the process of social interaction stand for the reality they may distort or be true to. The reflection or refraction of the reality, with signs as their vehicles, penetrates into individual minds and constructs the content of consciousnesses. Seeing that Bakhtinian semiotic theory points out, the content and logic of consciousnesses are essentially that of the social ideologies and semiotic interactions.

As discussed above, social proverbs are ideological signs and reflect or refract the deep structure of culture. By entering individual consciousnesses, social proverbs affect or even shape consciousnesses with world views, belief and value systems. As the result of the acceptance of these cultural patterns, the deep structure veiled in social proverbs, consciously or unconsciously, makes its way into consciousnesses and eventually influences individuals' perception and behaviour.

This may partially explain how culture, especially its deep structure, can endure and why through proverbs cultures can be learned. So long as individuals want to survive or succeed in the society, they have to interact with others, particularly on some crucial issues or fields, with the help of signs. Such cultural signs as social proverbs, through the use, gradually transmit their cultural information to both the users and the receivers. Moreover, this process may probably begin before we are aware of it. After penetrating into individual minds and form consciousnesses, the deep structure of culture, taking form of nearly every kind of cultural patterns, changes from abstract concepts into concrete subjective reality in brains. As the process that seems endless continues, a culture maintains.

This interdependence of culture, signs and consciousnesses are also exemplified in Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has developed into two versions: the strong version, linguistic determinism, which holds that language determines manners of thought; the weak version, linguistic relativity. Some elements of language like proverbs for instance, are cultural signs which preserve the essential cultural information; thanks to their strong shaping force towards cognition and conduct as well as the wide use among language communities, the core component of culture is generally accepted by the members so that a culture, together with its distinct features, can exist and last.

## V. CONCLUSION

In the attempt to shed light on the mechanism of social proverbs for establishing the connection to cultures and their functions as carriers of cultural message, the author turns to semiotics to seek help; from Bakhtinian semiotic theory has he borrowed the analytic tool.

The social proverb, with the form as a colloquial statement, the content of social common interest and the folk origin, can be taken as an utterance to great extent. As utterances, social proverbs have ideological utility as cultural signs in reflecting or refracting the deep structure of culture and influencing consciousnesses.

This study ends with following findings of significance:

Firstly, semiotics proves to be an effective approach to study language from the cultural viewpoint. Semiotics, with its plentiful theories to interpret linguistic phenomena as cultural ones and finally as signs, fulfills the requirements to deepen the understanding of the relationship between language and culture. Bakhtinian theory, among cultural semiotics, serves perfectly to comprehend the cultural aspects of some linguistic signs.

Secondly, the unique feature of social proverbs leads to their use as utterances. Utterances are typical ideological signs, social proverbs therefore can perform functions as cultural signs to maintain and transmit the deep structure of culture.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are inevitably limitations and defects in this study; accordingly, some improvements should be made in further researches.

Bakhtinian semiotic theory is not a completed one with clear framework and precise definitions for those key items; contradictory interpretations are not unusual among the works applying this inspiring theory. Although the foundational theories of semiotics are introduced to interpret it, Bakhtinian theory of semiotics seems still obscure to some extent. Nevertheless, this semiotic theory, with reflective insights into the social and cultural essence of signs, is a buried treasure needing further exploitation.

Cultural semiotic theories other than Bakhtinian can be applied to study idiomatic expressions besides proverbs. The relationship between culture and language which has puzzled scholars for long time may be partially solved by fostering semiotic researches determinedly and profoundly.

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# On the Effect of Task-based Language Teaching on the Pragmatic Competence (Illocutionary Force) of the Iranian Male and Female Students

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**Abstract**—The present research study, based on a systematic procedure, investigates the impact of the illocutionary and locutionary forces of the pragmatic competence on the Iranian male and female language teaching juniors. By virtue of gaining a persuasive and forceful ultimate goal of this study 400 language teaching Iranian juniors between 20 and 30 voluntarily took part in this study. They were initially exposed to the proficiency TEOFL test. Those who got over the 70 percent of the scores- 120 male and female subjects- were selected as the subjects of the study. This study subsumes three phases. Phase 1 witnessed a T-test where 60 males and females of the aforementioned subjects were randomly classified into two-30 subject groups. The experimental group was assigned tasks based on illocutionary act measures where the communicative force of the utterances was taken into account and the control group was given tasks based on locutionary act where the well-formedness of the utterances was considered for the period of twelve sessions. As the posttest five native like Iranian Ph.D holders in linguistics who had full command of pragmatic competence in general and speech act theory in particular were hired to interview all the 60 subjects to unravel their differences. The acquired result revealed that the experimental group was much more versed in pragmatic competence regarding the illocutionary force of speech act theory. Phase 2 was allotted to a correlational study. The researcher intended to look into the degree of correlation between the locutionary and the illocutionary forces. The scores of 30 subjects in illocutionary experimental group were correlated with those of the locutionary control group. The coefficient of correlation demonstrated that there was a negligible positive correlation between the two variables. In phase 3 a 2x2 factorial design was employed where the 120 male and female subjects selected by the TOEFL test were subjected to locutionary and illocutionary act. According to the observed F it was proved that the females outperformed the male subjects in both locutionary and illocutionary acts.

**Index Terms**—correlation, factorial design, illocutionary, juniors, locutionary, pragmatic competence, t-test

## I. INTRODUCTION

For the past 20 years, task-based language teaching (TBLT) has attracted the attention of the second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, curriculum developers, educationalists, teacher trainer, and language teachers worldwide. To a great extent, the introduction of TBLT into the world of the language education has been a 'top-down' process. The term was coined, and the concept developed, by SLA researchers and language educators, largely in reaction to empirical accounts of teacher-dominated, form-oriented second language class-room practice (Long & Norris, 2000).

However, according to Nunan (1989) the current trends are basically evolutionary rather than revolutionary in nature, as methodologists and curriculum developers seek to add value to tried and tested practices rather than to subvert or reject them out of hand. Nowadays, the applied linguists dwell on how contemporary trends have added value to practice, or have prompted reassessment and reevaluation of practice in the areas of syllabus design, approaches to teaching, the role of the learner, approaches to language, the role of texts, resources and approaches to learning, classroom organization and assessment (p.35).

Stimulus for Change

### 1. *Ineffectiveness of Traditional Approaches*

Perennial stimulus for change in language education has been dissatisfaction with the results obtained by 'traditional' methods, often at great cost to schools and language systems, and the expenditure of tremendous effort by students and teachers. In grammar-translation classrooms, learners typically spent years learning English and yet many of them were still unable to use the language effectively. They often knew a good deal about the language but were unable to use this knowledge to communicate appropriately. In systems where grammar-translation gave way to audiolingualism, students were able to parrot responses in predictable situations of use, but had difficulty communicating effectively in the relatively unpredictable world beyond the classroom. Many concluded that it was a poor investment if all that work seemed to offer so little practical result. Students had a basic foundation of language knowledge, but they do not know how to put that knowledge to active use. To help them to communicate and use that language knowledge, it was

gradually recognized and accepted that a new approach to language learning and teaching was needed. Learners needed to understand that language is not just a list of grammatical patterns and a collection of words. Language as communication involves the active use of grammar and vocabulary to listen and read effectively and to speak with and write to other people. Language needs to be learned functionally so that learners are able to see that different forms communicate different meanings. One response to the perception that language educators are relatively ineffective, was to question the value of learning another language. It is believed that language learning should have a central place in any educational system. If we accept what Pinker (1994) and his colleagues have to say, then language is arguably the defining characteristic of the human species, and a knowledge of language in general, as well as an ability to use one's first, and at least one other language, should be one of the defining characteristics of the educated individual. As the bumper sticker says: "Monolingualism is curable!" In a world that is increasingly intermeshed economically, environmentally and electronically, the ability to communicate effectively is crucial (Nunan, 1989, pp. 34 – 36).

## **2. *Relevance of Language Teaching to General Education***

It is only through language that we can communicate with each other, share our ideas, tell people what we have experienced, express our wishes and desires, solve complex problems by drawing on information we read or hear, and, above all, communicate in the workplace and across cultures with people from other countries. To achieve these objectives, however, we need to learn language as communication not just as a list of facts to be memorized or a set of symbols to be manipulated. This, as we saw earlier has been an important force in the evolution of a new approach to language learning, one which begins from this active use of language and which involves learners in cooperative learning tasks using language, helped by their teachers and specially designed learning materials. This is a central aim of contemporary approaches to language teaching. The skills developed through the application of active, co-operative learning principles can flow through to other subjects as well. Effective foreign language learning produces learners with the social and cognitive problem solving skills that can be deployed in other subjects on the school curriculum. If only we could get language teachers and subject teachers communicating with each other, it might be possible to fashion a new type of school curriculum, one in which the familiar elements are not jettisoned, but recombined.

Then, the relevance of the intellectual knowledge, learning skills, interpersonal development and intercultural sensitivities fostered in the language classroom might be appreciated by others with a vested interest in education (Nunan, 1989, pp. 38 – 40).

## **II. WHAT IS A TASK?**

The concept of 'task' has become an important element in Syllabus design, classroom teaching and learner assessment. It underpins several significant research agendas, and it has influenced educational policymaking in both ESL and EFL settings. Pedagogically, task-based language teaching has strengthened the following principles and practices:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom.

It is postulated that this is an important question to answer for two reasons. First, there is much inconsistency and confusion about what a task is at present. Second, a proper definition is necessary and important to the discussion of how the use of tasks should be able to promote SLA. The followings are some definitions of the term "task" one can find in the literature (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1986 p. 289):

"...a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation.... and helping someone across a road. In other words, by 'task' is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.

Long (1985) fastens on another definition (p. 89):

"An activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language (i.e. as a response). For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Task may or may not involve the production of a language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative ...since it provides a purpose for a classroom activity which goes beyond the practice of a language for its own sake.

"...a piece of work or an activity, usually with a specified objective, undertaken as part of an educational course, or at work" (Crookes, 1986, p.112).

"...any structured language learning endeavour which has particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a

range of work plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning--from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such a group problem-solving or simulations and decision making" (Breen, 1987 p. 23).

"An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process, was regarded as a 'task' (Prabhu, 1987, p. 24).

"...a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1989 p. 10).

"...an activity which involves the use of language but in which the focus is on the outcome of the activity rather than on the language used to achieve that outcome (Willis, 1990, p. 127).

"...some kind of activity designed to engage the learner in using the language communicatively or reflectively in order to arrive at an outcome other than that of learning a specified feature of the L2 (Ellis, 1994, p. 595).

These definitions differ in specificity. Long's definition which covers virtually everything people do, is a definition of the term in its general sense, with no particular reference to language teaching. The rest of the definitions all define the task in the pedagogical context. A difference here is that Breen's definition includes exercises while the rest of them do not. Based on the way most researchers define and use the term and the actual examples people give in their discussion of task-based language teaching, and following Hickey's (1993) approach to defining formulas by means of a preference rule system originally used by Jackendoff (1983, p. 55), some defining features of tasks are outlined below.

1. A task is an activity carried out for the ultimate purpose of language learning. Since the need for a clear definition of the term "task" rises because it takes on a particular meaning when being used in language teaching context, it is only reasonable to exclude activities carried out for purposes other than language teaching and learning.

2. A task is a meaning-oriented activity whereby the exchange of information is essential for its successful completion. This rules out those learning activities in which the learners' attention is focused on linguistic forms, such as imitation or pattern drills.

3. A task is an activity which leads to a specific outcome. The outcome can be a decision, a solution to a problem, an agreement reached among participants. This rules out activities which, though involving exchange of information, do not result in a specific outcome such as telling a story, questions and answers as independent tasks though they can be part of a task.

Based on these defining features, a task can be defined as *a meaning-focused language learning activity which leads to a specific outcome at its completion*. These defining features are the necessary conditions an activity has to meet to be considered as a task. Besides these conditions, a task typically employs language as the primary media for communication, though paralinguistic or any other means may be also involved. It should also have a definite beginning and ending point to make it a complete and independent activity. A task also typically has a set of procedures usually predetermined by the instructor for the learners to follow for its completion.

Long (1985) frames his approach to task-based language teaching in terms of target tasks, arguing that a target task is: a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, making a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination and helping someone across a road. In other words, by 'task' is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, and at play. When they are transformed from the real world to the classroom, tasks become pedagogical in nature (p. 89). In this domain another perspective was presented in the mid-1970s by Lawrence Stenhouse who argued that at the very minimum a task-based curriculum should offer the following:

#### A. In planning

1. Principles for the selection of content – what is to be learned and taught.
2. Principles for the development of a teaching strategy – how it is to be learned and taught.
3. Principles for the making of decisions about sequence.
4. Principles on which to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and differentiate the general principles 1, 2 and 3 above to meet individual cases. (p. 175)

### III. WHAT IS PRAGMATICS?

Austin, (1962) maintains that the linguistic discipline known as Pragmatics is that branch of linguistics concerned with *language in use* or the study of *meaning as it arises from language occurring in context*. Pragmatics does not examine the relationship between the word and its definition or sense (the domain of semantics) but the relationships between words and the entities (real-world or otherwise) to which those words refer (*referents* or *discourse entities*). Furthermore, the linguist working in pragmatics is trying to account for utterances in terms of the meaning intended by the speaker and understood by the hearer.

Swain (1985) maintains that when we encode an utterance, our hearer or reader can use dictionary/grammar knowledge to decode it to the point of establishing its meaning in a kind of general-purpose sense. But the dictionary/grammar meaning of any utterance underdetermines its meaning in context: its "value", or the role it plays in the ongoing communication. To understand a sentence like *Your driver will be here in half an hour*, a hearer needs to

feed a good deal of extra information into the utterance: the fact that in this instance the variable *your* refers to the hearer him/herself; the exact identity of the driver in question; the location of *here*; and the time frame within which *in half an hour* has to be calculated. None of this information is encoded in the grammar and semantics of the sentence itself. The sentence *I still haven't forgiven her for the thing about the hedgehog and the music stand* depends for its interpretation on shared knowledge that is in no way expressed by the language forms used. Correct interpretations of utterances can indeed take us a very long way away from their surface encodings. In specific situations the following sentences, for example, might be used to convey the messages shown in brackets (or other very different ones), and be successfully understood as doing so.

- *Your coat's on the floor.* ('Pick up your coat.')
- *Jane's got her exams on Friday.* ('I can't come to lunch.')
- *Let's not have a repetition of last time.* ('Don't get drunk and start flirting with Melissa.')
- *It's Wednesday.* ('Put the trash out.')

(p. 76)

#### IV. TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

TBLT started in the 1970s when scholars argued that language instruction should teach both grammar and meaning (Skehan, 2003, p. 145). The field widely takes Prabhu as one of the first proponents for tasks or TBLT when he started the approach in teaching secondary school classes in Bangalore, India in the 1970s (Ellis, 2003, p. 192). From then on, TBLT began to be recognized and widely discussed in language teaching and research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

Some of its proponents (e.g., Willis, 1996) believe that TBLT develops from communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the predominant language teaching approach since the 1970s, because TBLT shares the same several principles with CLT. From the 1980s, "task" and "task-based language teaching/instruction" have become increasingly preferred terms to those of "communicative activity" or "communicative language teaching" (Skehan, & Swain, 2001, pp.154 - 165).

Though TBLT is argued to have originated from CLT, it has its own rationales from different philosophies and approaches toward language instruction. Nowadays, TBLT is a broad term, which involves not only research and teaching, but testing and curriculum design in SLA. Crooks and Gass (1993) claim that TBLT is mainly used in two areas: "first, as an aspect of the research methodology used in studies of second language acquisition (SLA) from the beginning of the 1980s, and second, as a concept used in the second language curriculum design from the middle of the 1980s" (p.1). Recently Samuda and Bygate (2008) go beyond SLA and illustrate TBLT from an educational perspective. According to Samuda and Bygate (2008), "by 1913 Dewey was arguing that classroom learning needed to be focused and shaped so that it met the personally held interests that pupils brought with them, and the ends that they held in sight" (p. 19). That is, classroom learning should be connected with students' personal experiences, or classroom teaching should be authentic. The implication is that "we need to seek out new ways of teaching so that the content is accessible, useful and relevant given the levels of experience and understanding of learners" (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 20).

Willis (2007) maintains that the aim of language teaching worldwide is to enable learners to use the language they have learned in school or college to communicate confidently and effectively with other users of English in the world outside. This aim prioritizes fluency rather than accuracy. Learners should be able to use the language with speed and confidence even if this means sacrificing grammatical accuracy. A task-based approach, where learners actively engage in meaning focused activities, for much (but not all) of their time in class, is explicitly designed to achieve this. English teachers all over the world express the same worries. Teachers of Spanish and French in the UK have the same concerns. There is something seriously wrong with the way languages are taught in many classrooms. We believe that one of the problems is a failure to recognize that language is much more than a grammatical system. Learning a language involves *Learning How to Mean* as given in the title of Halliday (1975). A command of standard grammar is a part of this, but we need to recognize two things. As we have seen it is possible to have some knowledge of how the grammar works without being able to apply that knowledge. On the other hand it is possible to communicate effectively in a language for all kinds of purposes without conforming closely to a standard grammar. Most teachers are aware of this and many are aware that TBLT offers a realistic alternative to the traditional grammar-based approaches which have consistently failed our learners.

Among grammar-based approaches we would include PPP. In a PPP methodology learners are so dominated by the presentation and practice that at the production stage they are preoccupied with grammatical form rather than with meaning. We need to shift the emphasis in teaching foreign languages to a focus on understanding and expressing meanings. This almost certainly entails beginning with a more lexical approach and gradually integrating grammar once learners have a wide enough vocabulary to be able to see how grammar can help fine-tune their message. The purpose of this article is to address some of the questions which are constantly raised about TBLT and which perhaps get in the way of a much wider application of TBLT principles (pp. 120 – 122).

#### V. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)



Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the most accepted paradigms in the language teaching circle that offers a new view of language. The concept derived from theories in a wide range of areas: philosophy, psychology, sociology, linguistics and educational research taking language learning as an educational and a political issue (Savignon, 1991, p. 265). It has been popular since 1970 when language teaching was taken up by scholars from different disciplines, especially those in psychology and linguistics. H. Douglas Brown defines CLT as a “unified but broadly based, theoretically well-informed set of tenets about the nature of language and of language learning and teaching” (Brown, 2007, p. 46). Since CLT is not a method, and is not even fixed to any particular pedagogical methods “as far as theories of learning and effective strategies in teaching are concerned” (Brandl, 2008, p.6), interpretation for classroom practice can be applied in various ways. The formation of this set of tenets is influenced by interdisciplinary works of scholars such as J. Firth, M. Halliday, D. Hymes, and J.L. Austin (Brandl, 2008, p. 4). One of the distinguished scholars is Savignon, who supports the application of this approach in the classroom using interpretations and manifestation. The conceptual insights about CLT became broader and available for interpretation and implementation. From Audiolingual’s drill and repetitive activities, and Translation-Grammar’s lack of oral competence, language teaching in CLT framework widens its scope of interests to both social and linguistic contexts that leads to the enrichment of communicative competence in learners. CLT is a effort to develop authenticity, real-world simulation and meaningful tasks in language classrooms. Therefore learners’ linguistic fluency is focused (Brown, 2007, p. 45).

According to Brown (2007) the characteristics of CLT read as follows:

- With overall goals, all components of communicative competence as well as the organizational and pragmatic aspects of language are in play.
- By engaging learners in language use for meaningful purposes, pragmatic, authentic and functional use is encouraged and therefore correct forms can be excused though not totally ignored.
- To encourage comprehension and production with fluency in learners, correcting for accuracy can be offered by teachers subsequently.
- Focusing on real-world contexts, learners are equipped with skills they need for the unrehearsed contexts by communicative techniques.
- Individual learners’ learning process is considered in order to promote their autonomy and strategic involvement. Teacher can help them develop appropriate strategies according to their strengths, weakness and preferences of learning styles.
- Teacher roles in CLT classroom are like those of ‘coach,’ ‘guide’ or ‘facilitator’ and ‘friend’ who will help learners develop genuine linguistic interactive competence. Therefore learners are active participants who involve trial and error in order to communicate by integrating different language skills.

Due to a variety of interpretations of CLT, there are diverse manifestations of it leading to CLT ‘offshoots’ such as Natural Approach, Cooperative Language Learning, Content-based Teaching, and Task-based Teaching. These offshoots can be viewed as the effort to minimize CLT limitations. Furthermore, its survival of more than three decades and numerous and continual research studies on relevant issues as well as publication of teaching materials about CLT are evident to claim that it is a successful paradigm in the language teaching discipline (p. 48).

## VI. HOW DOES TBLT RELATE TO THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING?

Approaches to language teaching can be seen on a continuum from form-based to meaning-based. Form-based approaches rest on the assumption that language should be introduced or presented to learners item by item as a formal system. Once they have understood how a particular linguistic form is structured and used they can begin to use it for communication. Meaning-based approaches make the assumption that learners develop a language system through their attempts to use that language. The role of the teacher is to provide opportunities for meaningful activities, to organize exposure to language which will provide appropriate input for the learner’s system, enabling natural acquisition, and to encourage learners to look critically at that input and learn from it, for example by finding a new way of expressing a particular meaning. TBLT developed from communicative approaches. In TBLT, a task is seen as central to the learning cycle. A task has a number of defining characteristics, among them: does it engage the learners’ interest; is there a primary focus on meaning; is success measured in terms of non linguistic outcome rather than accurate use of language forms; and, does it relate to real world activities? The more confidently we can answer yes to each of these questions the more task-like the activity (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 13). So a task-based approach is very much towards the meaning-based end of the spectrum. Learners may engage with a task simply because the topic is appealing. For example, a group of teenagers asked to Work with a partner. What do you think makes a good party? May well find the topic intrinsically interesting and engage in discussion. But they are more likely to do this if they are given more specific instructions: Write a list and agree on the three most important ingredients of a good party (Kay & Jones, 2000, p. 62). And the chances of meaningful interaction may be further increased if there is a teacher led introduction in which the teacher describes a really memorable party she attended and gives one reason why she found it so memorable. So a successful task starts with a basic idea but it is the way that idea is exploited that helps to ensure real learner participation. Our own experience in the classroom, our observation of classrooms, and our discussions with teachers over many years suggests that most, if not all, of these observations hold good in the majority of classrooms. And all of

these observations reinforce the findings of SLA research. When we persist in a grammar-based approach with its overwhelming emphasis on accuracy we are flying in the face, not only of research, but also of our own classroom experience. There are a number of research studies which are concerned specifically with communicative language teaching and which are applicable to TBLT. Ellis (1994) summarizes the findings as follows:

1. Giving beginner learners opportunities for meaningful communication in the classroom helps to develop communicative ability and also results in linguistic abilities no worse than those developed through more traditional form-focused approaches.

2. Communicative classroom settings may not be sufficient to ensure the development of high levels of linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, although they may be very effective in developing fluency and effective discourse skills (p. 604).

By linguistic abilities Ellis means control of the grammar. Given that the proper goal of language tuition is the development of fluency and effective discourse skills rather than a narrow linguistic competence, Ellis can reasonably be taken as endorsing meaning-based approaches. Even if we have some doubts about the efficacy of such approaches we should still be prepared to give them a realistic trial, given the recognized failure of the more traditional methods outlined above. In the TBL approach proposed in Willis and Willis (2007) there is ample opportunity for learners to pay careful attention to language within the task cycle, and an explicit focus on form after the task cycle (pp. 130 – 173).

Long (1992) holds that among the recent innovations in the field of second language teaching, task-based language teaching is probably the most promising and productive one, the one which has drawn much attention from both second language teaching profession and second language researchers. Three distinctive variations of it have emerged over the last ten years. They all can be put under the general category of task-based language teaching because they all consider the use of content-based tasks as the most important feature of their innovations (p. 98).

However, they do differ from each other in some significant ways, particularly in terms of syllabus design. The first of them is characterized by having no predetermined syllabus and represented by Prabhu (1987) and Breen (1984). Advocates of this approach argue that the content of the language classroom should not be predetermined. Among the reasons they give, the following two are the most important. First, our current knowledge of second language learning process doesn't allow us to "clearly identify learning "items"" and "prespecify the optimum sequence for their presentation in order to optimize learning by the audience, whatever its size." (Candlin, 1984 p. 40), and second, even if we predetermine what is to be taught, we can't determine what is actually learned by our learners. The result is the "continuing disparity and conflict between intention and reality, between theory and realization." (Candlin, 1984 p. 32). To them a syllabus should be open and negotiable and they should be "retrospective records rather than prospective plans" (Candlin, 1984 p. 35).

In the second approach, as represented by researchers such as Long and Crookes (1992) and Nunan (1989, 1991), on the other hand, the syllabus does have predetermined content. However, different from traditional syllabuses which use grammar, lexis, notion or function as units of analysis, it is organized around the tasks which are derived from real-life tasks for pedagogical purposes and sequenced according to the complexity of the tasks (Long & Crookes, 1992). The third variation, as represented by Willis (1990, 1993), Sheen (1994), Widdowson (1984), and Brumfit (1984), makes a clear distinction between syllabus and methodology. They adopt a traditional structural (grammatical or lexical) syllabus, but the method is task-based. They argue that it is the methodology that can be communicative or task-based, but "There is no such thing as a communicative syllabus" (Widdowson, 1984, pp. 77 - 85).

Advocates of task-based language teaching claim that such a teaching approach is "compatible with current SLA theory." (Long & Crookes, 1992 p. 43). It has also been claimed that many studies have produced evidence which is in support of the effectiveness of this approach, specifically the use of tasks, in facilitating SLA. However, compared to the discussion of the practical aspects involved in this teaching approach, such as the designing of a task based syllabus and task derivation and sequencing, little has been done to explain the general question of how the use of tasks can better promote SLA than other teaching approaches, or, in the cases of the empirical studies, the results which are interpreted to support such claims, in terms of current SLA theory. In this paper I hope to answer three questions: what is a task? What does a task do as a learning activity? According to the current theory of SLA, broadly defined, how does the use of tasks facilitate SLA.

Skehan (1998) is persuaded that there are numerous theories and approaches to teaching a second language, some exotic some mundane but all have one thing in common – a desire to make the acquisition of a foreign or second language as efficient and effective as possible (p. 75).

Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach which offers students material which they have to actively engage in the processing of in order to achieve a goal or complete a task. Much like regular tasks that we perform everyday such as making the tea, writing an essay, talking to someone on the phone, TBLT seeks to develop students' interlanguage through providing a task and then using language to solve it.

## VII. SOME OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF TBLT

- there is some communication problem to solve
- there is some sort of relationship to comparable real world activities
- task completion has some priority

- meaning is primary
- the assessment is done in terms of outcomes

On the other hand, tasks:

- do not give learners other people's meanings to regurgitate
- are not concerned with language display
- are not conformity oriented
- are not practice oriented
- do not embed language in materials so that specific structures can be focused on which leads to some examples of tasks:

- completing one another's family tree
- agreeing on advice to give the writer of a letter to an agony aunt
- solving a riddle
- leaving a message on someone's answering machine

but which rule out:

- completing a transformation exercise
- most Q and A with a teacher
- inductive learning activities where preselected material is conducive to the
- generation of language rules

(Skehan, 1998, pp. 63 - 64).

From this we can see that tasks focus on form (rather than individual forms of many separate structures) and that learners have to actively negotiate meaning and produce communication to complete the task.

Skehan's list offers some exciting and fun possibilities. When tasks are introduced such as solving a crossword and then getting the students to make their own and then share it with each other, or read about a topic and watch a related video clip, students become engaged with language and meaning as well as intensive cognitive processing which induces interlanguage modification and development.

#### VIII. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Berwick (1988) maintains that one of the hotly debated issues in the realm of applied linguistics deals with the force of the practicality and feasibility of the task based language teaching (TBLT) in the educational arenas. On the other hand, the language practitioners are usually unaware of the impact of TBLT on the illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence. The problem of the sex of the language learners is also another focus in this respect. That is, language teachers are expected to know the different reaction that male and female learners show when they are exposed to the components of TBLT to promote their illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence.

#### IX. STATEMENT OF THE HYPOTHESES

In order to probe the foregoing issue and gain access to logical conclusions the following quantitative hypotheses were developed:

1. The task based language teaching has no impact on the illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence of language learners.
2. There is no correlation between illocutionary and locutionary forces of the pragmatic competence based on task based language teaching measures.
3. There is no interaction between sex and the illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence on the achievement of task based language teaching.

#### X. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The ultimate goal of the researcher was directed to promote and ameliorate language teaching environments through the following contributions:

First and foremost, language teachers should be mindful of the essence of task based language teaching and get enough instructions on its pertaining components. Second, language teachers should be well familiar with the effective strategies of the task based language teaching components to advance the illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence of the language learners in order to manipulate them in their classrooms. Last but not least, language practitioners are also expected to be acquainted with the different sexes' capabilities of employing the illocutionary force of the pragmatic competence in task based language teaching.

#### XI. METHOD

##### *Subjects*

In order to come up with conclusive and persuasive findings on the first null hypothesis forming the **phase one** of

this study, 400 Iranian male and female students- 150 males and 250 females- between 20 and 30 years of age served as subjects. They were enrolled in a general English course at the Islamic Azad University, Varamin-Pishva branch. These subjects were given a TOEFL test (Barron's 1990) as a pretest. Following the correction of the papers, those who scored more than seventy percent of the total scores- 180 subjects of both sexes- were selected as the subjects of the study. The researcher employed a true experimental design in this respect.

TABLE 1.  
TRUE EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN PERTAINING TO THE PHASE ONE

G(E)	T(1)	X (Internal validity checked)	T(2) (external validity checked)
G(C)	T(1)	O	T(2)

The researcher assigned 30 male and female subjects in the experimental group and 30 male and female subjects in the control group. These subjects had been randomly selected out of the aforementioned 180 subjects. Therefore, it could be considered that both groups were almost of the same language knowledge. The experimental group was assigned tasks based on illocutionary act measures where the communicative force of the utterances was taken into account while the control group was assigned tasks on locutionary act measures where the correctness of the utterances was the core of the attention. As the posttest five native like Iranian Ph.D holders in linguistics who had full command of pragmatic competence in general and speech act theory in particular were hired to interview all the 60 subjects to unveil their differences. The acquired findings based on the pertinent test statistical measures unraveled that the experimental group was much more versed in pragmatic competence regarding the illocutionary force of speech act theory.

The second null hypothesis making **phase two** of the research was to be probed Through a correlational study. The researcher intended to look into the degree of correlation between the locutionary and the illocutionary forces of the pragmatic competence based on task based language teaching measures . The scores of 30 subjects in illocutionary experimental group were correlated with those of the locutionary control group. The coefficient of correlation demonstrated that there was a negligible positive correlation between the two variables. In other words, the correlation coefficient was around +10%.

In **phase three** a 2x2 factorial design was employed where the other 120 male and female subjects selected by the TOEFL test who had not been subjected to any treatment or placebo were subjected to locutionary and illocutionary act measures. Hereunder the relevant table can be observed.

TABLE 2.  
2X2 FACTORIAL DESIGN PERTAINING TO THE PHASE 3

Sex	Method	
	Locutionary	Illocutionary
Male	30	30
Female	30	30

According to the observed F it was proved that the females outperformed the male subjects in both locutionary and illocutionary acts.

## XII. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

"Pragmatics," for language teachers, is to do with what is encoded. Languages do not leave their speakers to grapple unaided with the problem of bridging the gap between the dictionary/grammar meanings of utterances and their precise value in communicative contexts. All languages provide ways of reducing the problem by labeling, in general terms, the typical communicative roles that utterances can take on. So, language teachers are expected to know and transfer the pragmatic competence in general and illocutionary acts in particular to the language learners. Put simply, the learners should be able to encode linguistically the fact that they are asking a question, or expressing doubt, or adding information, or showing respect, or making an objection, or exaggerating. It is these language-specific features that count as the overall language communicative competence. It is also important for the language teachers to know the differences between male and female learners as to how they react to the components of the pragmatic competence in general and illocutionary acts in particular. In the long run, the applied linguistics authorities should equip the language practitioners with the on the job training to familiarize them with the pragmatic competence and the illocutionary acts knowledge and give them the guidelines as to how to manipulate them in the language arenas.

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# Lexical Approach and Its Application in College English Classes

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**Abstract**—As a composite of language form and function, lexical chunks indicate the positive interaction of semantics, syntax and pragmatics to promote further development of language utterances. The theory of lexical chunks is popular for college English teachers to adopt in their classes. Based on theories of lexical chunks and lexical approach, this paper aims to discover the effective way for the College English classes in China so as to improve students' language proficiency.

**Index Terms**—lexical chunks, lexical approach, college English classes

## I. INTRODUCTION

College English teachers in China pay much attention to apply effective teaching approach in their classes in order to perfect their teaching and better students' language acquisition. As for the teaching approach, many have been developed, such as multiple intelligences teaching approach, comprehensive teaching approach, tentative approach, discipline-based English teaching approach, genre-based teaching approach, lexical approach, among which the lexical approach has aroused much attention to improve language learning. Teachers in China have become more aware of lexical chunks in their English teaching for the past decades. Thus, researches on ready-made chunks of language start to prevail, which consider the chunks as important as productive rules. This study tries to explore the appropriate lexical approach applied in college English classroom to see if it is influential to improve the English learning ability of students. Besides, students are expected to raise consciousness of lexical chunks and master some learning strategies.

## II. THEORY OF LEXICAL CHUNKS AND LEXICAL APPROACH

### A. *Lexical Chunks*

Since Chomskyan theory presents that native speaker's utterances are limited with creation and prefabricated items play a crucial part in their output, for several decades, many linguists, scholars, and teachers have carried out a number of studies (Pawley & Syder, 1983; Kjellmer, 1987; Erman & Warren, 2000) on lexis. The notion of lexis can be traced back to Lyons (1968) who mentions unanalyzed whole acquisition and usage applied in special situations. Bolinger (1975) names them as memorized chunks, stereotypes, pre-assembled chunks, prefabricated chunks and so on, while Becker (1975) regards it as a particular multi-word phenomenon. Besides, terms such as sentence stem (Pawley & Syder 1983), prefabs or lexical phrases (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992), lexical bundles (Biber et al. 1999), and formulaic sequences (Schmitt & Carter, 2004) are given afterwards to show the awareness of each one. Over 57 terms related to the feature of lexis are found in linguists' research among which collocation, lexical chunks, formulaic sequence, multiword units/strings, phraseology, prefabs, and units of meaning are the most frequently mentioned (Wray, 2002). It can be inferred that lexis has received its recognition and became increasingly crucial in language acquisition. On the other hand, varieties of terms are used to describe the concept based on various aspects.

To further identify lexical chunks, researchers have made a variety of classifications. I would like to adopt the division from Lewis since I recognize the division fits the characteristics mentioned above. Lewis (1997) lists the following taxonomy of lexical chunks:

- a. Words and polywords: words are seen as one single or independent unit (e.g. desk, look), while polywords refer to phrases of idiomaticity as an extension of this division (e.g. by the way, on the other hand)
- b. Collocate ones, or word partnerships refer to pairs or groups of words co-occur with very high frequency. (e.g. verb-noun phrase "put forward a suggestion"; adjective-noun phrase "a heavy smoke")
- c. Institutionalized utterances are those chunks used as wholes with pragmatic function (e.g. I'll get it, If I were you)
- d. Sentence frames and heads are seen mostly in written context to show its formality and complex. (e.g. The fact

was . . . firstly,...and finally)

Thus, I prefer to define the lexical chunks as word blocks of multi-word combinations which are fixed or semi-fixed in prefabricated modular form in the vocabulary memory of language users and are frequently used in the actual speech act. It can generate specific language in semantics, pragmatics, language cognition and discourse structure, etc.

Teachers in China have become more aware of lexical chunks in their English teaching for the past decades. Most natural utterances are completed by the semi-fixed “chunks” existing between words and fixed phrases (Yang, 1999). There are also relative researches from Ding Yanren & Qi Yan (2005), Pu Jianzhong (2003), etc. These studies mainly include summarizing the general theory of lexical chunks, exploring the relationship between lexical chunks and English spoken, written, or reading proficiency, discussing the correlation between lexical chunks and grammar. However, there are few specific clarifications of the teaching chunks and the acquisition of types of lexical chunks applied in college English classroom taking advantage of topics from the units of New Horizon College English textbook.

### B. *Lexical Approach*

In order to cultivate L2 learners to become more fluent and communicative in applying foreign language, language teaching approaches have been developed further to reach the teaching target

Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) support the progression of language acquisition from routine to pattern to creative use. Many linguists, such as Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), and Lewis (1993) have attempted to apply formulaic sequences in language teaching, among which “Lexical Approach” coined by Michael Lewis can be the most meaningful alternative to concentrate on lexical activities in order to improve learners’ language proficiency. Strong and convincing cases are given in the book of the Lexical Approach in 1993 by Michael Lewis, covering the primacy of meaning in language teaching. The approach has aroused attention and welcomed by teachers who applaud lexico-semantic knowledge and apply lexical teaching strategies over grammatical drilling at class. Lewis insists that this approach is not a shift from grammar teaching to vocabulary part, that is “language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary, but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks” (1997)

The lexical approach for L2 teaching focuses on the layer of lexis. It differentiates from traditional vocabulary teaching, that is, vocabulary is taught as individual words resulting in a gap between words and fixed meanings. It as well differentiates from traditional classroom which has largely been one of subservience to grammar (Sinclair & Renouf, 1988). Therefore, Lewis claims that his lexical is not simply a substitute teaching for the previous one, as language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary, but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks (Lewis, 1997). Lewis thinks the perception of language is holistic and organic not atomistic. Instructions on chunks in this approach are given to arouse learners’ consciousness, help them identify and organize the chunks so as to reduce the efforts of processing individual words and increase the accuracy and native type of language. Learners’ cognition and ability are taken into consideration for language teaching.

Many studies are carried out in order to put the theory into practice. Some of them aim to investigate the lexical idea of learners in English learning in China so as to find accessible methods to improve English teaching. Meanwhile, corpora are built to help the lexical study. Pu Jianzhong (2003) makes a distinction on words usage between Chinese learners and native speakers. By examining several common verbs in non-English major’ writing in Chinese Learner English Corpus, mainly in terms of colligation and collocation, he found that the learners’ uses of those verbs are significantly deviant from those of the native speakers’ both in quality and in quantity. The lexicon used by Chinese learners is actually less appeared in native speakers’ utterances. Pu demands that teachers should apply lexical approach in English classroom. Wang Lifei (2006) has studied the use of chunks in Chinese learners’ English argumentative writing based on SW ECCL corpus to discover the chunks proficiency of English Learners in China. They point out that Chinese learners used fewer types of chunks and overused three-word chunks. The chunks used by Chinese learners can be classified into 10 categories. Chinese learners differ in the use of passive and active sentence builders from the native speakers. Besides, studies applied chunks in improving speaking, listening, reading and writing skills have been reported to discuss the teachability of lexical chunks such as Wen Qiufang, Ding Yanren & Wang Wenyu (2003), Ding Yanren & Qi Yan (2005), Ma Guanghui (2009).

The above studies, either abroad or at home, introduce the basic knowledge of lexical chunks and lexical approach or practice them in sentential or textual level, which have made achievements on Chinese language learners. However, the classroom performance of lexical approach is paid little attention. The present study hopes to practice lexical approach in College English class with the selection of units from textbook in order to help students transform the unfittable concept of College English learning and improve their English skills.

## III. APPLICATION OF LEXICAL APPROACH IN COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

### A. *Current Situations in College English Classes*

For a long time, most College English classes have been arranged for two main steps. At the beginning of one unit, teachers would like to present a list of new words followed by analysis and illustration so as to make students familiar with the new words and further make a good use of them. The next step for the class is to explain the long or sophisticated sentences in texts in order to make students understand the main idea from writers. However, the result

seems discouraging. In fact, out of class students can be found anytime and anywhere taking a vocabulary booklet with them, especially in face of the coming of all sorts of tests. It is a good phenomenon for both teachers and students to be conscious of the crucial role of vocabulary since words can be named as the foundation of a language, but problems still exist for the improper way of vocabulary acquisition.

Students' chunk competence remains in a low level. Some of them are aware of the existence of chunks but lacking in appropriate learning strategies. Students are eager to enlarge their vocabulary but neglect the comprehensive mastery of it (Wei, 2003). So there is an urgent demand to practice chunk theories into college English classroom.

#### *B. Lexical Teaching Practice in College English Classes*

According to the theory of lexical approach, I have made corresponding teaching design in order to help students identify, organize and use lexical chunks appropriately and accurately. It is crucial to instruct clearly in front of the students the definitions, characteristics and learning strategies of lexical chunks mentioned above before the application of lexical approach in English classes. The specific teaching steps are still developed based on the textbook of New Horizon College English. The teaching of lexical chunks lasts for fourteen weeks nearly one semester. Eight units are covered during this semester and one unit cost two weeks to instruct. Lexical approach is implemented through the whole unit and activities are developed to raise the consciousness of students and make them more familiar with those chunks. One unit here is designed as an example. There are three stages, that is, lead-in stage, text-analysis stage and conclusion stage to present the teaching details of lexical approach.

##### **a. Lead-in stage**

This stage can be considered as the first or introductory part of a new unit learning. In this stage, activities like video play, pictures appreciation, warm-up questions can be adopted to motivate students to give their speech practice as many as possible.

Under the help of multimedia techniques, students can quickly enter the context with visual and audio background. Attention can be aroused for students to think and memorize what they receive from video. For example, when coming to unit two, teachers first shows students a famous speech given by Al Gore, former president of the USA, who depicts the problem of environment and the solution. After the video play, students are asked to recall what words or phrases they have attained from it and teachers guide them to use lexical chunks to talk about the topic and give their own ideas afterward. Meanwhile, the key words in the form of lexical chunks are listed on blackboard by teachers to emphasize.

Pictures like cartoons, photos can be displayed in front of students to encourage them to express as much as possible. After the discussion, the teacher makes a conclusion during which lexical chunks are stressed again and previous mistakes are corrected. For example, the topic of unit two is about environmental problems, photos and cartoons of environmental problems around the world are shown to raise students' attention. During the time of describing pictures, students will be encouraged to use lexical chunks like "it turns out to be", "be aware of", "take measures" etc. Finally, the teacher gives a conclusion to arrange the mentioned chunks into a summary and meanwhile required students to repeat.

Questions relevant to the topic are first given and students are asked to think for a while with good arrangements of words and phrases to present their ideas. The teachers' reference book is so well-organized as to provide such warm-up questions. Free discussions are encouraged so students could have a sense of what lexical chunks are needed. As for some questions with difficulty, cues could be given in form of lexical chunks to students for highlighting.

##### **b. Text-analysis Stage**

Reading materials in the text book bring good opportunities for students to get knowledge of and then take advantage of those lexical chunks. When coming to the first time text reading, students first are taught to identify lexical chunks. Polywords and collocations should be trained to identify. Some polywords such as "in essence", "all in all" indicate the conclusion of topic; some such as "at any rate", "so to speak" act as cohesive tool. These are helpful marks for better comprehension. Collocations like "badly/ bitterly/deeply/seriously/severely hurt" shows that other chunks can be mastered if one chunk is mastered. A great number of lexical chunks have one thing in common, that is, they show the regular co-occurrence of words in a specific form and order, so much so that the presence of one sets up an expectancy of the other (Chitra Fernando, 1996). In addition, sentence frames help to make a distinction of writing style. Sentence frames like "The fact/ suggestion was...", "I think/believe/assume..." are used in expressing one's opinion; sentence frames like "After winning his own freedom..." is used in narrative writing. After students become aware of such lexical chunks, they are required to make good use of them. Several strategies can be applied during text-analysis. Paraphrasing is an effective method to encourage students to interpret sentences by other patterns with the same meaning so that they can reorganize sentences structure with the lexical chunks and recall other chunks they have learnt to make a substitution. Translation job is also frequently used in text-analysis, which asks students to divide sentences into several patterns, find the corresponding Chinese patterns and reorganize them to Chinese expressions.

##### **c. Conclusion Stage**

After analyzing text in detail, the last stage is to make an end of one unit including activities such as summary, review, writing, exercises finishing. Previously students are taught to meet new lexical chunks and how to deal with them, while during this stage students are supposed to grasp how to make use of them in accuracy and fluency.

At the end of one unit, students are required to give a brief statement of text with efforts to make use of lexical chunks which could be presented by teacher or found from students' retention. Students are first instructed by the skills



of retelling, that is, the topic, keywords and essential elements of articles are well organized to conduct a summary. Students could be put into several teams to make a discussion if the text-retelling was beyond one student. Students could take a note as well to help them remind those chunks. For example, in unit two "Environmental Protection Throughout the World", the thread of this expository writing is so clear that students summarized according to the regional division. The writer in the beginning points out problems on environment and then introduced the specific problems taken place in countries around the world. When student ends up his speech, teacher could proceed relevant questions for further discussion or students are encouraged to make a dialogue as a role-play. For example, in unit two, there come questions like "What measures shall government take to deal with the problem of shrinking land resources? What other environmental problems have you heard? In China, what problems happened? Besides environmental problems, what else do you think is the most emergent problem for us to notice?"

Repetition work are effective for students to master chunks they meet. Teacher can find some relevant scripts or listening materials for students to evaluate their retention quality. Through repetition for times, students tend to raise their consciousness on lexis study and bear the lexical chunks in mind.

Students are asked to write down a paragraph or a short passage to give a comment of one unit. In this way, master of lexical chunks can be examined and students are inspired to have an attempt to utilize new lexical chunks which of course would be checked by teacher. In fact, teacher's evaluation is under constraint due to the factor of time and energy of teacher. Strategy of self-evaluation is provoked and students can make their own judgments on lexical chunks, which help to enhance students' autonomous ability. For example, about unit two, a piece of writing with directions of "how do you view environmental problems" is assigned to students. After the topic study and relevant chunks have been instructed and repeated to them, the writing task is set to test their mastery of chunks.

Exercises attach to the textbook provide good opportunity to practice the lexical chunks presented in the unit. Each exercise is designed to train in different aspects such as collocations, sentence structures, etc, which are pertinent to the topic. For example, in unit two on environmental protection, exercises IV is designed to train identification of collocation through the way of correction. The exercise lists eight sentences with collocations which students are often used in confusion or error such as "regardless off", "spring out", "aim in". By means of correction, the exercise displays both the frequent mistakes students conduct and the correct forms of lexical chunks so as to leave a deep impression and stimulate their memory. Besides, the exercise provides synonyms of those lexical chunks to make an enlargement for students. In Structure VII, students are required to complete sentences using "remain to". Five sentences are given to show the various uses of "remain to", meanwhile, sentence frames like "it remains for sb. to do...", "sth. remains to be done" are introduced to students to make English sentences more flexible.

Strategies introduced above are the main strategies used in each unit practical teaching. In fact, there may be overlapping or interrelationship among them. It is worth mentioning that not every strategy is essential to each unit teaching. Teacher will alter some of them according to their experiences and students' reaction to the best effect. Helpful methods are welcomed to help students recognize the characteristics of chunks and finally make progress in College English classes.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

After the teaching practice, I have discovered through both of students' response in classes and talk after classes that they welcome the introduction of lexical chunks and admit the positive effects of lexical chunks in their English learning. Few were aware of learning collocations and expressions and there was no possibility for them to apply systematic lexis learning strategies. However, after practices of chunk identification and usage, students become more confident in English learning. During teaching practice, I have also found several aspects that cannot be neglected and they affect students' learning very much.

##### A. *Grammaticalised Lexis*

Lewis (1993) points out that Language consists of grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar; the grammar/vocabulary dichotomy is invalid; much language consists of multi-word chunks, which clarifies the top feature of lexical chunks. So the lexical approach asks for our notice of the feature of grammaticalised lexis. In tradition, language is regarded as a system of grammar/vocabulary dichotomy. Grammar in a language represents the generative system while vocabulary stands for the stock of fixed non-generative words. Thus, it is acknowledged that sentence patterns consist of subject, predicate, object and other complements sometimes. To make utterances, tenses, clauses and other generative items are given great awareness. Vocabulary is used to recite as individual word which brings memory work even to overload. The traditionally developed dichotomy between the generalizable quality of grammar and the apparently arbitrary nature of individual vocabulary items does no good to language learners (Lewis, 1993).

##### B. *Lexis Teaching Principles*

Sample exercises and teaching activities are also given by Lewis (1997). He states 10 principles on class of lexis teaching.

- a. topic. Teachers must bear in mind the lexical items and put them under a topic framework.
- b. situation. Physical situation should be taken into consideration as the most appropriate way to organize lexicon.

- c. collocation. It presents the main feature of lexis in a language.
- d. notion. When under certain event, particular words or phrases are used to describe certain psychological unity.
- e. narration. The pattern of nominalise-narrate-explain processing in one's mind to make a speech should be taken into consideration.
- i. keywords. This will help learners be more familiar with formulaic expressions so as to take less effort to give utterances.

Among these principles, collocation is a factor which is weighed much by Lewis. As the inadequacy of grammar/vocabulary dichotomy is recognized, it is reasonable for collocation to play an important syllabus-generating role (Lewis, 1993). Collocation is defined as the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in actual text with greater than random frequency (Lewis, 1997). Collocations are most discovered in form of verb-noun and adjective-noun, and they can be extended to word groups larger than pairs. Some collocations are fixed, for example, "catch a cold", "a heavy smoke". There are some collocations less fixed or a little flexible such as "badly/deeply/severely hurt".

Noticing collocations is a central pedagogical activity. "Instead of words, we consciously try to think of collocations, and to present these in expressions. Rather than trying to break things into ever smaller pieces, there is a conscious effort to see things in larger, more holistic ways" (Lewis, 1997)

## V. CONCLUSION

Learning lexical chunks can be convenient to select proper words according to the context in avoidance of onerous selection. Learners tend to produce language accurately and fluently for focusing on chunks usage instead of grouping single word. Thus, teachers shall undertake the task to introduce theory of lexical chunks to students. Besides, the nature of lexical chunks shall be recognized in order to enhance the self-evaluation for students. Though applying lexical-chunk approach in classroom instruction is a new concept, it is no doubt a new teaching methodology that cannot be neglected. Teachers are expected to employ various strategies to bring more opportunities of chunks acquisition. This teaching attempt results can enlighten us to develop further in lexical chunks study and some helpful teaching strategies are expected to make an improvement on College English teaching and textbook selection. In the future more objective research can be designed to study the lexical approach.

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# Learners' Beliefs about English Language Learning: Examining the Impact of English Proficiency Level on the Motivation of Students among Non-English Major EFL Students

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**Abstract**—The current study aims at examining language learning beliefs of non-English major EFL students with different levels of English language proficiency on language learning. More specifically, it seeks to investigate the effect of English proficiency level on the motivation of students. The participants surveyed in this study were 125 (86 female and 39 male) Iranian non-English majors who were studying in biology, geography, accounting and science from Marand Azad University. Two research instruments, i.e. the Michigan Language Proficiency Test (ECPE) and the translated version of Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) were administered to collect the required data sets. Statistical procedures used to analyze data revealed that proficiency level had a significant effect on the motivation of students. The more proficient participants reported holding strong beliefs in the category of "motivation and expectations".

**Index Terms**—learners' beliefs about language learning, beliefs about language learning, learning beliefs, language learning beliefs, beliefs, attitude

## I. INTRODUCTION

Student centered learning received attention in recent years, when research interest in foreign language learning has shifted from teacher directed instruction to the learners' perspective, in which learner-related variables were examined. Beliefs of language learners about language learning, as one of these variables, demand more investigations. White (1999) stresses how awareness of the complexity of learner beliefs and expectations can help us to understand the realities of the early stages of self-instruction in language learners (cited in Hurd, 2003). Beliefs, according to Richardson (1996) are "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (cited in Bernat, 2006, p.2).

In the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and ultimate success (Breen, 2001 cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005). For example, in the context of second or foreign language learning, students may hold strong beliefs about the nature of the language under study, its relative difficulty, the process of its acquisition, the usefulness of various learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, the length of time it takes to acquire a foreign language, their own expectations about achievement and teaching methodologies. These beliefs influence the learners' attitudes to language and learning, their motivation and shape their experiences in the classroom. Consequently, they interrupt or promote the learners' ultimate success in the acquisition of a new language and diminish the length of time committed to language learning. As Bernat & Gvozdenko (2005) claimed, identification of these beliefs and their reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching can inform future syllabuses design and teacher practice in the course.

The present study is an attempt to investigate the relationship between language learning belief of non-English major EFL students and their English proficiency level in language learning.

## II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

It is generally agreed that individual language learners hold different beliefs about how language is learned. Individual beliefs about language learning may consciously or unconsciously influence learners' approaches to language learning (Mokhtari, 2007). As Horwitz (1985, 1987 & 1999) claimed, it is important to understand learner beliefs to

better understand learner approaches to language learning, and learners' use of learning strategies to better plan language instruction (cited in Mokhtari, 2007).

Since the mid 1980s, a number of studies in second or foreign language learning were devoted to beliefs that language learners hold. Impetus for these studies was given by the pioneering research of Elaine Horwitz of the University of Texas at Austin. In 1980, Horwitz conducted her research among students and instructors by her designed instrument (BALLI) at the University of Texas at Austin. According to Nikitina & Furuoka (2006), Park (1995) investigated beliefs of English language learners at two universities in Korea.

Victori and Lockhart (1995) discuss differences between "insightful beliefs" which successful learners hold, and the negative or limited beliefs" which poor learners hold, state that:

... if students develop or maintain misconceptions about their own learning, if they attribute undue importance to factors that are external to their own action... they are not likely to adopt a responsible and active attitude in their approach to learning and may never become autonomous (cited in Tercanlioglu, 2005, p.225).

#### A. *Classifications of Beliefs about Language Learning*

According to Mokhtari (2007), among researchers, Horwitz (1987) is considered the first researcher to attempt to identify language learners' beliefs in a systematic way. Based on free-recall tasks and focus group discussions with both foreign language and ESL teachers and students, she developed a 34 Likert-scale questionnaire, called the beliefs about language learning Inventory (BALLI) to identify student beliefs. The BALLI assesses students' beliefs in five major areas: (1) foreign language aptitude; (2) the difficulty of language learning; (3) the nature of language learning ;( 4) learning and communication strategies; and (5) motivation and expectations (Horwitz, 1987).The BALLI instrument has been employed in a number of subsequent studies (Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992; Kern, 1995; Park 1995; Truitt, 1995; Oh, 1996; Kuntz, 1996; Kuntz, 1996; Kunt, 1997; Kim-Yoon, 2000; Kim 2001; and Hong 2006) showing that various beliefs are widespread but also culture-bounded at least to an extent.

#### B. *Studies on Beliefs in an ESL Context*

Cotterall (1995) emphasized on determining learners' readiness for autonomy and explored the relationship between ESL learners' beliefs about language learning and their autonomous language learning behavior, i.e. their readiness for autonomy.

Breen (2001) investigated how learners' attributes such as beliefs, aptitude, personality, or the concept of identity affect their conceptions of themselves and the learning environment. The author asserts that learners work selectively within their learning environment, and upon the linguistics and communicative data made available to them in that environment. This selectively derives from the learners' conceptualizations of the conditions that they believe to be facilitating or hindering their learning and their conceptualizations of the language to be learned. He also points out that such conceptualizations are imbued with the learners' feelings and attitudes, leading to the conclusion that affect, inter alia, shape one's cognitive conceptualizations or beliefs (cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005).

Successful learners develop insights into beliefs about the language learning processes and the use of affective learning strategies. Learners need to be aware of their beliefs and change their beliefs to make learning more effective.

147 Japanese learners were investigated in Lambert (2001) study by responding to questions concerning their beliefs and opinions about language learning. In order to determine their viability as input for L2 course design, the amount of agreement in learners' responses to 126 items concerning five major aspects of L2 courses was compared over a period of two weeks, and again over a period of one year. The findings showed that such knowledge might be used more productively in the classroom as a basis for dialogue between teachers and learners.

Another study by Bernat (2004) used BALLI to explore 20 adult Vietnamese ESL learner beliefs about language learning. The findings indicated that all of respondents (100%) either strongly agreed or agreed the importance to repeat and practice the target language being acquired as well as better English proficiency was likely to bring greater job opportunities most of them (80%) endorsed the importance of excellent pronunciations. Only 55% learners agreed the statement "it is necessary to know about English speaking cultures to speak English" (cited in Chiou, 2006).

Conscious or not, beliefs about language learning may influence the way learners approach language learning and types of learning tasks that are likely to produce problems or difficulties instead of helping to achieve goals, as they build up misconceptions about language learning (Oz, 2007).

#### C. *Studies on Beliefs in an EFL Context*

The study of Sakui and Gaies (1999) with 1300 Japanese EFL learners at tertiary level on their communicative and traditional orientation to learning the quality and sufficiency of classroom instruction, and foreign Language aptitude and difficulty. They stated that the most learner beliefs correspond to the distinction between traditional and contemporary views of language teaching and learning, language aptitude and difficulty.

Tanaka's study (2004 cited in Ellis, 2008), investigated the relationship between beliefs and language proficiency in 132 Japanese learners of English divided into two groups:

The New Zealand Group\_ 63 Japanese students studying English in an Auckland tertiary institute for 12 weeks.

The Japanese group\_69 Japanese students who were studying English in a Japanese university in Tokyo.

Tanaka administrated the belief questionnaire consisting of 27 Likert scale items, interview, diary, oxford placement test and oral narrative task. According the findings, most of the students were very dissatisfied with their English proficiency at the beginning of the study, which they attributed to the poor English language education they had received in Japan. Tanaka found that overall the relationships between beliefs and proficiency measures were very weak. The NZ Japanese students who reinforced their beliefs relating to experiential learning during study abroad tended to advance more in general proficiency but not in speaking ability. Changes in beliefs relating to analytic learning and affective states did not affect either general proficiency or speaking ability.

Zhang & Zhou (2005) explored the relationship between language learners' beliefs and autonomous learning in the Chinese learning context so as to cultivate the students learning autonomy and self-awareness, to improve their learning efficiency and to solve the problem of "teaching students how to learn". It must be accepted that language learning and teaching is a part of the total educational process, which means the development of autonomy through students being given practice in decision-making and thus accepting responsibility for their own learning and gaining experience which enables them to learn a third or fourth language.

Oz (2007) investigated metacognitive knowledge or beliefs about language learning of 470 Turkish EFL learners in secondary education. The primary aims of his study were to explore what beliefs Turkish students in secondary education held about learning English as a foreign language (EFL), how their beliefs systems were organized and whether there were significant differences in belief systems among learner groups according to variables such as social and school contexts, gender, age and grade level. Structured questionnaire based on Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (1987) used to collect required data sets. The results of this study showed that learners' metacognitive knowledge or beliefs about language learning have variability in terms of social and educational contexts, age, gender, and stages of language.

Bernat & Lloyd (2007) investigated the relationship between beliefs about language learning and gender. The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) and Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test administrated to 155 female and 107 male English as a Foreign Language students. Results show that overall males and females held similar beliefs about language learning, with only one item being statistically significant and another one being marginally significant.

Peacock (2007) conducted an investigation on the Links between learner beliefs, teacher beliefs, and EFL proficiency on 202 students in ten EFL classes and 45 teachers in the department of English, at the City University of Hong-Kong. The aim of this study was to carry out how far learner beliefs differ from those held by EFL teachers, whether those differences affect language learning (and in particular, whether incorrect beliefs are associated with lower proficiency levels), and how they might be eliminated. The initial set of data was collected using Horwitz BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory BALLI). Further data were collected during learner interviews, a proficiency test, and from essays. An additional aim of the study was to develop hypothesis about the origins of Hong Kong learner beliefs about language learning. Two further beliefs about language learning were also investigated; first, learners were asked to self-rate proficiency, making it possible to check the correlation between learners self-rated proficiency and tested proficiency. Second, the 25 most proficient and the 25 least proficient learners were asked for their opinions on the best way to learn EFL, and answers compared.

It has become obvious, by examining scores for self-rated proficiency, that almost all the students researched have a rather low opinion of their own abilities. Most rated themselves 'fair' in all areas, and only 8 percent rated themselves 'good' (there were almost no differences by gender). Certainly these students' actual ability is better than they estimate; this (as did certain results from the BALLI) also indicates a degree of lack of confidence. Another interesting finding that emerged from the correlations between tested and self-rated proficiency is that for these learners, there was a significant difference by gender in skill at estimating (1) their overall ability, and (2) their ability in listening and in reading (though not in grammar or in writing). Females were considerably more skilled, or more honest, at this than males. Two possible reasons for the differences are that males were conspicuously worse than females at estimating, or conspicuously worse at admitting, their own strengths and weaknesses. The findings of this study suggest that teachers examine their learners' beliefs and do what they can to reduce learner misunderstanding and dissatisfaction.

Rieley (2009) study investigated the beliefs about English language learning of 661 first-year university students and their 34 English teachers at a Japanese university. The focus of the article is the shifts in reported student beliefs over a nine-month period of English study between two administrations of the Sakui and Gaies (1999) beliefs survey instrument. Beliefs are usually considered as resilient constructs, self-perpetuating in nature. In this study, however, significant differences were found in student responses to almost a quarter of the items on the questionnaire. Two student discussion groups were also formed which provided further evidence of shifts in student beliefs about language learning during the nine-month period of English study.

#### *D. Studies on Beliefs in an FL context*

Mantle-Bromley (1995) investigated the link between the beliefs and attitudes of Spanish and French learners and found that many young learners bring to the language classroom misconceptions or erroneous beliefs likely to impede their learning progress. Mantle-Bromley (1995) explained that learner with positive beliefs are more likely to perform better in class.

Horwitz (1988, cited in Mokhtari, 2007) conducted a study on American students of foreign languages. She administrated the BALLI to 241 foreign language students at the University of Texas at Austin. Three language learning

groups; German, French, and Spanish were used for comparison. Horwitz found a similarity of beliefs among the different target language groups; the findings did not reveal statistically significant differences in beliefs. However, the responses indicated several small differences in beliefs among the groups. Horwitz explained that "such small differences among groups could result from measurement error, Differences in populations, the special nature of learning the target language, or the instructional content of specific classes" (p.291). She argued that knowledge of learner beliefs may be useful to educators to understand how learners approach language learning. The findings may clarify some misconceptions about language learning which lead learners to use less effective strategies.

Kuntz (1996) explored the beliefs about language learning by 424 first-month university students enrolled in both commonly taught languages (French, German and Spanish) and less commonly taught languages (Arabic and Swahili), using BALLI. This study identified some learning beliefs that were significantly different between the two groups. Findings of this study provided strong evidence that the language studies do influence the beliefs of student's concerning foreign language learning. Students of Arabic and Swahili showed a preference for statements associated with communication strategies and people of the target language countries. According to Kuntz, the language in this study as well as culture and social environment may have shaped beliefs of students (cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2007).

In another study, Kuntz (1999) investigated beliefs about language learning among schoolchildren of different languages (French, German, Latin, Spanish) at five levels of language instruction. Though the learners in her research were of much younger age than university students, the results provide some useful for the present study insights. Kuntz assessed beliefs that had been most commonly shared by the students of different languages at different levels of instruction as well as beliefs that had differed significantly between the groups of learners. She concluded that learners' assumptions about foreign language learning do change with the length of instruction, and some beliefs weaken while others grow stronger. Especially, beliefs concerning communication strategies underwent most significant changes. For example, Students of all languages at more advanced levels expressed stronger disagreement with the statements that learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translation, and that one has to know all the words for a good reading comprehension. Also, the students acquired more realistic beliefs about time spending needed for learning a foreign language. Kuntz concludes that "these changes may reflect program activities and personal experiences" (cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2007, p.33).

### III. METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants surveyed in this study were 125 (N=125) Iranian non-English majors, both male and female. As indicated in Table 1, they were majoring in biology, geography, accounting and science. They were selected from among non-English majors studying for a B.A. degree at Azad University of Marand.

TABLE 1:  
DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

		Sex of participants		Total
		Female	Male	
Field of study	biology	29	9	38
	geography	15	16	31
	accounting	23	12	35
	science	19	2	21
Total		86	39	125

#### B. Research Question

This study addresses the following research question:

1. Is there any significant difference between English language proficiency levels of non-English major EFL students and their motivation in English language learning?

#### C. Instruments

##### 1. The translated version of Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

The beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) were developed by Horwitz (1987) to elicit learners' beliefs about language learning. It contains thirty-four items relating to beliefs within five major areas:

- 1). foreign language aptitude
- 2). the difficulty of language learning
- 3). the nature of language learning
- 4). learning and communication strategies, and
- 5). motivation and expectations

Since my participants were not highly proficient, the researcher used the translated version of belief questionnaire including thirty-two items. For any single question or item in the questionnaire, we need to argue for its construct. In

other words, what does it test? As Table 2 shows, there is one construct for any bunch of statements or items in the belief questionnaire as follows:

TABLE 2:  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE ITEMS OF BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE BASED ON THE CONSTRUCT

Construct	Items
foreign language aptitude	1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 14, 17, 28, 31
the difficulty of language learning	3, 23, 32,
the nature of language learning	7,11,15,21,25,26
learning and communication strategies	6,8,12,13,16,19,20,24
motivation and expectations	4, 18,22,27,29,30

## 2. The Michigan Language Proficiency Test

From among the possible language proficiency tests (TOEFL, IELTS, Nelson Reading Checklist, and the University Michigan Language Proficiency Test (ECPE), a decision had to be made on one of these tests as an indicator of the readers' language proficiency. Given the fact the students' major was not English; it was assumed that TOEFL and IELTS might be very difficult. Moreover, Nelson Reading Checklist lacks reading comprehension section which is actually a major component of language proficiency. However, the Michigan test battery has some cloze passages which are considered to be good predictors of language proficiency. Therefore, it was supposed that the Michigan Language Proficiency Test may be a better candidate for the purposes of the present study.

The University of Michigan language proficiency test battery consisted of 70 items; 10 items constituted a cloze reading passage, 25 items tested knowledge of grammar, and 25 dealt with vocabulary. Also, this test included two reading comprehension passages each followed by five reading comprehension items. The test items were randomly selected from the University of Michigan ECPE test battery. The test was used to assign the participants to the three different proficiency levels of Low, Intermediate, and High.

## IV. RESULTS

This section is devoted to the analyses of data collected for the purpose of this study. The quantitative analysis of this study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 for MS Windows XP.

### A. Descriptive Analysis of Michigan Test

The result of descriptive analysis of Michigan test, as appeared in Table 3, shows that multiple-choice grammar has the highest mean and is more homogeneous. While reading comprehension has the lowest mean and is more heterogeneous.

TABLE 3:  
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF MICHIGAN TEST

Statistics				
	Cloze grammar	Vocabulary	Reading comprehension	Multiple choice grammar
N	126	126	125	126
Mean	20.71	21.5238	19.4400	24.31
Std. Deviation	13.27	9.39	14.15	9.07

### B. Descriptive Analysis of Belief Questionnaire

As indicated in Table 4, the results of descriptive analysis of belief questionnaire show that the highest mean belonged to the "motivation and expectations" category, while the lowest mean belonged to the "foreign language aptitude".

TABLE 4:  
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE

	aptitude	difficulty	motivation	nature	communication strategies
N	115	120	114	107	111
Mean	73.2560	77.0000	84.0351	81.1838	76.3514
Std. Deviation	9.89409	12.54981	12.66367	10.19981	9.31631

### C. Levels of Language Proficiency

In order to classify participants into three groups (Low, Intermediate and High) their total scores were used.



In order to have a relatively similar number of participants in each level half of SD ( $SD=3.15$ ) were added and subtracted from mean scores. Therefore, the low proficient group scored between 15.7 to 18.85 and intermediate participants scored 18.86 to 25.15 and finally advance group scored 25.26 and higher. The distribution of the participants in each group according to their English proficiency level appeared in Table 5.

TABLE 5:  
DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO THEIR PROFICIENCY LEVEL

proflevel		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	35	27.8	28.0	28.0
	Intermediate	54	42.9	43.2	71.2
	High	36	28.6	28.8	100.0
	Total	125	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.8		
Total		126	100.0		

#### D. Descriptive Analyses of Motivation and Expectations

In order to investigate the views of participants on the items expected to examine the motivation and expectations of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. The results, appeared in Table 6, shows that the participants have more agreement on items b18, b22, b27, b29 and b30. The participants' view on items b18, b22, and b29 are more homogenous. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items.

TABLE 6:  
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ITEMS EXAMINING MOTIVATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b4mot	I believe I will learn to speak English very well.	124	3.7258	1.00680	63.097 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
b18mot	People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.	125	4.1120	.98551	81.280 <sup>b</sup>	4	.000
b22mot	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English people better.	123	4.5041	.92660	1.974E2 <sup>c</sup>	4	.000
b27mot	If I learn to speak English very well. I will have better job opportunities.	121	4.3140	1.02496	1.314E2 <sup>d</sup>	4	.000
b29mot	I want to learn to speak English very well.	120	4.5583	.81782	2.024E2 <sup>e</sup>	4	.000
b30mot	I would like to have English friends.	120	4.0583	1.10989	73.083 <sup>e</sup>	4	.000

#### V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Considering the performance of four groups of participants on Michigan test and belief questionnaire, and based on data analysis results, it was found that there is a significant difference between the level of English language proficiency and motivation. In other hand, English proficiency level had a significant effect on the motivation of non-English major EFL students. The more proficient participants reported holding strong beliefs in the category of "motivation and expectations".

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# The Politics of Negotiation: *Moll Flanders* and Defoe's Ethic Codification

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**Abstract**—Daniel Defoe is often perceived as one of the most influential and prolific writers in the world literature as well as the inventor of the English novel. Among Daniel Defoe's various works, *Moll Flanders* (1722) is neither the most enduring nor the most popular one. But it is Defoe's first novel, also the first one in the history of English literature, with a woman protagonist from the lowest social class. By analyzing three women authors' works and three men authors' works in her *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (1999), Spivak proves the complicity between the ideology of writers, both male and female, and their class in their literary representation at certain social context though sometimes the ideology of their class is not the dominant culture power at society. This thesis aims at proving the heroine in Defoe's *Moll Flanders*—*Moll Flanders'* detour of identity and at interpreting this transformation of connotation of gentlewoman with the help of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's theoretic analysis of complicity relationship between author and his class and literary representation.

**Index Terms**—*Moll Flanders*, Defoe, complicity, gentlewoman, ethics

Among Daniel Defoe's various works, *Moll Flanders* (1722) is neither the most enduring nor the most popular one. But it is firstly Defoe's first novel, also the first one in the history of English literature, with a woman protagonist from the lowest social class. Second, *Moll* is especially ambiguous, for she, though defiant and indomitable, is often confused about her own identity and even tends to fall into the muddle of self-deception. Although *Moll* realizes her ideal identity of gentlewoman in the end of the novel, the connotation behind it has been changed compared with the conventional one. Third, this work appeared in the pre-industrial age provides me with a good chance to examine *Moll Flanders* and Defoe's ethic codification, thus disclosing the complicity relationship between author and his class and literary representation.

Despite its great popularity upon publication, for a long time *Moll Flanders* has to find its readers in the lower classes. Respectable readers dismissed it as a secondary novel and found its vulgarity and profanity outrageously distasteful. Though Charles Lamb was said to admire *Moll Flanders*, he labeled all Defoe's stories as "capital kitchen reading" (p.327), and William Hazlitt asserted, "*Moll Flanders* is utterly vile and detestable" (p.110). Twentieth-century literary criticism witnessed a drastic rise in the critical appreciation of *Moll Flanders*. Ian Watt writes in *The Rise of The Novel* that "it imposes itself as the best single work for the purpose of investigating Defoe's methods as a novelist and his place in the tradition of the novel" (p. 94); James Joyce, who possessed the complete works of Defoe and read every line of them, acknowledged his indebtedness and once commented in a lecture that "This lady (Mrs. Christian Davies), together with the adventuress Roxana and the unforgettable harlot *Moll Flanders*, forms the trio of female characters which reduces contemporary criticism to stupefied impotence" (p.346). The highest praise came from Virginia Woolf, who held that "*Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* ...stand among the few English novels which we can call indisputably great" (p.87).

The story is ostensibly narrated by a 70-year-old woman, a reformed criminal, looking back on her past life and commenting on her youthful self from the vantage point of maturity and repentance. Thus, the narrator is simultaneously the wayward girl who moves at breathtaking pace through a sequence of picaresque adventures and the mature woman unfolding her story to the reader with mingled understanding and regret. When reading *Moll Flanders* we are faced with a question: What is the narrator's attitude to her own life? Behind this question lies the other: What is Defoe's attitude towards his own creation?

I propose to approach *Moll* the female subject from her detour of identity of gentlewoman with the help of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's theoretic analysis of complicity relationship between author and his class and literary representation to try to answer these questions.

## I. GENTLEWOMAN: STEREOTYPING AND ITS VARIATION

### A. *The Stereotyping of Gentlewoman in the 18th Century*

#### 1. Representation of the conventional feminine virtues

The phrase "the weaker vessel" (p.60) originated with William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament into English in 1526 and became common usage during the next hundred years or more. It has become an established proverb: it runs though the conduct book literature of the pre-civil war period and recurs in sermons. It carries all the

resonances of the gender order upon which scriptural patriarchy rested, resonances of man's strength, initiative and authority. The subordination of women began with the hierarchical ordering of bodies and indeed with firmly defined gender roles. Women's protected and conservative role in the household and society was justified by arguments from her naturally preordained function. What enabled these ideas to persist in England was their germination among the squirarchy, the predominant class politically, culturally, and socially, with a "near monopoly of high prestige and status. (pp. 260-261)"

The stereotype of womankind is intensely vulnerable and unprotected. Women were credited with an inner weakness that could all too easily lead them through the assertion of their sexual and emotional power to subvert to the patriarchal order and break its boundaries. Chaste, silent and obedient; the trilogy of primary female virtues carry with it a series of logical connections. The central theme of female gender construction was humility and obedience.

Moll is inevitably different from those male adventurers. As a woman she is forced to stay at home and to move strictly within the defining institutions of female destiny, sex, marriage and the family. She can only come to her sense of herself and establish her particular identities in relation to those institutions, that is to say by disrupting them. Throughout her narrative her practice and sometimes clearly articulates a feminist individualism that subverts or at least qualifies the validity or binding finality of marriage and the family.

## 2. Causes of such representation

Under such social context, girls must expect to contain their expectations of living to the utmost of all their abilities: moulding and repression are the essence of female training. When, for some girls, this came to include schooling, as it did from around the 1620s, a consistent ideological pattern can be found in the teaching of the attributes of femininity at school which complemented men's approach to an upbringing at home. By the middle of the seventeenth century the pattern of upbringing for girls from gentry families was very firmly established. The number and variety of girls' schools expanded enormously during the eighteenth century. Therefore, girls were educated for marriage through a moral and social programme rather than an academic one. Those in gentry circles grew up knowing that nothing but a good marriage—that is a prestigious and advantageous one—would fully secure their family's lasting approval. Thus gender differentiation from an early age was rooted in this society's values and universally taken for granted. However, in Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), his heroine shows a different understanding of gentlewoman though she still lives in a society that gentry's morality is dominant.

## B. *Moll's Ideal of Gentlewoman - the Variation of Gentlewoman in the 18th Century*

### 1. Conflict between the aristocratic ideology and the bourgeois ideology

The eighteenth century has been portrayed as an aristocratic century and clearly in many respects it was so. Yet Paul Langford's account, which emphasizes the growing wealth and importance of the middle class, is an important corrective. Some women in middling families were not content to live the rest of their lives laboring on behalf of, and being dependent upon, families or husbands. And there are numerous cases of women who used their earning power to establish full or partial independence from their relatives or to avoid marriage. Middling families did apprentice their daughters to trades. Over the course of the eighteenth century most middling women learned to read and write, and with these skills they gained an ability to contribute to the historical record, as well as the chance to appropriate new kinds of power and authority that few non-elite women before them had possessed. Social aspiration has become a driving force in Hanoverian England, unifying the middle ranks in an almost obsessive engagement in seeking entry to the ranks of the gentry by aping their style of life, manners and morals. Defoe's *Moll Flanders* demonstrates it to the most by pursuing her identity of gentlewoman throughout her whole life yet the connotation of this identity has been changed in her mind.

### 2. Moll's varied understanding of gentlewoman

Moll, at this point in her life, knows exactly what she does want to be: a gentlewoman. Between pages 5 and 13 of the novel, this desire of hers to be a gentlewoman is a dominant topic. When the child Moll is shown to understand the word "gentlewoman" differently from the way her elders understand it, we see one of the potential hazards of identifying people by Moll's chosen means. Of the differences between her definition of her desired role and the definition made by her elders, Moll writes, "All this while, my good old Nurse, Mrs. Mayoress, and all the rest of them, did not understand me at all, or they meant one Sort of thing by the Word Gentlewoman, and I meant quite another: for alas, all I understood by being a Gentlewoman, was to be able to Work for myself, and get enough to keep me without going to service, whereas they meant to live Great and High, and I know not what". The sort of person that the old nurse and Mrs. Mayoress refer to with the word "gentlewoman" turns out to be not "gentle" at all: when Moll names for them one of her intended models, her old nurse says, "she is a Person on ill Fame, and has had two Bastards".

Moll is undeterred, however, by this information: I insisted that she was a Gentlewoman, and I would be such a Gentlewoman as that. And, she triumphantly asserts, two pages later, "I was a Gentlewoman indeed, as I understood that Word; for before I was Twelve Tears old, I not only found myself Clothes and paid my Nurse for my keeping, but got Money in my Pocket too" (p.10). Twice, the child Moll points out, with reference to the "gentlewoman (p.8)" who is her exemplar, "they call her Madam (p.9)", and, even as author, she seems pleased to remember that she herself achieved the desired reputation: "Mr. Mayor's Daughters would come and see me, and ask where the little Gentlewoman was, which made me not a little Proud of myself besides. I was often visited by these young Ladies, and sometimes they brought others with them; so that I was known by it, almost all over the Town" (p.9).

As has been shown, Moll's understanding of gentlewoman related with the attributes of independence and self-support is completely different from the stereotyping of it defined by the gentry. By comparing the stereotyping of gentlewoman and its variation we can ask such a question: what is the relationship between Moll Flanders and her creator Defoe-a representative of the bourgeois in such a social context?

## II. THE DETOUR OF MOLL FLANDERS' IDENTITY

### A. *Gentlewoman*

#### 1. Moll's feminine virtues

There is no doubt that in most hierarchical societies some members of socially inferior groups do embrace the dominant ideology in whole or more likely in part, up to and including an at least partial belief in their own intrinsic inferiority. And it is not surprising that writers should have succumbed to the prevailing ethos. Submission to duty is the most important lesson a girl has to learn in her years at school in a society which in each instance normality is represented by the life of an aristocratic gentlewoman. It was natural for women to subject themselves to men. Self-sacrifice for the benefit of others and obedience to authority remain the central aims of female socialization. In the opening pages of *Moll Flanders*, we see Defoe's heroine is constrained to the convention of gentlewoman and she actually internalized the aristocratic ideology which was dominant at that times at the opening of this book. In terms of male-female relation at the very beginning of the book, Moll is placed in the most passive position in her intercourse with her first lover, which commences and ceases strictly in the way the male authority demands. During this stage, Moll is governed by an approximately conventional morality and she is caused acute moral discomfort by the prospect of being at once one man's wife and his brother's whore. The male-female relation of Moll's at this period can typify such conventions and show the great power of aristocratic ideology upon Moll.

#### 2. The roots of Moll's femininity

The eighteenth century has been portrayed as an aristocratic century. It is equally the case that eighteenth-century society offered a pitiful array of chances for women fully to express themselves. In this respect the most deprived classes were neither better nor worse; women probably led a marginally more brutal life, with the hazards of childbirth augmented by crude gynecology and surgical implements that look like instruments of refined torture. Prostitutes-estimated by one observer at 50000-lived a scarcely more degraded life to many eyes. However, in the middle and upper orders of society, many women had enough leisure to regret their enforced idleness. Women could start salons, could become independent scholars, and could even become painters in the approved style. They could exercise power behind the throne, as consorts or royal mistresses or society hostesses. But they were denied access to proper schooling, excluded from the universities, forbidden the professions, kept well away from the armed services, and generally confined to trivial and ornamental offices. Defoe was all by the standards of the day advanced in their attitudes towards female education, but they could none of them foresee a real transformation in sexual patterns. All women, and the vast majority of the poor like Moll, were excluded from practical politics.

Moll is portrayed as passive in the face of men, biology, and fate. She has received the genteel education from the old nurse as well as some leisured middle-class gentlewomen in Colchester since her early childhood. But her education was social and gender-specific, that is, to see herself modest, neat, graceful, and obedient to draw on the likings of husbands. Moll, be a wife or whore, is commercialized in order to meet men's satisfaction. Moll actually internalized the aristocratic ideology which was dominant at society at the opening of this book under the influence of social program and her received education. During this period, Moll is a typical woman designated by dominant society, genteel and subversive.

### B. *Degentlewoman*

#### 1. Rising of the middle class and attributes of the middle class women

The traditional role of the wife in the English household was as a friend and partner, albeit a junior partner, of her husband. Some tasks, such as running the household, doing the shopping and bringing up young children were more the function of the wife; others, such as running the family business, were more the function of the husband, but this did not mean that the wife should not play an important part in the business side of middling family life with the development of society. One of the most fundamental changes that took place in the rearing of middling girls between the mid sixteenth and the late eighteenth centuries was the popularizing of the new or relatively new skills of reading and writing. The ability to read and write was a saleable skill in the early modern period, and once having mastered it, some women were not content to live the rest of their lives laboring on behalf of, and being dependent upon, families or husbands. They begin to find their way in the patriarchal aristocratic society.

Under such social context, more and more women, including Moll, were not content to live the rest of their lives laboring on behalf of, and being dependent upon, families or husbands. They begin to deconstruct the conventional role designed for women. There are numerous cases of women who used their earning power to establish full or partial independence from their relatives or to avoid marriage. Over the course of the eighteenth century most middling women learned to read and write, and with these skills they gained an ability to contribute to the historical record, as well as the chance to appropriate new kinds of power and authority that few non-elite women before them had possessed.

#### 2. Moll's strategy of deconstructing the convention of gentlewoman

Moll begins to destroy her identity of “weaker vassal” defined by society. Her relation with men at this period proves her transformation. In the affairs with her Lancashire husband, Moll has erased the difference between men “the self” and women “the other”. Moll and her Lancashire husband are the same from the nature and this marriage is a strategy of double deceivery. In this affairs, men/women regards the other side as “the self/the other” respectively, thus erasing the difference between men “the self” and women “the other”. In the affairs with the clerk, Moll destroys the sexual codes. She has become the “bad woman” who feminizes men, that is, she has become the “the self” while men “the other”. From the beginning of this marriage to the end of it, Moll is in positive and dominant position. From this marriage, Moll got what she wanted to get, that is, the economic security and quite life while clerk got what he wanted to get, that is, Moll-his ideal gentlewoman wife. As a matter of fact, this marriage is a covert commercialization. However, this time Moll is never the objective of it but the subjective of it.

### III. COMPLICITY RELATIONSHIP OF DEFOE AND MOLL’S ETHICS

#### A. *Regentlewoman*

##### 1. Defoe’s division of gentleman and gentlewoman

Defoe divides the English gentry into two categories which he treats in very different fashion. The first category comprises the first-born of a noble house: that is to say, in keeping with the English law of primogeniture, the heirs to the family estates. The second category comprises the younger siblings. In launching his attack on the first category, Defoe takes the side of the younger brethren who do not give themselves the airs commonly assumed by the first-born. He dismisses without further ado the megalomania surrounding so-called “purity of blood”, whether on family or on national level. Throughout the book, a distinction is maintained between “gentlemen by birth” and “gentlemen by breeding or education”. Defoe has little to say in favour of the former and would like to see himself as an example of the latter: they are the real gentlemen though education or self-education towards “gentleman” status has continued to be under the influence of aristocratic models.

##### 2. Moll’s representation of Defoe’s ideal gentlewoman

After transportation to America, Moll realizes her understanding of an ideal gentlewoman as well as Defoe’s who is the gentlewoman by breeding and education instead of the gentlewoman by birth. Moll returns London with his gentleman husband and enough money to support her leisured life. She can be regarded as the self-made gentlewoman by education, the variation of the conventional gentlewoman. The role of a virtuous wife and kind mother have been changed here. Moll has become the supporting and controlling role in the family. It is money not sex that determines the social and familial status. Moll finally makes her ideal bourgeois living by her own efforts. She can be regarded as the self-made gentlewoman by education, the variation of the conventional gentlewoman.

#### B. *Moll Flanders: Mirror of Defoe’s Ethics*

##### 1. The representation of Defoe’s ethics in Moll Flanders’s marriage

A sad and bleak future which worries Moll greatly is always shown at the beginning of every episode of marriage. While in the end of every episode, the men who keep close contact with her are dead, or leave her to escape from the punishment of law, or desert her to avoid the condemn of morality and consciousness. Thus Moll is swirled from ups and downs again and again all her life. Her experience of marriage can be summarized as a repetition of such a narration: Moll’s lack of money-Moll’s possession to the owner of money-Moll’s halt of money. Therefore, it can be inferred that money plays an irreplaceable role in Moll’s life. Every time when she must make a choice between love and money, the latter is always her invariable pursuit. Since the pursuit of money is the reassessment of her ethics, we have every reason to say that it is the newly arising bourgeoisie ideology which centralizes money instead of money itself that controls Moll’s life. Moll derives a sense of security from wealth, and the more wealth, the better. Viewing from the perspective of minority discourse, Moll is absolutely endowed with such positive qualities as self-reliance, acumen, and adaptability. These positive bourgeois characteristics is gradually strengthened by the binary opposition between her ideology and the dominant ideology at that times shown in her carrier of thievery.

##### 2. The representation of Defoe’s ethics in Moll Flanders’s thievery

Having repressed her feelings for Jemy in order to achieve a secure life, she is prepared to steal when the clerk dies. She passes into another circle of her hell, which has Newgate at its bottom. She takes risks beyond reason, stealing anything, even a horse that she cannot use or sell. With the accumulation of her wealth, Moll’s thieving becomes less and less associated with her poverty and Defoe makes it clear that she is now a thief “though love of the vice”. As a matter of fact, Moll’s worry about poverty is a reflection of a social psychology rather than of a living reality. Having several pounds with her, Moll in fact never plunges herself into a serious plight. According to three kinds of bills for breeding children the landlady gives to Moll, we are informed that the lowest spending is 13 pounds at every three months while the highest one is 53 pounds. She will spend no more than 50 pounds a year if measuring by the lowest spending. Therefore, Moll’s pursuit of money is not the mere demand of survival but the necessity to satisfy her nature and psychology to possess money.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Moll's detour of identity written by English novelist Daniel Defoe in the eighteenth century is interwoven with the novelist's ideological confirmation that the female protagonist Moll Flanders's pursuit of identity all her life is in essence the confirmation of capitalist individual value. Therefore, Moll Flanders stands for the newly rising bourgeoisie and her change against the legal system and moral conventions in Defoe's contemporary society is a positive negation of the dominant cultural force.

Money plays an important and irreplaceable role in Moll's life. Every time when she has to make a choice between money and another things, the firmer is her unchangeable choice. It is the newly rising bourgeois ideology which makes money as its key word that controls Moll's life. From the perspective of minority discourse, Defoe is no doubt endows Moll the female subject with such positive qualities as practice, prudence and diligence. As a matter of fact, Moll's values which affirm the newly rising bourgeoisie run in the opposite direction with the dominant ideology at society. Moll is a mirror to reflect the bourgeois spirit and demonstrates the motive for them to accumulate wealth as much as possible. Although such bourgeois codification as a newly rising culture is not the dominant power at society, it yet shows the increasingly bourgeois working system and the material relationship between men and men under the control of it. What Moll pursuits all her life is to challenge the established codification and to affirm the capitalist individual value. And Moll's qualities can be traced to her creator Daniel Defoe.

Defoe's own experience bears part of this evocation of the heroic merchant. Bankrupt twice for substantial sums, her continue to struggle financially all his life, in his transformation into a journalist an covert political agent an propagandist for opposing factions, exemplified the difficult, specifically social relationships that he renders in his fiction. Defoe was in his lifetime a servant of various aristocratic masters, a client begging for grace and favor much of the time. Therefore at the opening pages Defoe's heroine shows some traces of convention.

However, Daniel Defoe was born in London in the autumn of 1660. He was brought up in a world in which the predominant values were orderliness, discipline, self-sufficiency and respectability to improve one's lot through one's own industry was the prevailing ethic. As a boy Defoe must have been familiar with such terms as "merchant", "trade" and "commerce" and been impressed by the knowledge that his father had attained a position of modest prosperity as a result of hard work and initiative.

The 1680s were a promising time for an energetic young man to establish himself as a tradesman. Filled with the ambition and self-confidence of youth, Defoe set himself up as a London merchant, trading in hosiery, wines and spirits, tobacco and other commodities. He continued in this capacity from 1680 to 1692: years of decisive importance to his personal development and the shaping of his world. Defoe's ties with his class are so clear that no special flair for sociological investigation is needed to identify him as a typical representative of the bourgeoisie. As Taine wrote of Defoe: "His imagination was that of a businessman, not that of an artist." Defoe is very aware of the role of the bourgeoisie in England, as of the role of the tradesman and the role of money, which the bourgeois amass and with which anything and everything can be bought.

Such living background ensures Defoe's heroes and heroines survive against all odds because they use all their qualities of ingenuity, patience and cunning in their determination to win for themselves a place in the sun though he shows his convention at the beginning of the novel of Moll Flanders. They, as Ian Watt describes them, are all "an embodiment of economic individualism". The self-reliance which is the hallmark of their behaviour is characteristic of the rise of capitalism. The qualities which typify Defoe's narrators-self-reliance, acumen, adaptability-are the very qualities in such demand during the birth of the modern age and which he embodied so forcefully in his own person. The spirit infusing his novels is experimentation: a willingness to adapt oneself to the vagaries of fortune and a refusal to be browbeaten by unpromising or limiting circumstances. To use a modern expression, his narrators are characterized by their upward mobility: the urge to be a gentleman or to be a gentlewoman, to be socially acquisitive, to better one's lot until every possibility of advancement has been exhausted.

Watt criticizes Moll for not being a woman in his *The Rise of the Novel*, but of course she isn't a woman: she is a male author's narrative device, and her "unfeminine" traits are important not because they destroy the illusion of the female narrator but because they draw attention to it. Similarly failing to distinguish between the author's manipulation of gender as a thematic issue and a structural device; Watt mistakes Moll's ambitions for Defoe's: "Defoe's identification with Moll Flanders was so complete that, despite a few feminine traits, he created a personality that was in essence his own." Watt declares that Moll is simply Defoe dressed in a skirt and that her story is in effect an autobiography because Defoe was incapable of writing anything else: "There is certainly nothing in Moll Flanders which clearly indicates that Defoe sees the story differently from the heroine". Watt abandons any investigation of the text as literature in favor of his social analysis of the rise of the novel. For him, the text itself becomes an instrument in that rise, and he praises Defoe as a genuine spokesman for a new reading public. Defoe wrote effectively, Watt claims, for those of his time whose views of social relations and whose expectations of literature were as limited as his own.

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# An Investigation into Setting Head Parameters in English as a Head-initial Language from the Minimalist Perspective

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**Abstract**—Opposing to the behaviorist approach, the alternative approach proposed by Chomsky believes that language acquisition cannot be accounted for without considering a linguistically specific system of Principles and Parameters which every healthy child is expected to have genetically in his or her mind. A set of absolute Universals, Notions and Principles exist in the UG which do not vary from one language to another, while certain grammatical principles and rules may be universal. It is also true that languages differ from one another in some important ways like being either head-initial or head-last. Regarding English head parameters, all heads (whether nouns, verbs, prepositions, or adjectives etc.) normally precede their complements. In this study we tried to investigate why this language is considered as a head initial one despite the occurrence of different options for every NP, VP, AP and PP.

**Index Terms**—head parameter setting, head initial, head final, universal grammar

## I. INTRODUCTION

The innate linguistic endowment named UG is not sufficient to enable humans to speak a language, if it was so, human beings would be able to speak any language regardless of where they are born and whose their parents are, so it would be linguistically wrong to expect that, for instance, a child growing up in a community where only English is spoken could become a native speaker of Persian; because while certain grammatical principles are universal, there is also some variation among different languages. For example the head parameter, captures the way languages differ in the position of heads within phrases. (Haegeman, 2008; Cook, 1988)

## II. HEAD PARAMETER

A crucial innovation to the concept of phrase structure that emerged in the early 1970s (Chomsky, 1970) was the claim that all phrases have a central element, known as a head, around which other elements of the phrase revolve and can minimally stand for the whole phrases. An important aspect of language variation concerns the location of the head in relationship to the other elements of the phrase called complements. The head of the phrase can occur on the left of a complement or on its right (Cook & Newson, 2007). In head-initial languages like English, the head of a phrase occurs on the left of the other elements in the phrase.

### A. Heads and Their Dependents

In any phrase, the head is the necessary part of its phrase and other words are dependents to that head which can follow or precede it. In the following examples the italic words are the key word of the phrase namely heads and the other components are their dependents (Tallerman, 1998).

- a. very bright [N *sunflowers*]
- b. [V *overflowed*] quite quickly
- c. very [A *bright*]
- d. quite [ADV *quickly*]
- e. [P *inside*] the house

There are four different syntactic relationships between a head and its dependents. (The relevant heads are given in both bold and italic).

TABLE 1:  
SYNTACTIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HEADS AND DEPENDENTS (BASED ON THE DEFINITIONS AND ILLUSTRATION OF TALLERMAN, 1998: 103)

	Head	Dependents	Language	Example
1	Postposition/preposition	Object NP	English	<i>On the table</i> (preposition)
2	Verb	Arguments of the verb	English	<i>Ali loves the girl</i>
3	(possessed) noun	Possessor NP	English	<i>Ali's car</i>
4	Noun	adjective	English	<i>Big house</i>

### B. Heads as the Most Important Elements in the Phrase

Heads are the most important sections in their phrase due to the following reasons:

1. The head carries the most important semantic information, in other words it determines the meaning of the entire phrase. For example the phrase *very bright sunflowers* is about sunflowers and *overflowed quite quickly* is about something overflowing and so on. To take other examples, *a stone bridge* is a kind of bridge, not a kind of stone, so the head is *bridge*; and *a garden flower* is a kind of flower, not a kind of garden, so the head is *flower*. By paying attention to the examples we can conclude that the class of the head determines the word class of the entire phrase. Because *very bright sunflowers* is headed by a noun, it is a Noun Phrase (NP); and because *overflowed quite quickly* is headed by a verb, so it is a Verb Phrase (VP); and accordingly *very bright* is an Adjective Phrase (AP), *quite quickly* is an Adverb Phrase (ADVP) etc.

2. Heads are the only words that have the same distribution as the entire phrase because it's possible to substitute just the head for the whole phrase. For instance, it could be said that either Kim liked *very bright flowers*, or just Kim liked *sunflowers*; or it could be said, go *inside the house* or just go *inside*. By the same token *the sunflowers were bright* is grammatically correct but not *\*the sunflowers were very*. Therefore, *bright* rather than *very* must be the head of the AP.

3. The third property of heads is that they are the one obligatory item in the phrase, for example the answer to the question *Are you angry?* can't be just *very*!

4. By taking the third property of heads into considerations, the forth property of heads will be that they may select an obligatory dependent, such as NP. To sum up we can say that phrases have heads and may additionally contain some optional or obligatory dependents (Tallerman, 1998: 91-92, Crystal, 2003: 215).

### C. The Position of Heads in Different Languages

There is a strong tendency, cross-linguistically, for the head to occur in a fixed position in all phrases within a language. ... In head-initial languages the head precedes its complements, and in head-final languages the head follows its complements. (Cook & Newson, 1996)

#### Head-initial languages

"In English all heads (whether nouns, verbs, prepositions, or adjectives etc.) normally precede their complements" (Radford, 2006: 19), and hence it is a head-initial language. The complements to V, P, A and N all are preceded by their heads in the following examples:

- a. [VP *loves Mary*]
- b. [PP *into the water*]
- c. [AP *fond of chips*]
- d. [NP *admiration for Sara*]

#### Head-final languages

Examples of head-final language can be Persian and Korean, in which heads in every phrase such as: AP, NP, VP and PP follow its complements.

## III. STATES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LANGUAGE FACULTY

Children are not born with the knowledge of all the lexical items in the language. Parameters and lexical items have not been set in the initial state and the language faculty has minimal contents.

"The two extreme states of the language faculty are the steady state when the mind knows a complete I-language and the initial state when it knows only the principles. Language acquisition comes down to how the human language faculty changes from the initial to the steady state ... the language faculty achieves adult knowledge of language, complete with parameter setting and lexicon for a particular language, by getting certain types of information about the structures and vocabulary of the language it is exposed to." (Cook & Newson, 2007: 49-50)

### A. Principles and Parameters in First Language Acquisition

"In Chomsky's conceptualization, the child is born with some Language Acquisition Device (LAD) which provides an abstract specification of the range of possible and impossible rules and structure in natural language. With the help of this inborn faculty, the child is able to account for the grammaticality and ungrammaticality of certain sentences and rules he is faced with. For instance, the Structure Dependency Principle proposed by Chomsky is considered as the part of the innate system of biologically endowed principle of UG which constitutes the human language faculty (Farrokhphey, 1999).

“The child learning the grammar of some particular language ... simply has to find out the permissible order of elements in that language. Thereby the head parameter admits a limited range of above mentioned alternatives: head-initial or head-final. In Chomsky's view, universals provide the key to understanding language acquisition since only if we hypothesize that the child has innate knowledge of these universals can we account for the rapidity of language acquisition (ibid).

Chomsky argues that while language is acquired, it is not the environment or experience but the mind which has an important role. Indeed, if children are supposed to be acquiring language through making it a habit, namely by imitating it, they should also, be hearing the ungrammatical sentences which they produce from their environment. As one evident, when the language acquisition process is examined, it is seen that children know some grammatical rules although they have not come across with them. The fact is that children know more than they can speak which is obviously a sign that language is a product of the mind. Another evidence which shows the importance of the mind rather than the environment, is that although a child hears incorrect linguistic evidence, he can perform his language correctly. Even if adults pause and create unfinished and incorrect sentences while talking, the child can create infinite sentences even by depending on this limited data based on his innate faculty (Chomsky, 1988; Chomsky, 1976).

A child can develop his language with such limited data and input because the limited input is shaped by UG which is considered to be on people's mind by birth, in other words the data comes from within (from UG itself) not from outside. According to this, the process of language acquisition is seen as the access of the limited input that child hears, into a LAD and through processing inside the LAD, creative grammar is produced which is later named principle and parameter theory (Chomsky, 1972).

Accordingly, a new born baby's mind, by means of language acquisition is at its first state, which is called the Initial Zero State or  $S_0$ . (Cook & Newson, 2007); Language acquisition continues until the Steady State or  $S_s$  (the mind of the adult native speaker) where language development is completed (ibid). From the above statements it can be concluded that, a child acquires his language based on the following formula:  $S_0 - S_1 - S_2 \rightarrow S_s$ .

A child at the initial state will set the parameters on his mind depending on the input related to the language by activating the Principles and Parameters of UG; for instance, taking the head parameter into considerations, the child should start with one of the possible values of this parameter (head-initial or head-final) (Chomsky, 2005).

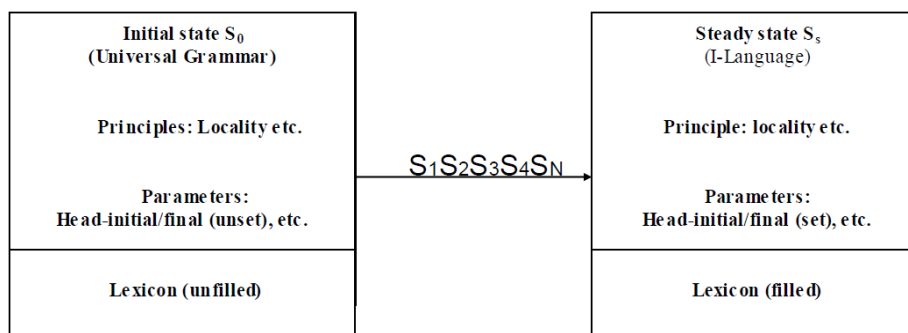


Figure 1: Language faculty developments from zero to final states  
(Cook & Newson, 2007: 50)

“The steady state is, to all intents and purposes, static; the speaker may become more or less efficient at using language or may add or lose a few vocabulary items, but linguistic competence is essentially complete and unchanging once it has been attained.” (Chomsky, 2001: 1)

#### **Parameter-setting acquisition and positive evidence**

Acquiring a language means setting all the parameters of UG appropriately, they are limited in numbers but powerful in their effects. To acquire English rather than language X, the child must set the values for the head parameter, and a handful of other parameters; the child doesn't acquire rules but setting for parameters, which, interacting with the network of principles, create a core grammar (Cook & Newson, 2007).

“Parameter setting might start in a neutral position in which any setting is possible and or start from a particular value (the unmarked setting) and need particular evidence to adopt the other setting (the marked setting)” (Cook & Newson, 1996: 115).

One of the questions posed by the parameter-setting model of acquisition is how children are able to choose the appropriate setting for given parameters, as Chomsky claims, there are two types of evidence expected to be available for the language learner, namely positive and negative evidence. If children's speech input is made up of structures in which heads precede their complements like English, then this provides them with positive evidence and by this positive evidence they are able to set the head-position parameter appropriately (Radford, 2006).

#### **Parameter-setting by negative evidence**

Negative evidence is of two kinds which also causes children set their appropriate parameter of mother tongue: direct and indirect; direct negative evidence might come from the correction of children's errors by other speakers of the language and indirect negative evidence occurs when for example, a child's experience includes no examples of

structures in which heads follow their complements (e.g. no prepositional phrases like *\*dinner after* in which the head preposition *after* follows its complement *dinner*, and no verb phrases such as *\*cake eat* in which the head verb *eat* follows its complement *cake*). On the basis of such indirect negative evidence (i.e. evidence based on the non-occurrence of head-last structures), the child might infer that English is not a head-final language ... and when the child hears a prepositional phrase like *with Daddy* in which the head preposition *with* precedes its complement *Daddy*, he will have positive evidence that English allows head-initial order in prepositional phrases and there is the assumption that the head-position parameter is a binary one and that each parameter allows only a single setting, then it is inferred that when for example English allows head-first prepositional phrases, it will not allow head-final prepositional phrases. In order for the child to know that English allows head-initial prepositional phrases, he doesn't need negative evidence from the non-occurrence of such structures, but he can rely on positive evidence from the occurrence of the converse order in head-initial structures. (Radford, 2006)

Chomsky (1986) concludes that there is good reason to believe that children learn language only from positive evidence and they set their language parameters based on the positive evidence of mother tongue language.<sup>1</sup> (Chomsky, 1986)

To sum up in Chomsky's words, "what we know innately are the principles of the various subsystems of  $S_0$  and the manner of their interaction and the parameters associated with these principles. What we learn are the values of the parameters and the elements of the periphery (along with the lexicon to which similar considerations apply)". (Chomsky, 1986: 150)

### B. Principles and Parameters in L2 Acquisition

While a child who acquires L1 is at initial state, the adult, learning L2, would be in a different position, because the adult would already be equipped with the knowledge of L1 containing the universal grammar of principles and parameters of his first language. Therefore, the initial state of SLA is shown by ( $S_i$ ) which actually is formed by:  $S_i$  (initial state of L2) = ( $S_0 + S_s$ ). It should be taken into account that in L2, there is no steady state like L1, instead, there is a Terminal State ( $S_t$ ) which differs from one person to another.

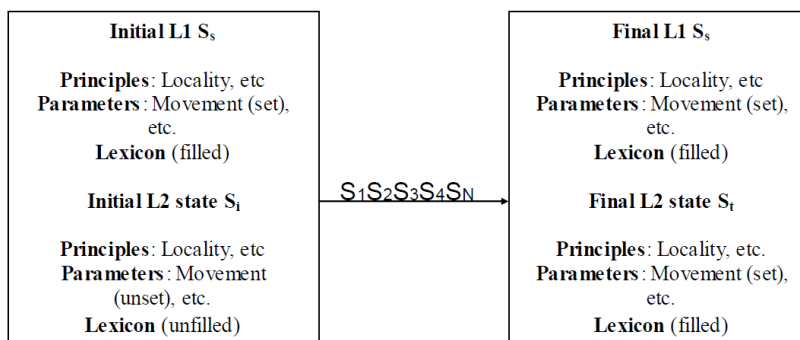


Figure 2: Developments of the language faculty from initial to final states  
(Cook & Newson, 2007: 230)

### 1. Phrase structure of NPs

NPs in different languages or dialects can be followed or preceded by different number(s) of complements; these phrases are analyzed in the following paragraphs in order to recognizing the position(s) of their heads and complements.

#### Is English head-initial in its NPs?

A phrase in X-bar theory always contains at least a head as well as other constituents. In NPs, N is the head plus some specifiers and complements as well as adjuncts (Haegeman, 2008). Since more complements in English NPs, follow their head nouns than the complements which precede them, they are considered as head-initial.

#### Complements preceding their head nouns

There are three complements which precede their head nouns in English NPs: 1- Specifiers, 2- Attributive adjectives and 3- Nominal dependents. Specifiers, attributive adjectives and nominal dependents are positioned before head nouns in English and are ordered based on the phrase structure rules of: 1-  $X'' \rightarrow \text{Spec } X'$ , 2-  $X' \rightarrow \text{Complement } X$ .

<sup>1</sup> Guasti (2002) also in his research claimed that children do not make use of negative evidence in setting parameters.

TABLE 2:  
COMPLEMENTS PRECEDING THEIR HEAD NOUNS IN ENGLISH

The complements which precede their head noun in English:	complement	Head noun	X-bar structure of NPs
<b>1- specifiers</b>  e.g., <i>The politicians are talking with each other.</i>	The	Politicians	
<b>2- attributive adjectives</b>  e.g., <i>The careless soldiers have been fined.</i>	careless	soldiers	
<b>3- nominal dependents</b>  e.g., <i>My grandmother's house is being repaired.</i>	grandmother's	house	

### **Complements following their head nouns**

There are five complements which follow their head nouns in English NPs, which are: 1- Appositive phrases, 2- Participial phrases, 3- Gerund phrases, 4- Prepositional phrases and 5- Adjective clauses. They are positioned after their head nouns as complements, based on the phrase structure rules of:

1-  $X'' \rightarrow \text{Spec } X'$  & 2-  $X' \rightarrow X \text{ complement}$

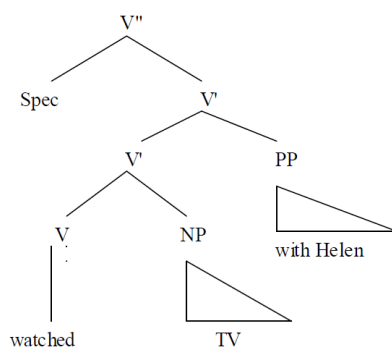
TABLE 3:  
COMPLEMENTS FOLLOWING THEIR HEAD NOUNS IN ENGLISH (BASED ON MARCELLA, 1972: CHAPTERS 3, 5, 6 & 10)

The complements which follow their head noun in English:	Head noun	complement
1- appositive phrases e.g., Mr. Harris, <i>in a hurry to get home</i> , took a taxi from the airport.	Mr. Harris	in a hurry to get home
2- participial phrases e.g., The girl <i>talking to the teacher</i> is very intelligent.	The girl	talking to the teacher
3- gerund phrases e.g., Her <i>cleaning the house every day</i> is not necessary.	cleaning	the house everyday
4- adjective clauses e.g., Here is a book <i>which describes animals</i> .	book	which describes animals
5- Prepositional phrases e.g., reason of the war	reason	of the war

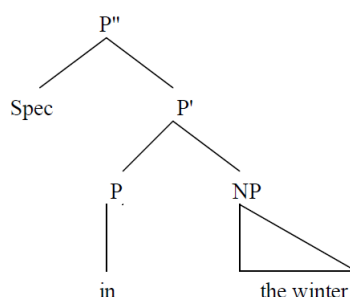
So, in English, more NPs, are ordered based on the phrase structure rule of  $X' \rightarrow X \text{ complement}$  and hence, their NPs are considered head-initial.

### **2. Phrase structure of VPs**

In the VP of English, the head verb appears on the left of the complement.



A) English PP: In the winter



### 3. Phrase structure of APs

In APs, the head adjective is the most important element in the phrase and the rest are its complement(s); in *indeed good*, it is considered head-final, but in *jealous of Jack*, head-initial. It is dealt more in the following sections:

#### Why is English AP head-initial?

In most of the English APs, the head adjective as shown below, precedes its complements and that is why in English, adjectives are considered head-initial.

A) Some of the complements which follow the head adjective in English are:

1- prepositional phrases: *envious of someone*

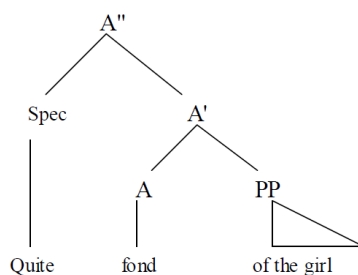
2- enough (adv): *warm enough*

3- that clause: *so beautiful that*

B) Some of the complements which precede the head adjective in English are:

Determiners: *rather cold*

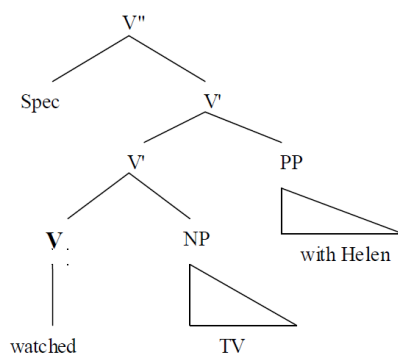
English AP: *Quite fond of the girl*



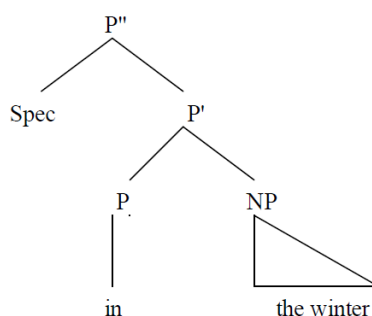
## IV. CONCLUSION

There are five complements in English NPs such as appositive phrases, participial phrases, gerund phrases, propositional phrases and adjective clauses which follow their head nouns and three complements such as specifiers, attributive adjectives and nominal dependents which precede them. Since the numbers of following complements are more than the preceding ones, then English is considered head-initial in NP. So, in English, more NPs, are ordered based on the phrase structure rule of  $X' \rightarrow X \text{ complement}$  and hence, its NPs are considered head-initial as following details.

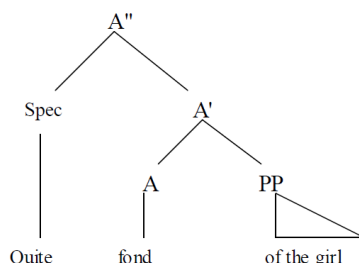
In the VP of English, the head verb appears on the left of the complement and there is no other choice for this phrase normally.



The head preposition appears on the left of the complement in English and there is no other choice for this phrase normally.



In most of the English APs, the head adjectives precede their complements, in other words the number of following complements is more than the preceding ones and that's why English adjective phrases are considered as head-initial. While prepositional phrases (e.g., *envious of someone*), enough as an adverb (e.g., *warm enough*) and that clauses (e.g., *so beautiful that*) follow their head adjectives in English, the determiners (e.g., *rather cold*) are the complements which precede their head adjectives in English as in the following diagram:



As it is shown in the above diagram, the determiner *quite* precedes the head adjective *fond* and the PP *of the girl* follows the head adjective *fond*.

To sum up, we see that what Radford (2006) expresses regarding English head parameters which normally precede their complements has enough evidence for English to be regarded as a head initial language.

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# Cognitive Interpretation of Chinese Gendered Discourse Pattern\*

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**Abstract**—In Chinese, there are clear embodiments of gendered discourse pattern. Based on the concrete embodiments of gendered discourse pattern in Chinese, this paper will discuss about some specific examples. Then the reasons of forming the Chinese gendered discourse pattern will be illustrated. Lastly the paper will summarize the cognitive interpretation of Chinese gendered discourse pattern.

**Index Terms**—gender, Chinese discourse pattern, cognitive interpretation

## I. INTRODUCTION

As everyone knows, among all kinds of creatures on the earth, mankind is the only one who has languages. We can say that it is language that makes mankind totally different from other kinds of creatures on the earth. Since language is a special social phenomenon of human society which formed with the developments of human society and directly reflected human thoughts of the society. From the complicated understanding of unlimited universe to every little feeling from people's daily life, people need wordage to record all of these since wordage is an important part of written languages.

As we all know, people use language to communicate with others, to express and exchange thoughts. Through these communicative activities, people get more information and learn more knowledge. In ancient times, people created more tools and transported their skills much further and faster than any other kinds of creatures with languages. The advantages enable mankind to get more food which could let them have chances to develop human civilization. So, obviously, human civilization has evolved with the evolution of language. It is no doubt that language played a crucial role in the process of human evolution.

With the developments of human society, languages changed step by step. Therefore, the languages we speak today are different from the ancient ones. A lot of languages disappeared while a lot of new words appeared. History left trace in languages as languages are an interpretation of human evolution. It is remarkable to realize that there are many differences between men and women when they communicate with languages or the way they interpret languages, especially when they transport messages and exchange thoughts. It means that men and women would like to choose different discourse patterns and use different communication strategies. It is quite likely, that as long as language has existed, the distinction between male and female has also been present within it. Today, there are no languages, which do not distinguish between the genders at all, leading linguists and psychologists to believe that gender may be "so fundamental to social organization and social structure that linguistic means to refer to this category are indispensable for speech communities" (Stahlberg et al. 2007, p.163). However, references to grammatical conventions of gender in language have prompted contemporary concerns over the power of language to shape social stereotypes about gender, and perhaps ultimately shape status distinctions between men and women. The feminist language critique, in particular, deems language to be overwhelmingly androcentric, putting girls and women at a disadvantage in personal and professional relationships (Stahlberg et al. 2007), and some countries, such as Norway, have actively reformed their languages to reflect a more genderless outlook (Gabriel and Gygax, 2008). In spite of attempts at language reform already underway, numerous questions remain regarding the relationship between the social aspects of gender and language and the potential benefits of modifying languages to be more gender-neutral.

This phenomenon reflects many reasons which come from the social culture and the social ideas. So studying this phenomenon is helpful for people to recognize the gendered discourse pattern in social communications and make communication strategies more flexible and more practical in order to have the team-work more efficient, the expression more friendly, the communication more fluent, our society more stable and the development greater. In recent years, academia had more and more interests in gendered discourse pattern. And the scholars also changed their focus to the gendered discourse pattern of communication which ensure the research have more practical value and realistic significance. Qian's research has already showed that men and women had many differences in their discourse patterns. Men and women had different discourse styles which mainly displayed on the choices of topics, the number of topics and the exchanging frequency of talking chances.

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\* The publication of this paper is supported by "the Liaoning Province's Social Science Planning Foundation"(L11DY029)

Sociolinguists found that men's topics were more abstract and extensive. Men would like to put their attentions on competitive topics, such as politics, legal matters, taxes or sports. And they rarely talked about their own feelings on personal things. The topics of women were different from men's. Women would like to talk about things connected with their everyday life, such as personal relationship, life's troubles or life styles.

Accordingly, Qian's research could prove this theory well. Western sociolinguists studied men's and women's topics by doing the survey in a group of western people. The result was that men's topics were mainly about competition or aggression, sports and other thing related with these topics. Women's topics were mainly about themselves, feelings, relationship with others, home and family. A similar survey had been done in a Chinese university in order to test this theory's reliability. And this survey had a same result. The male students' topics focused on politics, news sports, careers, computer games, military affairs, historical events, economy and beautiful girls. While female students' topics focused on clothes, cosmetics, entertainments, feelings, food and drinks, home, make-up, and books.

It was clear that not only in the western world but also in China the topics selected by men and women had great difference. The reasons were various as follows.

In ancient agricultural society, because of the distinctions between men and women in physiology, men did most of hunting, farming and other dangerous or labor work. While women did most of collecting, knitting and taking care of children and elder people. Even though women's job scope got much wider after the industrial revolution than it used to be, people's traditional mind was not eliminated easily. In modern times, there are still traditional concepts existing in people's mind. Men and women are expected to play different roles in society. Generally speaking, men are tough, strong, brave and competitive so they are fit for being statesmen, businessmen, engineers and doctors. While women are gentle, emotional and conscientious so they are fit for language teaching, being nurses and secretaries. Different social division of labor is one of the reasons for gendered discourse pattern.

Almost in every culture, people tended to teach boys and girls in different ways, set different hopes and standards to boys and girls and wished them play different roles in society after they grew up. In childhood, the games played in different ways. The games not only let children play together but also shaped children's characters. There was a research about games played by boys and girls. By the research, researchers found that girls' game tended to be played in little and close groups. They would like to play in room with toys or play some other kinds of family games together in order to keep their close relationship strong and stable. Girls' groups were so close that the other ones had little possibilities to get in. (Yu, 2008)

While the boys' game partners were much more than girls'. Their groups were larger and looser. They would like to play in this kind of groups. They played with a large group of children in outside. They competed, raced or played other games imitated hunting or fight. In their games, they usually appointed themselves as captains or soldiers. By these games, boys maintain their relationship and developed their team work abilities. The way people taught boys and girls showed their hopes to their children. Their wishes for their descendants were the reactions to the society's wish and culture values. The culture values had a great influence on everyone. And it changed the languages greatly. It is easy to understand that there is gendered discourse pattern in language. Recent theorizing suggests that language not only reflects the conventions of culture and particular patterns of thought, but systems of language can actually shape our cognitive understanding of the world around us (Boroditsky, 2009; Deutscher, 2010). Specifically, the gendering of language (even that which appears mundane and purely grammatical, such as the use of *la* versus *le* in French) can actually impact our perceptions. For example, researchers have discovered that the grammatical gender of a term for an inanimate object can influence people's perceptions of the masculine or feminine characteristics of that object, and this cannot be due merely to the properties of the object as the researchers used terms that were grammatically masculine in one language and feminine in another (Boroditsky et al. 2003; Konishi, 1993). The same findings are true even when pictures are used instead of text (Sera et al. 1994). Furthermore, when Jakobson (1966) had participants choose voices to personify the days of the week; Russian speakers consistently selected male or female voices to match the grammatical gender of that particular day. Therefore, Chinese gendered discourse pattern is to be studied in my paper.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The cognitive interpretation of gendered discourse pattern is not a new topic. In 1960s, with the rising of sociolinguistics, statistics and survey research which are typically used in sociology are brought to analyze the features of human language from gender and other factors on language. It counted gender factor as one of social variables to quest the relationship between language and gender. Some scholars began to explore the gendered discourse pattern. In 1930, Trubetzkoy introduced markedness theory which is widely used in study of language today. In this theory, the words are divided into two parts, the marked and unmarked. The markedness theory is used in appellation research. There are many researches about the topic. Qian Jin had a paper which was about the Chinese appellations of gendered discourse pattern. People's gender has a great influence on Chinese. In Chinese appellations, people of different gender have different appellations. The appellations of the father's side of the family and the mother's side of the family are different. There are relative appellations and social appellations. In both of them, the appellations for men and women have many differences. There are many reasons of this phenomenon. Traditional culture and social ideas are two of them. And in the researches which have been done before, we can find that studying this topic is meaningful, because we can figure out the social ideas and people's thoughts clearly via the study of gendered discourse pattern.



In ancient China, if there were a woman who wanted to do these kinds of jobs, she would be an exception. In this situation, the appellations needed to be marked in order to explain. While in modern society, these jobs have been done by lots of women. But the appellations were still marked with gendered marks because of the usual practice.

Example8. ji zhe—reporter      nv ji zhe—female reporter  
xue zhe—scholar      nv xue zhe—female scholar

(3) The appellations usually belonged to women and rarely described men, or didn't have a corresponding appellation for men. The professions which lack male appellations were usually regarded as humble professions. In traditional ideas, men couldn't or shouldn't do these jobs. People naturally contracted these professions with women, such as hu shi a yi (female nurse), you er yuan a yi (kindergarten aunt). In contrast, if a man had this kind of profession, this situation would be regarded as abnormal. Some depreciative appellations especially which endanger others or endanger the society need to be marked. In common sense, these appellations were only for men. So when people used these appellations on women, they would add them with gendered marks.

Example9. liu mang —hooliganism      qiang dao—robber  
pian zi)—cheater      te wu—spy

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Increasingly scholars and researchers recognize the power that asymmetries in lexical gender, male false generics, and the systematic way language becomes gendered can have on social gender stereotypes and inequities in status between men and women (Cameron, 1998). For example, feminist scholars have long decried that masculine generics are androcentric, and make women seem invisible in historical and contemporary discourse (Cameron, 1998). With empirical research highlighting the real world impact that gendered language can have on people's social judgments, decisions, and behavior, many have begun to rally behind the idea that change in language is needed to curb social inequalities in society (Foley, 2011). Although opponents of language reform argue that male false generics remain mere grammatical convention, too widespread to expect change, and irrelevant to gender inequality, empirical evidence supports what feminists have long known (see review by Foley 2011). For example, studies have shown that the male generic is in fact not simply a grammatical convention but that speakers actually visualize males when the word "he" or "his" is used in its generic form (Gastil 1990). Moreover, a "chairman" primes male pronouns and is rated as more masculine than a "chairperson". If men and women interpret male generics in a gendered way, then it stands to reason that these gendered impressions could have a lasting impact on real world gender stereotyping and role behavior. For example, consider the implications for career choice. Masculine forms of nouns, such as are found in lexical gender and gender related structures, are problematic, specifically when it comes to occupational titles and positions because women may have trouble identifying with the masculine forms, and so may choose to not pursue a career which implicitly excludes women. For example, Bem and Bem (1973) found that only 5% of female participants applied for a traditionally male job which used male generics in its description, whereas 25% of women applied when it was described in a gender neutral way. Moreover, Braun (2001) found that people rated women's attraction to a future career in psychology as lesser when they had read an excerpt about ethical standards for psychologists worded using male generics, as opposed to versions that were worded in a gender neutral way. Thus, over and above the influence of stereotypes about traditional gender roles associated with a particular occupation, the gendering of language may influence women's desire to seek certain employment opportunities.

Based upon the qualitative analysis, there is gendered discourse pattern in the cognitive interpretation of Chinese. In Chinese appellations, this phenomenon is very clear. People who are in different positions have different appellations. Chinese relative appellations appear to be divided by the family positions. However, they are divided by the blood lineage in essence which reflects Chinese social ideas and traditional influence. Chinese take the blood relationship seriously. In my view, the social appellations have more reflections of the society than the other ones. People use the gendered appellations to address professional men and women who take up same or different jobs. Because the appellations shed light on the social ideas and people's thoughts, the study of the cognitive interpretation of Chinese gendered discourse pattern is of great significance.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In Chinese, there exists gendered discourse pattern, especially in appellations. Chinese use gendered marks to make appellations marked or unmarked. By this study, people can understand Chinese traditional ideas more deeply. Above all, to have a thorough study of the markedness of personal gender appellations entailed a close study of personal relation, especially the gender sensitive interpersonal relation. More and more special attentions were given to discuss the markedness phenomena including ways of cognition, economic motivation, politeness principle and social elements. So to truly understand the intersection of gender in language, cognition, and culture, researchers will ultimately need to draw connections between large-scale cross-cultural trends, cognitive process models, and experimental research on interpersonal behavior. Moreover, although language may very well play a role in gender equality and language reform could be a fruitful avenue for improving the status of women, it is important to remember that linguistic modification must be accompanied by social and political adjustments in order to truly change existing asymmetries in gender. It

showed that people pay more and more attentions to the communications with others. With the development of the society, the world is becoming more and more globalized. Mankind is need of communications which all depend on our understanding of each other.

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# A Study of Language Learning Strategies Used by EFL Learners in Iran: Exploring Proficiency Effect on English Language Learning Strategies

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**Abstract**—The present study was carried out to investigate whether there is any relationship between the language learners' general language proficiency level and language learning strategies at elementary and intermediate level in Iran. The research tried to find out how learners' proficiency level influences language learning strategies employed by learners. In addition the study seeks to identify the most and the least used strategies by the above mentioned learners. Steps on measuring this factor are discussed in the research. Participants are adult language learners, about 100 Iranian men and women aged 13-48 who completed questionnaires provided by the researcher. These learners were in two different general learning levels (elementary and intermediate) of English language learning and their age and education are varied. According to the results of the SILL, the findings indicate that the use of cognitive strategies had the strongest relation to English proficiency and higher proficiency EFL students use cognitive, metacognitive and social strategies more often than students with lower proficiency level proficiency. In contrast, there is no significant difference in the use of memory strategies between higher and lower proficiency EFL students. In addition, both higher and lower proficiency EFL students use compensation strategies more often than other strategies.

**Index Terms**—learning strategies, language proficiency, cognitive, metacognitive, SILL, EFL

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, researchers and language teachers noticed that some learners seem to be successful in second or foreign language learning regardless of teaching methods and techniques. Therefore, a considerable number of researchers have shifted their focus from teaching methods or techniques to language learning strategy use. Language learning strategies are specific actions or techniques that learners use to assist their progress in developing second or foreign language skills (Oxford, 1990). Language learning strategies are believed to play a vital role in learning a second language, as they may assist learners in mastering the forms and functions required for reception and production in the second language and thus affect achievement (Bialystok, 1979). Many researchers have suggested that the conscious use of language learning strategies makes good language learners (Naiman, Frohlich & Todesco, 1975; Wenden, 1985). Researchers believe that strategies of successful language learners can provide a basis for aiding language learners (Rubin, 1975; Reiss, 1983). Therefore, if language teachers know more about effective strategies that successful learners use, they may be able to teach these effective strategies to less proficient learners to enhance these learners' language skills.

Therefore the researcher hopes that insights into Iranian EFL learners' use of English learning strategies could provide information for researchers and educators that will furnish them with knowledge about how to enhance and assist the students in the use of language learning strategies.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

"Strategy", from the ancient Greek term *strategia*, refers to generalship or the art of war. In a more specific sense, strategy entails the optimal management of troops, ships or aircraft in a planned campaign. "Tactics" is different but related to strategies, which are tools to achieve the success of strategies. Moreover, the two expressions share some basic concepts: planning, competition, conscious manipulation and movement toward a goal. In nonmilitary settings, the concept of strategy has been applied to the non-adversarial situations, where it has come to mean a plan, step or an action is taken for achieving a specific objective (Oxford, 1990). Oxford (1990) stated that strategies are particularly important for language learning "because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence" (p. 1). Because of its significance, learning strategies have been extensively employed in the educational field. In defining the language learning strategy, "different researchers use different terms

and different concepts" (Oxford & Crookall, 1989, p.414); therefore, a great number of researchers have formulated their own definitions which will be discussed in the followings.

Cohen (1998) defines Language Learning Strategies as "those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or FL, through the storage, recall and application of information about that language" (p.4). O'Malley & Chamot (1990) consider strategies as tools for active, self-directed involvement needed for developing FL communicative ability.

Schemeck (1988) stated, strategy is "the implementation of a set of procedures (tactics) for accomplishing something" and learning strategy is "a sequence of procedures for accomplishing learning" (p.5). Weinstein and Mayer (1986) proposed learning strategies as "behaviors and though that a learner engages in during learning and that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process" (p.315).

Nisbet (1986) offered another definition of language learning strategies as "always purposeful and goal-oriented, but perhaps not always carried out at a conscious or deliberate level. They can be lengthy or so rapid in execution that it is impossible for the learner to recapture, recall or even be aware that one has used a strategy" (p.25).

Oxford and Crookball (1989) defined language learning strategies as "steps taken by the learners to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information" (p.404). They noted that strategies may be used consciously but they can also become habitual and automatic with practice. Similarly, Oxford (1990) claimed "learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" (p.1). She proposed a more specific definition of learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situation" (p. 8)

### *B. The Importance of Language Learning Strategies*

Research on language learning strategies began with strategies of the "good language learner" by Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975). From these initial research efforts, numerous researchers have attempted to emphasize the importance of language learning strategy use by successful language learners (e.g. Abraham & Vann, 1987, 1990; Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Naiman, Frolich, Stern, and Todesco, 1978; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford et al., 1989, 1993, 1995; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Reiss, 1983). They noted that, generally speaking, more successful learners employed language learning strategies more frequently and more appropriately than did less successful learners. The researchers believe that language learning strategy plays a significant role in L2/FL learning, due to the fact that language learning strategies that can help learners to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information and increase self-confidence.

### *C. Classification of Language Learning Strategies*

In Oxford's (1990) study, she synthesized prior study results and came up with a language learning strategy system (see Table 1). Six categories, including memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies were divided into two major types: direct and indirect, and each class contains three categories. Direct strategies help learners to learn the target language directly; indirect strategies help learners to support and manage language learning without directly involving the target language. Direct strategies are subdivided into memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies; indirect strategies are subdivided into metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. In this study, I will use Oxford's (1990) classification as described below (Oxford, 1990, p. 8):

TABLE I.  
OXFORD'S LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY SYSTEM (OXFORD, 1990, P.17)

Type	Primary strategies	Secondary strategies
Direct Strategies	1.Memory strategies	A. Creating mental linkages B. Applying images and sounds C. Reviewing well D. Employing action
	2. Cognitive strategies	A. Practicing B. Receiving and sending messages C. Analyzing and reasoning D. Creating structure for input and output
	3. Compensation strategies	A. Guessing intelligently B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing
Indirect Strategies	1.Metacognitive strategies	A. Centering your learning B. Arranging and planning your learning C. Evaluating your learning
	2. Affective strategies	A. Lowering your anxiety B. Encouraging yourself C. Taking your emotional temperature
	3. Social strategies	A. Asking questions B. Cooperating with others C. Empathizing with others

Of all the variables that affect the use of language learning strategies, proficiency is regarded as one of the salient variables that result in differences in strategy use. If the strategies employed by students with different proficiency could be identified, more insights will be gained into the learning process of individual learners and the characteristics of learners with different proficiency level. Hence, a study of the relationship between language learners' proficiency level and their use of language strategies is necessary to provide more insights into this issue.

Chamot and Kupper (1989) asserted that high proficiency learners know how to use appropriate strategies to reach their learning goals, while low proficiency learners are less expert in their strategy use and choice. Oxford (1985) claimed that successful language learners use a wide range of strategies that are most appropriate for their learning tasks. MacIntyre (1994) also indicated that second language learners may use strategies that make their communication more effective, informative and persuasive when they attain certain proficiency. Yang (1994) stated that perceived proficiency levels have a significant effect on student's use of learning strategies. The better students perceive their language proficiency, the more often they use various learning strategies to assist them in learning English. It seems that language proficiency is commonly recognized as a determinant of strategy use by more and more students.

The factor, proficiency level, was addressed in studies related to language learning strategy by some researchers. In a study of 70 high-school age students enrolled in ESL classes from three high schools in an Eastern metropolitan area in the United States, the authors (O'Malley et al., 1985) revealed that intermediate level students tended to use proportionally more metacognitive strategies than students with beginning level proficiency. Chamot, O'Malley, Kupper and Impink-Hernandez (1987) found that cognitive strategy use decreased and metacognitive strategy use rose as the foreign language course level increased, but social affective strategy use remained very low across all course levels. In addition, according to some research, proficiency level and gender affect the choice of language learning strategies (Politzer, 1983; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1993; O'Malley et al., 1985; Chamot, O'Malley, Kupper and Impink-Hernandez, 1987).

#### *D. Research Questions and Hypotheses*

Proficiency level is one of the factors to affect the choice of language learning strategies. The purpose of this study is to investigate the difference in the extent and types of language learning strategy use between higher and lower proficiency EFL students. This study was designed to determine: (1) whether a statistically significant difference exists in the extent of language learning strategy use between higher and lower proficiency EFL students; (2) the strength of the effect of language learning strategy use on English proficiency. The research questions and null hypotheses are stated as follows:

(1) Is there any difference in the extent of language learning strategy use between higher and lower proficiency EFL students?

H01: There is no significant difference in mean language learning strategy average total score of higher proficiency EFL students and lower proficiency EFL students.

H02: There is no significant difference in mean language learning strategy average subscores of higher proficiency EFL students and lower proficiency EFL students.

(2) Does the reported use of language learning strategies significantly relate to English proficiency?

H03: There is no significant relationship between the use of the six types of language learning strategies and the scores on English proficiency test among EFL students.

### III. METHOD

#### *A. Participants*

The targeted population was intermediate and elementary-level adult English language learners at Nahid Language Institute (here after NCI) in Shahreza. Random selection was used in the sampling process of this research study. Participants were adult language learners, about 100 men and women aged 13-48 who completed questionnaires and were examined. These learners were in different learning levels at NCI and their age and education were varied. Students entering the program were mother tongue speakers of Persian. Of the 100 returned questionnaires, 17 questionnaires were discarded as invalid, those either incomplete or did not follow the answering instruction. Table 2 summarizes the profile of participants.

TABLE II.  
Profile of Participants

Group	Number	Percent
Higher proficiency (intermediate level)	40	48%
Lower proficiency (elementary level)	43	52%

#### *B. Instruments*

##### *1. SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning)*

To collect data on language learners' learning strategies, a Persian translation of English learning strategy questionnaire, which was based of Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), was administered



to the participants. The SILL was chosen for this study because it is "perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date" (Ellis, 1994, p.539). Version 7.0 of the SILL is a self-report instrument that assesses the frequency with which the subjects use a variety of techniques for foreign language learning. It contains 50 items, and characterized into six subscales: (a) memory strategies (item 1 to 9), (b) cognitive strategies (items 10 to 23), (c) compensation strategies (items 24 to 29), (d) metacognitive strategies (items 30 to 38), (e) affective strategies (items 39 to 44), (f) social strategies (45 to 50). These SILL 50 items are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The number indicates how often the learner uses the strategies.

Never or almost true of me =1  
 Generally not true of me =2  
 Somewhat true of me =3  
 Generally true of me =4  
 Always or almost always true of me =5

A sample of the questionnaire as well as its translation is available on Appendix 1.

## 2. General English proficiency determination

The curriculum at NCI contains twenty levels of English study which are subdivided into Elementary Levels (1-8), Intermediate Levels (9-16), and Advanced Levels (17-20). Following the purpose of identifying the strategies which are utilized by EFL learners into the first two categories (elementary and intermediate), we focus on the scores these learners get on the final-term achievement tests taken at the end of the levels in which they study. Since the required score to pass the level is the minimum of 70 out of 100, we are sure that the learner is in the right level of English study. These scores are considered as the proficiency scores (the proficiency level of the participants) in the present study. The test includes four parts: listening, reading, writing and speaking. In listening test, it contains two sections: 10 questions on question-response and 10 questions on short conversation. The reading test includes two passages and 10 questions on reading comprehension. The writing test consists of twenty question items testing students' vocabulary knowledge and twenty question items checking their knowledge of the grammar in the language. The total scores on the four skills, which are considered as the learners' scores in General English Proficiency Test (GEPT), were used to analyze the relationship between language learning strategy use and English proficiency.

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, to test Hypothesis One and Hypothesis Two, an independent samples t-test was used to evaluate the differences in language learning strategy use between higher and lower proficiency EFL students. Furthermore, to test Hypothesis Three, a multiple regression was used to evaluate the effect of language learning strategy use on English proficiency.

## V. RESULTS

This study examined three hypotheses which relate to the extent and types of language learning strategies used by higher and lower proficiency EFL students and their English proficiency. The report of the results consists of two parts:

1. Independent samples t-test
2. Multiple regression analysis

The data in this study obtained from the SILL and the GEPT test were tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows.

Students, who completed the questionnaire, responded as is shown in table 3. To compare the mean of memory strategies among elementary and intermediate students we use *t*-test. So we consider this statistical hypothesis.

H0: There is no difference in using the memory strategies in elementary and intermediate students.

H 1: Using the memory strategies in elementary and intermediate students is different.

To show these in mathematical way, we can write:

H0:  $M1 = M2$

H1:  $M1 \neq M2$

(M1 is the mean of memory scores in elementary students. M2 is mean of memory scores in intermediate students).

Table 3 relates to English proficiency level and presents data related to the overall SILL mean score as well as the mean scores on the six types of strategies for higher and lower proficiency EFL students. In addition, it reveals the result of the independent samples *t*-test.

TABLE III.  
MEAN REPORTED FREQUENCY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY FOR ALL STUDENTS

Strategies	Group	Mean	SD	T value	P value
Memory	elementary	27.6279	5.11777	-.613	.541
	intermediate	28.3250	5.22512		
Cognitive	elementary	42.5581	9.02721	-.209	.835
	intermediate	42.9500	8.03502		
Compensation	elementary	19.2093	3.93736	.123	0.902
	intermediate	19.1000	4.14358		
Metacognitive	elementary	32.8605	9.29050	.584	0.561
	intermediate	31.6250	9.92972		
Affective	elementary	15.4651	4.78265	-0.90	0.371
	intermediate	16.5000	5.62504		
Social	elementary	21.0233	4.59549	0.406	0.686
	intermediate	20.6250	4.34822		

To test hypothesis, *t*-test was used to determine the significance of differences. If *p*-value is less than alpha, we reject the null hypothesis; so we can see these results from the *p*-values of table 4:

TABLE IV.  
COEFFICIENTS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	79.168	7.252		10.917	.000
Memory	.146	.237	.080	.615	.540
Cognitive	-.158	.156	-.144	-1.012	.315
Compensation	.107	.339	.046	.315	.754
Metacognitive	.367	.163	.375	2.248	.027
Affective	-.524	.265	-.291	-1.974	.052
Social	.021	.287	.010	.073	.942

a. Dependent Variable: students' general English proficiency

*P*-value (memory): 0.540 is not less than alpha, so we can not reject the  $H_0$ ; it means that there is no significant difference in using memory strategies in elementary and intermediate students.

For the other strategies, also the same results can be seen (there is no significant difference in using these strategies and proficiency level). This means the students use these strategies irrelevant from their proficiency levels.

"Does the reported use of language learning strategies significantly relate to proficiency level?"

A multiple regression was used to form the model of the relationship between language learning strategy use and English proficiency. The regression analysis reveals how a change in one variable (*X*) relates to a change in the other variables (*Y*). In specific, the stronger the correlation between *X* and *Y*, the more accurately *Y* (dependent variable) can be predicted from *X* (independent variable), and vice versa.

Notice that dependent variable is *Y* (GEPT) and learning strategies are independent variables.

The multiple regression equation in this study is as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + e_i$$

*Y*: scores on English proficiency test

$X_1 \sim X_6$ : scores on six types of strategies respectively

$\beta_0$ : intercept

$\beta_1 \sim \beta_6$ : the strength of the effect of language learning strategy use on the scores of the proficiency test

*e*: error term

$B_i \quad i = 1, 000, 6$  regression coefficients

The regression model in first step is (table 4):

$$Y = 79.168 + 0.146 X_1 - 0.158 X_2 + 0.107 X_3 + 0.367 X_4 - 0.524 X_5 + 0.021 X_6 + e_i$$

The next step is checking the significance of regression coefficients ( $\beta$ s). Outputs of table 4 show that "metacognitive" and "affective" strategies were related to GEPT scores.

While ANOVA table is a useful test of the model's ability to explain any variation in the dependent variable, it does not directly address the strength of the relationship.

TABLE V.  
MODEL SUMMARY<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.313 <sup>a</sup>	.098	.027	9.22542

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social, Compensation, Memory, Affective, Cognitive, Metacognitive

b. Dependent Variable: GEPT

R the multiple correlation coefficients, is the linear correlation between the observed and model predicted values of the dependent variable. Its larger value indicates a strong relationship. In this table R is 0.313, so this relationship is weak. R-Square, the coefficient of determination, is the squared value of the multiple correlation coefficients. R Square in this table is 0.098 and shows that less variation in GEPT is explained by the model. If we omit the coefficients that are not significant, the amount of R and R-Square and Adjusted R Square will increase.

TABLE VI.  
ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	704.369	6	117.395	1.379	.234 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	6468.233	76	85.108		
	Total	7172.602	82			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social, Compensation, Memory, Affective, Cognitive, Metacognitive

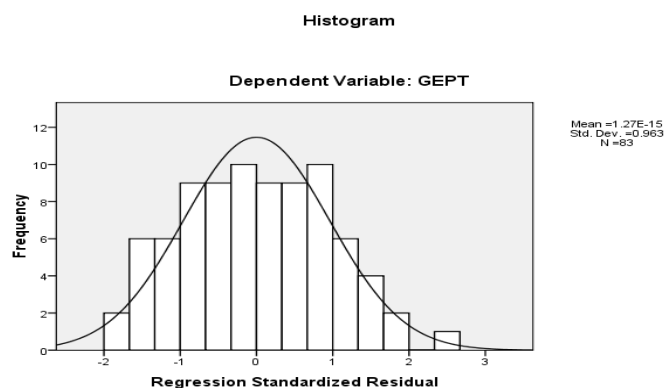
b. Dependent Variable: GEPT

TABLE VII.  
COEFFICIENTS<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	79.168	7.252		10.917	.000
	Memory	.146	.237	.080	.615	.540
	Cognitive	-.158	.156	-.144	-1.012	.315
	Compensation	.107	.339	.046	.315	.754
	Metacognitive	.367	.163	.375	2.248	.027
	Affective	-.524	.265	-.291	-1.974	.052
	Social	.021	.287	.010	.073	.942

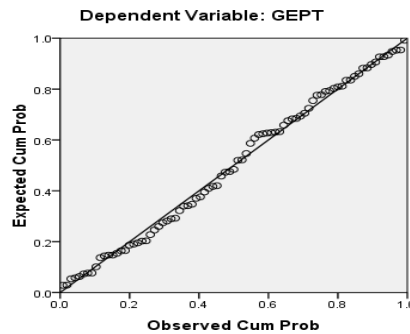
a. Dependent Variable: GEPT

The ANOVA table tests the acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective. The regression row displays information about the variation accounted for by the model. The residual row displays information about the variation that is not accounted for by the model. The regression and residual sums of squares are not equal which indicates that most of the variation in the GEPT is not explained by the model. The sig (p-value) in this table shows that some of the independent variables must be canceled. The significant value of F-statistic is more than 0.05 which means the variation explained by the model is not suitable.



A residual is the difference between the observed and model predicted values of the dependent variable. The residual for a given product is the observed value of the error term for that product. This histogram shows that residuals are normal. (P-p plot shows the normality of residuals, too).

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual



The plot of residuals by the predicted values shows that variance of errors increases with increasing predicted values.

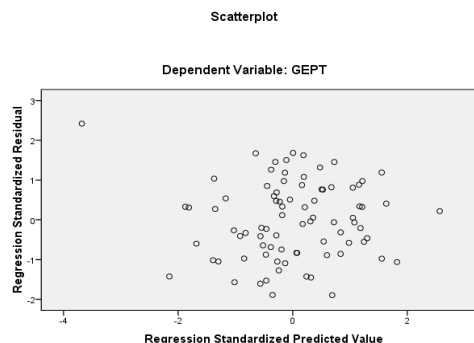
TABLE VIII.  
Coefficient Correlations

Model		Social	Compensation	Memory	Affective	Cognitive	Metacognitive
1 Correlations	Social	1.000	.033	-.225	.025	-.144	-.378
	Compensation	.033	1.000	.100	-.222	-.266	-.337
	Memory	-.225	.100	1.000	-.069	-.426	.063
	Affective	.025	-.222	-.069	1.000	-.069	-.424
	Cognitive	-.144	-.266	-.426	-.069	1.000	-.023
	Metacognitive	-.378	-.337	.063	-.424	-.023	1.000
Covariances	Social	.082	.003	-.015	.002	-.006	-.018
	Compensation	.003	.115	.008	-.020	-.014	-.019
	Memory	-.015	.008	.056	-.004	-.016	.002
	Affective	.002	-.020	-.004	.070	-.003	-.018
	Cognitive	-.006	-.014	-.016	-.003	.024	.000
	Metacognitive	-.018	-.019	.002	-.018	.000	.027

a. Dependent Variable: GEPT

To examine the amount of relationship among the independent variables (strategies), coefficient is used. For example the correlation between social and compensation is 0.033 and it is weak. Since its usual range is  $(-1 < r < +1)$ , strong correlation (positive or negative) is a number close to 1 and -1 respectively. Social and memory strategies have negative correlation.

To illustrate the strength of the relationship between the strategies and GEPT, we use the scatter plot for each variable; although metacognitive and affective strategies are the only variables that had relationship with GEPT (Table 4), this relationship can not be recognized in the plots.



The matrix of correlation shows the whole relationship among the independent variables and GEPT (dependent variable) and among the independent variables.

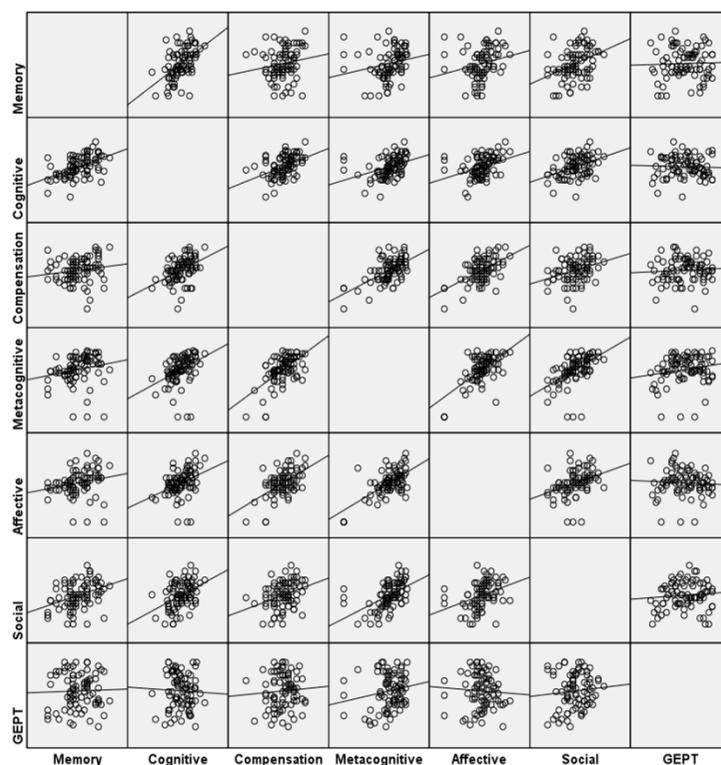
## VI. CONCLUSION

According to the independent samples *t*-test on proficiency level in Table 3, compared to lower proficiency EFL students, higher proficiency EFL students use cognitive, metacognitive and social strategies more often. The result was consistent with the finding that intermediate level students tended to use proportionally more metacognitive strategies than students with lower proficiency level proficiency (O'Malley et al., 1985) and the finding that metacognitive strategy use rose as the foreign language course level increased (Chamot et al., 1987). In contrast, there is no significant difference in the use of memory strategies between higher and lower proficiency EFL students. In addition, both higher and lower proficiency EFL students use compensation strategies more often than other strategies probably because they are the easiest to use. This finding might imply that students tried to make up for their missing knowledge by using the most direct and natural way. The result is similar to Green and Oxford (1995) who found that intermediate students used cognitive strategies significantly more than did basic students. The positive relationship between cognitive strategy use and English proficiency represents that students with a greater use of cognitive strategy have better performance on English proficiency.

In conclusion, the principal findings from this investigation include:

1. Both higher and lower proficiency EFL students use compensation strategies more often than other strategies.
2. Lower proficiency EFL students use language learning strategies as often as higher proficiency EFL students. This is perhaps because the levels of proficiency which were investigated in this study (elementary and intermediate) are not much different from each other and if the elementary level were compared with the advanced one a significant difference could be noticed (a good hypothesis for further studies).
3. The use of cognitive strategies had the strongest relation to English proficiency.

What learners know about themselves and about their own learning process can affect their use of language learning strategies (Wenden, 1986). Learners' level of strategy awareness also influences strategy use. Nyikos (1987) found that learners used only a narrow range of strategies and were generally unaware of the strategies they used. Therefore, in order to improve students' language learning, EFL teachers need to understand what language learning strategies students use and encourage lower proficiency EFL students to use language learning strategies in their learning process. Moreover, teaching methods often influence how students learn. Teachers should become more aware of their students' learning strategies in order to orient teaching methods more appropriately. This study provides the information about the difference in the extent and types of language learning strategy use between higher proficiency and lower proficiency EFL students and the strength of the effect of language learning strategy use on English proficiency. Future research should focus on methods to integrate language learning strategy training into language instruction, discovering other strategies other than the six types of language learning strategies discussed in this study might enhance students' language learning and the effect of strategy instruction on language learning.



## APPENDIX A STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL)

This form of the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read each statement and write the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells HOW TRUE THE STATEMENT IS.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. This questionnaire usually takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the teacher know immediately.

**Part A**

- |  |                       |   |                       |   |                       |   |                       |   |                       |   |
|--|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| 1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.                               | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.   | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.           | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.              | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.   | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.   | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 7. I physically act out new English words.   | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 8. I review English lessons often.   | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign. | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |

**Part B**

- |  |                                  |   |                       |   |                       |   |                       |   |                       |   |
|--|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| 10. I say or write new English words several times.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 11. I try to talk like native English speakers.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 12. I practice the sounds of English.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 13. I use the English words I know in different ways.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 14. I start conversations in English.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.           | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 16. I read for pleasure in English.  | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully. | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.                    | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 20. I try to find patterns in English.   | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |
| 21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.               | <input type="radio"/>            | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | 4 | <input type="radio"/> | 5 |

22. I try not to translate word for word. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**Part C**

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English. ☒ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
27. I read English without looking up every new word. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**Part D**

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
35. I look for people I can talk to in English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
38. I think about my progress in learning English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**Part E**

39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
43. I write down my feelings in a language learning dairy. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**Part F**

45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
47. I practice English with other students. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

48. I ask for help from English speakers. 
49. I ask questions in English. 
50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers. 

Class

School ID

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# Strategies on Translation of English Puns

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**Abstract**—Pun is a rhetorical device widely used in English. It is a witticism involving the playful use of a word in different senses or of words, which differ in meanings but sound alike. Pun's translation into Chinese has long been considered a difficult problem. Many people regard it as untranslatable. In the author's opinion, a perfect pun's translation is impossible according to the three traditional principles of faithfulness, smoothness and elegance. However, it doesn't mean the pun is untranslatable. It's obvious that in pun's translation, something has to be dropped in order to well preserve the other more important parts. In this paper, the author will introduce two most widely used methods in pun's translation, namely, adding footnotes and rewriting. In spite of their respective disadvantages, the two methods do partly fulfill the purpose of conveying more and better the information from different angles.

**Index Terms**—pun, translation, strategy, functional equivalence

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Definition and Characteristics of English Puns

Pun is an active rhetorical figure widely used in English literature. A definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary is that "the use of a word in such a way as to suggest two or more meanings or different associations, or the use of two or more words of the same or nearly the same sound with different meanings so as to produce a humorous effect". The Webster's Third International Dictionary gives a definition to puns as "a humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest different meaning or applications, or of words having the same or nearly the same sound but different meanings: a play on words." According to The Collins English Language Dictionary, a pun is defined as "a use of words that have more than one meaning, or words that have the same sound but different meanings, so that what you say have two different meanings and makes people laugh." To put it simply, a pun is rather a play on words depending upon a similarity of sound and a disparity of meanings. It is usually employed for producing an amusing, humorous and even satiric effect (Feng, 1996). Therefore it is widely used in stories, jokes, riddles etc. However, it is not always so easy to appreciate the point of a pun unless one is familiar with the different meanings of the word or phrase used in the pun.

The use of pun dates back to ancient days. It's one of the earliest figures of speech in English. Puns in English have experienced a long history. As early as 2,000 years ago, Aristotle declared that the use of puns was acceptable in certain styles in his famous works Rhetoric. As what William Shakespeare says that pun is "the noblest art", the pun has first become a new fashion in the field of literature. It is estimated that Shakespeare used more than 3,000 puns in his works. And since his time the use of puns in the literature works becomes superior and artistic. Later in the works of Dickens, Mark Twain, puns were also employed for many times. Since puns can make use of the polysemous words in English by which they are able to be used to create humor and irony, this is what any other language phenomenon can not achieve. Nowadays, puns are generally employed in both oral and written expressions and communications.

### B. Categories of English Puns

The term "pun" originates from the Latin word "paronomazein", meaning "calling by a different name". Pun is a rather complicated rhetorical device in English. To make the later analysis easier, the author classified English puns into the following five categories, namely, the Homophonic pun (同音双关), the Paronomasia (近音双关), the Antaclaris (同词异义双关), the Sylleptic pun (一词多义双关) and the Asteismus (歧解双关).

#### 1. Homophonic pun

It's a pun making use of words with the same pronunciation but with different spellings and meanings:

e.g. Bassanio: Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?  
Shylock: To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.  
Gratiano: Not on thy *sole*, but on thy *soul*, harsh Jew...

-----Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

Here "sole" and "soul" are of the same sound, but of the totally different meanings. They make up a pair of homophones, and produce a satiric effect.

## 2. Paronomasia

It's a pun making use of two words, which are similar in pronunciation but different in meanings.

e.g. Oh, *Wellington*! (Or "*Villainton*"—for Fame  
Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;  
France could not even conquer your great name,  
But punned it down to this facetious phrase—  
Beating or beaten she will laugh the same,)...  
-----*George Gordon Byron, Don Juan*

Here "Wellington" and "Villainton" are similar in pronunciation. Wellington was a famous English general who had beaten Napoleon in Waterloo in 1815. After that, he was called *Villainton* by French newspapers and magazines, because either "Villain" in English or "Vilain" in French is an abusive word that means rascal.

## 3. Antaqlasis

It's a pun in which a word is used twice or more, but each time with a different meaning.

e.g. If we don't *hang* together, we shall assuredly *hang* separately.

----- *Peter Stone and Sherman Edwards*

Here, the authors make use of the two different meanings of the word "hang". The former means "unite", while the latter means "put or be put to death by hanging with a rope around the neck".

## 4. Sylleptic pun

It is similar to antaqlasis, but the word used as a pun occurs only once. This is the most frequently employed device of pun.

e.g.: An ambassador is an honest man who *lies* abroad for the good of his country.

Here, "lies" can either be comprehended as "locates, stays" or "makes a statement that one knows to be untrue".

## 5. Asteismus

It's a pun usually used in dialogue, referring to one's casual or deliberate misunderstanding of the meaning of a word.

e.g.: The clerk: ... Can you *see a female*?

Augustus: Of course I can *see a female* as easily as a man. Do you suppose I'm blind?

-----*George Bernard Shaw, Augustus Does His Bit*

Here, "see" has two meanings as "interview somebody" or "have a look". Augustus misunderstands the meaning of the clerk in "interview a female" as "have a look of a female", that makes the ambiguity.

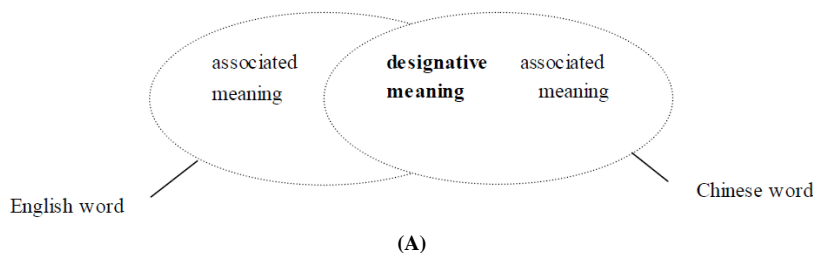
## II. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF A PERFECT TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH PUNS INTO CHINESE

From the above categorization, we can see that English puns are really very complex and intricate. Although the Chinese words are also complex and there is a similar figure called Shuangguan in Chinese language, a perfect translation of English pun into Chinese seems impossible owing to the different language, cultural backgrounds and the discrepancy between the two figures of speech.

### A. Different Language Backgrounds

As we all know, English and Chinese are two totally different languages. The former belongs to the Indo-European language family. The basic elements of its word formation are the Latin alphabet. By contrast, the latter is a member of Sino-Tibetan language family. Its words are a system of hieroglyphic characters. Therefore, the English pun, as a play on the meanings and pronunciations of English words cannot be transferred directly into Chinese at all. Although in Chinese, most words also have various associated meanings in addition to their designative meanings, and the phenomenon of paronomasia even more widely exists than in English, the two languages follow different channels in this aspect. We can hardly find out an English word whose equivalent in Chinese has exactly the same designative meanings and the associated meanings as itself, or two English words similar in sound having the similar pronounced equivalents in Chinese.

Such kinds of relationships can be seen more clearly from the following graphs:



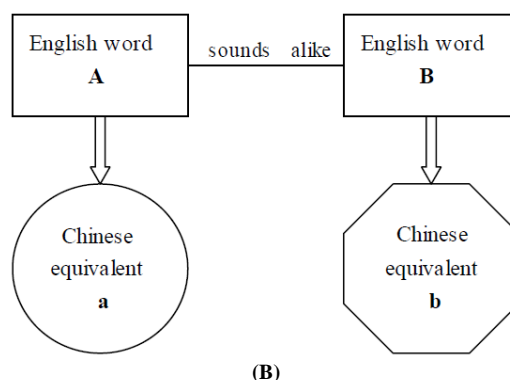


Figure 1: Different Language Backgrounds of English and Chinese Words

These two graphs demonstrate clearly two kinds of relationships between English and Chinese words in pun's translation. Graph (A) shows that an English pun that plays on a word's double or more meanings cannot be matched by a Chinese word, which has the exactly same double meanings; and Graph (B) shows that a pun plays on two words that sound alike cannot find their Chinese equivalents with the same sound. Therefore, a direct translation of English puns into Chinese will surely end in failure. A perfect translation that fulfills the three principles of faithfulness, smoothness and elegance at the same time is definitely impossible.

### B. Different Cultural Backgrounds

Besides the language distinctions, the different cultural backgrounds are also big barriers to English pun's translation.

Culture is a big concept covering many aspects such as history, literature, art, and religion. Every country may have its own unique customs and traditions that may seem strange to others. Since China and the western countries have developed in a nearly isolated way from each other for about hundreds of years, their cultural estrangements seem greater and are harder to be removed. This makes pun's translation even more complicated. For example, Shakespeare has such a famous pun:

On Sunday they *pray* for you, and on Monday they *prey* on you.

A literal translation may be: “他们星期日为你祈祷，星期一对你敲诈”。Here, Shakespeare makes a penetrating satire to those seemingly pious and benevolent ladies and gentlemen through a pun on *pray* and *prey*. However, if a Chinese reader has no idea of the religious rites of the Christianity to pray on Sundays for the happiness and well-being of people, he will be puzzled by this sentence. He may be wondering what are the differences between Sunday and Monday, or why they pray on Sunday, and things like that. If he is told such an expression is similar to a Chinese idiom of “佛口蛇心” or “佛面蛇心”, maybe he can better grasp the real meaning. After all, Chinese people are more familiar with the Buddhism than the Christianity. But, can we say it is a perfect translation of the pun? Definitely not. Since we can hardly well convey the whole meanings of a pun owing to the cultural gap, how can we produce a perfect translation?

### C. The Discrepancy between English Pun and Chinese Shuangguan

Now let's look at the characteristics of the figures of speech themselves, and make a comparison between them. English pun and Chinese *shuangguan* have long since been taken as the two equivalent figures of speech, however, they are in fact not always corresponding to each other (Chen, 1997).

As I've classified the English puns into five categories in the first part, I'd like to give their corresponding Chinese figures of speech in the following table:

TABLE 1:  
ENGLISH PUNS AND CORRESPONDING CHINESE FIGURES

	English Pun	汉语辞格
1	Homophonic pun	同音双关
2	Paronomasia	谐音双关
3	Antaqlasis	语义双关
4	Sylleptic pun	换义
5	Asteismus	歧义

From the table we can see clearly that the first three kinds of English puns may be equivalent to some kinds of *shuangguan*, but the other two puns correspond to Chinese 换义 and 歧义 respectively. In this case, if we tend to translate every English pun directly into Chinese *shuangguan*, we'll surely end in failure. In fact, even those listed above are not exactly equivalent to each other owing to some other reasons I don't intend to go into in detail in this essay. Therefore, an English pun can hardly find an exactly equivalent style in Chinese, let alone a perfect translation both in meanings and in style (Li, 2000).

### III. TRANSLATION STRATEGIES ON PUNS

From the above analysis, we can make sure that a perfect translation of English pun, which fulfills faithfulness, smoothness and elegance at the same time, is definitely impossible. However, it doesn't necessarily mean English pun is not translatable or we can do nothing on pun's translation.

One obvious thing is that in pun's translation, we'll have to give up something in order to better retain some other things. For this purpose, we need to know what should be dropped and what should be reserved. Such a problem cannot be easily settled in one sentence or two. It largely depends on the specific situation, i.e. the context and some other factors. However, some principles are necessary to guide our action in this process. Nida's theory of "functional equivalence" is of practical value.

#### A. *Nida's Principle of Functional Equivalence*

Eugene A. Nida is a famous American linguist and theorist. His principle of functional equivalence on translation has become very popular in recent years. According to him, translating is a process of communicating depending on what is received by persons hearing or reading a translation. Judging the validity of a translation cannot stop with a comparison of corresponding lexical meanings, grammatical classes and rhetorical devices. What is important is the extent to which receptors correctly understand and appreciate the translated text. Therefore the functional equivalence is essentially a comparison of the way in which the original receptors understood and appreciated the text and the way in which the readers of the translated text understand and appreciate the translated text (Nida, 1998).

In this condition, we've actually set up a reader-oriented principle in pun's translation. Our purpose is to try to convey more and better the information from the original text into the translated text so as to stimulate a nearly same response in the readers of the translated text. The information here includes the content (the literal meaning), the style, the effect etc., of the original text. To convey more and better means we cannot convey the information completely and perfectly. How to make a selection in the information is up to their impact on the readers.

Now, let's look at the two principal methods widely used in pun's translation, namely adding footnotes and rewriting.

#### B. *One Way—Footnotes*

Strictly speaking, adding footnotes is an adjustment of translation rather than an independent method. It is used for compensating the ideas or meanings that owing to varied kinds of reasons cannot be expressed clearly in the translated text or otherwise will make the sentence clumsy and involved. It aims at faithfulness to the content, and tries to retain the exact designative and associated meanings of the puns. However, it fails to convey the form and spirit of a pun, i.e. after translation the original humor contained in the pun was lost.

e.g.

HERE	这里
LIES	埋葬的是
LESTER MOOR	赖斯特 莫尔
FOUR SLUGS	他死于
FROM A44	A44 枪弹
NO LES	不多不少
NO MORE	整四颗

From the above example, we can see clearly the advantages and disadvantages of adding footnotes. On the one hand, it faithfully conveys the three meanings of "No Les, No More" in the original text, which is especially helpful and beneficial to the readers who aim at language study and culture knowing during their readings. However, on the other hand, we cannot see any sense of a pun in the translated text. As for those reading for fun, such kind of a translation makes almost no sense to them since they can hardly catch any humor in it that exists in the original text until after a careful study of the footnotes.

Footnotes, because of its inherent defects in form, can only be used in written materials, like novels, stories etc. Once it comes to the films, TV series, lyrics or stage plays, footnotes will have no way to perform themselves. Obviously, it's ridiculous to have the footnotes printed on the screen or held by the players.

Therefore, we turn to another way in pun's translation, namely, rewriting.

#### C. *Another Way—Rewriting*

Rewriting is a method much more complicated and difficult than adding footnotes. It's a kind of recreating rather than literal translating. It is used to express the spirit of a pun in another way after partly or totally discarding the original literal meanings. Outwardly, it is not faithful to the original text in the content since great changes have been made in lexical meanings, grammatical classes or rhetorical devices, but inwardly, it is faithful to the spirit of the source text, i.e. it aims at producing the same effect as the source text.

Look at the following examples please:

e.g.: -- What flowers does everybody have?

-- Tulips.

(A) -- 人人都有的花是什么花?

-- 郁金香。

(B) -- 人人都有的花是什么花？

-- 泪花。

The original text is a pun playing on the paronomasias of *tulips* (郁金香) and *two lips* (双唇). Translation (A) is an example of adding footnotes, and (B) is a rewriting of the pun. After a comparison, we can see that translation (A) well conveys the designative and associated meanings of the original pun, but doesn't produce any humor of the pun. While in (B), the "tulips" and the "two lips" are totally discarded, and instead, the translator adopt the word "泪花" which shares the same character "花" with the question. Though the meaning is changed, the similar effect is produced. The readers can immediately catch the humor and appreciate the trick in the dialogue. To those who aim at language study in reading, the translation (A) may be better and more useful. As for the common readers, translation (B) may seem more effective.

Therefore, rewriting is widely used in pun's translation in films, TV series, lyrics etc., when the pun is only used to make a fun and the real meaning is not so important (Qian, 2000). For example, the lyric of the famous song Do, Re, Mi is from very beginning to the end a play on puns:

Doe--- a deer, a female deer; Ray--- a drop of golden sun; Me--- a name I call myself; Far--- a long long way to run; Sew--- a needle pulling thread; La--- a note to follow sew; Tea--- a drink with jam and bread; That will bring us back to doe.

Someone translate it literally as:

Doe——是鹿，是一头鹿；Ray——是金色阳光；Me——是我，是我自己；Far——是奔向远方；Sew——是引线穿针；La——跟在后面走；Tea——喝茶加点心，那就重又回到 Doe。

Though such a translation conveys the exact meaning of the lyrics, doesn't it sound a little bit incomprehensible?

The puns in the lyrics here are mainly composed for children to better memorize the music notes, but in the translated text such a function is totally lost. In this song, the contents of the puns are not so important. What's of value is the paronomasia interest produced by the puns. Therefore, we'd better have a rewriting of the lyric so as to retain the spirit of the puns.

There's another translation of the lyric and here it is for comparison:

朵，美丽的祖国花朵；来呀，大家都快来！密，你们来猜秘密；发，猜中我把奖发；索，大家用心思索；拉，快点猜莫拖拉；体，怎样练好身体，做茁壮成长的花朵！

This one is a typical rewriting. For the young children who are not capable enough of comprehending a foreign language, this one may be more meaningful.

#### D. A Comparison between Footnotes and Rewriting in Pun's Translation

As I have mentioned before, a perfect pun's translation is impossible. In pun's translation we have to drop something in order to well reserve some other things. Such an idea can be proved by the above discussion about footnotes and rewriting.

As the two main methods used in pun's translation, they both have some advantages and disadvantages. They, from different angles, partly fulfill the purpose of more and better conveying the original information. The method of adding footnotes lays emphasis on conveying all the meanings of the original text, but neglects the delivery of the spirit; by contrast, rewriting well conveys the spirit of the original text but sacrifices the meanings. Which one should be used in our practice is up to the function of the original text and the expectation of the readers. Someone may prefer rewriting to adding footnotes as the former can acquire the faithfulness on a higher level, i.e. the faithfulness to the spirit, and therefore can better stimulate the almost same response in the readers of the translated text as of the translated text. However, in some circumstances where the original meanings are of great importance to be conveyed, we cannot rewrite it freely but to adopt the footnotes. Of course, sometimes we can combine the two methods, i.e. rewrite the pun in the text and with the addition of the footnotes later, so as to better convey all the information in the original text.

Finally, I have some suggestions to make on the translation of English puns:

(a) Adding footnotes, though an easy method, cannot be used indiscriminately. After all, translating, unlike retelling, is somewhat an art of recreating. The translator should try to convey the information as much as possible in the text, not in the footnotes.

(b) Rewriting cannot be abused, either. Rewriting doesn't mean writing arbitrarily. It must comply with the purpose of conveying the spirit of the original text. In fact, it's a much more complicated and difficult task than adding footnotes that requires a stronger ability of a translator in comprehending and using the two languages as well as his experiences, skills and inspiration sometimes. Therefore, if a suitable rewriting cannot be obtained at the moment, adding footnotes is a wise alternative.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Pun is a rhetorical device widely used in English. It is a witticism involving the playful use of a word in different senses or of words, which differ in meanings but sound alike. It is usually employed for jocular and humorous effects in English literature. English pun's translation has long been considered a difficult problem. Though it has been proved

that a perfect translation is impossible, some efforts still can be made to produce a relatively good one. In the author's opinion, a perfect pun's translation is impossible according to the three traditional principles of faithfulness, smoothness and elegance, i.e. a pun's translation that is equivalent to the original text in the content, style and effect at the same time. In this paper, the author proved this impossibility from the language, cultural backgrounds and the features of the rhetorical device itself.

However, it doesn't mean the pun is untranslatable. It's obvious that in pun's translation, something has to be dropped in order to well preserve the other more important parts. But what is to be dropped and what is to be kept still require a principle. Eugene A. Nida, in his theory of "functional equivalence", points out that translation should try to produce in the receptor of the translated text the capacity for a response as close as possible to what the original readers experienced. In this condition, the pun's translation is given a reader-oriented principle, i.e. to try to convey more and better the information in the source text into the target language.

According to this theory, the author introduced two most widely used methods in pun's translation, namely, adding footnotes and rewriting. In spite of their respective disadvantages, the two methods do partly fulfill the purpose of conveying more and better the information from different angles. In short, there're no set rules for translation. Bear in mind the reader-oriented principle, i.e. try to stimulate the same response in the readers' minds of the translated text as of the original text; the remaining thing is to deal with the specific problem in the specific situation.

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# Investigating Frequency and Distribution of Transition Markers in English and Persian Research Articles in Applied Linguistics: Focusing on Their Introduction Sections

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**Abstract**—The pressure to produce work in English and to publish internationally has increased over recent years. However, a large number of non-native writers may be excluded from the web of global scholarship due to defective rhetorical organizations and discourse structures of their works. This study aimed to investigate frequency and distribution of transition markers (TMs) in introduction sections of applied linguistics research articles (RAs) written by native writers of English (NE), non-native Persian writers of English (NNE), and native writers of Persian (NP). For this purpose, 45 RAs were functionally and manually analyzed and compared to find possible differences among their introduction sections in terms of frequency and distribution of TMs. The results showed that compared with English, Persian language makes more use of TMs. Moreover, it was revealed that NNE writers show a pattern of overuse of TMs when they write in English owing to the effects of their native language writing culture.

**Index Terms**—research article, introduction section, applied linguistics, metadiscourse, transition markers

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that English is the world's predominant language of research and scholarship. That is, English is the lingua franca of academic discourse and as Vold (2006) notes, novices as well as established researchers must be able to express themselves in English if they want to be fully accepted members of the international academic community. In other words, academic writers need to be aware of the rhetorical conventions used by professionals in the community in order to enter and to join the academic world (Swales, 1990).

In today's flooded world with information, publication is considerably appreciated in hiring, promotion and continued employment (Belcher, 2007). As a result, many non-native writers have recently shown a stronger tendency to join their disciplinary communities through writing research articles. However, a large number of non-native writers may be excluded from the web of global scholarship (Hyland, 2006) mostly due to problems with rhetorical organizations and discourse structures in their writings.

It is commonly assumed that writers' introductions are crucial to the success of their texts. Writing effective introductions that can both get the interest of the readers and justify the way the research addresses an important gap in a specific field is of special significance in the highly competitive world of academic publication nowadays. An appealing introduction should fulfill two basic functions of getting the interest of the readers and also justifying the way the research addresses an important gap in a specific field (Ya-jun, 2009). Thus, particular attention has been paid to the study of introductions and how they are organized in recent years.

However, writing a winsome introduction that helps shape readers' first impression is considered to be troublesome for many academic writers. This is particularly true when the writer has to make at least four decisions to ensure the effectiveness of the introduction. These decisions include appropriate amount and type of background knowledge, the writers' stance towards the readers and previous scholarship, the winsomeness of the appeal, and the directness of the approach (Swales, 1990). Academics, thus, have to gain fluency in the rhetorical conventions of English language discourse to become or remain a member of the international academic community, to understand their discipline, to establish their careers, and to successfully navigate their learning (Hyland, 2006).

A key to effective text production is conscious awareness of the rules and conventions of rhetorical functions of the target language (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). One aspect of such awareness is metadiscourse awareness. Since metadiscourse is an integral part of academic discourse and of particular importance at advanced levels of academic writing, there seems to be a crucial need for studies that investigate metadiscourse in research articles, particularly in introduction section of the articles because introductions determine the winsomeness of the articles to a large extent.

Hyland (2005, p. 37) defines metadiscourse as "The cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as

members of a particular community.” A number of taxonomies of metadiscourse have been proposed since its emergence. Some of the major models of metadiscourse markers are Vande Kopple (1985), Crismore and Steffensen (1993), Hyland and Tse (2004), and Adel (2006). Most of the models organize metadiscourse markers under the labels of textual and interpersonal. Textual metadiscourse refers to the organization of discourse and interpersonal metadiscourse reflects the writer’s attitude toward the content and the audience. Hyland and Tse (2004) propose an interpersonal model of metadiscourse believing that all metadiscourse resources are interpersonal and organize the metadiscourse resources under the headings of interactive (instead of textual) and interactional (instead of interpersonal) metadiscourse.

Interactive resources refer to those features of the text which set out an argument to explicitly establish the writer's preferred interpretations. These features are used to organize prepositional information in the ways that the audience finds the text coherent and convincing (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Table 1 summarizes Hyland and Tse’s interpersonal model of metadiscourse.

Transitions as one of the most widely used interactive metadiscourse resources (Burneikaitė, 2009) are used to arrange propositions in the text and involve the readers. According to Hyland (2005), transition markers are mainly conjunctions and adverbial phrases which help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument by marking additive, contrastive, and causative steps in the discourse. Addition adds elements to the argument and consists of items such as *and*, *furthermore*, *moreover*, and *etc.* Comparison marks arguments as either similar (e.g., *similarly*, *likewise*, *equally*, *correspondingly*, and *etc.*) or different (e.g., *in contrast*, *however*, *but*, *on the contrary*, *on the other hand*, and *etc.*). Consequence relations tell readers that either a conclusion is being drawn or justified (e.g., *therefore*, *consequently*, *in conclusion*, and *etc.*) or an argument is being countered (e.g., *admittedly*, *nevertheless*, *anyway*, *in case*, *of course*, and *etc.*).

Although there are several studies that compare metadiscourse use in English and Persian research articles (Vassileva, 2001; Abdi, 2002; Dahl, 2004; Zarei & Mansoori, 2007; Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Shokouhi & Talati Baghsiahi, 2009; Abdi, Tavangar, & Tavakoli, 2010; Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010), up to this point, analysis of introduction sections of research articles in terms of the frequency and distribution of interactive metadiscourse resources has received little attention. This study aims to explore and gain insights into the way transitions, as a subcategory of interactive resources, are distributed in introduction sections of research articles in Persian and English.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Distribution and use of metadiscourse in research articles has been demonstrated in a number of contrastive and descriptive studies in recent years (Vassileva, 2001; Abdi, 2002; Dahl, 2004; Zarei & Mansoori, 2007; Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Shokouhi & Talati Baghsiahi, 2009; Abdi, et al., 2010; Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010).

In order to see whether language or discipline is the most important variable governing the pattern of metatext in academic discourse, Dahl (2004) investigates writer manifestation in research articles in three languages, English, French, and Norwegian, and three disciplines, economics, linguistics, and medicine. The findings suggest that in medical texts, metatext is a marker of academic discipline whereas in economics and linguistics texts, language and national writing traditions seem to be much more influential.

In addition, Zarei and Mansoori (2007) compare and contrast the use of metadiscourse elements in Persian and English research articles to find out how English and Persian make use of metadiscourse elements, and whether the two languages differ in using metadiscourse resources in academic texts. By analyzing 19 articles in the two languages, they conclude that both Persian and English used interactive resources more than interactional ones, emphasizing the significance of text coherence over interpersonal function of language in the academic genre. They also indicate that compared with English, Persian capitalizes on more interactive resources.

Shokouhi and Talati Baghsiahi (2009), furthermore, investigate metadiscourse functions in sociology research articles in Persian and English. The results reveal a higher number of metadiscourse elements in the English texts. It is further found that the frequency of textual metadiscourse markers is greater than the interpersonal markers in both language samples and among the different metadiscourse elements, text connectors are employed more frequently in both languages. They finally conclude that the Persian writers are less likely interested in explicitly organizing the texts and orienting the readers.

The studies reviewed indicate that metadiscourse as a rhetorical means in research articles is culture-bound. To date, studies have revealed significant differences in the use of metadiscourse resources across Persian and English. However, a lack of studies that analyze introduction sections of research articles in terms of metadiscourse use is quite obvious in the field. This work is an attempt to cast light on the issue of metadiscourse use across introduction sections of Persian and English research articles.

## III. METHOD

### A. The Corpora

A number of criteria were utilized for the selection of the 3 corpora in this study. First of all, three criteria of genre, ESP, and text type proposed by Grabe (1987) were utilized. Research articles were chosen to meet the genre criterion



and they were also limited to the field of applied linguistics to meet the ESP criterion. Furthermore, among the moves 'introduction' section was singled out in order to guarantee the text type criterion. Second, to take care of the time factor, all texts were chosen from among articles published in 2009 issues of the intended journals. Third, in order to choose articles written by native English writers, it was attempted to choose articles that had at least one English native-speaker author judged by the names and affiliations of the authors. Fourth, caution was taken to choose the articles which had separate introduction section.

The data for this study comprise a total of 45 English research article introduction sections in applied linguistics, 15 written by native writers of English published in 2009 issues of the *Applied Linguistics*, *English for Specific Purposes*, and the *Journal of Pragmatics*, 5 articles from each of which (See Appendix A), 15 by non- native Persian writers of English published in 2009 issues of the *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji* (*Foreign Language Studies*) journal published by University of Tehran, *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning* published by University of Tabriz, and the *Iranian journal of Applied Language Studies* published by University of Sistan and Baluchestan, 6,6, and 3 articles from each, respectively (See Appendix B), and 15 by native writers of Persian published in 2009 issues of *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji* (*Foreign Language Studies*) journal, 13 from the journal published by University of Tehran and the other two from that published by University of Tabriz (See Appendix C).

### B. The Analysis

According to Ädel (2006) metadiscursive expressions can be multifunctional and context dependent, therefore the propositions containing metadiscourse markers were identified functionally and manually throughout each corpus. Furthermore, headings, footnotes, quotes, equations, linguistic examples, tables and figures which appeared in the introduction sections of the articles were excluded from the data in order to analyze the corpora. Since the total number of words varied in each corpus, NE: 15321, NP: 16017, and NNE: 15206, the frequency of transition markers was calculated per 1000 words.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the main objectives of this study was to examine the occurrence of transition markers in introduction sections of research articles in applied linguistics written by native writers of English, non- native Persian writers of English, and native writers of Persian. Another aim was to identify the differences between native and non-native writers of English in the use of transition markers in introduction sections of the articles. In order to meet these goals, the articles were examined functionally and manually to determine the frequency of these words. Table 2 summarizes the results of the analysis; the raw number of occurrences of the transition markers and also their frequency per 1000 words in the 3 corpora are presented in this table.

As table 2 indicates, among the 3 categories of transition markers, additive markers show the highest and causative markers show the lowest frequencies in each corpus. However, there exist some differences in the pattern of distribution of the 3 categories of transition markers across the 3 corpora, For example, addition and consequence markers show the highest frequency per 1000 (i.e., 32.09 and 2.37, respectively) in the NP corpus, while comparison markers show the highest frequency per 1000 words (i.e., 7.70) in the NE corpus. The total frequencies also show that NP writers made the most use of the transition markers (37.64 per 1000 words) compared to NE writers (34.98 per 1000 words) and NNE writers (37.82 per 1000 words). It shows that Persian puts more emphasis on text coherence and organization. These findings are in line with the findings of Zarei and Mansoori (2007) which indicate that compared with English, Persian capitalizes on more interactive resources.

Furthermore, comparing the total frequencies in the NNE corpus with those in the NP corpus and also with those in the NE corpus reveals that due to the effects of the Persian language writing conventions, non- native Persian writers of English generally show a pattern of overuse in the application of transition markers. Likewise, Farrokhi and Ashrafi (2009) conclude that there is a significant difference in the distribution of textual metadiscourse markers between the writings of native English writers and non-native Persian writers of English. Findings of this study also provide further evidence for Dahl's 2004 claim that language and national writing traditions seem to be the most influential factors in using interactive metadiscourse markers in linguistics texts. These finding also support Kaplan's 1966 indication that the influence of linguistic background and cultural traditions of non- native writers in English persists even when EFL writers attain a good command of a target language. Figure 1 summarizes these results:

Writing research articles is considered to be a troublesome and complicated task particularly for the non-native writers of English because it requires not only mastering the explicit linguistic rules and the genre schemata of the discipline, but also understanding of higher levels of discourse. Furthermore, the influence of linguistic background and cultural traditions of non- native writers in English adds to the complexity of the task. Results of the present study revealed that Persian EFL writers of English preserve the writing conventions of Persian especially when using addition and consequence markers. Therefore, introducing EFL learners to the practice of professional native writers can provide them with rhetorical knowledge and understanding of the ways meanings are conveyed in their disciplines. Moreover, the results of this study could be useful to foreign language writers, particularly Persian EFL writers who seek to write publishable articles in international journals. These findings further can be a guide for teaching and understanding of cross-cultural academic writing. The results of this study also can be used to benefit research in contrastive rhetoric.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the occurrence of transition markers in introduction sections of research articles in applied linguistics written by native writers of English, non- native Persian writers of English, and native writers of Persian and further to identify the differences between native and non-native writers of English in terms of the use of transition markers in introduction sections of the articles.

The results of this study suggest that compared with English, Persian capitalizes on more interactive resources. It was further revealed that the use of interactive metadiscourse resources is regulated more or less by the conventions of native language writing culture rather than by the disciplinary culture among non- native Persian writers of English.

Since interactive metadiscourse resources particularly, transition markers are central to the coherence and organization of research articles and help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument, Iranian EFL writers need to deepen their understanding of the disciplinary conventions regulating the use of metadiscourse resources in order to write internationally publishable articles.

Lack of familiarity with the conventions of disciplinary culture may cause difficulties for those non-native writers who want to be considered as a member of disciplinary community. Therefore, EFL writers need to increase awareness of rhetorical conventions of their disciplinary community to enter and to join that community.

This study was limited to the analysis of the use of transition markers in introduction sections of research articles in applied linguistics and took into account only cross-language differences. Future studies could explore the use of other categories of interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources in other sections of research articles such as abstract, method, results, discussion, and conclusion. Moreover, further research needs to be conducted to include possible differences across other academic genre and disciplines.

## APPENDIX A

### **List of the English Research Articles Used as the NE Corpus (The articles have been alphabetically ordered based on the author (s)' names.)**

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- Ellis, R. (2009). The differential effects of three types of task planning on the fluency, complexity, and accuracy in L2 oral production. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(4), 474-509.
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## APPENDIX B

### **List of the English Research Articles Used as the NNE Corpus (The articles have been alphabetically ordered based on the author (s)' names.)**

- Abdi, R. (2009). Projecting cultural identity through metadiscourse marking: A comparison of Persian and English research articles. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 212, 1- 15.

- Atai, M. R. & Soleimany, M. (2009). On the effect of text authenticity & genre on EFL learners' performance in C-Tests. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji*, 49, 109- 123.
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- Zarei, A. A. (2009). The effect of bimodal, standard, and reversed subtitling on L2 vocabulary recognition and recall. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji*, 49, 65-85.

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**List of the Persian Research Articles Used as the NP Corpus (The articles have been alphabetically ordered based on the author (s)' names.)**

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- بابزاده، ج. (2009). زبان فرهنگ اصطلاحات و ارتباط آنها با آموزش زبان فارسی. *پژوهش زبانهای خارجی*، 55، 19-28
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- پیشقدم، ر. و طباطبائی، م. (2009). بررسی وضعیت موجود و آسیب شناسی آموزش زبان انگلیسی در مهد کودک ها. *پژوهش زبانهای خارجی*، 55، 55 - 69
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- رحمتیان، ر. و اطروش، م. (2009). تحلیلی بر چگونگی ارائه نرم افزارهای آموزشی زبان با توجه به شکل محتوا و تکنیک. *پژوهش زبانهای خارجی*، 51، 7-41
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## APPENDIX D

TABLE 1.  
A MODEL OF METADISOURSE IN ACADEMIC TEXTS (HYLAND AND TSE, 2004, P. 169)

Category	Functions	Examples
<b>Interactive</b> Transitions Frame markers Endophoric markers Evidentials Code glosses	<b>Help to guide the reader through the text</b> express relations between main clauses refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages refer to information in other parts of the text refer to information from other texts elaborate propositional meaning	<b>Resources</b> in addition; but; thus; and finally; to conclude; my purpose is noted above; see figure; in section 2 according to X; Z states namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
<b>Interactional</b> Hedges Boosters Attitude markers Self-mentions Engagement markers	<b>Involve the reader in the text</b> withhold commitment and open dialogue emphasize certainty and close dialogue expresses writers' attitude to proposition explicit reference to author(s) explicitly build relationship with reader	<b>Resources</b> might; perhaps; possible; about in fact; definitely; it is clear that unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly I; we; my; me; our consider; note; you can see that

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCY OF THE TRANSITION MARKERS IN NE, NNE, AND NP CORPORA

	NE		NNE		NP	
	Raw number	Frequency per 1000	Raw number	Frequency per 1000	Raw number	Frequency per 1000
<b>Addition</b>	401	26.17	435	28.60	514	32.09
<b>Comparison</b>	118	7.70	95	6.24	51	3.18
<b>Consequence</b>	17	1.10	34	2.23	38	2.37
<b>Total</b>	536	34.98	564	37.09	603	37.64

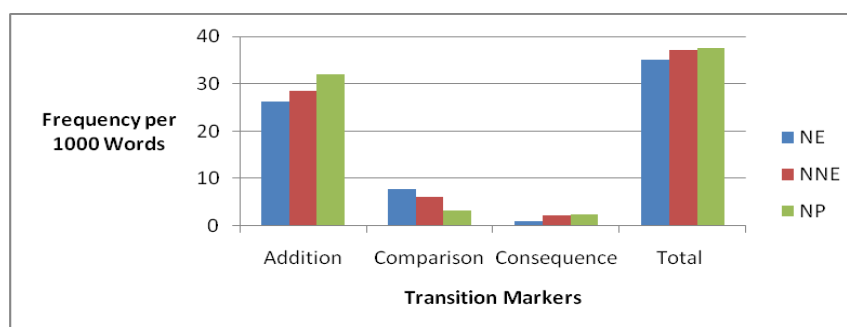


Figure 1. Frequency of the transition markers in NE, NNE, and NP corpora.

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# A Study of College English Classroom Discourse

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**Abstract**—The present study focuses on college English classroom discourse. Through a detailed description and analysis of the collected data by referring to Sinclair and Coulthard's classroom discourse analysis model and Nina Spada, Maria Fröhlich, Patrick Allen's COLT scheme, the discourse patterns and features are made clear and on the basis of which a few strategies for college English teachers are put forward by the author so as to improve college English teaching and learning.

**Index Terms**—college English, classroom discourse, pattern, feature, strategy

## I. INTRODUCTION

Discourse is defined as "the language in use" (Cook, 1989, P. 6) and discourse analysis is concerned with the "the analysis of language in use" (Brown and Yule, 1983, P.1). Discourse analysis refers to the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. It involves looking at both language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that aid in our interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk. The application of discourse analysis to second language teaching and learning can reveal much about how teachers can improve their teaching practices by investigating actual language use in the classroom, and how students can learn language through exposure to different types of discourse.

Classroom discourse analysis is an aspect of classroom process research, which is one way for teachers to monitor both the quantity and quality of students' output. By following a four-part process of Record-View-Transcribe-Analyze, second language teachers can use discourse analytic techniques to investigate the interaction patterns in their classrooms and to see how these patterns promote or hinder opportunities for learners to practice the target language. Since spoken language is "the medium by which much teaching takes place and in which students demonstrate to teachers much of what they have learned" (Cazden, 1988, P. 432), the present study focuses on spoken language rather than written language, and the context specified here is the college English classroom of non-English majors.

The present study focuses on college English classroom discourse. The data are collected in three college English classrooms of non-English majors at Qingdao University of Science and Technology. Through a detailed description and analysis of the collected data by referring to Sinclair and Coulthard's classroom discourse analysis model and Nina Spada, Maria Fröhlich, Patrick Allen's COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) scheme, the discourse patterns and features are made clear and on the basis of which a few strategies for college English teachers are put forward by the author so as to improve college English teaching and learning.

## II. RELATE THEORY

### A. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. It grew out of work in different disciplines in the 1960s and early 1970s, including linguistics, semiotics, psychology, anthropology and sociology.

In 1952, Zellig Harris—one of the founders of discourse analysis, published a paper with the title "Discourse Analysis" (Harris, 1952, quoted in McCarthy, 1991, P. 5) on the journal "Language", making the term known to people. In the 1960s, Dell Hymes (1964, quoted in McCarthy, 1991, P. 5) continued discourse studies and introduced a social perspective to the field of discourse analysis by analyzing speech in social settings. He edited "Language in culture and society" in 1964, in which "speaking form" was researched. The linguistic philosophers such as Austin(1962), Searle (1969) and Grice (1975) (quoted in McCarthy, 1991, P. 5) contributed to the tradition and promoted the study of language as a social action. They were concerned with the social function of the language which gave rise to the development of speech-act theory and the formulation of conversational maxims.

Discourse analysis was developing in the 1970s. The research subject included reference, context, topic and comment, cohesion and coherence, substitution, etc. Most influential works were: "Some Aspect of Text Grammar" (Van Dijk, 1972), "Text and Context" (Van Dijk, 1977), "The Thread of Discourse" (Grimes, 1975), "Cohesion in English" (Halliday, 1976), "Papers on Discourse" (Grimes, 1978), etc. More and more researchers concentrated on the study of discourse analysis and discourse analysis as a new discipline has come into being.

The 1980s was a prospering stage of discourse analysis. An academic journal called "Text" was founded by Van Dijk

in 1981 which gave discourse analysis an academic field. In 1983 G. Brown and G. Yule co-authored “Discourse Analysis”, summarizing the previous research. In 1985 Van Dijk edited and published “Handbook of Discourse Analysis” which was regarded as a mark that discourse analysis was becoming an independent discipline.

### B. Sinclair and Coulthard's Model

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed a model for the description of teacher-pupil talk based on a hierarchy of discourse units. The Sinclair and Coulthard model was devised in 1975 and slightly revised in 1992. It consists of five ranks: *lesson*; *transaction*; *exchange*; *move* and *act*. The ranks are hierarchical in nature with *lesson* being the largest unit and *act* being the smallest as is shown in figure 1.

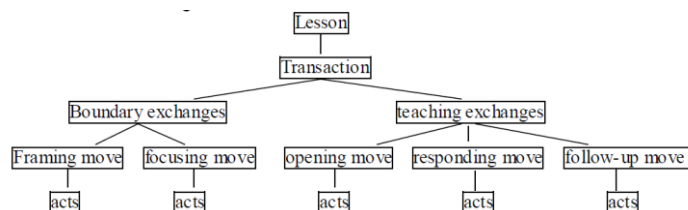


Figure 1 Sinclair and Coulthard's model

The highest rank “lesson” can’t be structured according to “transaction”, namely, the structure of “lesson” hasn’t been found yet (Wang Dexing, 1998). “Transaction” is composed of “exchange”, and is clearly structured. The boundary of transaction is marked by the words like OK, well, right, now and good which are usually stressed; have a falling tone and with a short pause. These words are referred to as “frame”. A teacher tends to use a metastatement after a frame to indicate the beginning of a transaction and when a transaction is finished, another metastatement is used as conclusion. This kind of metastatement is called “focus”, for example:

1) frame: Now,

focus: I want to tell you about a king who lived a long time ago in Ancient Egypt.

2) focus: What we’ve just done, what we’ve just done is given some energy to this pen.

frame: Now,

The exchange which is made up of a frame and a focus is called “boundary exchange”. The structure of a transaction begins with a boundary exchange and followed by a sequence of informing exchange, directing exchange or eliciting exchange, etc, which constitute “teaching exchange”. A transaction is often ended by a boundary exchange too.

An “exchange” is composed of “moves” and has its own structure. Boundary exchange is composed of framing move and focusing move. Teaching exchange consists of opening move, responding move and follow-up move. For example:

3) T: Can you tell me why do you eat all that food? Yes.

P: To keep you strong.

T: To keep you strong. Yes. To keep you strong. Why do you want to be strong?

In this example, there is a boundary in the middle of the teacher’s second sentence. According to Sinclair, there are two moves here, that is focusing move and opening move. Next example is an eliciting exchange:

4) T: Those letters have special names. Do you know what it is? What is one name that we give to these letters?

P: Vowels.

T: They’re vowels, aren’t they?

T: Do you think you could say that sentence without having vowels in it?

A huge amount of classroom discourse data like this example show that an eliciting exchange is made up of three moves and its structure is T-P-T. To put it in detail, that is, the teacher raises a question, then the students answer it, and the teacher gives an evaluative follow-up before raising another question. The three moves that constitute an eliciting exchange is referred to as “initiation”, “response” and “follow-up”. This kind of eliciting exchanges made up of the three moves is common in classrooms. When a student replies the teacher’s question, the other students may not hear clearly sometimes. So the teacher needs to repeat the student’s words so as to make it clear to all the students. What’s more important is that the teacher should give “feedback” to the student’s answer, to show whether the answer is right or whether it is the answer expected by the teacher. For example:

5) T: (elicit) What does the food give you?

P: (reply) Strength.

T: (feedback) Not only strength, we have another word for it.

P: (reply) Energy.

T: (feedback) Good, energy, yes.

In this kind of three-move structure if the third move doesn’t appear, that usually is a hint that the student’s reply is not correct. For example:

6) T: (elicit) Can you think why I changed “mat” to “rug”

P: (reply) Mat’s got two vowels in it.

T: (feedback)



T: (elicit) Which are they? What are they?

P: (reply) “a” and “t”

T: (feedback)

T: (elicit) Is “t” a vowel?

P: (reply) No.

T: (feedback) No.

A “move” is formed by one or many “acts”, and also has its structure. The concept of “act” put forward here by Sinclair et al is different from the theory of “speech act” by Austin and Searl who aimed to find out how people do things with words, or to identify the pragmalinguistic features that native and/or non-native speakers employ to achieve their communicative goals in various speech events (Hinkel, 1997). Sinclair and Coulthard (1992) provide a definition of the discourse act: “Discourse acts are typically one free clause, plus any subordinate clauses, but there are certain closed classes where we can specify almost all the possible realizations which consist of single words or groups”. The “act” here is defined and classified according to its exchange function. For instance, the function of elicitation act is to require a linguistic response and the function of informative act is to provide information. There are all together 22 acts put forward by Sinclair and Culthard (1975).

Sinclair and Coulthard also contributed a lot to the analysis of exchange structure. They found in the language of traditional native-speaker school classrooms a pattern of three-part exchanges, where the teacher made the initiation and the follow-up move, while pupils were restricted to responding moves (Coulthard, 1985, quoted in McCarthy, 1991). According to Coulthard (1985, quoted in Wang Dexing, 1998), an exchange is a structure made up of five moves:

I (R/I) R (F) (F)

An exchange is formed by at least two moves (initiation and response), and at most by five moves. Look at the following example:

7) T: Can anyone tell me what this means?

P: Does it mean danger men at work?

T: Yes...

(example 1-7 are quoted from Wang Dexing, 1998, P.202-209)

Here, P's words are not only a response to T's question, but also an initiation. In college English classrooms where the students have low proficiency, discourse acts such as “loop”, “nomination”, “prompt”, and “clue” are expected to appear, because when a teacher does not get a response or gets a wrong answer to an elicitation, she/he can start again by repeating or rephrasing the question, or move on to another pupil. An discourse element for these teacher's acts is called 'bound initiation' (Ib), and it may be bound in ways of 're-initiation', 'listing', 'reinforce' or 'loop'. An exchange which reactivates an element in another exchange instead of repeating it or rephrasing it, is called 'bound exchange', contains single or a few Ib slots (Coulthard and Brazil, 1992).

In sum, the model of discourse analysis by Sinclair and Coulthard provide us with a set of description category and analysis procedures. This is undoubtedly a great contribution to discourse analysis. However, the Sinclair and Coulthard model is not without critics. It is far from perfect and is not quite applicable in describing natural discourse. Malouf (1995a, quoted in Andrew Atkins, 2001) argues that it “has only been applied to two-party discourse and would seem to fall short of the full range of linguistic communication.” It has been modified by a number of scholars to account for less structured discourse patterns (Brazil and Coulthard, 1992, Coulthard, 1992; Farooq, 1999a, Francis and Hunston, 1992) such as telephone and casual conversations. The lack of an adequate description of intonation is another problem in Sinclair and Coulthard's model. The importance of intonation analysis in the pursuit of communicative purpose was also mentioned by Brazil (1995). Francis and Hunston (1992) point out one drawback that I have been careful to address in my data. Para-linguistic features such as gestures and eye-gaze may also be part of the discourse in face-to-face communication. I felt that recording the lesson on video might have had a negative effect on the naturalness of the discourse in classes of college English on campus. To avoid any negative effect, the lesson was recorded on cassette and para-linguistic items were not included in this study (as cited in Atkins, 2001).

### C. COLT Scheme

COLT stands for “communicative Orientation of Language Teaching” and was introduced for the first time in 1984 by Nina Spada, Maria Fröhlich and Patrick Allen. This observation scheme was developed within the context of a project investigating the nature of L2 language proficiency and its development in classrooms, referred to as the Development of Bilingual Proficiency (DBP). One of the research components in this project was to investigate the effects of instructional variables on learning outcomes which required an observation scheme that could systematically describe instructional practices and procedures in different L2 classrooms. Furthermore, one of the main questions was whether instruction which was more or less communicatively oriented contributed differently to L2 development. An observation scheme was, therefore, needed to describe the exact features of instruction.

The COLT scheme is divided into two parts, the first of which describes classroom events at the level of episode and activity and the second part analyses the communicative features of verbal exchange between teachers and students and/or students and students. Thus it is quite suitable to explore the research questions mentioned above. In the description and analysis of the data, this scheme is frequently consulted with a few variations.



In part A of the COLT scheme there are five categories: activity, participant organization, content, student modality and materials. "Activity" is open-ended; no predetermined descriptors have to be checked off by the observer. Each activity and its constituent episode are separately described and timed so that a calculation of the percentage of time spent on various COLT categories can be determined. "Participant organization" describes three basic patterns of organization: Whole class, Group work and individual seat work. The parameter of "content" describes the subject matter of the activities, that is, what the teacher and the students are talking, reading, or writing about or what they are listening to. Three major content areas have been differentiated along with the category Topic Control: management, explicit focus on language, and other topics which refers to the subject matter of classroom discourse, apart from management and explicit focus on language. Topic control indicates who selects the topic that is being talked about—the teacher, the student, or both. "Student modality" identifies the various skills involved in a classroom activity with the focus on the students and the purpose to discover whether they are listening, speaking, reading, or writing or whether these activities are occurring in combination. The category "Other" covers such activities as drawing, acting, etc. "Material" describes the materials used in connection with classroom activities. As the present study takes spoken discourse as the research field, the category of "material" is not included in this study.

Part B of COLT analyses communicative features of verbal exchange and is divided into teacher verbal interaction and student verbal interaction. As the present study deals with both teachers' and students' discourse, the two parts were all included in the description. There are 7 categories in this part: use of target language; information gap; sustained speech; reaction to code or message; incorporation of preceding utterances; discourse initiation; and relative restriction of linguistic form. The original COLT scheme has two alternatives in "use of target language"—first language (L1) or second language (L2). A third alternative is desirable in this study, however, namely translation. Since target language is meant to show how often the teachers and students trying in their second language instead of using their first language, situations where students are demanded to do translation work both from L1 to L2 and from L2 to L1 cannot be included in these counts. The feature of "information gap" refers to the extent to which the information requested and/or exchanged is unpredictable, i.e., not known in advance. "Sustained speech" is intended to measure the extent to which speakers engage in extended discourse or restrict their utterances to a minimal length of one sentence, clause or word. To measure amount of speech, COLT includes three categories: ultraminimal, minimal and sustained, where sustained speech consists of at least three main clauses. The present study, however, indicated that this division was too wide. Very few student utterances could be regarded as sustained speech. The categories used in this study were with some adaptation: ultraminimal, (utterances consisting of one or two words), minimal speech (phrase, clause), and sustained speech (at least one main clause with extension). "Reaction to code or message" refers to a correction or other explicit statement which draws attention to the linguistic form of an utterance. "Incorporation of preceding utterances" shows the way teacher gives feedback such as no incorporation, repetition, paraphrase, comment, expansion and elaboration. "Discourse initiation" measures the frequency of self-initiated turns by students. As this is very rare in the college English classrooms observed, this category is also excluded in the present study. It has been argued that a creative and uncontrolled language use, just like the one in L1 development, is also crucial in classroom language learning. "Form restriction" measures this dimension. COLT scheme differentiates in restricted use, limited use and unrestricted use.

Part B is analyzed according to these different categories from the aspects of teacher verbal instruction and students verbal interaction respectively.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. College English Classroom Discourse Patterns

##### 1. Analysis of the classroom discourse for TPT structure

The recorded discourse was transcribed and analyzed using the Sinclair and Coulthard's 'IRF' (Initiation-Response-Feedback) model for an exchange, a move and an act (1975). A total of 271 exchanges consisting of about 1150 utterances were identified.

The results of discourse structure analysis for Teacher-Pupil-Teacher (TPT) sequences are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE CLASSROOM DISCOURSE FOR TPT STRUCTURE CLASS ONE

T-initiate	Number of exchanges	98.02%
P-initiate	Number of exchanges	1.98%
T	11	10.89%
TP	32	31.68%
TPT	41	40.59%
TPTP	11	10.89%
TPTPT	4	3.96%
PT	2	1.98%
PTP	0	0
PTPT	0	0
Total	101	100%

CLASS TWO

T-initiate	Number of exchanges	86.02%
P-initiate	Number of exchanges	13.98%
T	22	23.66%
TP	7	7.53%
TPT	38	40.86%
TPTP	5	5.38%
TPTPT	8	8.60%
PT	9	9.68%
PTP	2	2.15%
PTPT	2	2.15%
Total	93	100%

CLASS THREE

T-initiate	Number of exchanges	100%
P-initiate	Number of exchanges	0%
T	21	27.27%
TP	5	6.49%
TPT	30	38.96%
TPTP	5	6.49%
TPTPT	16	20.78%
PT	0	0
PTP	0	0
PTPT	0	0
Total	77	100%

TOTAL

T-initiate	Number of exchanges	99.03%
P-initiate	Number of exchanges	0.96%
T	54	19.93%
TP	44	16.24%
TPT	109	40.22%
TPTP	21	7.75%
TPTPT	28	10.33%
PT	11	4.10%
PTP	2	0.74%
PTPT	2	0.74%
Total	271	100%

Abbreviations T: Teacher, P: Pupil

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) found that a TPT sequence is a regular sequence in the classroom discourse. Table 1 shows that around 40.22% of the total exchanges analyzed had a TPT structure. TPT accounted for the largest proportion of all the exchanges in these three classes with class one 40.59%, class two 40.86% and class three 38.96%. The other structures observed included T, TP, TPTP, TPTPT, PT, PTP, PTPT. The most obvious and typical feature found in this table was that Teacher-initiated exchanges made up the overwhelming majority of the exchanges with a total number of 99.03%, and in class 3, teacher-initiated exchanges even occupied 100%.

With “TPT” and “T-initiated” exchanges dominating, the three classes all had their own distinctive features in exchange patterns.

In class one the second largest proportion of the exchanges was TP, which accounted for 31.86% maybe because the teacher explained many words to the students. After the explanation, the students would read the words and the teacher would go on with the next one without giving any feedback if the word was easy. For example:

8) I-1-T: the third word, hostile, means unfriendly (s).

R-2-PP: hostile (rep).

9) I-1-T: Next, isolate, isolate from sth (s).

R-2-PP: isolate (rep)

The pattern “PT” appeared in this class although there were only two exchanges accounting 1.98%.

In class two and three, the second largest number was that of the pattern “T” which was 23.66% and 27.27% respectively. From the number and also from my observation, it was easily seen that the teacher in these two class spent quite a long time in explanation and interpretation of the text so as to ensure that most of the students could understand it completely. For example:

10) I-1-T: The text of section A is quite easy. In paragraph 1, the author gives us an introduction. And from paragraph 2 to the last paragraph the author gives us many examples to show the environmental problems and how the countries solve the problems (i).

11) I-1-T: Paragraph 2 tells us changes of all people’s life. Besides children, adult life are also changed. In second line we have the word “enormous”. Maybe you don’t know the meaning but you can guess using the skill of “finding out word meanings” we learned just now. The buildings, apartment buildings are very high, they can hold a lot of

people. So “enormous” means “huge”, “very big” (i).

According to my own experience, in college English classrooms, such long monologue of the teachers are very common. It's not strange that the pattern of “T” had such a large proportion because the students' English is generally poor and one of the main aims of teaching is to inform the students of the meaning of the text and some important language points. The other reason is that the traditional teaching method is still prevailing in this university although reforms is being seriously considered and is in its infancy to be implemented in classrooms.

In class two, the pupil-initiated exchanges made up 13.98% of all the exchanges, which is much more than that of the other two classes even though the number was small itself. An activity in this class was that the teacher asked the students to find out some key words and nominated some students to read them and explain them. For example:

12) 1-P1: Paragraph 6, decade (i).

2-T: Yeah, “for decades” (acc). A decade is ten years (i).

13) 1-P1: The first is in line 4 (i)

2-T: line 4(acc).

3-P1: “pocket”. It means area here (i).

4-T: Yeah, very good. Line 4, “in various pockets of the world”, here “pocket” means areas (acc/eva).

In class three, the pattern “TPTPT” occupied the third largest proportion of the exchanges which showed that the teacher was trying to make the students talk more in class. For example:

14) I-1-T: OK, tell me your choice, and tell me why you make the choice (m/el).

R-2-P1: A (rep).

F-3-T: Yes, very good (acc/com). Why do you choose A? (el)

R-4-P1: because of the word “choice” (rep).

F-4-T: Yes, choice is the synonym of “option”, very good! (acc/com)

## 2. Analysis of the classroom discourse using the 'IRF' model

The results of discourse structure analysis using Sinclair and Coulthard's Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) model are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE CLASSROOM DISCOURSE FOR IRF STRUCTURE

Discourse element	Class one		Class two		Class three		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	11	10.89 %	22	23.66%	21	27.27%	54	19.93%
I R	32	31.68%	7	7.53%	5	6.49%	44	16.24%
I R F	38	37.62%	34	36.60%	27	35.06%	99	36.53%
I R F R	3	2.97%	1	1.08%	1	1.30%	5	1.85%
I R Ib R	1	0.99%	2	2.15%	0	0	3	1.11%
I R Ib R F	3	2.97%	2	2.15%	9	11.69%	14	5.17%
I Ib R F	1	0.99%	2	2.15%	1	1.30%	4	1.48%
I Ib Ib R F	0	0	1	1.08%	2	2.60%	3	1.11%
I R F/I R F	8	7.92%	5	5.38%	6	7.79%	19	7.01%
Other	4	3.96%	17	18.28%	5	6.49%	26	9.59%
Total	101	100%	93	100%	77	100%	271	100%

(N= number of exchanges      %= percentage of the total)

The discourse analysis by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) is for classroom situations where the teacher exerts the maximum amount of control over the structure of the discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Coulthard, 1985; quoted in McCarthy, 1991). Table 2 shows that there were some features observed which agreed with Sinclair and Coulthard's findings on discourse structure, for example, IRF (36.53%), I (19.93%) and IR (16.24%) were observed at relatively high rates just as Table 1 shows that the teacher-initiated exchange was dominant (99.03%). This is probably because: (1) the classes examined in this study were all large classes of about 70 students where the students were in formal or restrictive circumstances. The teachers exerted the maximum amount of control over the classes and the structures of the discourse. (2) Chinese students have been disciplined not to speak in classes without a teacher's direction, the attitude of Chinese students towards speaking English in front of other students are often negative because they fear making mistakes, and (3) the students simply cannot speak due to their poor English ability so they only spoke when they were asked to in most of the cases.

## B. College English Classroom Discourse Features

COLT Scheme describes the communicative features of classroom discourse. The categories in COLT were employed to analyze the discourse features of teacher verbal instruction and student verbal interaction based on approximately 1150 utterances. Thus the discourse features in the present study would be analyzed and discussed in these two respects.

Table 3 adapted from COLT system showed the percentage of utterances on each category.

TABLE 3  
TEACHER VERBAL INSTRUCTION(% OF CODED UTTERANCES)

TEACHER VERBAL INSTRUCTION (% OF CODED UTTERANCES)													
Comm. features	Target Lang.			Information gap		Sust. speech		Incorporation of preceding utterance					
	Sub categ.	L1	Tr.	L2	Request Genuine Infor.	Request Pseudo Infor.	Min.	Sust.	No Incorp.	Repet.	Paraphr.	Comm.	Expan.
Class 1	3.47	6.13	90.40	12.20	87.80	18.12	81.88	6.25	25.0	15.63	12.5	9.38	31.25
Class 2	5.61	9.44	84.95	14.29	85.71	13.91	86.09	2.94	26.47	17.65	14.71	8.82	29.41
Class 3	4.18	5.22	90.60	9.38	90.63	12.23	87.77	3.45	24.14	24.14	10.34	6.90	31.03
Total	4.43	6.96	88.61	11.96	88.04	14.81	85.19	4.21	25.26	18.95	12.63	8.42	30.53

TABLE 4  
STUDENT VERBAL INTERACTION (% OF CODED UTTERANCES)

STUDENT VERBAL INTERACTION (% OF CODED UTTERANCES)											
Comm. Features	Target Lang.			Information gap		Sust. speech			Form restriction		
Sub categ.	L1	Tr.	L2	giving unpred. Infor.	giving pred. Infor.	Ultra Min.	Min.	Sust.	Restr.	limited	Unrestr.
Class1	3.66	10.53	86.32	6.25	93.75	57.78	26.67	15.56	55.29	27.06	17.65
Class2	16.85	22.47	60.67	10.67	89.33	46.91	25.93	27.16	46.48	21.13	32.39
Class3	3.85	3.85	92.31	9.84	90.16	58.49	22.64	18.87	59.09	34.09	6.82
Total	8.47	13.56	77.97	8.62	91.38	54.02	25.45	20.54	53.00	26.50	20.50

The classroom activities concentrated on form more than on meaning with a percentage of 59.58%; 1 Teachers dominated the class with 87.94% of topic control and requested much more pseudo information (88.04%) than genuine information (11.96%) and students even gave a 91.38% of predictable information, which meant that communication and interaction did exist in the classrooms observed but the communication between teacher and students was more of the pseudo-communication instead of real communication.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

The primary exchange patterns of college English classroom are T-P-T, and I-R-F. Other patterns like T, TP, TPTP, TPTPT, PT, PTP, PTPT, and I, I R F R, I R Ib R, I R Ib R F, I Ib R F, I Ib Ib R F, I R F/I R F also exist. The classroom discourse features are: classroom activities mainly center on form rather than meaning; language learning and practicing composes the primary content of teaching; whole class activities are much more than individual activities and group work has not been found in any of the classes; teacher dominates the class and controls the topic; language used in classroom is mostly English by both teacher and students; in most cases teacher's discourse is "sustained speech" while students' discourse largely belongs to "ultraminimal" or "minimal" with only words, phrases and short sentences; information requested by teacher and given by students is almost all pseudo and predictable. All these features imply that communication does exist in college English classrooms but it is far from natural.

Based on the study above, the following strategies are suggested: Asking "referential" questions and giving "facilitating" feedbacks; Involving more "negotiated interaction" in classroom discourse; Engaging the students in group work; Maximize opportunities for students participation. College English teachers can refer to these strategies for sustaining student engagement and communicative interaction in classroom for the purpose of improving college English teaching and learning. This is also the significance of the present study.

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# Correct or Incorrect Language: A Case of Iranian EFL Teachers

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**Abstract**—Research on teacher attitudes toward language and cultural differences has revealed that teachers form negative stereotypes of students with non-standard dialects (Münstermann, 1989). They consider dialect differences as deficiency in language learning, or sloppy pronunciation. Teacher's attitude toward the students is important in that it creates the classroom atmosphere and affects the way language is taught to the students. The immediate goal of the present study is to investigate EFL teachers' attitude toward dialect differences in Iran. It further investigates the roles that the variables like teachers' gender, teachers' years of teaching experience, school location and the students' ethnic background play in forming the teachers' attitude toward dialect variations. To this end, forty Iranian EFL teachers were randomly selected from nine different public high schools. To collect data, modified version of Hoover et al. (1996) Questionnaire was administered. The data were analyzed using simple frequency and percentages. The findings revealed that %71 of the teachers were sensitive toward varieties in dialect and considered them as forms of language and only %14 viewed them as language learning deficiency. The study has some implications for language teaching and material development.

**Index Terms**—EFL teacher, teachers attitude, dialect variation, non-standard dialects

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes are very important for understanding and improving educational affairs. These beliefs are closely related to the teachers' strategies for overcoming problems in their classroom settings. They form students' learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement. Dialects are varieties in language that represent cultural and regional differences among the speakers; however, to some teachers there is only one "correct" dialect-namely standard dialect-and many substandard and incorrect dialects. As far as dialects are viewed as social and personal qualities of different students, it seems necessary to investigate the teachers' attitudes toward different dialects in the classroom. Since the 60's, linguists have generally accepted that listeners form dialect-based judgments of speakers' intellectual ability and personal characteristics (Cross et al., 2001). A lot of research is necessary to explore whether teachers who are dealt with different dialects in the classroom are sensitive to students with non-standard dialects. Research has been done on speakers of dialects other than Standard English, such as African American English which have been concluded that it is a rule-governed dialect and not "sloppy speech" or "poor English". Negative attitudes toward dialects like African American English as Blake and Cutler (2003) stated are quite widespread as evidenced by researchers and educators. So it seems necessary to have an investigation on teachers' attitude toward dialect variations in a country like Iran with its diverse cultural and ethnical background. This paper tries to answer the following questions:

1. What is Iranian teachers' attitude toward dialect differences in Iran?
2. What variables may contribute to the attitudes?

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Attitude as a concept is concerned with an individual way of thinking, acting and behaving. It has very serious implications for the learner, the teacher, the immediate social group with which the individual learner relates and the entire school system (Yara, 2009). The relationship between teachers' attitude and behavior and the students' academic performance has been approved by a large body of research (Bowie & Bond, 1994; Tauber, 1997). They provided the evidence that teachers' negative attitude and behavior is directly related to students' failure in learning a language. Sarwar (2002) in his research concluded that high academic achievers have better study habits and more positive study attitudes than low academic achievers. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998a) stated that children who speak nonstandard dialects of English may be at greater risk for reading difficulties. There is ample evidence that listeners make stereotyped judgments about speakers of particular dialects. Matthews (1980) for instance, found that the attitude of English teachers in Virginia tended to be more practical of substandard forms of language. Differences between the dialect children speak at home and the dialect taught at school may contribute to difficulties in learning to read. For example a teacher pointing out the "d" sound in the words "sold" or "find" can confuse the African American child who pronounces these words "sol" and "fine." A student who pronounces the words "deaf" and "death" in the same way is

likely to be confused if the teacher uses these words in a lesson on contrasting final consonants. However, these kinds of confusions in phonemic awareness and reading instruction can largely be avoided by making teachers more aware of dialect difference (Burns et al., 1999).

Teachers' characteristics such as attitude and years of teaching experience have been studied to explore their effects on students' academic achievement (Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997). Further investigation was done by Wenglinsky (2000). In his study he concluded that teachers with a major or minor in the subject area of their teaching will provide greater gains in student achievement in both mathematics and science. He further claimed that this remained true even after controlling for teacher professional development, teacher classroom practices, class size, and student demographics. Hawkins, Stancavage, and Dossey (1998) stated that even though teaching experience seems to be related to student achievement, the relationship may not be linear; students whose teachers had fewer than 5 years of experience had lower levels of mathematics achievement, but there were no differences in mathematics achievement among students whose teachers had more than 5 years of experience. Other researchers, on the other hand, found different results. Hanushek (1997) found that 71 percent of the studies he surveyed did not explore any findings to support a relationship between teachers' teaching experience and student achievement.

Labov and Hudley (2009) emphasized on two main factors associated with dialect that may affect students' academic achievement: (1) structural differences, phonemic inventory and grammatical rules that may interfere with reading and learning in standard English; and (2) symbolic influences, the social and psychological factors that result from the perceptions of teachers and others about the abilities and conduct of students who speak certain dialects. With this respect teachers may view some dialects as weaker intellectual ability or low educational aspirations, and this may cause students to lower their own academic expectations (Adger, Wolfram & Christian, 2007). The effect may be even more than just lowering their expectations. According to Delpit (2006) children and youth who are criticized and corrected for speaking in their own dialect may develop oppositional attitudes towards school. Eades (1995) maintained that students who speak Standard English as a second dialect show poor Standard English language skills, and although factors other than dialect may be involved, several studies suggest that the failure to specifically address dialect diversity may be contributing to their underachievement.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

Forty Iranian EFL teachers were selected from nine different high schools (located in different regions of the city) in Zahedan and were asked to complete the questionnaire. Zahedan by nature is a city in which a variety of people from the other cities with different ethnic backgrounds live. The respondents varied in age, gender, number of years teaching, classes taught, as well as ethnicity of the students they taught.

#### B. Instruments

The modified version of the questionnaire by Hoover et al. (1996) was used to collect the data. The first part included the participants' age, sex, ethnicity, educational background and teaching experience. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of statements designed to assess teachers' attitudes toward different topics. The first section measures whether respondents recognize variation in people's speech, its influence on school performance, and on their feelings about education. The second set of statements measure attitudes toward differences in dialect in general. Respondents are then asked to evaluate the appropriateness of different dialects in and outside the classroom. Finally, respondents are asked to evaluate whether standard dialect is dominant because it is the best form of language, and whether it is the role of the school to make certain that all students have the same chances to succeed. A Lickert-type scale was used to evaluate statements from "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly." In other words, the respondents are given the following choices in ranking their feelings toward statements: (a) agree strongly, (b) agree mildly, (c) no opinion, (d) disagree mildly, (e) disagree strongly. The reliability of the scale measured from 0.89 to 0.93 (Abdul-Hakim, 2002).

#### C. Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to teachers at the nine selected schools, in which the students were from different ethnic backgrounds. Teachers generally received the questionnaire at the break time and were asked to return them anonymously. The participants were also asked to add any comments. Many of them provided us with useful comments. Several remarked that it is better to refer to Standard dialect in the questionnaire as the "correct" form of language rather than the "best" form of language. Some others proposed that dialect speakers be placed in classes alongside ELL students. The data gathered through the analysis of the questionnaires may suggest that there may be a correlation between teachers' attitudes and students learning success.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As it is represented in Table 1, regarding the gender of the participants there were 10 males, 27 females and 3 for those who didn't respond to the age item.

TABLE1:  
SEX OF THE RESPONDANTS

Sex of the respondents	N
Male	10
Female	27
No response	3

Table 2 represents the respondents' years of teaching experience. As it is shown most of the respondents had an experience of more than 10 years.

TABLE2:  
YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Years of teaching experience	N
0-1 years	6
3-5 years	9
6-10 years	7
10 years or more	18

Table 3 demonstrates different ethnic groups of students who were taught by the teachers in different high schools.

TABLE3:  
ETHNIC GROUP OF STUDENTS TAUGHT

Ethnic group of students taught	N
Sistani	79
Borujerdi	68
Mashhadi	33

While the data set for this study is not large, the results do suggest noteworthy and significant results. Following are the results for the attitudinal part of the survey. They are discussed for the aforementioned social categories in terms of percentages and favorability toward statements.

#### A. By School

Fig. 1 shows that in all nine schools, the respondents almost categorically acknowledge (95%) variation in language and agree (90%) that students who do not speak Standard Persian may suffer academically (Survey questions 1, 2, and 5).

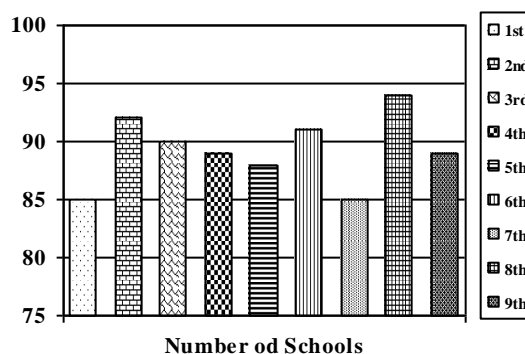


Figure1. Bilingual Education is the right of every child who does not speak the dominant language.

#### B. By Sex of the Respondents

In this study, the results for the men and women are comparable for all statements. In fact, there is an average of only 3–7 percentage points' difference for any statement.

#### C. By Years Taught in the School System

The majority of the teachers in our sample have been teaching for 10 or more years. This group comprises a large percentage (45%) of our sample, and the remaining 55 percent of the informants are divided among the four remaining factor groups. Nonetheless, we find little variation in the frequencies for responses between the various groups at this time.

#### D. By Students' Ethnicity

As Fig. 2 shows the teachers are generally more likely to support bidialectical (the ability of individuals to control two distinct dialects of the same language) education and they agree that such students have problems similar to ESL

students. It was further discovered that the same teachers feel that standard dialect is dominant in the society and it is the best form of Persian.

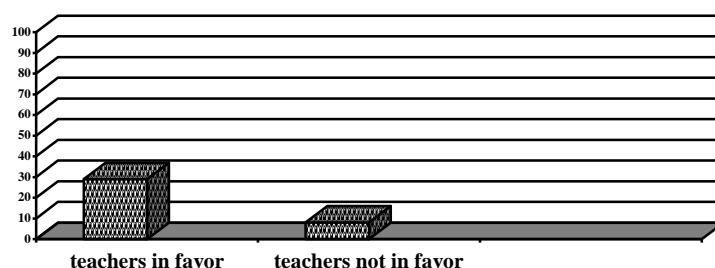


Figure2. Bidialectal education is the right of every child who does not speak the dominant language or dialect.

## V. DISCUSSION

As the analysis of the data reveals the teachers in the nine high schools appear to have an understanding of language variation and dialects. A substantial (71%) percentage view dialects as forms of language with only 14 percent viewing it as lazy forms of Persian. In addition, 53 percent of teachers responded that dialects have its own set of rules. Only 22 percent agree that Standard Persian is the best form of Persian language.

The results revealed the importance of language diversity in educational settings and the need for positive attitudes toward the issues of dialect difference. Teachers' attitude towards the teaching of language plays a significant role in shaping the attitude of students towards the learning of language. The teachers have to keep these differences in their mind and help the students maintain their confidence even though they have non-standard dialects. The teachers are recommended to implement an approach to teaching students that encourages respect for language diversity and ask them to cooperate with each other. In terms of pedagogy, a high percentage of the teachers (86%) believe that students with nonstandard dialects have problems similar to students learning a second/foreign language. As Fig. 2 above demonstrates majority of teachers agreed upon this fact that essential care should be given to the issue of bidialectism. The students who do not speak the standard dialect may face problems very similar to second or foreign language learners. Similarly, most of the teachers feel that it is educationally acceptable to use the students' first language to teach the standard language. The fact that students are allowed to maintain their native language in the classroom provides an environment that encourages and welcomes dialect diversity. A small number of the teachers responded that Standard Persian is dominant in school and business as it is the best form of Persian.

In sum, in terms of bilingual and bidialectal education, nearly half (55%) of the teachers in the study supported bilingual education, and a great proportion (62%) supported to plan these types of programs. The study furthermore showed that teachers' attitudes play a main role in the experiences of students, and predictions of students' academic achievement are related to assessment of their speech. Half of the teachers agree that students with dialect diversity need to have special education very similar to the students who learn a second or foreign language, but minority (20%) of them preferred to use the students' first language as a medium to teach Standard Persian.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study was developed to investigate Iranian EFL teachers' attitude toward dialect differences to add to the findings of the existing research. The study shed light on how to deal with the varieties of standard languages and that to know the problems (educationally, socially, or psychologically) which students with non-standard language may face in the classroom. The findings revealed that 71percent of the teachers were sensitive toward varieties in dialect and considered them as forms of language and only 14 percent viewed them as language learning deficiency. Based on the results of the study which focus on the students' dialect diversities, a need to teacher training program is felt. The teachers should be aware of the needs of the students who are nonstandard speakers. As Smitherman (1999) stated there are two points to be regarded with respect to language varieties. One is that we need to have a policy specialized for language diversities, and the other one is that as far as language attitudes are concerned, the schools are the place for social change. What is new in this research is that language programmers and curriculum developers should take into account attitudes held by the teachers in the classrooms and that linguistic background of the students may act as a medium for acquiring standard language.

Very little effort has been done in educational settings to restructure educational policies for students with nonstandard dialects. In other words, we need language policies that assure the students that they do not fail due to not being a speaker of Standard Persian. Enormous efforts are required from linguists and other social scientists to help to improve public attitudes (Blake, 2000). The study suggests that teachers' attitudes to dialect differences have natural consequences for the students, so it demands enough care and sensitivity from the teachers as well as from the students'



parts. Charity et al. (2004) referred to this sensitivity as “dialect awareness” and maintained that children’s awareness of dialect differences in their speech community may increase their ability to think about and manipulate language. Being aware of these variations may help the students experience less interference from dialect mismatches and therefore experience less difficulty in language learning. Some approaches had been proposed for embedding first dialects in so called bidialectal education (Harris-Wright, 1999, in Dekalb County, Georgia, and through the Kamahameha Schools in Hawaii (Baugh, 2007)). These approaches have been classified by Rickford (2003, cited in Alim, 2005, p.27) into: a) the linguistically informed approach through which teachers learn to distinguish between errors deriving from first dialect interference and those from language development; b) the dialect reader approach in which the materials developed in the home dialect are used to bridge between the first and second dialect, and c) the dialect awareness approach where students learn the inherent variability of language.

The study has some implications for material designers, too. According to Snow et al. (1998b) a teacher who is sufficiently knowledgeable and sensitive about dialect differences will prepare materials and lessons that are consistent with the phonology, syntax, and vocabulary of the children’s dialect. With this respect syllabus designers and material developers should design programs that consider the variables which can promote teacher’s motivation and teacher’s interest. By so doing, they will be able to play their roles efficiently in educational settings. Garman (2004) suggests four factors practical in bringing about positive attitude change: i) exposure to different cultures, ii) education, iii) travel, and iv) personal experience of discrimination. The other important implication of this study is that teacher training centers are needed to give the teachers more background and understanding appropriate to their preferred teaching methods and strategies that they can use in the classrooms with varied dialects. Meanwhile, there should be a set of specific guidelines for the teachers to have the opportunity to restructure old beliefs about the superiority of the standard dialect.

#### APPENDIX

(The items taken and adapted from the questionnaire developed by Hoover et al., 1996)

1. People speak differently in different situations.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
2. In every language there are always variations in the way people from different age, class and academic backgrounds speak.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
3. Bilingual education is the right of every child who does not speak the dominant language.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
4. Government funds should be used to support bilingual education.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
5. Some children do poorly in school because they do not speak Standard Persian.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
6. Bidialectal education is the right of every child who does not speak the dominant language or dialect.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
7. Government funds should be used to support Bidialectal education.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
8. Different dialects are forms of Persian.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
9. Dialects are lazy Persian.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
10. Dialects are subject to their own set of rules.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
11. Kids with nonstandard dialect would advance further in school without Standard Persian.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
12. Using dialects as a tool to teach subjects to students would hurt their chances to learn Standard Persian.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
13. There are settings outside the classroom where dialects are appropriate.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
14. It is educationally sound to use a student's first language as a way of teaching that student the standard language of a community.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
15. Different dialects are inadequate for teaching subjects such as social studies or math.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
16. Students with nonstandard dialects have problems similar to those of students learning Persian as a second language.  
Agree Strongly   Agree Mildly   No Opinion   Disagree Mildly   Disagree Strongly
17. Students with nonstandard dialects should be taught in classrooms alongside Persian as a second language.

- Agree Strongly Agree Mildly No Opinion Disagree Mildly Disagree Strongly
18. Standard Persian is dominant in schools and business because it is the best form of English.  
Agree Strongly Agree Mildly No Opinion Disagree Mildly Disagree Strongly
19. One purpose of school is to make certain that all students graduate proficient in Standard Persian.  
Agree Strongly Agree Mildly No Opinion Disagree Mildly Disagree Strongly

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# Analysis of Lexical Repetition—Taking a News Discourse as an Example\*

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**Abstract**—This article puts Hoey's lexical patterns into practice by analyzing a news discourse from *The Times*. The analysis involves a deep and detailed exploration of the links and bonds formed by lexical repetitions, from which marginal and central sentences have been derived. The analysis is believed to have great implications for discourse analysis and foreign language teaching.

**Index Terms**—lexical, repetition, link, bond

## I. INTRODUCTION

Lexis is believed to constitute the foundation of a text. Its contribution to cohesion and coherence has been the focus of attention among many scholars. The pioneers in the study of cohesion and coherence — Halliday & Hasan (1976) made their first attempt in classifying cohesive devices roughly into five categories: conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, reference and lexical cohesion. Among them, the first four fall into grammatical category while only the last is related to lexis. The importance of lexical cohesion is proved by a study conducted by Halliday & Hasan (1976), from which they concluded that lexical cohesion accounts for over forty percent of ties. Hoey (2000) puts forward that, except conjunction, the other cohesive devices have shown different degrees of repetition. Winter, E. O. (1979) holds a similar point of view by saying that “many clauses are repeated, either partially or (almost) entirely... the most obvious kind of repetition being the very common partially repeated structures of the clause. This repetition may however, be disguised by the grammatical form which it takes” (p. 101). *Repetition* is traditionally defined as “doing the same thing many times” (Longman Dictionary, 2003, p.1201). Hoey argues for a broader one which involves many types of repetition.

Using a news report as an example, “Cinema parks face bad projections” which is taken from *The Times* (see the Appendix for the full report), the paper is going to expound in great detail how Hoey's model is applied to analyzing texture in discourse from lexical point of view.

## II. HOEY'S ANALYZING MODEL OF LEXICAL REPETITION

Hoey (2000) has made a meticulous and systematic study of repetition. As is stated previously, Hoey adopts a broad definition of repetition. He classifies repetition into simple lexical repetition, complex lexical repetition, simple paraphrase, and complex paraphrase.

“Simple lexical repetition occurs when a lexical item that has already occurred in a text is repeated with no greater alteration than is entirely explicable in terms of a closed grammatical paradigm.” (p. 53) For example, *receiver* in Sentence 4 (So far, no details have emerged of the size of the company's borrowings or its debtors, but a spokesman for Ernst & Young, the **receiver**, said that it was confident THI could be turned around.) is the simple repetition of *receivers* in Sentence 3 (THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the **receivers** earlier this month...).

Complex lexical repetition “occurs either when two lexical items share a lexical morpheme, but are not formally identical or when they are formally identical, but have different functions” (p. 55). For example, *collapse* in Sentence 7 (That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Centre on London's South Bank, should **collapse** so suddenly ...) forms complex repetition with *collapse* of Sentence 3 (...blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden **collapse**). Although they are identical in form, they function differently in grammar with the former (in Sentence 3) being a noun and the latter (in Sentence 7) a verb.

Paraphrase of which the major function is to explain things in different words, is kind of repetition. Likewise, paraphrase is classified by Hoey (2000) into two types: simple and complex. “Simple paraphrase occurs whenever a lexical item may substitute for another in context without loss or gain in specificity and with no discernible change in meaning.” (p. 62) For example, *firm's* in Sentence 6 (Industry sources believe it is likely to be broken up, with buyers picking off individual sites, and some of the firm's incomplete schemes...) and *company's* in Sentence 4 (the full sentence has been presented earlier) are examples of simple paraphrase. To some degree, simple paraphrase is equivalent to Hasan's (1984) synonym.

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\* Supported by Social Sciences Programme of Liaoning Province (L11DYY044) and the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (DUT12RW435)

Hoey interprets complex paraphrase broadly. Complex paraphrase is said to occur “when two lexical items are definable such that one of the items includes the other, although they share no lexical morpheme” (p. 64). For example, *turn around* in Sentence 4 means “to manage an unsuccessful business so well that it becomes successful again” (Longman Dictionary, 2003:1555); in this way, it stands in complex paraphrase with *success* in Sentence 1 (The UK’s cinema market is bracing itself for a slowdown, despite growing film attendances and the **success** of recent releases). In addition, complex paraphrase includes antonym.

In addition to the four repetition devices discussed above, repetition also include superordinate, hyponymic, and co-reference repetition (p. 69-70). For example, *the country* in Sentence 23 (One agent says: “Virtually every cinema in **the country** would now be valued at ...”) and *the UK* in Sentence 19 (Research into cinema attendances .....has found that while the number of screens in **the UK** has risen...) are of co-reference. In Sentence 14, Sentence 15 and Sentence 16, there are *Australian cinema operator*, *the US operator*, and *South African-owned operator* respectively, of which *Australian*, *the US*, *South African* are related as hyponym to superordinate with *foreign* in Sentence 12 (A rush of **foreign** operators began chasing sites in 1998...).

Sometimes, an item in a sentence will form a link with two items in another sentence at the same time. Under such circumstance, only one link is recorded. Hoey (p. 83) puts forward the following list which is made in order of decreasing importance in deciding which link to record.

- simple lexical repetition
- complex lexical repetition
- simple mutual paraphrase
- simple partial paraphrase
- antonymous complex paraphrase
- other complex paraphrase

### III. ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL REPETITION IN DISCOURSE

According to Hoey (2000), “the study of the greater part of cohesion is the study of lexis” (p. 10), and relations between lexical items are established on various types of repetition. Repetition links in the selected news discourse are presented below in Table 1 (Because all the links have been listed, the table has to spread across several pages).

TABLE I.  
LEXICAL REPETITION

1						
2	cinema-cinema	2				
3	UK's-UK market-market	leisure-leisure parks-parks buyers-receivers collapse-collapse leading-pioneers	3			
4	success- be turned around	buyers-receiver	borrowing- borrowings THI-its receivers-receiver	4		
5		buyers-selling	THI-its receivers-receiver	company's-comp any receiver-receiver	5	
6		industry's-industry buyers-buyers	collapse- be broken up	company's-firm's	company-firm's	6
7		collapse-collapse leisure-leisure developers-redeve lop industry's-industry	collapse-collapse sudden-suddenly leisure-leisure	THI-THI	company-THI	Industry-industry be broken up- collapse tender-bidding individual-whole
8	UK's-UK's growing- expansion	leisure-leisure parks-parks	UK-UK's blaming-blame leisure-leisure park-park		believe-suggesting	
9	UK's-UK cinema-cinema	parks-parks collapse-sprung up cinema-cinema	parks-parks UK-UK collapse-sprung up	emerged-sprung up	including-include	
10	sought-found	leisure-leisure parks-parks industry's-busines ses	park-parks leisure-leisure			Industry-business
11	market-market	leisure-leisure parks-park	leisure-leisure parks-park collapse-demise	emerged-demise		be broken up- demise

12		sought-chasing		company's-operators	a number of-a rush of company-operators	
13		industry's-industry sought-looking for		company's-operators so far-now	company-operators a number of -few	Industry-industry sites-sites firm's-operators
14	cinema-cinema UK's-UK	cinema-cinema collapse-came to nothing	UK-UK collapse-came to nothing	company's-comp any emerged-came to nothing	company-company	schemes-plans firm's-company
15	cinema-cinema UK-UK	cinema-cinema collapse-open	UK-UK collapse-open	company's-operators emerged-withdrawn said-announced	company-operators some-completely	Schemes-plans Incomplete-completely be broken up-open sites-sites
16	cinema-cinema	cinema-cinema		company's-operators	selling-sale	Sites-sites
17		leisure-leisure	leisure-leisure	said-says	assets-property	likely-likely
18				company's-company	company-company	Firm's-company Picking off-picking up
19	cinema-cinema attendance-attendance UK's-UK Growing-risen	cinema-cinema	UK-UK			
20	cinema-cinema growing-growth	cinema-cinema		company's-operators	company-operators	firm's-operators
21	market-market	parks-parks	level-levels park-parks market-market			Schemes-schemes
22	market-market		market-market		market-market	
23	cinema-cinema UK-the country		UK-the country	said-says		
24		collapse-emerged	receiver-receivership THI-THI	emerged-emerged receiver-receivership THI-THI	receiver-receivership	schemes-planning
25		leisure-leisure Developers-redevelop	THI-THI's Leisure-leisure Receivers-receivership	receiver-receivership	receiver-receivership	Schemes-scheme Tender-bid

8	leisure-leisure	8				
9		Parks-parks	9			
10	leisure-leisure industry-businesses	leisure-leisure parks-park	include-including Parks-park	10		
11	leisure-leisure collapse-demise	leisure-leisure parks-park	parks-park	leisure-leisure parks-park	11	
12			tenant-tents the US-foreign	businesses-operators	However-But	12
13	industry-industry			businesses-operators	demise-opening	Operators-operators Sites-sites Chasing-looking foreign-Australian a rush of-few
14	collapse-came to nothing	expansion-expansion UK's-UK furious-ambitious	cinema-cinema UK-UK sprang up-came to nothing		demise-open	Operators-operator began-quit
15	collapse-open	expansion-cut	Cinema-cinema US-US Multiscreen-screen			Operators-operator foreign-the US sites-sites
16			Cinema-cinema		leisure-leisure	Operators-operators
17	Leisure-leisure	Leisure-leisure	sprung up-take place	leisure-leisure		
18						Operators-operators
19		expansion-risen UK's-UK Cinema-cinema	multiscreen-screen	found-found		
20		furious-aggressive Cinema-cinema expansion-growth	cinema-cinema		parks-parks market-market	Operators-operators
21		Out-of-town-out-of-town Parks-parks	Parks-parks	Parks-parks	market-market	

22			cinema-cinema			began-dipped their toes
23					demise-emerged	
24	collapse-emerge THI-THI Questions-problems		Cinema-cinema		leisure-leisure	
25	Bidding-bid Redevelop-redevelop Leisure-leisure			Leisure-leisure		create-began

13						
14	Operators-operator	14				
		Operator-operator Plans-plans Opening-open expansion-cut Cinema-cinema				
15	Operators-operators sites-sites		15			
		Operator-operator Cinema-cinema	Operator-operator Cinemas-cinema sites-sites	16		
16	Operators-operator sites-sites					
	consolidation- consolidation Few-more	came to nothing-take place	announced-says		17	
17	Operators-operators	Operators-operators	Operators-operators	operators-operators		18
		Cinema-cinema UK-UK expansion-risen	number-number screens-screens UK-UK Cinemas-cinema	cinema-cinema	consultant- consultant	
19		ambitious-aggressive cinema-cinema expansion-growth Operators-operators	Cinemas-cinema Operators-operators	cinema-cinema operator-operators	more-many	operators- operators
20	Few-many Operators- operators	Plans-planning	Plans-planning			
21			withdrawn- retreating			a couple of- several
22	Now-now					
	few-less Now-now	Cinema-cinema UK-the country	Cinemas-cinema UK-the country	cinema-cinema	says-says more-less	
23		came to nothing-emerge plans-planning	plans-planning		take place- emerge	
24		plans-scheme	plans-scheme		leisure-leisure	
25						

19						
20	risen-growth cinema-cinema	20				
21	parks-parks		21			
			market-market	22		
22						
23	UK-the country	more-less	now-now	23		
24			imposed-forced	investor-investment	a year ago-last year	24
						receivership-receivership planning-scheme THI-THI
25			schemes-scheme			

To give a clearer picture, the repetition links in Table 1 is re-presented in Table 2 in the form of the number of the links. Out of 300 cells, i.e. sentence pairs, 102 cells (34%) have shown zero links, and 84 cells display only 1 repetition which takes up 62%. This shows that nearly 2/3 links are not closely related and only 1/3 are intimately linked. Hoey points out, “we will only concentrate on those cases of linkage that, within the text, show an above-average degree of connection” (p. 91). So the first step is to pin down of the average number of linkage.





distribution of bonds across the text.

TABLE IV.  
NUMBER OF BONDS

纽带数	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
句子数	5	5	3	4	2	4	0	1	1

It can be seen that the number of sentences with 3 and 5 bonds are equal. Thus, we'll take the middle number 4 first as the divide and treat sentences with 4 or more bonds as central sentences. According to Table 3, sentences with 4 or more bonds are Sentence 2, Sentence 3, Sentence 7, Sentence 8, Sentence 9, Sentence 14, Sentence 15, and Sentence 19. Putting them together gives rise to the following abridgement.

② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑧ Observers are already suggesting that the furious expansion of the UK's out-of-town leisure parks is to blame. ⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. ⑲ Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million.

The above abridgement covers major information of the selected news report: 1) the collapse of one of UK's entertainment park developers — THI; 2) causes that lead to this situation; 3) other foreign developers that have similar experiences. And this abridgement is basically coherent, except for the fact that there seems to be an information gap between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14. Sentence 9 talks about domestic developers while sentence 14 suddenly switches to overseas developers. If a transitional sentence is added, will coherence of the abridged version be enhanced? Between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14, there are sentences 10, 11, 12, 13; however, the number of their bonds are quite small, i. e. 10 (1, 0), 11 (1, 0), 12 (0, 2), 13 (2, 0). As said previously, the first number in the bracket shows the number of preceding sentences that the present sentence has bonds with and the second showing how many sentences after the present sentence are formed in bond with each other. Of the four sentences, only Sentence 12 has bonds with subsequent sentences, and Sentence 14 and Sentence 15 happen to occur after Sentence 12. So we'll try to see whether coherence will be improved by inserting Sentence 12 between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14.

⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑫ A rush of foreign operators began chasing sites in 1998, pushing up rents. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites.

Obviously, coherence of the abridged version has been greatly improved. The function of Sentence 12 helps throw light on the question posed previously, that is, are marginal sentences omissible in a text? According to the threshold of bonds (4 bonds) that has been decided earlier, Sentence 12 is supposed to be a marginal sentence. Although it is not the most marginal one — the sentence not bonded to any sentence or the coordinates are (0, 0), its bonds after all are far fewer compared with those of central sentences. Enhanced coherence of the abridgement achieved by having Sentence 12 added shows that marginal sentences can supply background or subsidiary information which helps readers better understand the themes of the text and thus raises readability of the text.

From the above, we have obtained central sentences by pinning down the number of bonds to 4 and organize them into an abridged version. But this abridgement seems to have contained excessive adjoining sentences (Sentence 2, Sentence 3; Sentence 7, Sentence 8, Sentence 9; Sentence 14, Sentence 15), and it is supposed to be shorter.

Next, we are going to raise the threshold to 5 and in this way get Sentences 2, 3, 7, 14, 15, and 19. Put together, they form the following abridgement:

② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically

cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. <sup>19</sup> Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million.

With 5 bonds as the threshold, this abridgement is highly condensed and appropriate in length — about 1/5 of the original text. If the background information is provided, that is, the transitional sentence — Sentence 12 is added, both coherence and readability of the above version will get uplifted.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Hoey's lexical pattering involves discussions of repetition links, bonds, marginal sentences, and central sentences. The forgoing analysis has great implications for discourse analysis and foreign language teaching: first, lexical cohesion is multi-faceted; connection between sentences is established not merely through mechanical repetition of the same lexical item; second, as a crucial component of a text, lexis teaching is supposed to focus on those words that have given rise to most bonds. Because Hoey's lexical model contains many meticulous analyses and calculations, it is very hard to carry out the analysis on a quantitative basis. Further corpus research conducted on the computer should thus be encouraged.

#### APPENDIX

##### Cinema parks face bad projections

Jameson, A.

*The Times* 23 April, 2001

① The UK's cinema market is bracing itself for a slowdown, despite growing film attendances and the success of recent releases. ② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ④ So far, no details have emerged of the size of the company's borrowings or its debtors, but a spokesman for Ernst&Young, the receiver, said that it was confident THI could be turned around. ⑤ The receiver is working with the group on a number of options to rescue the situation, including selling some of its non-core assets, selling the company as a going concern, or restructuring. ⑥ Industry sources believe it is likely to be broken up, with buyers picking off individual sites, and some of the film's incomplete schemes possibly going back out to tender. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑧ Observers are already suggesting that the furious expansion of the UK's out-of-town leisure parks is to blame. ⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑩ Other leisure businesses, including themed restaurants, bowling alleys, health and fitness clubs and nightclubs are also to be found on the parks. <sup>11</sup> However, there have been signs of a demise in the leisure park market for some time. <sup>12</sup> A rush of foreign operators began chasing sites in 1998, pushing up tents. <sup>13</sup> But now consolidation in the industry means there are few, if any, operators looking for sites. <sup>14</sup> Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. <sup>15</sup> The US operator Cinemamark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. <sup>16</sup> Ster Century Europe, a South African-owned operator, which had one cinema in operation in Norwich and four sites, has also put itself up for sale. <sup>17</sup> Colin White, leisure property consultant at Edward Symmons Hotel & Leisure, says that further consolidation is inevitable: "It's highly likely more consolidation will take place. <sup>18</sup> There's a logic from the larger company point of view to pick up a couple of the smaller operators. " <sup>19</sup> Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million. <sup>20</sup> Many cinema operators based their projections on more aggressive growth. <sup>21</sup> Government-imposed planning restrictions on new parks and parking levels at out-of-town schemes have also hampered the market. <sup>22</sup> Institutional investors, who dipped their toes in the market several years ago, are now retreating. <sup>23</sup> One agent says: "Virtually every cinema in the country would now be valued at a rent less than it was a year ago." <sup>24</sup> As for THI, its problems first emerged last year when it was forece to place a special-purpose investment vehicle into receivership, after a proposed project at Herne in the Ruhr Valley, Germany, was refused planning permission. <sup>25</sup> The receivership also kills THI's shortlisted bid to redevelop Kings Dock in Liverpool to create a leisure scheme on the waterfront.

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# An Analytical Study of Translation of Stream of Consciousness in the Novel *The Sound and the Fury* and Its Two Persian Translations by Sholevar and Hosseini: A Hallidayan Perspective

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**Abstract**—This study is a step towards translation of stream of consciousness within the framework of Halliday's model of language and discourse (1994). The key problem with translation of literary works written in the field of stream of consciousness is that the complex structure of original work can be questionable for translators to convey the specific textual features of the original text. Most of the studies reviewed so far, however, suffer from the fact that they have paid little attention to the grammatical structure and textual features of stream of consciousness as writing style. To this end, the present study employed a descriptive method to compare and analyze metafunctions and lexicogrammatical patterns of the original work along with its two Persian translations to seek matches/mismatches occurring in translation process by taking into consideration of the specific structure of the original work employed by the author, and application of Halliday's model (1994) in translation from English into Persian.

**Index Terms**—stream of consciousness, Halliday's model, translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

By definition, stream of consciousness is a name for introducing the specific method of narration "that undertakes to reproduce, without a narrator's intervention, the full spectrum and continuous flow of a character's mental process, in which sense perceptions mingle with conscious and half-conscious thoughts, memories, expectations, feelings, and random associations" (Abrams, 1999, p. 299). Applying stream of consciousness as a certain technique to narrate the character's mental world seems to be problematic for writers who tend to approach their characters' subjective world. According to Steinberg (as cited in Chang, 1993), some linguistic features such as lack of appropriate punctuation, applying ungrammatical structures, incoherent and overlapping sentential forms and abrupt shift from one stream of thoughts into another are needed to depict the essence of stream of consciousness writing style. Taken together, the complex form of this writing style could be problematic for the source language reader to follow main stream of the story and chain of events, accordingly, the same situation may occur for the target language reader. Meanwhile, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the pivotal roles of both translation and translator as the mediators between source language and target language. As Nord (2005) pointed out, the difficulty of source text in the phase of source text analysis can be considered as one of the most serious obstacles during translation process. Despite the importance of the problem in the field of translation studies, so far, however, there has been little discussion about Persian translation of literary works written in the field of stream of consciousness. The researchers to date have tended to focus on other aspects of stream of consciousness, and far too little attention has been paid to the textual and linguistic features of stream of consciousness. Therefore, the present study was designed to seek the analysis of textual characteristics of stream of consciousness in the source text, and reproduction of the given style in the target text in the light of Halliday's model of language and discourse (1994).

Horri (2009) investigated the translator's style in translation of narrative texts, and examined Persian's translation of Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* in the light of Baker's universals of translation. He put the focus of his study on the importance of the writer's style along with the translator's style considering stylistics of the translator suggested by Baker, and concluded that normalization is the most frequent universal in Hosseini's translation of *To the Lighthouse*. Wang (2011) conducted a corpus-based study on Chinese translation of *Ulysses*, and investigated the translator's fingerprint as manifested in his/her style in translation. Wang (2011) came to this conclusion that the fingerprints of the translator are left on the translated text both as a result of his/her linguistic idiosyncrasy and of the interference and

constraints of the languages s/he is dealing with in translation. In 2011, Kao and Wu published a paper entitled as “Translating Stream of Consciousness in the Light of Adaptation: The Case Study of Faulkner’s Quentin Compson in *The Sound and the Fury*”. They draw our attention to the structure of stream of consciousness style employed by Faulkner to show Quentin’s puzzlement and astonishment, and claimed that translation without annotation may lead to textual inaccessibility for the target reader. To improve textual accessibility, they proposed adaptation to reconstruct stream of consciousness through the use of explicitation and expansion. Obviously, there are similarities between the natures of previous studies and what the present study aims at, such as focus on Faulkner’s style to represent stream of consciousness and proposing translation strategies to handle problematic translation of *The Sound and the Fury* (1995). The issue of stream of consciousness has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of translation, undoubtedly, this problem refers to textual features of this style which have become a central issue for reading literary works written in this field, owing to this fact, translation and getting the exact meaning of author and conveying the intended meaning are the major issues in the field of translation studies. With regard to these problems, the present study seeks to address translation of stream of consciousness and application of Halliday’s model (1994) in practical aspect of translation from English into Persian simultaneously. As Bosseaux (2007) acknowledged.

Halliday’s model (1971, 1976 and 1985/1994) is based on *systemic functional grammar* (SFG). A *functional grammar* considers that language performs a number of different functions and that any piece of language is likely to be result of choices made on different functional levels. It is designed to account for how language is used and claims that everything can be explained, ultimately, by reference to this. The theory behind Halliday’s account is also known as *systemic* since it is a theory of *meaning* as choice, by which a language is interpreted as a network of interlocking options. Halliday’s model is designed for the study of language as communication; meaning is attributed to the writer’s speaker’s motivated linguistic choices, which systemically relate to a wider sociocultural framework. Halliday’s model provides a detailed analysis of three interconnected elements of meaning or *metafunctions* in a text. These metafunctions are the metafunctions in the linguistic system of three general purposes, which underlie all uses of language and are the *functions*. They are namely the *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual* metafunctions. (pp. 24-25)

Egins (1994, as cited in Munday, 2001) acknowledged that analysis of metafunctions is the heart of the Halliday’s model, and the close relationship between lexicogrammatical patterns and metafunctions help us to understand a text.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Materials

In order to seek the matter in question, three chapters of William Faulkner’s novel *The Sound and the Fury* (1995) known as one of the notable fictional works in the realm of stream of consciousness along with its two Persian translations by Sholevar (2004) and Hosseini (2009) have been selected. In order to understand the plot of the story, and to avoid deviations and misunderstandings occurring during the analysis of the original text, *Critical Companion to William Faulkner: A literary Reference to His Life and Work* (2008) by Fagnoli, Golay, and Hamblin has been chosen. Some required definitions and functions of words in the original text have been checked by *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English CD-ROM* (2005). In order to obtain the frequency and percentage of data, *Microsoft Office Excel* (2007) has been employed.

### B. Text Selection

As confirmed by Volpe (2003), the original text is narrated through three characters’ minds with three different viewpoints. Owing to this, samples of stream of consciousness writing style have been selected on the basis of the narrator’s different viewpoints, and analyzed separately.

### C. Procedure

In order to acquire data and deduce conclusions, 30% of the best samples of stream of consciousness were extracted from each chapter of the original work, to compare the original work and translations, after the original text analysis, translations of the samples extracted from two Persian translations of the novel were analyzed clause by clause on the basis of Halliday’s model of language and discourse (1994) to obtain constituents of required grammar for each type of meanings. For each case of three types of meaning in the original work, two Persian translations were checked to see whether Persian translations would match the required grammar of each type of meanings. Findings obtained from this comparison were analyzed in terms of differences and changes made by translators, to see whether they would change the meaning. If changes affected the meaning, analysis would seek to address in what sense and how did changes affect the meaning.

## III. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This section includes all statistical information including frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of each type of meanings obtained from comparison between the original text and its two Persian translations.

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of experiential meaning obtained from the first chapter of the original text and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 1  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF EXPERIENTIAL MEANING IN CHAPTER ONE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Actor	62	40. 64.5%	37. 60%
Senser	13	9. 69.2%	3. 23%
Sayer	4	2. 50%	2. 50%
Carrier	10	7. 70%	6. 60%
Behaver	4	1. 25%	0
Goal	19	19. 100%	19. 100%
Circumstance	58	57. 98.2%	58. 100%
Beneficiary	4	4. 100%	4. 100%
Receiver	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Verbiage	0	0	0
Attribute	9	8. 89%	8. 89%
Phenomenon	12	12. 100%	12. 100%
Range	2	2. 100%	2. 100%
Existent	0	0	0
Process: material	82	76. 97%	79. 96%
Process: mental	13	13. 100%	13. 100%
Process: verbal	4	4. 100%	4. 100%
Process: behavioural	5	4. 80%	4. 80%
Process: existential	0	0	0
Process: intensive	10	9. 90%	9. 90%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of interpersonal meaning obtained from the first chapter of the original text and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF INTERPERSONAL MEANING IN CHAPTER ONE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Subject	94	59. 63%	50. 53%
Finite	84	84. 100%	84. 100%
Finite: modal	12	5. 42%	3. 25%
Adjunct: circumstantial	63	55. 87%	62. 98%
Adjunct: conjunctive	41	41. 100%	41. 100%
Adjunct: continuity	0	0	0
Adjunct: mood	2	2. 100%	2. 100%
Adjunct: vocative	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Predicator	107	105. 98%	102. 95%
Complement	39	39. 100%	39. 100%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of Theme types obtained from the first chapter of the original text and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 3  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF THEME TYPES IN CHAPTER ONE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Topical Theme	98	61. 62%	50. 51%
Textual Theme	33	33. 100%	33. 100%
Interpersonal Theme	2	1. 50%	1. 50%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of experiential meaning obtained from the second chapter of the original work and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 4  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF EXPERIENTIAL MEANING IN CHAPTER TWO

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Actor	28	17. 60%	18. 64%
Senser	4	1. 25%	1. 25%
Sayer	6	5. 83%	3. 50%
Carrier	19	11. 58%	11. 58%
Behaver	3	2. 67%	3. 100%
Goal	19	18. 95%	18. 95%
Circumstance	53	52. 98%	52. 98%
Beneficiary	2	2. 100%	2. 100%
Receiver	0	0	0
Verbiage	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Attribute	21	19. 90%	21. 100%
Phenomenon	3	3. 100%	3. 100%
Range	1	0	1. 100%
Existent	5	4. 80%	2. 50%
Process: material	42	42. 100%	42. 100%
Process: mental	7	7. 100%	7. 100%
Process: verbal	6	5. 83%	6. 100%
Process: behavioural	3	3. 100%	3. 100%
Process: existential	2	2. 100%	1. 50%
Process: intensive	15	15. 100%	15. 100%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of interpersonal meaning obtained from the second chapter of the original work and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 5  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF INTERPERSONAL MEANING IN CHAPTER TWO

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Subject	58	31. 53%	35. 60%
Finite	46	46. 100%	46. 100%
Finite: modal	8	7. 87.5%	7. 87.5%
Adjunct: circumstantial	45	42. 93%	45. 100%
Adjunct: conjunctive	20	20. 100%	20. 100%
Adjunct: continuity	0	0	0
Adjunct: mood	5	4. 80%	5. 100%
Adjunct: vocative	9	8. 89%	8. 89%
Predicator	63	63. 100%	63. 100%
Complement	48	41. 85%	45. 98%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of Theme types obtained from the second chapter of the original text and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 6  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF THEME TYPES IN CHAPTER TWO

	Original Text	Sholevar's translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Topical Theme	69	37. 57%	36. 52%
Textual Theme	16	16. 100%	14. 87.5%
Interpersonal Theme	17	12. 70.5%	15. 88%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of experiential meaning obtained from the third chapter of the original work and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 7  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF EXPERIENTIAL MEANING IN CHAPTER THREE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Actor	17	11. 65%	10. 59%
Senser	8	5. 62.5%	2. 25%
Sayer	3	3. 100%	2. 67%
Carrier	4	2. 50%	1. 25%
Behaver	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Goal	12	12. 100%	12. 100%
Circumstance	22	22. 100%	22. 100%
Beneficiary	1	1. 100%	0
Receiver	0	0	0
Verbiage	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Attribute	3	3. 100%	3. 100%
Phenomenon	8	6. 75%	8. 100%
Range	0	0	0
Existent	0	0	0
Process: material	31	28. 90%	24. 77%
Process: mental	10	9. 90%	10. 100%
Process: verbal	4	4. 100%	4. 100%
Process: behavioural	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Process: existential	0	0	0
Process: intensive	4	4. 100%	4. 100%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the grammatical constituents of interpersonal meaning obtained from the third chapter of the original work and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 8  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF GRAMMATICAL CONSTITUENTS OF INTERPERSONAL MEANING IN CHAPTER THREE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation	Hosseini's Translation
Subject	32	17. 53%	10. 31%
Finite	32	32. 100%	32. 100%
Finite: modal	5	5. 100%	4. 80%
Adjunct: circumstantial	22	22. 100%	22. 100%
Adjunct: conjunctive	17	17. 100%	17. 100%
Adjunct: continuity	3	2. 67%	3. 100%
Adjunct: mood	3	2. 67%	3. 100%
Adjunct: vocative	1	1. 100%	1. 100%
Predicator	46	43. 93%	45. 98%
Complement	22	22. 100%	22. 100%

The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of Theme types obtained from the third chapter of the original text and its two Persian translations.

TABLE 9  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF THEME TYPES IN CHAPTER THREE

	Original Text	Sholevar's Translation F. (%)	Hosseini's Translation F. (%)
Topical Theme	30	14. 47%	13. 43%
Textual Theme	25	20. 80%	22. 88%
Interpersonal Theme	0	0	0

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned earlier, due to the differences between three narrators' viewpoints, and characteristics of stream of consciousness depicted by Faulkner (1995) in the original text, this section has been divided into three parts. Throughout this section Sholevar's translation (2004) and Hosseini's translation (2009) will be marked as T1 and T2 respectively.

##### A. Samples of Chapter One

###### Sample 1:

He put my hands into my pockets. I could hear him rattling in the leaves. I could smell the cold. The gate was cold.

T1: و دست های مرا در جیبم کرد. صدای جرق جرق او را توی برگ ها می شنیدم. بوی سرما را می شنیدم. در باغ سرد بود.

T2: دستهام را گذاشت تو جیبهام. خش خش را لای برگها می شنیدم. بوی سرما را می شنیدم. دروازه سرد بود.

From an experiential meaning viewpoint, it can be seen easily that the constituents "He" and "I" functioning as actor and senser have been omitted in both translations. In the same way, from an interpersonal meaning viewpoint, the aforementioned elements functioning as subject have been omitted in both translations. To certain extent, we can say



that these omissions did not change the meaning definitely. The supporting evidence behind of this claim is the fact that in both translations the Subject Marker conflated with both process and predicator in experiential and interpersonal meanings confirms the presence of omitted elements.

Consider the highlighted items in the following Persian translations of each clause, the highlighted items indicate the presence of subject in Persian translations.

T1: و دستهای مرا در جیبم کرد

T2: دستهام را گذاشت تو جیبهام

T1: بوی سرما را می شنیدم

T2: بوی سرما را می شنیدم

T1: صدای جرق جرق او را توی برگ ها می شنیدم

T2: خش خش را لای برگ ها می شنیدم

Comparing the original clauses with translations, it can be seen that the constituent “could”, what we can label as modal finite in interpersonal meaning, has not been translated by both translators. According to Halliday (1994),

The Finite element, as its name implies, has the function of making the proposition finite. That is to say, it circumscribes it; it begins the proposition down to earth, so it is something that can be argued about. A good way to make something arguable is to give it a point of reference in the here and now; and this is what the Finite does. It relates the proposition to its context in the speech event. This can be done in one of two ways. One is by reference to the time of speaking; the other is by reference to the judgment of the speaker.... In grammatical terms, the first is PRIMARY TENSE, the second is MODALITY. (i) Primary tense means past, present or future at the moment of speaking; it is time relative to ‘now’. A proposition may become arguable by having its relevance to the speech event specified in these temporal terms. (ii) Modality means the speaker’s judgment of the probabilities, or the obligations, involved in what he is saying. A proposition may become arguable by being presented as likely or unlikely, desirable or undesirable-in other words, its relevance specified in modal terms. (p. 75)

Halliday (1994) divided modality into two subdivisions, Modalization and Modulation. Halliday (as cited in Eggins, 1994) defines modalization as a means to express two kinds of meanings, “1. **probability**: where the speaker expresses judgments as to the likelihood or probability of something happening or being; and 2. **usuality**: where the speaker expresses judgments as to the frequency with which something happens or is” (p. 276).

Returning now to the comparison between the original text and two Persian translations in sample 1, it can be seen that both translators have not translated the constituents “could” which can be labeled as Finite Modal Operator. In fact, the narrator’s judgment has been overlooked.

Sample 2:

*Mrs Patterson came across the garden, running.*

T1: خانم پاترسن از آن طرف باغ بدو آمد.

T2: خانم پاترسن دوان دوان از آنسوی باغ آمد.

As mentioned earlier, one of the textual features of stream of consciousness is the use of ungrammatical structures. The constituent “running” functions as predicator in the original text, this item has been separated by use of comma without any preceding items.

From a Hallidayian perspective, the above-mentioned clause can be named as *elliptical clause*. Let us look at what Halliday meant by ellipsis and elliptical clauses. As Halliday and Hassan (1976) pointed out

When we talk of ellipsis, we are not referring to any and every instance in which there is some information that the speaker has to supply from his own evidence. That would apply to practically every sentence that is ever spoken or written, and would be of no help in explaining the nature of a text. We are referring specifically to sentences, clauses, etc where structure is such as to presuppose some preceding item, which then serves as the source of missing information. An elliptical is one which, as it were, leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere. This is exactly the same as presupposition by substitution, except that in substitution an explicit ‘counter’ is used... whereas in ellipsis nothing is inserted into the slot.... We can take as a general guide the notion that ellipsis occurs when something that is structurally necessary is left unsaid, there is a sense of incompleteness associated with it. But it is useful to recognize that this is an over-simplification, and that the essential characteristic of ellipsis that something which is present in the selection of underlying (‘systemic’) options is omitted in the structure-whether or not the resulting structure is in itself ‘incomplete’. (pp. 143-144)

Halliday (1994) also added, “in general, every independent clause in English requires a Subject, because without a subject it is impossible to express the mood of the clause, at least in the usual fashion” (p. 93).

It is clear from above that, the predicator “running” was left incomplete, that is to say, mood structure has been omitted, but the function of the given element changed in both T1 and T2. It has been translated as circumstantial elements.

### 1. Concept of Shift in Translation

Suggested by Catford (2000, as cited in Munday, 2001), there are two types of shift: shift of level and shift of category. As far as our analysis is concerned, we focus on the second type of shift and its subdivisions from Catford’s viewpoint. According to him, shift of category is divided into four subdivisions: Structural shifts which deal with shift in grammatical structures, Class shifts which refer to shift from one part of speech into another, Unit shifts or rank shifts

take place where equivalents of target language belong to different hierarchical linguistic units, and Intera-system shifts occur when source language and target language have the same corresponding systems approximately, but translation involves non-corresponding terms in the target language system. Consider the following clause extracted from the original text and its two Persian translations:

Then he fell into the flowers, laughing,

T1: بعد همانطور که می خندید نری گل ها افتاد

T2: بعد خنده کنان نری گل ها افتاد

The constituent “laughing” is the Predicator of an elliptical clause. In T1 it has been translated as “می خندید” which functions as Finite + Predicator. Finite in T1 gives tense to the clause. By contrast, the given elliptical clause in the original text has been translated as a circumstantial element in T2, the participant “خنده کنان” functions as circumstantial adjunct, in other words, here we deal with a class shift.

## 2. Theme and Rheme

As Eggins (1994) pointed out, the point of departure in each clause can be labeled as Theme, and Rheme is served to develop Theme, determining Theme and Rheme boundaries and identification of each item are based on the simple criteria, that is to say, each element that is not theme is Rheme. She acknowledged that “*the identification criteria are only true for English, where word order plays a very significant role in the grammar* [italic added]” (p. 275). Halliday (1994) identifies three main types of Theme including topical, interpersonal and textual. Eggins (1994) continues that when the first constituent of each clause has Transitivity function, it can be described as topical Theme, if the first constituent has a Mood label, we can call it interpersonal Theme, and those elements which function as cohesive devices served for relating the clause to its context can be described as textual Theme. Pakravan (2002) draws our attention to the fact that “free words order and omission of subject lead to change Theme-Rheme structure in Persian grammar [translation is mine]” (p. 47). To put it another way, due to these features of Persian grammar the point of departure is alterable and does not follow the constant patterns of English Theme-Rheme structure.

Consider the following clause and its two Persian translations:

We went to the library.

T1: رفتیم به کتابخانه.

T2: به کتابخانه رفتیم

By definition, the point of departure in the original clause “we” is topical Theme, while T1 begins by “رفتیم” that functions as material process, due to Persian grammar free words order and definition of the topical Theme in Halliday’s model (1994), we can label this item as a topical Theme in T1, by contrast, T2 begins by “به کتابخانه” that functions as a circumstantial element, and we can label it as topical Theme in T2.

## B. Samples of Chapter Two

### Sample 1:

Thinking what he said about idle habits. Thinking it would be nice for them down at New London if the weather held up like this.

T1: و فکر بکنم که درباره عادات بیهوده او چه می گفت. فکر کنم که برای آنهایی که در نیو لندن بودند خوب بود اگر هوا همین طور می ماند.

T2: و درباره آنچه از عاداتهای بیهوده می گفت فکر کنم. و فکر کنم که اگر هوا بر همین منوال می ماند، برای آنها که در نیو لندن بودند خوب می شد.

The mood structure of the constituent “thinking” that functions as predicator has been removed in the original text, but it can be identified by referring to the preceding clauses. However, due to the omission of subjects in T1 and T2, they cannot be treated as elliptical clauses, and presence of subjects can be identified through subject markers conflated with predicators in both translations. The constituent “would” in the original text functions as Temporal Finite Verbal Operator and refers to the time, and gives tense to the clause. Its following element “be” functions as predicator. A closer look shows that “would” is a separate element in the original clause, but it has been conflated with predicator in both T1 and T2, and it does not exist as a separate element.

### Sample 2:

Until on the Day when He says Rise only the flat-iron would come floating up. It's not when you realise that nothing can help you--religion, pride, anything--it's when you realise that you don't need any aid. Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. If I could have been his mother lying with open body lifted laughing, holding his father with my hand refraining, seeing, watching him die before he lived. *One minute she was standing in the door*

A closer look at the above-mentioned paragraph shows that there are no logical and meaningful relations between clauses, and this is what we know as one of the most important aspect of stream of consciousness writing style manifested in Faulkner’s style to create such a complex and puzzling environment through the course of narrating the story which makes the story difficult to follow. Halliday and Hassan (1976) acknowledged that

A text is best regarded as a SEMANTIC unit: a unit not of form but of meaning. Thus it is related to a clause or sentence not by size but by REALIZATION, the coding of one symbolic system in another. A text does not CONSIST OF sentences; it is REALIZED BY, or encoded in, sentences. If we understand it in this way, we shall not expect to find the same kind of STRUCTURAL integration among the parts of a text as we find among the parts of a sentence or clause. The unity of a text is a unity of a different kind. The concept of TEXTURE is entirely appropriate to express the

property of 'being a text'. *A text has texture, and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text* [italic added]. It derives this texture from the fact that it functions as a unity with respect to its environment. (p. 2)

Eggs (1994) that "when we say the clauses don't hang together, we are reacting to two dimensions of the paragraph: its contextual properties: what we call its **coherence**; and its internal properties: what we call its **cohesion**" (p. 87). Text and texture are two terms frequently used in Halliday's approach towards language and linguistics, and this is an important issue in analysis of the second chapter samples. The term text has come to be used to refer to

Any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation, we shall call a text. It may be either spoken or written, or indeed in any other medium of expression that we like to think of. The important thing about the nature of a text is that, although when we write it down it looks as though it is made of words and sentences, it is really made of meanings. Of course, the meanings have to be expressed, or coded, in words and structures, just as these in turn have to be expressed over again-recoded, if you like-in sounds or in written symbols. It has to be coded in something in order to be communicated; but as a thing in itself, a text is essentially a semantic unit. It is not something that can be defined as being just another kind of sentence, only bigger. (Halliday & Hassan, 1989, p. 10)

Taken together, from Halliday's model viewpoint, identifying a field, tenor and mode for the collection of clauses of sample 2 extracted from chapter two is impossible.

Sample 3:

Father said Uncle Maury was too poor a classicist to risk the blind immortal boy in person he **should** have chosen Jason because Jason **would** have made only the same kind of blunder Uncle Maury himself **would** have made not one to get him a black eye

T2: پدرمان می گفت که دایی موری جاودانه پسر نابینا یکی از آن افلاطونیهای بسیار بی مایه است که نمی تواند دست به خطر بزند شخصا جیس را انتخاب می کرد چون جیس فقط همان خطابی را مرتکب می شد که خود دایی موری مرتکب شده بود نه اینکه کاری بکند که چشمش سیاه شود

The highlighted elements in the original text function as temporal finite which gives tense to the clauses, a closer look at analysis shows that these items do not exist as a separate element in T2, and they have been conflated with predicators [highlighted items in T2]. Consider the underlined element in T2 that functions as negative modal finite, indeed translator has conveyed the meaning precisely by adding such an item which does not exist in the original text, in other words, another structural shift occurs again.

### C. Samples of Chapter Three

Sample 1:

So after a while I heard the band start up, and then they begun to clear out. **Headed** for the show, every one of them. **Haggling** over a twenty cent hame string to save fifteen cents

T1: خلاصه کمی بعد شنیدم که دسته موزیک شروع کرد و بعد آنها کم کم روانه شدند. بلااستثناء به قصد نمایش راه افتادند سر یک تسمه مال بند: بیست سنتی چانه می زنند

T2: برای همین کمی بعد شنیدم که نوازنده ها شروع کردند، و آن وقت آنها بنا کردند به در رفتن از مغازه. همه یک کله رفتند طرف نمایش. سر یک تسمه مال بند چانه می زنند

The mood structure of the highlighted items [subject and finite] in the original text has been removed, but the elliptical elements have been conflated with predicator in both translations.

Sample 2:

She had dodged out of sight somewhere. Saw me coming and dodged into another alley, running up and down the alleys with a dam show man in a red tie that everybody **would** look at and think what kind of a dam man **would** wear a red tie.

T1: در رفته بود و از نظر ناپدید شده بود. دید که من می آیم و تند به کوچه دیگری پیچید، توی کوچه پس کوچه ها با یک بازیگر کوفتی که راوات سرخ داشت بالا و پایین می دويد که همه نگاهش می کردندو فکر می کردند که کدام نامردی است که کراوات سرخ بزند.

T2: یک جایی غیبش زده بود. دید که من می آیم و خودش را انداخت توی کوچه دیگری که توی کوچه پس کوچه ها با یک نمایش چی بی پدر و مادر کراوات قرمزی بدود تا همه ببینند و با خودشان بگویند این کدام آدم عوضی است که کراوات قرمز می زند.

From an interpersonal meaning viewpoint, the constituent "would" that functions as temporal finite does not exist as a separate element in translations, and it has been conflated with predicator, and gives tense to the clause.

### D. Conclusions

Conclusions derived from the analysis have been divided into two aspects, application of Halliday's model (1994) and translation of stream of consciousness. . From an experiential meaning viewpoint, the participants involved in different process type such as Actor, Sayer, Behavior and Carrier can be omitted in Persian language [active clauses], but this omission does not change the meaning, in the way that the constituent subject marker conflated with the verbal group in Persian grammar can fill this gap and convey the intended meaning, the only difference existing between Persian and English languages is that the subject marker which plays the role of omitted element cannot be labeled as a separate element in Halliday's model (1994), it only confirms the presence of the omitted constituent. Likewise, from an interpersonal meaning viewpoint, the subject marker attached into the verbal group of a Persian clause confirms the presence of subject, but this marker cannot be labeled as an independent element by itself. The statistical results obtained from data analysis support our findings. The frequencies of participants such as Actor, Sayer, Carrier and Subject in both translations are less than the original text.

The constituent finite in interpersonal meaning was divided into two main categories, Temporal Finite Verbal Operator and Finite Modal Operator. According to Eggins (1994) the first type is served to give tense to the clause, and the second one is employed to express probability and usuality. The significant conclusions can be drawn from analysis is the fact that although, finite elements have been overlooked by translators over and over again in different parts of the original text, but in general, therefore, it seems that there are no suitable equivalents for each case of finite element in Persian language. To put it another way, according to Halliday (1994), Finite Verbal Operators are divided into different categories to specify the certain degrees and boundaries [Temporal Operators: past, present and future, Modal Operators: low, median and high] existing between these items. Comparing the original text with its two Persian translations reveals us; however, far too little attention has been paid to take account of Persian translation of Finite Verbal Operators. From a Systemic Functional Linguistics viewpoint, the most important limitation in terms of Finite Verbal Operators lies in the fact that unlike English grammar, defining certain boundaries to identify and determine degrees and subdivisions of finite elements in Persian translation is not a simple task, to this end, the findings of this study suggest that in order to convey the exact meaning of finite elements precisely, we need to employ additional items, or apply different types of shift such as class shifts. The reliable evidence to support this claim is the concept of loss and compensation in translation studies. As Bassnet (2005) pointed out

Once the principle is accepted that sameness cannot exist between two languages, it becomes possible to approach the question of *loss and gain* in the translation process. It is again an indication of the low status of translation that so much time should have been spent on discussing what is lost in the transfer of a text from SL to TL whilst ignoring what can also be gained, for the translator can at times enrich or clarify the SL text as a direct result of the translation process. Moreover, what is often seen as 'lost' from the SL context may be replaced in the TL context. (p. 38)

From a textual meaning viewpoint, identification of Theme-Rheme structure and determination of boundaries to define Theme in Persian clauses can be considered as the most controversial aspect of application of Halliday's model. Halliday (1994) defines Theme in an English clause as a point of departure, as Baker (1992) pointed out

The syntactic structure of a language imposes restrictions on the way message may be organized in that language. The order in which functional elements such as subject, predicator, and object may occur is more fixed in some languages than in others. Languages vary in the context to which they rely on word order to signal the relationship between elements in the clause. (p. 110)

The most convincing and supporting evidence to prove this claim is the constant words order in English clauses versus free words order in Persian clauses. Consequently, the concept of Theme as a point of departure in English language differs from Persian language, the most tangible aspect of this difference manifests in translation of declarative clauses [active and passive].

In the final part of conclusions, we have to focus on the translation of stream of consciousness. To certain extent, both translators have tried to employ explication as a certain strategy to present their works. Sholevar (2004) and Hosseini (2009) have made attempts to provide background information about the novel by addressing the author's biography and works, literary criticism of the novel and the characteristics of stream of consciousness as a writing style. To some extent, Sholevar (2004) has succeeded to provide background information about *The Sound and the Fury* (1995). First of all, he has introduced William Faulkner and his works, then, he has concentrated on the textual features of the novel and introducing the narrator of each chapter and complex nature of the novel. He also has mentioned more details about the confusion of characters' names and different font types indicating different and overlapping stream of thoughts employed by Faulkner. Although both translators have followed the font type pattern of the original work, but in the first chapter, the chain of memories and events rolling around the narrator's mind has been separated by use of a chronological order, this pattern has been overlooked in both translations. The second chapter of the novel is the most questionable and problematic part in terms of understanding the meaning and following the chain of events, and also it has been proven by the analysis. The second chapter includes overlapping clauses, repetition of single names and events, different flashbacks to previous memories and scenes that indicate the narrator's puzzlement and confusion. Among these problematic features, the key problem with this chapter is lack of coherence [situational coherence] and cohesion. Owing to this and with regard to the definition of text and texture presented by Halliday (1994), we cannot accept this chapter as a text. Returning to the definition and characteristics of stream of consciousness mentioned earlier, in the field of stream of consciousness, more than anything else, we deal with interior monologue and unuttered speeches which do not follow the certain and definite linguistic and grammatical rules and patterns. The greatest problem of application of Halliday's model for translation of the second chapter is that as a matter of fact, this model does not take account of text without texture. A reasonable approach to tackle this problem could be to adopt a suitable translation strategy, for this purpose the best choice is adaptation. Another logical reason for the use of such a strategy refers to a considerable amount of elliptical clauses in the body of the original text in which the mood structures have been removed. The elliptical elements can be identified through the cotext [the preceding and following clauses], conversely, subject and finite as elliptical elements of the original clauses have been conflated with predicator in both translations, or their functions have changed in the translation process. To certain extent, translators have succeeded to convey the intended meaning of the source text by the use of such a kind of shift and changing function of the participant; however, employing ungrammatical syntactic structures which can be considered as one of the most significant features of stream of consciousness has been distorted.

Taken together, these results suggest that from a Hallidayan perspective, both translators have failed to reconstruct stream of consciousness writing style in the target language especially in elliptical clauses in which the mood structures has been removed by the author. In order to overcome this failure, we need to employ adaptation and recreation of the original work in Persian language.

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# A Comparison of Cultural Connotations between Chinese and English Animal Words

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**Abstract**—Throughout the history of the social evolution, man and animals come into frequent contact that forms an interdependent relationship between man and animals. The images of animals root in the everyday life of all nations, forming unique animal culture of each nation. Therefore, Chinese and English, as the two languages which spoken by the most people in the world, naturally contain a lot of words relating to animals, and because of different history and culture, the connotations of animal words in one language do not coincide with those in another. The clever use of animal words is by no means scarce in everyday communication or literary works, which helps make English and Chinese vivid and lively in image, plain and expressive in character, and rich and strong in flavor. In this study, many animal words are collected for the analysis of the similarities and the differences between the cultural connotations carried by animal words in Chinese and English, find out the causes of differences, and then discuss some methods and techniques for translating these animal words.

**Index Terms**—English and Chinese, animal words, figurative meaning

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is well known that the Western culture originated in ancient Greek mythology and oriental culture with ancient Chinese culture as the mainstream are the two richest, most complete cultural systems on the earth, and they have widespread impact around the world. After thousands of years, these two cultural systems developed their own cultural characteristics. Carol R. Ember (2009), the American social linguist once said that language reflects the corresponding culture through vocabulary (p.45). Therefore words become a carrier of culture and attract much attention. There are many animal words in English and Chinese. According to the habits of animals, people often link those animal words with a specific character and identity, and therefore these words will remind people of the figurative meaning of a particular. Some animal words in Chinese and English are the same or similar in cultural connotations, because the Chinese people and the English people have some same capabilities of thought, some same laws of cognition, and some animals have the same important role in the human life of these two nations, and have the same attributes and features. But some of them are dissimilar or different. The cause of it is that the English people and the Chinese people are different in Aesthetic standards, history, geographical environment, custom, etc.. The key point of this paper is to explain and analyze the similarities, differences of cultural connotations in animal words used in English and Chinese basing on cultural linguistics and contrastive linguistics perspectives. Language is not only a component of culture, but also the carrier of culture. Learning language words is actually learning the culture. Therefore, it is very important and necessary for us to strengthen language culture learning, which is the key for improving the efficiency of vocabulary learning and approaching the real target of vocabulary teaching, thus afford us a full preparation for a better cross-cultural communication.

## II. A COMPARISON OF CULTURAL CONNOTATIONS OF ANIMAL WORDS IN CHINESE AND ENGLISH

Because of the influence of different cultural factors (such as history, customs, religions, values, etc) the cultural connotations of animal words are different in these two cultures. In the thesis, the similarities and differences between Chinese and English animal words are analyzed in four types. They are same object and same or similar figurative meaning; same object but different figurative meaning; same object but a vacancy of figurative meaning; different object but same or similar figurative meaning.

### A. Same Object with Same or Similar Figurative Meaning

Different nations have different views to different objects, but all human beings have some similar capabilities of thought, some same laws of cognition, therefore, the people from both countries recognize animal from its basic quality that will certainly create the same or similar attributes. In different languages, some same animals will be endowed with the same or similar images. For example, “he is a fox”, which means a very cunning in Chinese. Therefore, it can be

easily understood that fox is usually used to describe men's treacherous and tricky. In American slang, amazing and fashionable young lady is called fox, but with less derogatory sense in English. Besides, men never be enchanted by vixen, because people associate vixen to shrew or hot-tempered women. For instance, "having a vixenish temper". As English proverbs says, "when the fox preaches, take care of your geese", which warns us to guard against fox. Judging from the above examples, it can be seen clearly that different people have same impression on fox. Either in Chinese or English, the mice have negative meaning. For instance, we use the "dǎn xiǎo rú shǔ", "zéi méi shǔ yǎn" to describe the cowardly, humble, short-sighted person in Chinese. In the United States slang, rat is the lowly and disloyal people. A rat crossing the street is chased by all. Wolf is a fierce and greedy animal in Chinese people's mind. There are "láng zǐ yě xīn", "láng bèi wéi jiān" in Chinese language. In English, there is also the statement "wolf dressed in sheep's clothing", pretending to describe a kind of people act friendly but in fact has evil intentions. Either in Chinese or English, the mice have negative meaning.

#### B. Same Object but Different Figurative Meaning

Because English and Chinese have the different language culture, different geographical environment, different cognitive feelings and ways of thinking, most animal words though refer to the same animals in Chinese and English have different figurative meanings. Cobuild Collins (1987) explained in his dictionary that "Dragon" is regarded as mythical monster, usually represented as a large reptile with wings and claws, breathing out fire and smoke. However, the explanation of dragon in the Chinese dictionary is a mythical animal in the Chinese legend, with scaly skin, claws and legs. It can fly and swim, and can create clouds and rain. Obviously, the major difference lies in the distinction between monster and mythical animal. In western culture, dragon is a symbol of monster without any good connotation. However, in the Chinese culture, dragon is not a symbol of nobleness and mystery, but also a metaphor referring to the emperor with supreme power. Undoubtedly, when the emperor is angry, Chinese people will have their say like "The emperor flew into rage", The offspring of the emperor are called "the offspring of dragon". As we all know, Chinese parents living out a fantasy that their children could be the dragon someday. An English man will feel stunned upon hearing, because from his view the Chinese parents expect their children to be nothing but a monster. In English, fierce and brutal women are called dragon. For instance, "she is a real dragon, you'd better keep away from her". If people intend to express Chinese concept of "dragon" in English, it will be better to interpret it into "Chinese dragon", in order to avoid the misunderstanding, "yà zhōu sì xiǎo lóng" should be translated into "Four tigers" instead of "Four dragons". Dragon culture is the specialty of Chinese culture, and it embodies the specific character of national culture.

In Chinese sheep stands for people who are noble and charming, artistic and love nature. But in English, sheep, goat, ram are used to describe bad things. Sheep in English means "coy coward" and even "stupid people", goat can refer to a lecher, also can refer to a scapegoat, a victim; play or act the giddy goat "acts like a clown"; ram means a satyr. It is often happen that the same animal words in the English and Chinese culture have different figurative meanings. Another example: if you said to a Chinese: "You are a lucky dog." The listener may very unpleasant. "An old dog" in Chinese is a curse in saying that, while in English it means that "old, but experienced people." Cat in Chinese eyes is a kind of gentle sweet little animals, in many cases, the Chinese use cat to describe a person with the intimacy, such as "small slander cat". While in the Western culture, "cat" is the incarnation of Satan in the legend. The same sentence "she is a cat", English people will understand like: She is a spiteful or unpleasant woman, because the "cat" in English means "despicable woman", and Chinese people will think "She is a very lovable person".

#### C. Different Object but Same or Similar Figurative Meaning

Chen Wenbo (1982) once said that the English culture connotations of some animal words are the same or similar to the Chinese cultural connotations of other Chinese animal words. Their implied meanings are the same, but their names are different. This is a case that we often have in translation.

In Chinese, people take mouse as timid person. "as timid as a mouse" is employed to express cowardice, while English people use "as timid as a rabbit, chicken-hearted or pigeon-hearted" to deliver the same meaning, and rabbit, chicken, pigeon are used to express cowardice. China has a saying that "chū shēng niú dú bù pà hǔ", because the Chinese treat the tiger as the "king of beasts", is a symbol of bravery. While the foreigners treat the lion as the "king of beasts." For example, "as bold as a lion". If we only translate literally, the aliens can not be precisely understood the real meaning of the language. Such as the Lion's den that means a difficult situation in which you have to face a person or people who are aggressive towards you. Translated into Chinese is "lóng tán hǔ xué", which means in danger.

#### D. Same Object but a Vacancy of Figurative Meaning

Hornb A. S. (1997) said that in English, bull is used to describe the troublemaker and the person that acts rude, clumsy; chicken means a coward; eel implies cunning, dishonest, unreliable people, and so on. But in Chinese culture there is no such association. In Chinese we have the idiom "zhǐ lù wéi mǎ", but the equal expression in English is "talk black into white". The English version of the Chinese saying "guà yáng tóu mài gǒu ròu" is "to cry up wine and sell vinegar".

### III. THE CAUSES OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN CULTURAL CONNOTATIONS BETWEEN CHINESE AND ENGLISH ANIMAL WORDS

Cultural connotation of some animal words in English and Chinese are closely related to the aesthetic standards, history, geographical environment, and the customs of a nation.

#### A. *Aesthetic Standards*

Aesthetic standards are the main reason for the appearance of animal words' different figurative meaning. Animals in different styles often used to describe the person or thing of a certain character, so that the expression is vivid, thus some animal words in different cultures have the same or similar figurative meaning. As in English culture, the dragon is a kind of cruel, violent reptile and without respect. It is a heinous monster, a symbol of the devil. In Chinese, the ancient Chinese have the supreme respect on dragon which is a mysterious animals in ancient legends of their own country. Dragon is not only a symbol of the emperor in feudal society, but also a symbol of the Chinese nation. Dragon, this word stands for the source of the Chinese culture of about five thousand years. It is a special product of the Chinese culture. The Chinese take proud of being "the descendants of dragon" while Western people can not understand it.

#### B. *History*

Nobility of ancient China called the ordinary people as "yǐmín" (ant people) ,it means the low status of the ordinary people whose life is not valuable. However, in Western minds, the ant people are that the people who are brave and good at fight. This originated in ancient Greek mythology.

In Chinese, we will be faced with some words such as "qì zhuàng rú niú". Cattle and horses were good helpers of two nations' people in the production process, they left good impressions in the people's mind, and so have the above usage of words. Ancient Chinese people always use the cattle to plow the land, but the early British farming with the horse. If we want to express the same meaning we will use "works like a horse, as strong as a horse, flog a willing horse". In Chinese, "cattle" has the same meaning as the "horse" in English. That's caused by their different histories.

#### C. *Geographical Environment*

As we know, Britain is a typical island country. There are many aquaculture and boat-related words in English. The Chinese animal words about ocean and marine aquatics are fewer than Britain's. For example, in English "fish" has rich cultural connotation while in Chinese it doesn't. Such as "to have other fish to fry" means have nothing to do, fish in the air yú ān mù qí ú yú, an odd fish (guǎi rú), cool fish (hòu liǎn pí), fresh fish (xīn qiú fàn) etc.. The reason is that in Britain fisheries and maritime industry plays an important role in economic life. Only the coastal areas in China have fishermen, so there are few of these words in Chinese language.

We can use oyster to describe a quiet person. It is said that the best oysters are produced in England, and the best oysters are always closed mouth tightly.

Beavers mainly live in North America. They build their nests with high techniques and inflexible will. People of American countries are familiar with this kind of animal. So in English "beaver" means "the people who work hard". As the geographical environments in China are quite different, the Chinese people hardly know this kind of animal and their special cultural connotations.

#### D. *Customs*

There are many differences between English customs and Chinese customs, the most typical of this is the attitude towards dogs. Dog in Chinese is a humble animal. Chinese idioms with dog are mostly derogatory: "hú péng gǒu dǎng", "gǒu jī tiào qiáng", "láng xīn gǒu fèi" "gǒu tuǐ zǐ" and so on. Although in recent years, the number of people who raising pet dogs has increased dramatically, the dog's "status" seems to have changed, but the dog's derogatory image was deeply remained in the Chinese language culture. However, Du Xuezheng (1999) proposed that in western English-speaking countries, dogs are considered man's most loyal friend. English idioms with dogs in addition to the influence of other languages contain derogatory, most have no derogatory sense. English idioms often describe the person's behavior with the image of a dog's. You are a lucky dog (you're a lucky one), every dog has his day (each one has his lucky day), Old dog will not learn new tricks (the elderly can not learn new things) and so on. Described the man "seriously ill" with the sick as a dog, "very tired" is dog-tired

Owl in the West is the symbol of calm and intelligent. People often use a wise old owl to describe wise old man. Owls also often appear with the image of impartial judge. Because in ancient Greek mythology, the guardian goddess Athena is the goddess of wisdom and the trial, and her symbol was an owl. But in most parts of China, the owl which always issue shrill cry very late at night is considered to be an animal with bad luck. People thought hearing its sounds indicates that someone would be dead, and therefore, there is a Chinese saying "māo tóu yīng jiào xiào".

### IV. SOME METHODS OF TRANSLATING ANIMAL WORDS

The purpose and characteristics of translation work are the communication of ideas and cultural. Different countries or different regions have the hope of mutual understanding between each other; have the wish to learn from each other. This makes the translation of animal words become a problem, which worthy of study either in theory or in practice.

#### A. *Literal Translation*

Literal translation refers to translate a sentence originally, keep the original message form, including construction of



sentence, meaning of the original words, metaphor of the original and so on. Translation would be fluent and easy to comprehend by target language readers.

In translation, we can use literal translation when the same animals are endowed with the same or similar images both in Chinese and English. For example, a wolf in sheep's clothing is an analogy of one kind of people who may seem friendly, but in fact is the evil person like wolf. The sheep has a good, gentle symbolism and the wolf is extended for the cruel, dangerous people, so we can use the literal translation here. Another example, cock-a-hoop used to describe the pretentious, arrogant, rude people. With the development of modern technology, increasingly cultural exchanges, there is no need to comment the translation of some animal words. It is proved that the literal translation has accepted by readers, and enriches the language. In Chinese language culture, the rooster has a similar meaning, therefore it can be translated into “dè yì yáng yáng dī” or “ào dé xiàng zhī dà gōng jī”. For instance, crocodile tears may initially be translated as “jiǎ cí bēi” or “māo kū lǎo shǔ”. However, unconsciously, “crocodile tears” has been accepted by the Chinese readers. Dealing with the animal words in English, sometimes literal translation can be a good method.

However, in some cases, when translating we must take the cultural psychology, aesthetic custom, consumption habits and style concepts (such as text structure and style) into account. For example, the translation of the brand with animal words, it can prevent us from economic losses in international commercial activities.

Here are some examples, “bái yǔ” is a brand of pen, in Chinese, we have “jī máo xìn”, “qiān lǐ sòng é máo” and other sayings with feathers. But in English idiom “to show the white feather” is “sneak away at a critical juncture”, “weakness”, and it has an insulting meaning. If translate “bái yǔ” into “WHITE FEATHER”, the pen will not be accepted by foreign customers.

### B. Liberal Translation

Liberal translation is also called free translation, which does not adhere strictly either to the literal meaning or the word order of the original. Sometimes the animal image just exists in the source language or in the target language, and does not exist in the target language or the source language at all. In this case, we can just translate the meaning of the original because the first purpose of translation is to convey the meaning. In English “to teach fish to swim” means that you are teaching someone who is more experienced than you, in Chinese we use “bān mén nòng fū” to describe the same meaning. There are some other examples, to run like a rabbit in Chinese means “yī liū yān de pǎo diào”; to swim like a duck could be translated into “shí shuǐ xìng”; one swallow does not make a spring means “yī zhī dū xī wù bú shì chūn” in Chinese.

### C. Substitution

Some animal words may have totally different or even opposite cultural connotations; this is the real problem in translation to deal with them. For these animal words, the translator can use the method of substitution. Such as: “talk horse” can be translated as “chuī niú”, the ancient Chinese people treat cattle as the most important animal, it is very common in everyday life. But in Western countries, people make the use of horsepower frequently, so horse is used there. Another example: a lion in the way can be translated as “lán lù hǔ” and “Rats desert a falling horse” can be translated as “shù dǎo hú sūn sàn” and so on.

“To keep the wolf from the door” is very easily translated as “bú yào yǐn láng rù shì” while it's English meaning is to be able to buy enough food for oneself and one's family, as “néng gòu miǎn yú jī è” “miǎn qiáng kě yǐ wéi chí shēng huó” in Chinese, and has nothing to do with “yǐn láng rù shì”, it must not be confused.

## V. NECESSITY TO STUDY THE METHODS OF TRANSLATING ANIMAL WORDS

To learn the methods of translating animal words between English and Chinese can provide practical guidance to understand the cultural differences, which is necessary in intercultural communication. It can help us to appreciate the two cultures further and remove the barriers in intercultural communication.

To learn the methods of translating animal words between English and Chinese can also prevent us from economic losses in international commercial activities. For example, a clock factory in China sells its product named “goat” to the western countries without knowing that “goat” in English refers to “unpleasant old man, especially one who is sexually active”, no wonder there is no market for this product. Take “white elephant” for another example, “white elephant” in English means “clumsy and useless”, therefore, battery named “white elephant” certainly couldn't make a profit in western market. From these examples we can find that different cultural connotations of animal words would cause misunderstandings.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper mainly analyzes the connotations of culture on animal words and then helps us to realize the cultural differences between English and Chinese. The causing and developing of different words' connotations are closely related to the history backgrounds, geographical environment, custom habits, aesthetic standard. It reflects cultural diversities between two nations. These cultural information is accumulation and ideological essence of laboring people, that comes from a long course of human's social practicing and living.

Knowing about these similarities and differences will help us to convey the right information in translation and

multicultural communication. This paper also analyzes the causes of the discrepancy between cultural connotations between these two languages' animal word. Those cultural connotations are not only inspire human's endless imagination, but also give the words more extensive meanings. What's more, cultural connotations possess specific cultural enchantment and irreplaceable power of expression.

By means of contrastive analysis for animal word's cultural connotation, we can understand very clearly that animal words are not only a symbol of animal figures. Because animal words were deeply marked by cultural diversity, so it was given varied cultural connotations.

We should pay more attention to the cultural connotations of animal words of the two languages, so we can translate properly from the source language into the target language.

In order to master vocabulary, we should study hard on understanding word's connotations. Therefore, we must insist on reading large number of articles and learning cultural connotations to help us to understand much better. Only understanding the cultural traditions and custom habits, can we communicate with others smoothly and achieve a cross cultural communication.

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# The Linguistic Representation of Iranian and Western Actors of Iran's Nuclear Program in International Media: A CDA Study

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**Abstract**—Revealing the unequal relation of power which leads to hegemony in mass media and making audiences aware of this unequal representation of events have been in the center of attention for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for a long period of time. As Fairclough states becoming aware of this complicated process of manipulation of reality through linguistic mechanisms will “ help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.” ( 2001, p.1) van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic network of social actors is been considered as a competent framework for linguists and discourse analysts to do so. In this article, we study 50 hard news and articles published in leading international news agencies and newspapers about Iran's nuclear program during November and December 2010 to analyze the way the social actors of both sides of the quarrel have been represented in the media. The results showed that although the international news agencies and newspapers claim to stay neutral in representing the events, some linguistic mechanisms to represent Iranian social actors differently from the western ones are obvious and Iranian social actors playing role in this case are shown as irrational hardliners while western counterparts are introduced as logical peace seeker ones.

**Index Terms**—Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Iran's nuclear case, socio-semantic network of social actors, van Leeuwen

## I. INTRODUCTION

The history of linguistic analysis of news as discourse mainly goes back to van Dijk's pioneering work (1988). He starts his discussion from the ambiguity of the notion of the news and illustrates three different commonly accepted definitions of the news and writes: “The notion of news is ambiguous. First, we have the general notion of news, meaning 'new information', as we find in such everyday sentences as "I have had news for you" or "What is the latest news from your son?"

Clearly, the notion of news we are dealing with is both different but also has meaning components in common with this more general notion. Our notion of news, then, is part of a second class of meanings, which involve the media and mass communication. It is used in such expressions as "Have you read the news about the rising interest rate"? or in "Did you watch the news last night"? Even this class of media news notions contains interesting ambiguity.

...In other words, the notion of media news in everyday usage implies the following concepts:

1. New information about events, things or persons.
2. A (TV or radio) program type in which news items are presented.
3. A news item or news report, i.e., a text or discourse on radio, on TV or in the newspaper, in which new information is given about recent events. (pp. 3-4)

The development of critical studies of language leads to further explorations on the nature of the news and the connections between language and the news. Many linguistic works such as Fowler (1991), Fairclough (1989, 2001) Fowler (1991) and van Dijk (1988) were published to show the linguistic mechanisms of manipulation of the real world events by journalists. Fairclough (2001, p.1) elaborates his aims to write the book as “I have written it for two purposes. The first is more theoretical: to help correct a widespread underestimation of significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power. The second is more practical: to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.”

Each of these linguistic attempts has its own theoretical and practical privileges and weak points. Some of them are mainly centered around formal linguistics concepts (for example Fowler, 1991) but almost all of them have paid have

shown clear interest to functional approach to text analysis (mainly M.A.K Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar) as a dynamic approach to text analysis which goes beyond the limitations of Chomsky's generative grammar.

Van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach to text analysis is one of the most frequently cited frameworks within CDA and many researches have been done using its theoretical concepts to describe the social and semantic features of the representation of the social actors in a social interaction. This framework has been also used to analyze media discourses. In the following section we initially review basic concepts of this framework.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: VAN LEEUWEN'S SOCIO-SEMANTIC NETWORK OF SOCIAL ACTORS

Van Leeuwen initiates the discussion by the key illustration of the representations of social actors and writes: "My question, 'How can social actors be represented in English?' is a grammatical question if, with Halliday, we take a grammar to be a 'meaning potential' ('what *can* be said') rather than a set of rules ('what *must* be said'). Yet, unlike many other linguistically oriented forms of critical discourse analysis, I will not start out from linguistic operations, such as nominalization and passive agent deletion, or from linguistic categories, such as the categories of transitivity, but instead will draw up a *socio-semantic* inventory of the ways in which social actors can be represented and establish the sociological and critical relevance of my categories before I turn to the question of how they are realized linguistically." (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.23)

The socio-semantic network of social actors is divided into two main branches of 1) exclusion and 2) inclusion as van Leeuwen mentions: "Representations include or exclude social actors to suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended." (ibid:28) Exclusion means omitting actors of a social action by some linguistic mechanisms and has two main subdivisions: suppression and backgrounding. As van Leeuwen mentions "Exclusion has rightly been an important aspect of critical discourse analysis. To mention just one classic example, Tony Trew (1979: 97ff.) showed how, in the *Times* and the *Rhodesian Herald* (during the year 1975), the police were excluded in accounts of the 'riots' during which they had opened fire and killed demonstrators, because it was in the interest of these papers and their readers to attempt to justify white rule in Africa". (ibid)

The main distinguishable difference between suppression and backgrounding is the point that they leave trace or not.

In other words Some exclusions leave no traces in the representation, excluding both the social actors and their activities. Such radical exclusion can play a role in a critical comparison of different representations of the same social practice, but not in an analysis of a single text, for the simple reason that it leaves no traces behind. This radically exclusion without leaving clear traces within the text is called suppression while in backgrounding the exclusion process does leave some traces but actors are excluded to provide the interests of the newspaper or text in general, van Leeuwen himself elaborates the discussion and writes: "When the relevant actions (e.g., the killing of demonstrators) are included, but some or all of the actors involved in them (e.g., the police) are excluded, the exclusion *does* leave a trace. We can ask 'But who did the killing?' or 'But who was killed?' even though the text does not provide the answers. In this case, a further distinction should perhaps be made, the distinction between *suppression* and *backgrounding*. In the case of suppression, there is no reference to the social actor(s) in question anywhere in the text." (p.29)

It worth to mention that in most cases it is not easy to say if the exclusion process leaves any trace and the omitted actors are retrievable by the readers or not.

Some of the linguistic signs of suppression are passive agent deletion (in an expression such as "many concerns are being expressed about this problem" by whom is not clear) and nonfinite clauses which function as a grammatical Participant (such as "To maintain this policy is hard." in which nonfinite clause of to maintain policy plays the role of one of the grammatical participants of the action expressed in the sentence.)

To delete beneficiaries of an action is another mechanism of exclusion. In the following text, social actors who benefit from the action (probably Pakistanis who had been offended) are deleted from the text:

"Japan's National Police Agency had to apologise recently for circulating an internal memo to police stations claiming that Pakistanis working in Japan have a unique body odour, carry infectious skin diseases and tell lies under the name of Allah."

Van Leeuwen enumerates some of the linguistic representations of backgrounding and writes: " Backgrounding can result from simple ellipses in nonfinite clauses with *-ing* and *-ed* participles, in infinitival clauses with *to*, and in paratactic clauses. In all of these cases, the excluded social actor is *included* elsewhere in the same clause or clause complex. It can also be realized in the same way as suppression, but with respect to social actors who *are* included elsewhere in the text. The two realizations background social actors to different degrees, but both play a part in reducing the number of times specific social actors are explicitly referred to." (p. 30-31)

The distinction between generic and specific (Genericization versus Specification) reference is also important in the representation of social actors; they can be represented as classes, or as specific identifiable individuals. Genericization may be realized by the plural without article such as "Iranian students" in the following sentence:

"Iranian students are among the most successful students of the international universities."

If social actors are represented as individuals, it is called "individualization" but if they are shown as groups it is labeled as assimilation. As van Leeuwen exemplifies:

“Individualization is realized by singularity and assimilation by plurality, as with “Australians” and “Muslims” in 2.28:

2.28 Australians tend to be skeptical about admitting “Muslims.”

Alternatively, assimilation may be realized by a mass noun or a noun denoting a group of people as, for instance, with “this nation” in 2.29 and “the community” in 2.30:

2.29 Is he [Prime Minister Hawke] entitled to believe that this nation, which only recently shed the White Australia Policy, is somehow impervious to racist sentiment?

Association versus dissociation is another important distinctive dichotomy in van Leeuwen network of social actors: “There is another way in which social actors can be represented as groups: *association*. Association, in the sense in which I shall use the term here, refers to groups formed by social actors and/or groups of social actors (either generically or specifically referred to) which are never labeled in the text (although the actors or groups who make up the association may of course themselves be named and/or categorized). The most common realization of association is *parataxis*” (p.38)

Nomination and categorization are two other important notions in this network. When social actors are presented in terms of their unique identity, they are nominated and when they are represented in terms of their common identities and functions they are categorized.

In inclusion, we generally face a process in which the interested actors are put in the center of attention and presented in the text clearly. Inclusion is a more diversified process in van Leeuwen’s network and in the first level of distinction can be divided into three subparts of:

- Activation / passivation
- Participation / Circumstantialization / Possessivation
- Personalization / Impersonalization

### III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data of this article is a body of 50 hard news and article which are selected from leading international media to study the way they represent Iranian and western actors, playing role in Islamic Republic of Iran’s nuclear case. These articles were published in time span of November and December of 2010 and are selected from the large number of analyses and news items published to cover the nuclear clash between Islamic Republic of Iran and major European countries plus the United States of America which are generally called as major world powers by international media. We try to analyze this body of news discourse within van Leeuwen’s socio-semantic network of social actors and testify the level of neutrality of the international media in covering the news relating to this international clash. We will mainly focus on two major mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in the body of selected news to see which actors are in the center of attention and which are backgrounded or totally suppressed. The following table shows the articles and news selected to study in this paper:

TABLE 1.  
TITLES AND SOURCES OF THE NEWS ARTICLES

No.	Title	Date	Source
1	Iran says no date set for nuclear talks	Tuesday, 28 December 2010	Agence France Press(AFP)
2	Medvedev says Iran nuclear stance 'unreasonably tough'	Wednesday, 22 December 2010	Bloomberg
3	Iran atomic chief Salehi takes charge as new FM	Saturday, 18 December 2010	Agence France Press(AFP)
4	U.S., EU nations agree on new Iran sanctions	Saturday, 18 December 2010	The Wall Street Journal
5	Iran maintains nuclear policy after FM sacked	Tuesday, 14 December 2010	AFP
6	Top US officer says Iran still driving for a bomb	Saturday, 18 December 2010	The Associated Press(AP)
7	U.S. and allies plan more sanctions against Iran	Saturday, 11 December 2010	The New York Times
8	West eyes tighter Iran sanctions for arms smuggling	Friday, 10 December 2010	AFP
9	Little progress seen as talks with Iran come to end	Wednesday, 08 December 2010	The Washington Post
10	Ahmadinejad sets nuclear red lines for January talks	Wednesday, 08 December 2010	Reuters
11	Iran will not discuss atom enrichment at next talks	Tuesday, 07 December 2010	Reuters
12	Gulf states urge Iran to be 'positive' on nuclear talks	Tuesday, 07 December 2010	AFP
13	Iran talks were difficult: U.S. official	Tuesday, 07 December 2010	Reuters
14	Major powers and Iran hold 'constructive' talks	Tuesday, 07 December 2010	The Washington Post
15	Scientist's death dominates nuclear talks as Iran blames agents	Monday, 06 December 2010	Bloomberg
16	Yellowcake plays a crucial role	Monday, 06 December 2010	The Wall Street Journal
17	Iran touts nuclear advance ahead of U.S. talks	Monday, 06 December 2010	The Wall Street Journal
18	Nuclear chief says Iran to process own raw uranium	Sunday, 05 December 2010	The Associated Press
19	Iran accuses U.N. nuclear agency of sending spies	Sunday, 05 December 2010	Reuters
20	Iran ready for talks, but not on nuclear rights: Ahmadinejad	Sunday, 05 December 2010	AFP
21	Clinton presses Iranians	Saturday, 04 December 2010	The Wall Street Journal
22	China says hopes Iran nuclear talks are constructive	Friday, 03 December 2010	Reuters
23	EU powers say Iran on path of "confrontation"	Thursday, 02 December 2010	Reuters
24	US lawmakers fume over China's Iran links	Thursday, 02 December 2010	AFP
25	Iran talks must focus on nuclear issue: Clinton	Wednesday, 01 December 2010	Reuters
26	US hopes Iran will pursue 'serious process' on nuclear issue	Tuesday, 30 November 2010	AFP
27	EU's Ashton to hold talks with Iran Dec. 6-7	Tuesday, 30 November 2010	Reuters
28	Embarrassed silence in Gulf over WikiLeaks on Iran	Monday, 29 November 2010	AFP
29	Iran admits uranium enrichment hit by malware	Monday, 29 November 2010	AFP
30	Iran's atom enrichment not negotiable—Ahmadinejad	Monday, 29 November 2010	REUTERS
31	Around the world, distress over Iran	Monday, 29 November 2010	The New York Times
32	Iran's nuclear plant starts operations Saturday	27 November 2010	AFP
33	Centrifuges in Iran were shut down, IAEA report says	Wednesday, 24 November 2010	The Washington Post
34	US stresses Iran's 'continued failure' to comply with IAEA	Wednesday, 24 November 2010	AFP
35	Report says computer worm stymied Iran nuclear sites	Wednesday, 24 November 2010	The Wall Street Journal
36	Iran denies problem with uranium enrichment	Tuesday, 23 November 2010	AFP
37	North Korea nuclear find raises fear on Tehran	Tuesday, 23 November 2010	The Wall Street Journal
38	Iran to hike atomic output despite possible talks	Monday, 22 November 2010	Reuters
39	Iran nuclear talks likely in Geneva next month: EU	Monday, 22 November 2010	AFP
40	Stuxnet may be part of Iran atom woes – ex-IAEA aide	Sunday, 21 November 2010	Reuters
41	Worm can deal double blow to nuclear program	Saturday, 20 November 2010	The New York Times
42	Russia tells Iran to keep nuclear drive peaceful	Thursday, 18 November 2010	AFP
43	Gates says Iran leadership rift over nuclear sanctions	Tuesday, 16 November 2010	BBC News
44	Stuxnet study suggests Iran enrichment aim: experts	Tuesday, 16 November 2010	Reuters
45	Analysis: Are Iran nuclear talks doomed to fail again?	Monday, 15 November 2010	Reuters
46	China, Russia urge Iran to show nuclear plans peaceful	Monday, 15 November 2010	Reuters
47	Iran's nuke plant to feed power grid in December	Sunday, 14 November 2010	The Associated Press
48	Iran holds defence drills at nuclear plants: commander	Sunday, 14 November 2010	AFP
49	EU accepts Iran talks offer, suggests venue	Friday, 12 November 2010	AFP
50	E.U. responds to Iran about talks on nuclear program	Friday, 12 November 2010	The New York Times

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

As we mentioned above, the theoretical framework of this article is van Leeuwen's socio-semantic network of social actors and within this framework, we study the representation of Iranian and western actors of nuclear case of Iran. The analysis of the data has shown that international media represent the actors of the two sides of the table in a considerably different way and the inclusion of western actors is much higher than their Iranian counterparts. In this body of data we also observed that even the name of a geographical entity such as the Persian Gulf (the official name which is approved by all of the international organizations for example the United Nations) is reduced to Gulf which shows the political attitudes behind this naming strategy. In the following we will summarize the main findings of the research:

##### A) inclusion/exclusion mechanisms:

Analysis of the data showed that leading international media news agencies and newspapers do follow the policy of including the western actors in positive subjects (defending the human rights and international peace) and excluding them from negative subjects. The general picture of the western figures acting in this quarrel is the image of peace-

seeker and rational persons while the situation is totally different (if not vice versa) for Iranian ones. In many cases we face the extreme exclusion mechanism toward Iranian actors and they are totally or partially omitted in the discourse and are categorized as mass nouns while western actors are active and present in the text and have personal identity for themselves. In the following examples you can see reference to highly prestigious figures who are speaking against Iran's nuclear case while Iranian actors are generally called as Iranian officials or totally omitted. The negative utterances toward Iranian nuclear program are always quoted from "experts", "lawmakers" or even the general and ambiguous source of "analysis". (numbers stands for the title number listed in the table above.)

6- **Top US officer** says Iran still driving for a bomb.

13- Iran talks were difficult: **U.S. official**.

24- **US lawmakers** fume over China's Iran links.

44- Stuxnet study suggests Iran enrichment aim: **experts**.

45-**Analysis**: Are Iran nuclear talks doomed to fail again?

48- Iran holds defense drills at nuclear plants: **commander**.

We also observed that the politically oriented attitude toward the coverage of the news related to this program is significant in quoting from the leaders of those countries such as China and Russia who are usually in the same track with Iran and defend the right of this country to have access to nuclear power:

2-**Medvedev** says Iran nuclear stance 'unreasonably tough.

22-**China** says hopes Iran nuclear talks are constructive.

46- **China, Russia** urge Iran to show nuclear plans peaceful.

Analysis of the data in this research showed that in 83 percent of the news is directly or indirectly quoted from the western actors' point of view and Iranian actors are totally omitted or backgrounded from the text. The only utterance which is reflected from the Iranian side is the cliché sentence of: "Iran rejects all the blames and says its program is peaceful." This sentence does not convey any informative value and the body of the news is written in a way that the readers find it dubious (if not false!)

In some cases, the western media directly and clearly show their attitude toward Iranian actors, for example, in news number one Iranian president is called as the hardliner:

"...President **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad**, meanwhile, on Tuesday welcomed the upcoming talks in Istanbul, which he said would be followed by rounds of negotiations in Brazil and Iran.

The **hardliner** said world powers had applied a «lot of political pressure» against Iran and adopted «sanctions one after another to prevent Iran from becoming nuclear.»..." (Iran says no date set for nuclear talks/AFP/ 28 Dec. 2010)

#### **B) Naming strategies:**

As an independent country, Iran has a clear and accepted name in international organizations such as the UN which is "The Islamic Republic of Iran" and should be referred to as Iran or the complete title we mentioned but amazingly we observed that international media tend to name Iran with different discursively meaningful titles such as: "one of the biggest oil producing countries", Islamic regime/Shiat regime, irresponsible country and so on.

It seems that by calling Iran as a country with the biggest gas and oil resources, the western news agencies are indirectly conveying the message that a country with considerable fossil fuel resources does not have any need to invest on nuclear programs, this claim is not acceptable when Russia, and USA with great fuel resources have the biggest nuclear power plants!

By naming Iran as Islamic regime they seemingly want to relate Iran with the Islamophobic trend of western media. Referring to Iran as a Shiat country is another strategy to illustrate Iran as an isolated country because Iran is the only member of the international community in which Shiat faith is the official religion.

### V. CONCLUSION

In this article, we studied a body of news related to Iran's nuclear program within CDA approach (van Leeuwen's socio-semantic network of social actors) to see if international news agencies and newspapers reflect social actors of the both sides equally and neutrally or not. The two most prominent mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion are in the center of attention in this paper.

The analysis showed that although international leading media claim that they reflect events and realities without political intentions, there is a clear political and ideological attitudes in covering the news stories and analyses about Iran-US clash on nuclear program.

Western social actors are included in positive actions such as defending the human rights and they are generally illustrated as logical peace seekers. The situation is totally different when Iranian actors are presented, and they are excluded from positive actions or state of affairs and included in negative ones.

The voice of Iranian side is mainly limited to cliché sentences empty from any new information while the western actors are usually introduced as experts and complete analyses are quoted from their point of view.

This article shows that the audience of international mass media should be more clever and have critical thinking about the way media represent the world and events.

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# A Brief Introduction of Skopos Theory

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**Abstract**—There are many theories of translation study, among which, Skopos theory is a new branch and can explain and instruct many translation activities. This paper puts forth some basic concepts of Skopos theory, introduces some basic rules of it, and concludes the merits and limitations of Skopos theory.

**Index Terms**—Skopos theory, action, coherence, culture, adequacy, equivalence

## I. A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRANSLATION STUDIES AND THE DEFINITION OF SKOPOS THEORY

### A. A Brief History of Translation Studies

Writings on the subject of translating go far back in recorded history. The practice of translation was discussed by, for example, Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) and St Jerome (fourth century CE). In St. Jerome's case, his approach to translating the Greek Septuagint Bible into Latin would affect later translations of the Scriptures. Indeed, the translation of the Bible was to be - for well over a thousand years and especially during the Reformation in the sixteenth century - the battleground of conflicting ideologies in Western Europe.

However, although the practice of translating is long established, the study of the field developed into an academic discipline only in the second half of the twentieth century. Before that, translation had normally been merely an element of language learning in modern language courses. The gearing of translation to language teaching and learning may partly explain why academia considered it to be of secondary status. Translation exercises were regarded as a means of learning a new language or of reading a foreign language text until one had the linguistic ability to read the original. Study of a work in translation was generally frowned upon once the student had acquired the necessary skills to read the original.

Another area in which translation became the subject of research was contrastive analysis. This is the study of two languages in contrast in an attempt to identify general and specific differences between them. It developed into a systematic area of research in the USA from the 1930s onwards and came to the fore in the 1960s and 1970s. Translations and translated examples provided much of the data in these studies. The contrastive approach heavily influenced other studies, which overtly stated their aim of assisting translation research. Although useful, contrastive analysis does not, however, incorporate sociocultural and pragmatic factors, nor the role of translation as a communicative act. Nevertheless, the continued application of a linguistic approach in general, and specific linguistic models such as generative grammar or functional grammar has demonstrated an inherent and gut link with translation. While, in some universities, translation continues to be studied as a module on applied linguistics courses, the evolving field of translation studies can point to its own systematic models that have incorporated other linguistic models and developed them for its own purposes. At the same time, the construction of the new discipline has involved moving away from considering translation as primarily connected to language teaching and learning. Instead, the new focus is the specific study of what happens in and around translating and translation.

The more systematic, and mostly linguistic-oriented, approach to the study of translation began to emerge in the 1950s and 1960s. There are a number of classic examples:

Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet: *Stylistique comparee du francais de l'anglais*, a contrastive approach that categorized what they saw happening in the practice of translation between French and English; Georges Mounin: *Les problemes theoriques de la traduction*, examined linguistic issues of translation;

Eugene Nida: incorporated elements of Chomsky's then fashionable generative grammar as a theoretical underpinning of his books, which were initially designed to be practical manuals for Bible translators.

These more systematic and "scientific" approaches in many ways began to mark out the territory of the academic investigation of translation. The word "science" was used by Nida in the title of his 1964 book (*Toward a Science of Translating*, 1964a, cited in Munday 2001). At that time, even the name of the emerging discipline remained to be determined, with candidates such as "translatology" in English - and its counterparts "translatologie" in French and "traductologia" in Spanish - staking their claim.

A seminal paper in the development of the field as a distinct discipline was James S. Holmes's *The name and nature of translation studies*. In his *Contemporary Translation Theories*, Gentzler (Munday, 2001) describes Holmes's paper as "generally accepted as the founding statement for the field". Crucially, Holmes puts forward an overall framework, describing what translation studies covers. This framework has subsequently been presented by the leading Israeli translation scholar Gideon Toury with a displaying map. The crucial role played by Holmes's paper is the delineation of the potential of translation studies. However, this paper omits any mention of the individuality of the style,

decision-making processes and working practices of human translators involved in the translation process.

The surge in translation studies since the 1970s has seen different areas of Holmes's map come to the fore. Contrastive analysis has fallen by the wayside. The linguistic-oriented "science" of translation has continued strongly in Germany, but the concept of equivalence associated with it has declined. Germany has seen the rise of theories centered on text types and text purpose, while the Halliday views language as a communicative act in a sociocultural context, which has been prominent over the past decades, especially in Australia and the UK, and has been applied to translation in a series of works by scholars.

The late 1970s and the 1980s also saw the rise of a descriptive approach that had its origins in comparative literature and Russian Formalism. In literary polysystem, amongst other things, different literatures and genres, including translated and non-translated works, compete for dominance.

The 1990s saw the incorporation of new schools and concepts, with Canadian-based translation and gender research led by Sherry Simon, the Brazilian cannibalist school promoted by Else Vieira, postcolonial translation theory, with the prominent figures of the Bengali scholars Tejaswini Niranjana and Gayatri Spivak and, in the USA, the cultural-studies-oriented analysis of Lawrence Venuti, who champions the cause of the translator.

For years, the practice of translation was considered to be derivative and secondary, an attitude that inevitably devalued any academic study of the activity. Now, after much neglect and repression, translation studies have become well established. It is making swift advances worldwide, although not without a hint of trepidation.

### B. *The Definition and History of Skopos Theory*

In the history of translation studies, for a long time, when people assess the quality of a translation, they are likely to employ "equivalence" or "faithfulness" to the source text as the most authoritative criterion to judge whether the translation is successful or not.

This kind of translation evaluation is stereotyped and over-simplified. Although this trend plays a positive role in guiding translation practice and standardizing the translation field, other factors should not be neglected, because translation is a complex human activity and the study of translation also should be descriptive. Under this situation, the Skopos theory, by viewing translation as an action with purpose, tries to open up a new perspective on such aspects as the status of the source text and the target text, their relationship, the concept of translation, the role of the translator, translation standards and strategies.

Skopos theory put forward by Hans J. Vermeer is the core of the functionalist translation theory developed in Germany in the 1970s. This is a new perspective of looking at translation, which is no longer limited by conventional source-text oriented views. Vermeer finds that, according to action theory, every action has a purpose, and, since translation is an action, it must have a purpose too. The purpose is assigned to every translation by means of commission.

To some extent, Skopos theory makes up for the deficiency of conventional translation theories. In the framework of Skopos theory, there are not such things as right or wrong, faithfulness or unfaithfulness, and the translation Skopos decides the translation process. Skopos theory accounts for different strategies in different situations, in which the source text is not the only factor involved.

Skopos is the Greek word for "aim" or "purpose" and was introduced into translation theory in the 1970s by Hans J. Vermeer as a technical term for the purpose of a translation and of the action of translating. Hans Vermeer believes that the purpose of a text determines the translation strategies. He objects to the traditional equivalence-based theories, which speak of the source text, or its effects on the source text reader, or the purpose of the source text author as a decisive factor in translation and raises the Skopos of the translation action to the center.

In Christiane Nord's *Translating as a Purposeful Activity-Functionalist Approaches Explained*, she defines the Skopos theory in this way:

Skopos is a Greek word for "purpose". According to Skopostheorie (the theory that applies the notion of Skopos to translation), the prime principle determining any translation process is the purpose (Skopos) of the overall translational action. This fits in with intentionality being part of the very definition of any action.

Skopos theory focuses above all on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result. This result is the TT, which Vermeer calls the *translatum*. Therefore, in Skopos theory, knowing why an ST is to be translated and what the function of the TT will be crucial for the translator.

The Skopos theory experienced four stages:

- (1) Katharina Reiss and the functional category of translation criticism
- (2) Hans J. Vermeer: Skopostheorie and beyond
- (3) Justa Holz-Manttari and the theory of translational action.
- (4) Christiane Nord's Function plus Loyalty Principle

The book *Possibilities and Limits of Translation Criticism*, written by Katharina Reiss, can be regarded as the "starting point for the scholarly analysis of translation in German" (Nord, 2001). In her opinion, the ideal translation would be one "in which the aim in the TL (target language) is equivalence as regards the conceptual content, linguistic form and communicative function of a SL (source language). However, she finds in some situation equivalence is impossible. She also explains some exceptions from the equivalence because of the translation brief which we will talk

about next.

In order to bridge the gap between theory and practice, Hans J. Vermeer gives up the equivalence theory and lays the foundation of functional theory: Skopos theory. In his opinion, we can not solve all the problems in the translation just by linguistics alone. According to Action Theory, human action is a kind of purposeful behavior in a given situation. In his opinion, translation is a kind of translational action on the foundation of a source text. Therefore, Vermeer names his theory Skopos theory, a theory of purposeful action. Reader is one of the most important factors determining the purpose of the translation. Vermeer thinks that to translate means to produce a text in a target setting for a target purpose and target addressees in target circumstances.

"Translational action" was put forward by Justa Holz-Manttari in 1981. The theory is based on action theory, being designed to cover all forms of intercultural transfer. In his model, translation is defined as complex action designed to achieve a particular purpose. She pays much attention to the actionable aspects of the translational process. In the process, the role of the participants and the situational conditions in which their activities take place is analyzed. The generic term is "translational action". The purpose of translational action is to transfer message overcoming culture and language barriers through message transmitters produced by experts.

In her work *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, Christiane Nord admits the merits of Vermeer's Skopos rule. However, in her book she also points out two interdependent shortcomings of the Skopos rule. One is that because of the differences in TT expectations, it is impossible for the translation purpose to satisfy all target readers. The other one is concerning the translator and the ST author. If the translation brief requires a translation whose communicative purposes are contrary to or incompatible with the intention of the original author, there would be no restriction to the range of possible ends. Considering these shortcomings, Nord puts forward the "loyalty principle" of Skopos theory: the responsibility of translators towards to their partners in translational interaction.

## II. BASIC CONCEPTS OF SKOPOS THEORY

### A. Theory of Action

The theory of action provides the foundation for Skopos theory.

Action is the process of acting, which means "intentionally (at will) bringing about or preventing a change in the world (in nature)" (Wright, 1968, p. 38, cited in Nord 2001). Action can thus be defined as an intentional "change or transition from one state of affairs to another" (Wright, 1968, p. 28, cited in Nord 2001). If there are two or more agents, the theory of action can become a theory of interaction.

Considering the multiple factors involved in a translation procedure, translation is also an interaction.

Translation theorists of the functionalist approaches view translating as a form of translational interaction, as intentional interaction, as interpersonal interaction, as communicative action, as intercultural action, and as text-processing action.

With emphasis on the interplay of each relation, such definition broadens the horizon of translation studies and helps to explain the complexity of translation.

### B. Skopos, Aim, Purpose, Intention, Function

Skopos is a Greek word for 'purpose'. According to Skopostheorie, the prime principle determining any translation process is the purpose (Skopos) of the overall translational action. This fits in with intentionality being part of the very definition of any action. We can distinguish between three possible kinds of purpose in the field of translation: the general purpose aimed at by the translator in the translation process, the communicative purpose aimed at by the target text in the target situation, and the purpose aimed at by a particular translation strategy or procedure (Vermeer, 1989a, p.100, cited in Nord 2001). Nevertheless, the term Skopos usually refers to the purpose of the target text.

Apart from the term Skopos, Vermeer uses the related words *aim*, *purpose*, *intention* and *function*.

In order to avoid the conceptual confusion, Nord have proposed a basic distinction between *intention* and *function* (Nord, 2001). 'Intention' is defined from the viewpoint of the sender, who wants to achieve a certain purpose with the text. Yet the best of intentions do not guarantee a perfect result, particularly in cases where the situations of the sender and the receiver differ considerably. This distinction is particularly useful in translation, where the sender and receiver by definition belong to different cultural and situational settings. Because of this separation of sender and receiver, intention and function may have to be analyzed from two different angles (Nord, 2001).

Vermeer considers the teleological concepts *aim*, *purpose*, *intention* and *function* to be equivalent, subsuming them under the generic concept of Skopos.

The top-ranking rule for any translation is the 'Skopos rule', which says that a translational action is determined by its Skopos; that is, 'the end justifies the means' (Reiss and Vermeer, 1984, p.101, cited in Munday 2001). Vermeer explains the Skopos rule in the following way: Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The Skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function.

### C. Intertextual and Intratextual Coherence

Intratextual coherence specified that a translation should be acceptable in the sense that it is coherent with the receiver's situation, that is, the target-text receivers should be able to understand the target text and interpret it as being sufficiently coherent with their own communicative situation and culture. At the same time, we have to note that since the target text is produced according to the formation offered in the source text, it is expected to bear some kind of relationship with the source text. This relationship is what we call 'intertextual coherence' or 'fidelity'.

As in the case of the Skopos rule, the important point is that intertextual coherence should exist between source and target text, while the form it takes depends both on the translator's interpretation of the source text and on the translation Skopos (Nord, 2001).

Intertextual coherence is considered subordinate to intratextual coherence, and both are subordinate to the Skopos rule.

#### D. Culture

Vermeer's definition of culture focuses on norms and conventions as the main features of a culture. For him, a culture is the entire setting of norms and conventions as individual as a member of his society must know in order to be 'like everybody'-or to be able to be different from everybody (Vermeer, 1987a, p.28, cited in Nord 2001).

Translating means comparing cultures. Translators interpret source-culture phenomena in the light of their own culture-specific knowledge of that culture, from either the inside or the outside, depending on whether the translation is from or into the translator's native language-and-culture (Nord, 2001).

#### v. Adequacy and Equivalence

In the case of a translation, the translator is a real receiver of the source text who then proceeds to inform another audience, located in a situation under target-culture conditions, about the offer of information made by the source text. The translator offers this new audience a target text whose composition is guided by the translator's assumptions about their need, expectations, previous knowledge, and so on. These assumptions will be different from those made by the original author, because source-text addressees and target-text addressees belong to different cultures and language communities. This means the translator can not offer the same amount and kind of information as the source-text producer. What the translator does is to offer another kind of information in another form.

Within the framework of Skopostheorie, 'adequacy' refers to the qualities of a target text with regard to the translation brief: the translation should be adequate to the requirements of the brief. It is a dynamic concept related to the process of translational action and referring to the 'goal-oriented selection of signs that are considered appropriate for the communicative purpose defined in the translation assignment' (Reiss, 1989, p.163, cited in Nord 2001).

In Skopostheorie, equivalence means adequacy to a Skopos that requires that the target text serve the same communicative function or functions as the source text, thus preserving 'invariance of function between source and target text. This concept of equivalence is reduced to functional equivalence' on the text level of what Reiss refers to as 'communicative translation, not only from the perspective of word level.

For Reiss, the generic concept is adequacy, not equivalence. Equivalence may be one possible aim when translating but it is not held to be a translation principle valid once and for all.

### III. THE BASIC RULES OF SKOPOS THEORY

Reiss and Vermeer aim at a general translation theory for all texts. They set out a detailed explanation of Vermeer's Skopos theory and adapts Reiss's functional text-type model to the general theory. There are six basic underlying "rules" of the theory (Reiss and Vermeer, 1984, p.119, cited in Munday 2001). These are:

1. A translatum (or TT) is determined by its Skopos.
2. A TT is an offer of information (Informationsangebot) in a target culture and TL concerning an offer of information in a source culture and SL.
3. A TT does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way.
4. A TT must be internally coherent.
5. A TT must be coherent with the ST.
6. The five rules above stand in hierarchical order, with the Skopos rule predominating.

Rule 2 is important in that it relates the ST and TT to their function in their respective linguistic and cultural contexts. The translator is once again (as was the case in Holz-Manttari's theory) the key player in a process of intercultural communication and production of the translatum. The irreversibility in point 3 indicates that the function of a translatum in its target culture is not necessarily the same as in the source culture. Rules 4 and 5 touch on general Skopos "rules" concerning how the success of the action and information transfer is to be judged: the coherence rule, linked to internal textual coherence, and the fidelity rule, linked to intertextual coherence with the ST.

The coherence rule states that the TT "must be interpretable as coherent with the TT receiver's situation" (Reiss and Vermeer, 1984, p.113, cited in Munday 2001). In other words, the TT must be translated in such a way that it is coherent for the TT receivers, given their circumstances and knowledge. The fidelity rule merely states that there must be coherence between the translatum and the ST or, more specifically, between:

- a. the ST information received by the translator;
- b. the interpretation the translator makes of this information;

c. the information that is encoded for the TT receivers.

However, the hierarchical order of the rules means that intertextual coherence (rule 5) is of less importance than intratextual coherence (rule 4), which, in turn, is subordinate to the Skopos (rule 1). This down-playing (or “dethroning”, as Vermeer terms it) of the status of the ST is a general fact of both Skopos and translational action theory.

#### IV. MERITS, DISCUSSIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF SKOPOS THEORY

##### A. *Merits*

Skopos theory defines translating as an intentional, interpersonal, partly verbal intercultural interaction based on a source text. Skopos theory has brought a new concept for the status of the source text and target text. An important advantage of this theory is that it allows the possibility of the same text being translated in different ways according to the purpose of the target text and the commission which is given to the translator. In Vermeer's words:

What the Skopos states is that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principle respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is: this must be decided separately in each specific case. (Vermeer, 1989/2000, p.228, cited in Munday 2001)

The source text is just an “offer of information”; the target text becomes the focus. Thus translator can be released from restrictions to increase the range of possible translation strategies according to the different purposes the translator intends to achieve. Skopos theory has come to widen the narrow visions of traditional translation criticism, implying the acceptance of multiple versions and the evaluation of individual versions with respect to the purpose for which each version is intended. No source text has only one correct or perfect translation so the possibility of translation is expanded. Since Skopos theory puts forward a new criterion for translation “adequacy”, translation is defined to be adequate or inadequate with regard to the purpose or the communicative function which is assigned to audience.

##### B. *Discussions*

There are also some criticisms of Skopos theory by other scholars, these include the following:

a. What purports to be a ‘general’ theory is in fact only valid for nonliterary texts. Literary texts are considered either to have no specific purpose and/or to be far more complex stylistically.

b. Reiss's text type approach and Vermeer's Skopos theory are in fact considering different functional phenomena and cannot be lumped together.

c. Skopos theory does not pay sufficient attention to the linguistic nature of the ST nor to the reproduction of microlevel features in the TT. Even if the Skopos is adequately fulfilled, it may be inadequate at the stylistic or semantic levels of individual segments.

Vermeer answers the first point above by stressing that goals, purposes, functions and intentions are ‘attributed to’ actions. Thus, a writer of a poem may have goals of having the resultant *translatum* (poem) published and of keeping copyright over it so as to make money from its reproduction. He or she may also have the intention of creating something that exists for itself (‘art for art's sake’)

Two points are at issue in the second criticism: to what extent does ST type determine translation method and what is the logic of the link between ST type and translation Skopos. The third criticism in particular is tackled by another functionalist, Christiane Nord, with her model of translation-oriented text analysis.

##### C. *Limitations*

Like any other theories, Skopos theory is also not perfect. According to Nord, there are two interdependent limitations of this theory. One concerns the culture-specificity of translational models; the other has to do with the relationship between the translator and the source-text author.

To solve the above problem, Nord introduces the loyalty principle into the functionalist model. In Nord's terms, function refers to the factors that make a target text work in the intended way in the target situation. Loyalty refers to the interpersonal relationship between the translator, the source-text sender, the target-text addressees and the initiator. (Nord, 2001). The combination of function and loyalty is the successful point of Nord's functionalist approach, and are respectively the two pillars of her approach which also answers many scholars' criticism of Skopos theory.

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# Evaluation of General English Coursebooks in Iranian Universities: A Critical Thinking Perspective

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**Abstract**—The present study aimed at providing an evaluation of General English coursebooks used at universities in Iran. To this end, a retrospective evaluation was designed to examine the reading comprehension questions of a single sample of such coursebooks in terms of the degree to which they foster critical thinking. Each question was analyzed based on Facione's (2011) critical thinking model (consisting of 6 features); then, the data were analyzed and occurrence percentage of each feature was calculated. The results revealed the extent to which the coursebook matched the criteria in fostering critical thinking. Furthermore, the findings of the study seem to suggest that Iranian university students could not be expected to become critical thinkers through the study of such coursebooks.

**Index Terms**—textbook evaluation, comprehension questions, critical thinking, Facione's (2011) critical thinking model

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of 1970s, there has been a change of focus from teachers to the learners. In line with this importance, a great need was felt to design all instructional materials in a way to elevate the students' thoughts. As Sheldon (1988, p.245) mentioned, "learners are not taught in a vacuum, but come from somewhere and are proceeding towards specific educational goals and future training". In order to achieve such goals, educational materials, particularly textbooks should be evaluated, because textbooks are the fundamental materials in the learning process. According to Hutchinson and Torres (1994), the textbook has a vital and positive role to play in teaching and the learning process. Litz (2005) holds that whether one believes textbooks are too inflexible and biased to be used directly as instructional material, there can be no denying that they are still the most valuable element in educational systems.

Sheldon (1988) believed textbooks are the visible heart of any ELT program for both teachers and students; however, as a matter of fact textbooks suffer from some shortcomings. Litz (2005) stated that one of the reasons for having undesired and unsatisfied ELT textbook is the fact that they are often regarded as the "tainted and product of an author's or a publisher's design for quick profit" (Sheldon, 1988, p.239), so such books present disjointed materials. Moreover, to Nation and Macalisten (2010), a coursebook evaluation searches for strengths and weaknesses but actually the weaknesses cause problem. Consequently, we should apply appropriate criteria to evaluate textbooks to identify their strengths and weaknesses and promote the merits and eliminate demerits. The essential issues for instructional material are the level of quality and appropriateness of the content of the textbooks. Allwright (1990) argued that materials should teach students to learn. Besides, he emphasized that materials control learning and teaching. In Iranian educational system students rely heavily on coursebooks and learn materials in a way that the coursebooks present them; therefore, the content of textbook is outbalance of anything else. O'Neill (1982) believed that great attention must be devoted to spontaneous, creative interaction in the classroom and textbook can help to do this. Despite the agreement with the basic attitude, the researcher in the present study believes that there must be also a creative interaction between learners and the content of coursebook. Whenever the creative interaction does not occurred, coursebooks are only dead pages (O'Neil, 1982).

From another viewpoint, the content of textbooks must train critical thinker students. Those who make good decisions and improve their own future are successful in education and are not dependent on the textbook. Therefore, the textbook must help to sharpen the students' critical thinking skills. There are different General English coursebooks used in Iranian universities, consisting of some reading passages followed by several reading comprehension questions. The university students read the texts to get ready for the special courses. Yet, unfortunately, the reading

comprehension questions of the books do not match the students' level of proficiency. As a result, some learners neither need to comprehend the text nor to think to answer the questions.

Although currently teaching materials pay attention to the learner interests and tastes, this necessity does not prove fruitful by its own. As mentioned before, due to the vital role played by textbooks in language classrooms, the importance of preparing materials matching the desired features in the target situation demonstrates the significance of such studies. As well, they can help to reveal the weakness areas of the textbook in fostering critical thinking and investigate its cognitive aspects of questions. As far as the review of related studies indicates, critical thinking in the General English books in Iran has never been explicitly discussed. There is a serious lack of researches to examine the reading comprehension questions and their effects on students' thought. As Facione (2011) mentioned, "Failures of critical thinking contribute to job loss, gullible voters, bad decisions, unplanned pregnancies, family violence, divorce, drug addiction, academic failure" (P.3). In addition, Facione (2011) believed "there is a significant correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension" (P.23). The mutual relationship between these two is further explained as well. Critical thinking is an essential factor to improve learners' thought and to make them successful in the next steps in their life. So, it is expected from curriculum designers or those who are involved in material preparation to place a high value on critical thinking.

Therefore, this study intended to investigate the extent to which certain designed questions have been prepared based on critical thinking model and to evaluate whether the textbook foster critical thinking or not. For this purpose, the content of a general English coursebook used at Iranian universities will be analyzed based on Facione's (2011) critical thinking model. Based on the results, the defects of coursebook will be discussed and some suggestions will be offered to improve these materials. Besides, due to the earlier mentioned caveats in disregarding a crucial position for critical thinking in the existing checklists, it seems that the present study would be helpful in opening a new horizon in the area of material evaluation. Hence, in the assessment process of comprehension questions in university English coursebooks, answers to the following research questions have been sought:

- 1) To what extent are features of Facione's (2011) critical thinking model represented in the coursebooks?
- 2) To what extent does each of the coursebooks foster critical thinking in their reading comprehension questions?

## II. BACKGROUND

As a cognitive skill, most teachers believe in the importance of critical thinking for the students. The cognitive skills of synthesis, evaluation, inference and monitoring employed in the complex process of reading (Grabe, 1991, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001) are those cognitive skills that Facione (2011) considers as being at the very core of critical thinking. It means that both critical thinking and reading have some cognitive abilities in common. In Iranian educational system, most of the students have not developed critical thinking skills while such skills will not develop by themselves and demand teaching. Yet, teaching critical thinking skills is a difficult and time consuming task. Students must learn to think critically and become self-confident as well as open-minded to achieve greater success in their work and get better positions in their education.

In relation to this field, a large number of studies have been done around the world, evaluating textbooks from various perspectives and some studies concerning critical thinking in reading in EFL contexts. These researches are divided into two categories of theoretical and practical. This section deals with some of these researches carried out in the context of Iran and in other countries all over the world.

Concerning the Iranian attempts, Yarmohammadi (2002) evaluated the senior high school textbooks in terms of Tucker's revised model. He concluded his study by mentioning some shortcomings such as, lack of authenticity, using English and Persian names interchangeably and ignorance of oral skills.

Rahimy (2007) evaluated a reading comprehension textbook for the university students entitling *Reading Comprehension for the University Students*, in Iran. Several schemes and checklists (e.g. Ansary and Babaii, 2002; Garinger, 2002; Harmer, 1998) were used which included features of content, layout, additional materials, unit grading, reading comprehension skills, etc.

Mirzaie (2008) studied the relationship between critical thinking and lexical inferencing of Iranian EFL learners. The scores showed that those who gained higher in critical thinking outperformed those with lower scores.

Pishghadam and Motkef (2008) analyzed two texts (taken from New Interchange series and high school English books). Their study was conducted with aim of making a connection between CDA, Critical Discourse Analysis, critical thinking, and ZPD, Zone of Proximal Development. The result of their study focusing on reading texts exhibited that most of the texts are laden with hidden ideologies and power relations and teachers are responsible to make students aware of these hidden ideas.

Azizifar, Koosha & Lotfi (2010) carried out an evaluation of two series of ELT textbooks used for teaching English language in Iranian high schools from 1965 to the present. In this course of study, Tucker's (1975) textbook evaluation model was used. The results suggested that ELT textbooks were one of the fundamental factors in the learners' English language achievement.

Karamouzian (2010) analyzed the content of a reading comprehension series entitled *Reading through Interaction* used at the university level in Iran. A newly developed checklist was applied. Results of the study indicated that the overall quality of the three books was convenient, but there was a lack of materials on grammar and pronunciation.

In another study, Kamili and Fahim (2011, pp. 104-111) investigated the relationships between critical thinking ability, resilience- a measure of successful stress-coping ability- and reading comprehension of texts containing unknown vocabulary items. The results indicated that "EFL learners' critical thinking levels have significant effects on their resilience levels. The study also revealed that "learners' critical thinking levels have significant effects on their reading comprehension ability when faced with unknown vocabulary items."

In addition to the above native studies, a number of similar studies in different contexts were conducted as well.

Tomlinson et al (2001) used a list of 133 course evaluation criteria to evaluate eight current adult courses published in the UK. The textbooks evaluated were *Language in Use* and *True to Life* by Cambridge University Press, *Cutting Edge* and *Wavelength* by Pearson Longman, *Inside Out* and *Reward* by Macmillan Heinemann Press. His checklist had two main parts of overall criteria and coursebook specific criteria.

McGrath (2002) reviewed a number of employed checklists and criteria in evaluating materials. He distinguished three main stages in evaluation as pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluation. He also suggested some criteria for choosing a suitable method of evaluation.

Litz (2005) carried out a complex evaluation process of a textbook (English Firsthand 2) used in Sung Kyun Kwan University in Suwon, South Korea. The purpose of the study was to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the book towards the specific language program.

Thein (2006) evaluated the effectiveness of the textbooks used for teaching English to religious studies students at Myanmar Institute of Technology. The study investigated the extent to which teachers' and learners' expectations matched the objectives of the program in developing the students' communicative skills and critical thinking.

Yujong (2011) examined an effort to support critical literacy in English as a foreign language (EFL) setting by analyzing one college EFL reading classroom in which students read and responded to articles from "The New Yorker". Results show that when taught to be critical readers of the text, these EFL participants were able to actively use linguistic resources from the article as well as their own cultural and personal experience to support their ideas and raise questions.

To sum up, all the previous studies evaluated textbooks in relation to various factors with different topics. However, there are no studies evaluating Iranian university General English coursebooks from the critical thinking perspective.

### III. METHODOLOGY

As a comparative-analytical study, the general English coursebooks used in Iranian universities were sampled for analysis. From among several such coursebooks, the one used at a very populated university in Iran was selected. The book consists of 4 major sections, each section divided into 3 to 4 units. The units include reading passages which are followed by several reading comprehension questions. Hence, each question and each unit is evaluated to see which features of Facion's (2011) critical thinking model are more emphasized and also to identify the frequency of occurrence of each feature. The specifications of the selected book are as follows:

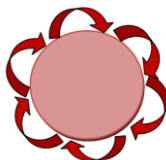
Jalilifar, A., Abdollahzadeh, E., Mohmedi, F., & Mir Tabatabai, M. (2009). *English for University Students: An Orientation Course*. Tehran: Parayab Publishing Company.

The content of the book is further outlined below:

- Section A {
  - Unit1: showing emotion
  - Unit2: Family pressure
  - Unit3: Confidence at work
  - Unit4: Attention seeking
- Section B {
  - Unit5: Getting on with the in-laws
  - Unit6: Housework hassles
  - Unit7: Money trouble
- Section C {
  - Unit8: Do you want the same thing?
  - Unit9: What are you arguing about?
  - Unit10: What you learn about relationships during childhood
- Section D {
  - Unit11: The art of high street haggling
  - Unit12: How to ground a 'helicopter parent'
  - Unit13: Ten best excuses for coming to work late
  - Unit14: Ten tall tales told on resumes

The instrument used to do the analysis was Facion's (2011) critical thinking model. This model consists of six cognitive skills: Interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

1. Interpretation
2. Analysis
3. Evaluation
4. Inference
5. Explanation
6. Self-regulation



Facione (2011) has defined the cognitive skills as follows:



- **Interpretation:** means comprehending the meaning of various questions, statements, judgments, and experiences.
- **Analysis:** is identifying the actual relationship among different information statements, questions, ideas, and experiences.
- **Evaluation:** is evaluating credibility of various opinions, questions, beliefs, etc.
- **Inference:** refers to the use of elements needed to form hypotheses and make logical conclusion.
- **Explanation:** is to be able to make a coherent result of others reasoning.
- **Self-regulation:** is conscious control and monitoring one's cognitive activities.

Therefore, based on the detailed accounts of the employed model, the data were collected through the analysis of reading comprehension questions of the selected General English coursebook. Although this study is a qualitative research, some quantitative records were also represented to give some inferential statistics for each feature of Facion's (2011) critical thinking model.

#### IV. FINDINGS

This section mainly deals with the existence accounts of Facion's (2011) critical thinking features in separate questions as well as in each unit in terms of percentages. The findings are then compared to the optimal suggested accounts and will be subject to further detailed discussions in the next part. To have a clear view of question based accounts, the reader is referred to appendix I wherein the results are provided in further details. It's noteworthy to mention that, the optimal record in these tables refers to the cases where at least four features are present in all the questions. This condition provides the expected value of 66.6% for each unit.

Based on the results, only 4 out of 7 questions of the unit 1 had one or two features of the model and the rest had no features. Because of direct mentioning of the answers in the text, students did not need to think or to comprehend the text to provide answers. The representation of these features in unit one is about 16.6% while the optimal percentage for questions to be considered as critical thinking questions is 66.6%. Clearly, there is a long distance between the obtained percentage of existed features and the optimal percentage.

In unit 2, only one out of 6 questions did not entail any critical thinking feature. Yet, the other five included at most two critical features which in turn, led to the total representation of 25% falling well below the optimal record.

Concerning the third unit, only three out of 6 questions favored the existence of at least one feature. This resulted in the total occurrence percentage of 16.67 which was highly distant from the expected optimal value of 66.6.

In relation to unit 4, only three questions included merely the interpretation feature among the six suggested critical features. This led to the large difference between the actual occurrence of features (i.e. 8.3%) and the expected value.

From the 5 designed questions in unit 5, two questions had at most two of the suggested critical features. The overall record of this inclusion (10%) was again far from the optimal expected record.

The involved eight questions in unit 6 reported an inclusion of four questions with two critical thinking features of interpretation and explanation and one with only one interpretation feature. Despite the more frequent records, the total represented account (18.7%) lagged behind the optimal suggested value (66.6%).

Unit 7 included 6 questions out of which 2 had two critical features and one only one feature of interpretation. The total representation value of 13.8% was again highly different from the expected value.

Concerning the eighth unit, two out of nine questions included the two interpretation and explanation features. Besides, the first question employed the two evaluation and explanation features. The ninth question used the only interpretation feature. Although a number of features were employed in certain questions, the overall representation record of 12.9% was far from the expected value.

In relation to unit 9, out of 6 questions, the presence of two separate critical features was found in only two. This low feature representation resulted in the record of 5.5% which was greatly distant from the optimal value.

Regarding the tenth unit, only two questions out of 5 had employed the interpretation feature. Not surprisingly, the low total record of 6.6% was distant from the optimal value.

Similarly, in unit 11, merely two questions out of 6 recorded the presence of interpretation critical feature. Therefore, the overall representation value of 5.5 appeared as against the suggested optimal value.

With respect to the twelfth unit, only one out of 6 questions had employed the interpretation feature. Hence, this low representative value of 2.7% lagged far behind the optimal predicted value.

Concerning unit 13, out of 5 questions, one had the explanation and another had employed interpretation critical thinking features. The total representation value of 6.6% was again far from the optimal value.

Finally, in relation to the last unit, two out of 7 questions had employed the only interpretation feature. This low frequency resulted in the total value of 4.7% which was highly distant from the optimal expected record.

The following figure provides a clear graphic representation of the actual representation records of critical thinking features across each unit.

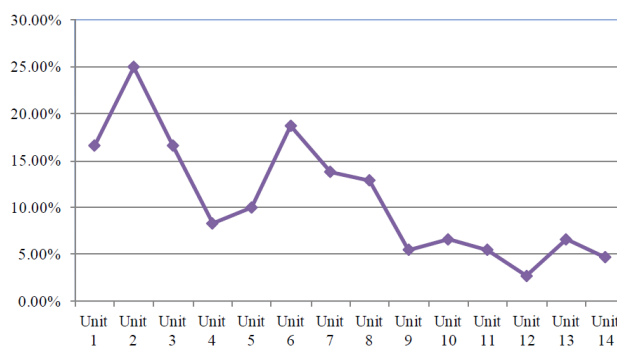


Figure 1. Unit Based Representation of the Overall Feature Usage

Accordingly, through the 14 examined units, the second unit followed by units 6 and 1 had employed the highest number of features. Meanwhile, unit 12 was regarded as the least representative of the critical thinking features.

Besides the above mentioned accounts, table 1 clearly represents another view of the employed critical thinking features in each unit.

TABLE 1.  
UNIT BASED REPRESENTATION OF CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES

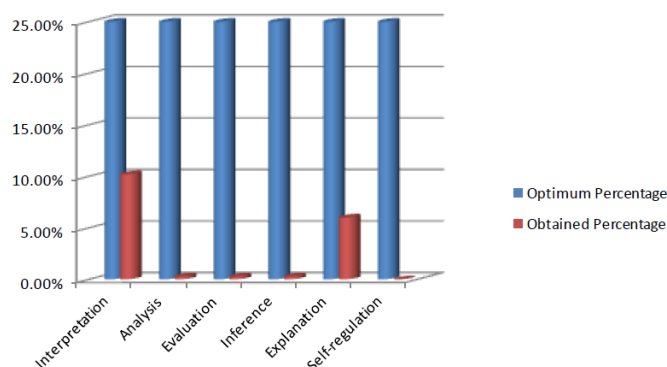
	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Mean percentage
Unit 1	4 (9.52%)				3 (7.14%)		16.6%
Unit 2	5 (13.8%)				4 (11.1%)		25%
Unit 3	3 (8.3%)			1 (2.7%)	2 (5.5%)		16.6%
Unit 4	3 (8.3%)						8.3%
Unit 5	2 (6.6%)				1 (3.3%)		10%
Unit 6	5 (10.4%)				4 (8.3%)		18.7%
Unit 7	2 (5.5%)	1 (2.7%)			2 (5.5%)		13.8%
Unit 8	3 (5.5%)		1 (1.8%)		3 (5.5%)		12.9%
Unit 9	1 (2.7%)				1 (2.7%)		5.5%
Unit 10	2 (6.6%)						6.6%
Unit 11	2 (5.5%)						5.5%
Unit 12	1 (2.7%)						2.7%
Unit 13	1 (3.3%)				1 (3.3%)		6.6%
Unit 14	2 (4.7%)						4.7%

Following these records, there is a possibility to account for the highly frequent employed features in general and in particular units. Based on the findings, the highest frequent employed feature had been the interpretation feature which had been present in all the units with the highest record of 13.8% in unit 2. Yet, after self-regulation with no occurrence of usage the least frequent feature had been analysis, evaluation and inference each with only one occurrence.

Finally, an overall account of the examined critical thinking features in the coursebook is presented.

TABLE 2.  
REPRESENTATION OF EACH FEATURES OF FACION'S (2011) CRITICAL THINKING MODEL IN THE COURSEBOOK

	Frequency	Percentage	Optimal percentage
Interpretation	36	10.2%	25%
Analysis	1	0.28%	25%
Evaluation	1	0.28%	25%
Inference	1	0.28%	25%
Explanation	21	6%	25%
Self-regulation	0	0%	25%



## V. DISCUSSION

The collected data made it clear that the units in the book did not appear homogeneous in their application of critical thinking features.

Regarding the first research question, the data showed that each unit of the book had a low percentage of Facion's (2011) critical thinking features, lower than the optimum percentage (66.6%). 3 of 6 features (Evaluation, Analysis, Inference) had 1 frequency in the entire book, one of the features (self-regulation) had no frequency and the rest (Interpretation & Explanation) had higher frequencies in the book, the former with 36 frequency as the most frequent and the latter with 21 cases.

As to the second question, the occurrence of Facion's (2011) critical thinking features was too rare in the book. Therefore, this book and its reading comprehension questions neither fostered critical thinking nor examined the students' comprehension. Students may easily find the answer to the questions explicitly mentioned in the text. This proves crucial in the sense that, as they proceed to the end of the book (to the last units) reading comprehension questions became simpler and more primitive, while the logical and reasonable method suggests that questions become more complex step by step. Such questions are more similar to the display questions with their obvious answers which do not need any thinking.

Furthermore, in the process of evaluation it was found out that the reading comprehension questions of each unit had not entirely covered the text. Moreover, such questions were so ridiculous for university students with a certain level of proficiency.

Reading passages included comprehension questions at the end of each text. In order to have balanced multilevel questions, some low-level as well as high-level questions should be included. To foster critical thinking one needs some kinds of questions, like inference questions, analysis questions, logical reasoning questions, etc. Hereby, it is suggested to ask hierarchical questions with philosophical basis. The example may include cases like "is there any hidden and specific idea in the text? If yes, are you agree or disagree with it? If agree, why? If disagree, what is the reason?" and so on. Conclusively, this book could not be regarded as one which fosters critical thinking, even is not suitable for comprehension.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This article tried to analyze the reading comprehension questions presented in a General English coursebook used in the Iranian university based on Facion's (2011) critical thinking model to know which feature of the model was more emphasized. Although the book and its exercises were believed to have been designed to increase the students' comprehension, the features of the model were presented in very low frequencies. Therefore, this book neither increased the students' comprehension nor fostered their critical thinking.

## APPENDIX A

TABLE1.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S (2011) CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 1

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q. 1	√				√		4.76%
Q. 2							0%
Q. 3							0%
Q. 4							0%
Q. 5	√				√		4.76%
Q. 6	√				√		4.76%
Q. 7	√						2.38%
Total							16.6%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE2.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 2

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1					√		2.77%
Q.2	√				√		5.55%
Q.3	√						2.77%
Q.4	√				√		5.55%
Q.5	√				√		5.55%
Q.6	√						2.77%
Total							25%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE3.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 3

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2	√			√	√		8.33%
Q.3	√				√		5.56%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6	√						2.78%
Total							16.67%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE4.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 4

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1	√						2.77%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5	√						2.77%
Q.6	√						2.77%
Total							8.3%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE5.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 5

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4	√				√		6.67%
Q.5	√						3.33%
Total							10%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE6.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 6

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2	√				√		4.16%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5	√				√		4.16%
Q.6	√				√		4.16%
Q.7	√				√		4.16%
Q.8	√						2.08%
Total							18.7%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE7.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 7

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4	√				√		5.55%
Q.5		√			√		5.55%
Q.6	√						2.78%
Total							13.8%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE8.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 8

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1			√		√		3.7%
Q.2							0%
Q.3	√				√		3.7%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6							0%
Q.7	√				√		3.7%
Q.8							0%
Q.9	√						1.85%
Total							12.9%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE9.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 9

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2							0%
Q.3					√		2.77%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6	√						2.77%
Total							5.5%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE10.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 10

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1	√						3.33%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5	√						3.33%
Total							6.6%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE11.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 11

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2	√						2.77%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6	√						2.77%
Total							5.5%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE12.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 12

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6	√						2.7%
Total							2.7%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE13.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 13

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1					√		3.33%
Q.2							0%
Q.3							0%
Q.4							0%
Q.5	√						3.33%
Total							6.6%
Optimal							66.6%

TABLE 14.  
REPRESENTATION OF FACION'S CRITICAL THINKING FEATURES IN UNIT 14

Questions	Interpretation	Analysis	Evaluation	Inference	Explanation	Self-regulation	Percentage
Q.1							0%
Q.2							0%
Q.3	√						2.38%
Q.4							0%
Q.5							0%
Q.6							0%
Q.7	√						2.38%
Total							4.7%
Optimal							66.6%

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# A Study on the Teaching Methods of Improving Students' Oral English

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**Abstract**—Nowadays, with the development of the international relationship among countries, learning English, especially the oral English is playing a more and more important role in the world. After China's entry into the WTO, China has paid more attention to the oral English teaching in some colleges, which is not only the need of current quality education but also a revolution of the foreign language teaching. How to help undergraduates to improve their oral English becomes a big challenge in China. As we know, language is a significant communication tool for all the people. However, there are still some problems today about the oral English. This thesis will discuss some main factors affecting oral English, followed by exposing some factors including the lack of context, cultural factors, and language anxiety and so on. Then some necessary countermeasures of improving oral English will be put forward, which includes the methods of strengthening the teaching of English listening and speaking, the imitation, the repetition and the teaching environment. More importantly, it is necessary for students to find out disadvantages of oral English in time and then correct them quickly. Only in this way, students who are learning oral English can learn it well so that they can communicate to foreigners fluently.

**Index Terms**—oral English, improvement, relative factors, countermeasures

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is acknowledged that Chinese students start to learn English from the early year of primary school. However, a confusing problem is how to improve students' oral English very well. The students who have learned thousands of words until now still cannot speak English fluently; even some of them can not open their mouths to speak English. This phenomenon has existed in China for many years, which is not neglected by some educational institutions, teachers or other scholars. This negative situation of oral English learning is caused by many inevitable reasons but luckily, it will be corrected in time as long as we can find out the reasons and take measures to solve these problems. It is necessary to study these problems from the perspective of students and teachers. Students should realize their own problems including the shyness to speak, the anxiety, the inner going character and other mental factors. Teachers should realize that whether the teaching environment meets the teaching needs or not. It is imperative to consider that whether the role of students has been into full played.

## II. MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING ORAL ENGLISH

Learning a language is not easy, especially the oral English. It is a truth in China that thousands of students can not speak fluent English although they have learned it for many years. So here some main factors affecting the oral English will be discussed, followed by exposing some factors including the lack of target language learning environment, cultural conflict, the language anxiety as well as the rooted habit of "inert".

### A. The Lack of Target Language Learning Environment

If a person stays in the foreign countries, he or she will practice their oral English in a short time, maybe just several months. That is why a majority of college students choose to study abroad. However, domestic students cannot own this perfect target language learning environment, which is an important factor affecting their oral English. In class, English teachers are mostly native Chinese speakers who have they can hardly speak as standard as native foreigners. Students cannot learn a Standard English. In China, there are still some students cannot afford to study in the target language country. Even in some colleges, there are no foreign teachers can communicate with them in their daily life just like a pair of friends. It is so difficult for them to find out a native speaker to practice every day.

### B. The Special Character of Chinese

In the long history of China, Chinese people are typically self-conscious when speaking a language. They are so shy to open their mouth, especially when making mistakes in public in case all the people around would laugh at them loudly for fear of being ridiculed or losing face, people are not willing to communicate in target language. This made them unwilling to communicate in target language for fear of being ridiculed or losing face. Little by little, dumb English becomes the fatal factor for the English learners. When reading English, out of Chinese preference to be quiet,



English learners like to read in silence instead of speaking aloud in public, which is also an obstacle to oral English learning.

### C. *The Cultural Conflict*

The cultural conflict is a crucial factor influencing one's oral English, including the religion, the oral speaking habit, the privacy problem and festivals. For example, foreigners do not like to be asked some private questions such as "How much do you earn?" or "How old are you?". These questions are not boring but private to foreigners. However, Chinese people cannot avoid asking such kind of questions. Due to the culture differences sometimes the foreigners become angry while the Chinese begin to feel so bad and decide to stop learning English to avoid any trouble. Culture is the carrier of one country, which can not disappear gradually, so what people need to do is to adapt themselves to such kind of new culture and environment. Paying attention to the cultural difference, one can avoid making mistakes in their life.

### D. *The Rooted Habit of "Inert"*

"Inert" here means "inactiveness" in the class. In the traditional teaching class, the teacher likes to ask students questions and the students should hand up to answer. However, some Chinese students are not active in class. When being asked, most of them lower down their heads and pretend not to hear what the teacher said. Therefore, they always miss this chance to stand up and say something in English, which is a better way to practice English. When groups of student are chosen to discuss something, they often reject it. Such kind of shyness has been rooted in the Chinese heart for a long time. What students need to do is to change their shyness and try to accept new challenges bravely in their life, which is an important factor affecting their mental quality to speak perfect English.

### E. *The Language Anxiety*

Sometimes people who would have spoken perfect English, but they failed to open the mouth due to anxiousness. This bad mental quality is related to language learner's personality. It is because that this person often feels nervous when he or she is doing something. This affects their learning achievements in their life. If they can resist this kind of anxiety, perhaps they will speak English better. Sometimes they can achieve success, but the anxiety becomes a big barrier for them to overcome. Mentality is an important factor affecting one's oral English, if one has a strong and brave heart to learn English, when meeting difficulties, he or she will resist it and continue to do what they have done before. In people's daily life, there are some people who are afraid of speaking in public, which is an enemy to the progress. Thus, students should practice to speak in public with a brave heart. In China, there is a problem that schools or colleges pay little attention to the cultivation of oral English, as a result, few oral courses are conduct and little chance of practicing is provided to students, which is a significant problem for educational institutions to think about.

## III. COUNTERMEASURES TO IMPROVE ORAL ENGLISH

English is playing a very important role in the world. More and more people put stress on English learning in order to adapt to the needs of social development. Nevertheless, how to communicate in English is also very important. Here some countermeasures to improve students' oral ability will be put forward.

### A. *The Training of English Listening & Speaking*

Speaking cannot be taught separately and it has to be combined with listening. When the students are listening, they can imitate the correct pronunciation and intonation. They also get much information to speak by listening. Learning English for Chinese students involves many aspects such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. It is said that if a person can do well in these four aspects, he or she will have a good master of English. In terms of oral English, listening and speaking are the first and foremost abilities. While there are some measures to strengthen the teaching of English listening and speaking. Listening is the basic of speaking. Chinese education institutions require the middle school, high school and colleges to take the listening into account and establish some courses about listening in universities. In the CET4, CET6 and TEM8 or other examines, listening comprehension is the essential section for students.

#### a. *Imitation*

Imitation is one of the best methods to improve oral English. In order to improve the listening ability, students can choose to listen to some tapes of English. Following English tapes and imitating sentences will be an effective way to improve pronunciation and intonation. By taking down what have been heard and imitated, English learners can accumulate more vocabulary and make a great progress. As a child can fast master the mother language, only by hearing and imitating a lot before speaking, one can for sure improve the oral English. New concept English is also a good choice to refer to. In addition, watching some English or American movies and imitate the speaking tone and speaking mode is a good method. In a word, imitation is conducive to the improvement of oral English.

#### b. *Repetition*

As the saying goes, "Practice makes perfect". Repetition is a good and effective way to improve oral English. For example, students can choose the book of Crazy English. According to the Crazy English advocates, one word or sentence can be practiced a hundred times before being perfect. By following the teacher and repeating a word repeatedly, one can easily speak out without any hesitation. Even though it is hard to be persistent, only sticking to the habit to practice, one can finally be excellent. Repetition is to keep doing the same thing repeatedly. Repeating some

key sentences from the texts can improve students' ability of oral expression.

#### *B. Multi-angle in All Directions to Create a Foreign Language Environment*

Foreign language environment can help an English learning student a lot. This special environment can place the student into a "second motherland". Surrounded by foreigners everyday, people have to speak English in order to communicate with others. Therefore, it is necessary to have a foreign language environment. Some schools can establish English corners composed of native English speakers and foreign teachers where students can practice English by talking with each other. Even in some schools without English corner, it is a little difficult for Chinese students to practice English well. In addition, with the spread of the Internet, some domestic student can find foreigners online. Although Internet sometimes is an unreal world, it is a way to communicate in English. Students can introduce to foreigners what has happened in China and these foreigners can tell Chinese students what has happened in UK or US. Students can even go to some places full of foreigners, such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen and so on. It is really a big environment to practice English.

#### *C. A Relaxed Teaching Environment*

Interest is the best teacher for students. Students like the comfortable and relaxed environment instead of the boring and annoying one. In terms of the teaching environment, first comes to the concrete environment. The classroom should be surrounded with the English cultural features. Students can write on the blackboard an English proverb or the English version of cards or pictures that can also be written in the English version to reinforce students to read. Second is about the abstract environment. The teachers should avoid using some traditional teaching methods--roll calling and question answering. Instead, teachers can arrange the courses through means of games. This is a so relaxed environment that students will not feel nervous or get pressure by being laughed at or making mistakes. The teacher should always encourage students more to speak English loudly and correctly.

### IV. CONCRETE WAYS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH ORAL ABILITY

Although there are some problems about the English oral ability, concrete ways to improve students' speaking English can be taken advantage of, including putting the main role of students into full play; improving students' sensitivity to cultural differences; attention to student's oral errors.

#### *A. The Main Role of Students into Full Play*

Students should be paid attention to by teachers. The teaching process is a mutual one between students and teachers. Students should be given more time and chances to practice their oral English. In order to help students improve their listening, speaking and overall communication ability, teachers should make students realize their dominant roles in class and make sure everything can be talked in English as much as possible. For instance, a discussion subject for students can be put forward. The rest of the time is left for them. Students can be divided into two groups, one is positive partner and the other is the negative partner. A fierce discussion in English can be read and the teacher aside will give some suggestions about pronunciation or tones. Meanwhile, the teacher can ask students to make a PPT to introduce anything interesting, which can also be regarded as a process of practicing the oral English. Sometimes teachers can conduct some program of role-play activities for students to practice and speak English in a more meaningful way as a practical language.

Different students may meet different problems in class. If being nervous to open the mouth in public, one can improve confidence by delivering speeches as much as possible. The teacher should also give more chances to students to speak at class. Through training, if being bad in English words pronunciation, one should take a record or MP3 and listen to the native English speaker. In the class, a game about speaking the correct word can be created. The victory team will be given the prizes, which can promote students' confidence. If students have some difficulties in understanding the foreign culture, which make them feel shamed of making mistakes, then the teacher should find some books to read for them and then let them to retell the text. There are many examples cannot be told here one by one. In a word, it is necessary to find a way suitable for them.

#### *B. The Improvement of Students' Sensitivity to Cultural Differences*

Just like what mentioned above, cultural differences are the key problem for the English learners. Without knowing a country's culture, no matter how good the oral English is, one can hardly avoid being laughed at by foreigners of the foolish words or behaviors. In order to avoid this situation, the schools and colleges should set up some courses about the cultural differences between China and other western countries. Students should be aware of their different religions, customs, culture, speaking mode and so on. Nowadays some educational channels also show different cultures in foreign countries. Students will be told what should be done and what can't be done in order not to break up the relations with foreigners. By reading some books or watching some programs about culture, students will have a clear understanding of the cultural differences. For example, "dragon" is the symbol of China, but stands for an evil to the western countries. Students can go to the library to find some books on the cross-culture and learned something. The educational institutes should conduct some course to help us understand more about the cross-culture. Student also can watch TV or listen to the video to get this information. If they have the opportunity to go abroad, they can experience

different countries' culture well. But in our country, there are also lots of foreigners so that students can communicate with them about the cross-culture. Students need to take advantage of each resource which can improve and enhance their awareness of cross-culture. In a word, "Do in Rome as the Romans do"

### C. *The Attention to Student's Oral Errors*

In this process of English oral learning, there are still some students cannot speak correct English, due to the less attention on the oral practice and negative attitude in English learning, especially to the pronunciation. For example, when a certain student is talking with a foreigner, he or she cannot say a correct word, which makes it difficult to understand what the meaning is. This is a bad phenomenon for an English learning. Therefore, when studying English, students should pay more attention to grammars. Besides, teachers need to correct errors and guide students how to express correctly. Some techniques should also be told when dealing with some confused words instead of just correcting their errors. It is quite different in the teaching process, which can encourage students to study the oral English to speak fluent English.

## V. MATTERS NEED ATTENTION

During the process of improving students' oral English, we still need to pay more attention to students' speaking quality, which is necessary for Chinese students. Besides, gestures, movements and facial expressions needed in class to enhance students' oral English.

### A. *Paying Attention to the English Speaking Quality*

In the process of improving the oral English, there are also some problems need to be paid attention, especially English speaking quality. Students should focus on their pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Great efforts should be made great efforts at pronunciation primarily in order to study oral English well. Students should pay more attention to the phonetic symbol learning. Phonetic symbol is the base of speaking. For example, the phonetics of /θ/ should be extremely noticed, which is a frequent phonetics in the western countries. Until now, some students cannot say "Thank you" correctly. The phonetics should be practiced by reading some words including this phonetics of /θ/, such as "tooth", "mouth" and so on. To improve students' oral English, students must practice more in liaison, weak reading, Plosive losing, accent, and so on. Some pronunciation is hard to pronounce in English. In order to solve the problems of pronunciation and intonation, some suitable training is necessary.

### B. *Speaking English with Gestures, Movements and Facial Expressions*

Body language is a complement to verbal communication, in daily communication, people always value verbal communication but ignore the importance of non-verbal communication in message conveyance. Without gestures, our world will be static and colorless. "Eyes are the windows of the soul", the ever changing expressions in eyes reflects people's rich and colorful inner world. The face has been called an organ of emotion because we constantly read facial expressions to understand what others are feeling. When somebody is speaking perfect English, he or she will have to use some gestures, movements and facial expressions to enhance the spoken meanings. The gestures mainly mean the body gesture that can be shown through the parts of body such as the mouth, hands, head and legs, etc. When talking to a foreigner in English, one can use the body gestures to help the foreigner know the meanings he/she is expressing. Sometimes, facial expressions can tell the foreigner what exactly is talking about. Some scientific researches have suggested that certain gestures, movements and facial expressions can promote mutual communication in a more effective way. This is related to constrain of culture, customs or other things. For example, if a student goes to restaurant with a foreigner, the foreigner wants to eat some Chinese dishes, without knowing how to express, hands would be used to express ideas.

### C. *Speaking English as Soon as Possible after Learning*

After learning one language, one should use it immediately and speaking it as much as possible. The short memory of human being requires people to use the language at once after learning. For example, if one watched an English film, then he or she should imitate and practice it in this short time. Through repeating imitations and speaking, what they have learned cannot be easily forgotten. Later in time, this short time memory can transfer into the long-term memory, so it is easier for students to remember their English language and speak it out anytime. So speaking English as soon as possible after learning is the basic to get the final command of this language. Chinese Confusion ever said that people need to review what they learned before, as long as one can review and practice, he or she will do it well. However, Chinese students are often loaded with heavy homework so that they have little time to review things or they are tired of reviewing. Thus, college should give students more time and space to learn and review to help them enhance their memorizing ability. College should carry out some contests for students to test their memorizing ability; the winner can be given the prize as an honor. Little by little, it will become easy for students to remember the knowledge.

## VI. CONCLUSION

After analyzing factors affecting the improvement of students' oral English, a conclusion is made. It is acknowledged

that oral English is so significant in the teaching process today, so it is imperative to improve students' oral English.

Speaking is the most important skill of all. As a kind of language, English is used to communicate with each other. Therefore, the aim of learning English is to learn how to speak. With the development of the economy and society, the oral English is becoming more and more important. If the students want to speak well, it is required to master rich English language and insist on practicing. In addition, the speaking is a skill that can and should be developed in China if the students and the teachers can work hard together. The present paper explicates the importance of oral practice in the study of the English language from various angles. After exploring these factors affecting the oral English, some measures are suggested to solve this problem. Improving students' oral ability is not just completed in one day, which needs to be improved in a long time. Students' activeness should be provoked to enjoy the feeling of learning English. This is a necessary context for English learners. The educational institutions should make every effort to provide a good learning environment for students. Students should also be given a platform to improve oral English. "Practice makes perfect." with the consistent practice, as a communication tool, English will play a better role in the development of globalization.

There are two limitations in this thesis. Firstly, this research is only based on the author's observation and experience, which discusses how to develop the students' oral competence but ignores others factors like students' motivations and teachers' levels. Secondly, the thesis suggests and describes the methods in the oral English. More related research can be still carried on in the near future.

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# Exploring the Textual Variations of Metaphors in Terms of Rank Dimension and Their Discoursal Values across Different Text-types

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**Abstract**—Working within the framework of Systemic- Functional Grammar and defining metaphorical expressions as a textual / intertextual strategy, bringing ‘guest images’ from other universes of discourse to the semantic realm of texts, and also believing that the occurrence of metaphoric expressions in texts is meaningful and motivated, in this study we looked at the textual variations in terms of rank dimension across three different genres of scientific, literary and journalistic texts. We found out that these different genres cannot be differentiated from each other in terms of presence or absence of this strategy. Indeed metaphorical expressions appear in all text types. We speculate that different dimensions of meaning are added to the text through use of this strategy across different genres. The findings of this study revealed that this strategy contributes to ideational function of the texts in the scientific text type. Our study revealed that in the literary and journalistic texts, this strategy contributes to ‘textual function’ as well as ‘ideational function’ of the texts. In journalistic texts, the main function of metaphors is to contribute to the ‘indirectness’ of the texts. In literature, metaphoric wordings are ‘thematically motivated’, reinforcing the theme of the texts. For this purpose 14 different texts from different text-types are selected to be analyzed in term of the use of metaphorical expressions.

**Index Terms**—metaphor / metaphoric expression, intertextuality, variations in rank dimension, textual function, ideational function, indirectness, thematically motivated element

## I. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally metaphor is thought to be a literary device or a special pattern of language which mostly appears in literary texts. Stylisticians tend to characterize metaphor as a property of literature because it is in literature that metaphor catches our attention mostly. The traditional view states that “metaphor is an ornamental aspect of speech and thought” (Tendahl, M. & Gibbs, R.B. 2008 p: 1823). They further argue:

“A traditional belief among many scholars is that metaphorical meaning is created de novo, and does not reflect preexisting aspects of how people ordinarily conceptualize ideas and events in terms of pervasive metaphorical schemes. But in the past 25 years, various linguists, philosophers, and psychologists have embraced the alternative possibility that metaphor is fundamental to language, thought, and experience” (Tendahl, M. & Gibbs, R.B. 2008 P: 1825).

Working within the framework offered by the cognitive approach to the study of metaphor and adopting Systemic – Functional Grammar as a framework of text analysis, we assume that the presence of metaphor like any other textual strategies is neither sufficient nor necessary condition of literariness. According to new trends in linguistics and genre analysis, the difference between literature and non- literature is not the result of the presence of special linguistic devices in literature. Indeed what distinguishes different genres from each other in general and literature from non-literature in particular rather than being the result of presence or absence of some particular and specific linguistic ingredients, is established through the value and function of the specific linguistic devices (Lotfipour; 1992) . That is to say it is not just the textual strategies or linguistic ingredients which differentiate different text- types from each other (Lotfipour; 2006). Rather it is the effect and underlying discoursal functions of the textual strategies which draw lines between different genres (Lotfipour & Abbasi 2000-2001). So we do not consider metaphor merely as a literary device. Rather we consider it as a textual/intertextual strategy which can be realized and actualized in any text contributing to fulfill different functions in difference genres. As it is stated by Tendahl, M. & Gibbs, R.B (2008) metaphor “is not merely a figure of speech, but a specific mental mapping and a form of neural coactivations that influences a good deal of how people think, reason, and imagine in everyday life” (P:1825). In the following section we present some views on the different functions of metaphor based on previous studies.

### A. Metaphor and Texture

Textuality or texture refers to text-forming devices which distinguish text from non-text (Halliday and Hasan; 1976). The texture-forming resources are textual and formal manifestation of textual function. As Halliday (1973) mentions it is through textual function that a text makes links with itself and its situation. It is argued that textual function is concerned with the “semiotic reality” through which ‘ideational meaning’ and ‘interpersonal meaning’ are realized as text (Martin: 1995, p: 9). As it was mentioned above, the textual meaning embodies texture or text-forming devices. Among textual features contributing to texture, Halliday and Hasan (1976-1990) refer to cohesion. They argue that cohesion is manifestation of underlying ‘topical unity’- coherence- and is realized at lexico-grammatical level through cohesive devices (Halliday and Hasan 1990).

In a study, entitled metaphor as a textual strategy, Mei-zhen (1999) showed that metaphor is a textual strategy and a text – building device which contributes to texture of the text. He argued that metaphor can function as a cohesive device, contributing to textuality of the text.

#### *B. Metaphor and Ideational Function of Language*

Within the framework of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar, it is argued that one of the most important functions of language is ‘ideational function’ or ‘ideational meaning’ (Halliday; 1985). Ideational meaning is related to relationship between language and outside realities and experiences. Halliday, defining language as a product of social process (Halliday; 1978) believes that language performs at once a ‘dual function’ as a means of action and as a means of reflection (Halliday; 1985). Ideational meaning is related to the function of language as a means of reflection; reflection of outside realities and experiences. However, as it is mentioned by Threadgold (1987), the function of language is not limited to reflect outside realities, but language as a reality constructing and reality-changing semiotic process contributes to formation of new meanings and “restructuring of the semantic system” within a culture (Threadgold; 1987; P: 345). In this regard language is a means of action. The focus of this section is on the relationship between ideational meaning of language (as a means of reflection) and the value of metaphoric uses of language to fulfill this function.

Cognitive linguists claim that language users employ metaphors in their discourses in order to convey new ideas and abstract things through familiar and more concrete objects and entities (see Lakoff; 1991). That is to say by expressing unknown and abstract things through more concrete entities, they reflect their experiences and intentions to others. Since metaphor is commonly used to express new ideas through the knowns, it is argued that one of the most important functions of metaphor is ‘world-disclosing’ function (Debatin; 1995) through which we extend our understanding of the world and outside realities.

#### *C. Metaphor and Its Effect on Cognition*

It is said that metaphor like other types of figurative language is a special pattern of language structure which is imposed upon ordinary literal use of language. Most philosophers have generally argued that figurative language, metaphor included, involves tricks or play on the literal (Tim Rohrer; 1995). So it is inferred that understanding metaphors takes longer time. But in a research conducted by Rohrer (1995), it is proved that understanding metaphor takes no longer time provided there is sufficient context. He argues that the bulk of our metaphoric processing is automatic and only some metaphors require attentional processing to be understood (Rohrer; 1995).

In this regard George Lakoff (1991) argues that the use of metaphor is common place and inescapable. Abstraction and enormously complex situations which are difficult to understand are routinely processed via metaphor. Indeed there is an extensive, and mostly unconscious, system of metaphor that we use automatically and unreflectively to understand complexities and abstractions. Put in other words, we can say that the use of metaphoric expressions promotes our understanding in most cases. Mei-zhen (1991) also demonstrated that metaphor has cognitive effect and helps the language users to understand and comprehend new ideas better. It is argued by cognitive linguists that the mapping helps us to learn what is new, unknown or unfamiliar (Liao- Mei-zhen: 1999).

So not only do we use metaphor in our uses of language unconsciously, the process of cognition of it also takes place, in most cases without special attention. Indeed, metaphoric uses of language rather than being blocks in our understanding, in most cases, they promote our comprehension (Tim Rohrer; 1995).

It is demonstrated that unlike old metaphors, some new metaphors take longer time to be understood (see Tim Rohrer; 1995). This may contribute to literariness of literature- texts, because in literary texts we encounter lots of new metaphors. This prolonged search for meaning contributes to literariness of texts (see Lotfipour; 1989).

#### *D. Metaphor and Politics*

Regarding language as a reality constructing and reality-changing phenomenon, critical linguists believe that language is not an indifferent mirror of the outside objective realities (see Birch; 1990). Following this line of thinking critical linguists believe that language is not an indifferent mirror of presenting social realities rather outside realities and meaning are constructed through use of language. Butt (1988) argues that language is not a mirror of preverbal reality. According to Ryan (1991) the kind of language people use determines the way they see themselves and the way they see realities.

Defining text as the unit of language, Halliday views text as a semantic unit, a process of meaning in a continuous interaction with other semiotic systems of a society (Halliday; 1978). It is argued that the relationship between language

and society is not unidirectional; rather the relationship is bi-directional (see Birch, 1990 & Fairclough, 1990). That is to say language reflects the meaning and realities of the society and at the same time influences and gives direction to the social realities (Fairclough; 2010). Text, in Halliday's view is the actualization of a higher order semiotic system which in his view constitutes the reality of culture (Halliday: 1978). Culture can be considered as a network of interrelated potential semiotic system i.e. a system of potential behavior or a system of what one can do (ibid). In the process of verbal transactions, a text as the unit of communication (Lotfipour; 1993) would actualize some meaning potentially available in the semiotic system of the society (Halliday; 1978). But it is argued by critical linguists that meanings potentially available in the culture do not have the same chance to be actualized and realized through using of language. It is the function of power system or dominant ideologies which put in foreground some meanings while suppressing other meaning to be actualized through language (see Fairclough; 2010). That is to say the function of dominant ideologies in the society is to establish recurrent pattern of semantic choices in a culture and determine the culture's "characteristic ways of meaning" out of a large amounts of potential semantic choices within a society (Threadgold; 1987).

Accepting that language has grown dramatically in term of the uses it is required to serve (Fairclough; 1990), critical linguists claim that the grammatical system of language is closely related to social needs - ideological needs included - that language is required to serve (Fairclough; 1990). So studying textual strategies employed in a text reveals a lot of facts about underlying social conventions and power systems existing in the society (ibid).

We argue that the use of metaphors determine our world- view (see Lakoff; 1991). Metaphor as textual / intertextual strategy is used mostly and skillfully in political texts to determine and direct the way people think and the way they behave. As Lakoff (1991) argues there is a widespread, relatively fixed set of metaphors that structure how human beings think.

In a paper entitled "Metaphor and War: The Metaphor System used to Justify War in the Gulf" (part a), George Lakoff (1991) argues that one of the metaphors used in politics is: "war as medicine". He says that there is a common metaphor in which military control by the enemy is seen as a cancer that can spread. In this metaphor, military "operations" are seen as hygienic, to "clean out" enemy fortifications.

In another paper entitled "Metaphor, Morality, and Politics" (1995), George Lakoff argues that morality, being an abstract notion, in most cases is determined by metaphor we use. Lakoff (1995), as an example for the metaphor used to express morality, mentions to "Being Good is being Upright" (Lakoff; 1995). Examples for this metaphor "include sentences like: He's an upstanding citizen, He's on the up-and up (ibid). Lakoff (1995), as another example of metaphor for morality, mentions to "morality is strength". He argues people are not simply born strong. Moral strength must be built. Just as in building physical strength, where self-discipline and self-denial (no pain, no gain) are crucial. Therefore moral strength is also built through self-discipline and self-denial (Lakoff, 1995). From this example we understand how abstract things like morality can be expressed by using metaphoric expressions.

Lakoff (1995), as an example of metaphor used in politics, mentions to: "the Nation -as- Family Metaphor". In this metaphor the nation is seen as a family, the government as a parent and the citizen as children. By using metaphors like the metaphors mentioned above, those who are in power try to impose their intentions and wishes. For example by using "the nation -as- family" metaphor, they say that government is wiser than the nation (government is parent, while the nation is a child) and most of the works of government are justified. So metaphors play a very important role in maintenance of institutions of power in the society. Therefore, we agree with critical linguists in regarding language as an instrument of repression (see Fairclough, 1990).

But as Fairclough (1990) claims it is in the capacity of human beings to change what human beings have created. That is to say by 'consciousness-raising' processes, critical linguists can help people to use language in a way which bring them freedom (ibid). It is believed that language is not only a 'reality- constructing' process, but also it is a 'reality- changing' phenomenon which can and should be used in the process of "emancipation" (Fairclough; 1990).

### *E. Metaphor & Intertextuality*

The notion of 'intertextuality' was developed by Julia Kristeva in 1967 in her seminal work on intertextuality Word, dialogue and novel (Still & Worton, 1990; P: 1) in the intellectual context of Cultural Revolution of 1960, in France to revolutionize not only structuralism but cultural politics in general (see Pfister; 1991).

The notion of intertextuality can, in essence, be traced back to Bakhtin who considers the dialogic concept of language as fundamental (cf. Still & Worton; 1990). Unlike Bakhtin who claimed that some texts are monologic and dialogic while others are dialogic, Kristeva believed that both of monologic and dialogic language can be found in any text (Still & Worton; 1990). For Kristeva every text is as intertext governed by dialogism (see Still & Worton; 1990 & Pfister; 1991).

According to the theory of intertextuality, text is not a self-coherent and self-contained entity (Birch; 1990). Text being a semantic unit is not a well-defined object. Text, unlike clause which is a lexico-grammatical entity with the clear-cut beginning and ending, is an abstract and semantic entity which does not have the established boundaries (see Birch; 1990). A text, as Halliday mentions (1987) is not something that has a beginning and the ending. Derrida expresses a similar view (c.f. Birch; 1991; P: 9). A "text for Derrida is a complex network of unfinished meaning that its openings and ending can never be found" (Birch; 1990). He, however, argues, "[t]here are of course edges and

borders to a text” but “these are not set by the text or the writer” (Birch; 1990 P: 11). Rather the borders and boundaries of the text are established by institutional practices (ibid).

Text, as a semantic process, rather than carrying the meaning, is assumed to provide only a ‘meeting ground’ between the discourse processes of the text producer and text receiver (see Candlin & Lotfipour; 1983). The ‘textual indices’ used in a text are the manifestation of the writer’s or the speaker’s discursive strategies and are motivated by many socio-psycholinguistic factors determined by ‘characteristic pattern of meaning’ recurrent in the society (see Candlin and Lotfipour; 1982 & Birch, 1990). The ‘textual indices’ also act as activators of the readers discourse process (Candlin & Lotfipour; 1982). The receiver of the text by relating textual indices to the belief systems, conventions, knowledge frame and characteristic ways of meaning ‘recurrent in the society’ sets his own discourse process in motion for the possible negotiation of the writers messages ( see Candlin and Lotfipour; 1982). Every text is by its nature an intertext because the processes which lead to its production and comprehension are necessarily intertextual and intersemiotic processes (see Birch; 1990).

### 1. Modes of Intertextuality

Defining intertextuality as the property of discourse rather than text, and characterizing intertextual strategies as discursive strategies, we speculate that in textualization process, the intertextual strategies can be realized in different modes (see Lotfipour & Abbasi; 2000). From structural point of view the modes of intertextuality can be divided into two groups: 1) visible 2) invisible. Structurally visible modes have usually definite pretexts. (By pretext we mean the text from which the intertextual element is taken). Questions are instances of the visible mode of intertextuality. (This mode of intertextuality was already investigated by Lotfipour & Abbasi; 2000 & 2001). It seems to us that thematic structure is an instance of invisible mode of intertextuality. (By structural invisible intertextuality element, we mean those intertextual elements which do not have any definite pretexts.)

### 2. Metaphor as an Intertextual Strategy

In our characterization, metaphors are also invisible intertextual elements because the producer of the text by using metaphor brings in “guest images” to the universe of his text. According to Goatly (1997) metaphor can be defined as a unit of discourse used to refer to an object, concept, process, quality, relationship or word to which it does not conventionally refer (c.f. Dastjerdi; 2000). By metaphor Halliday (1985) means. ‘Non-literal use of words’ “a word used for something resembling that which it usually refer to” (p: 319). According to Halliday (1985) the words flood and poured in, in the following sentences are examples of metaphoric use of language:

***A flood of protests poured in following announcement.***

Halliday (1985) argues that “most instances of metaphoric wording involve transfer from a concrete to an abstract sense and one large class of these is from material to mental process, as in “it *escapes* me”, I haven’t *grasped* it, I don’t *follow*” (Halliday; 1985 p: 319).

Metaphor is one way of using language indirectly. That is to say in the metaphoric use of language there is always a clash between what is said and what is meant. The speaker says something but he means something different and more than what he actually says. It is the concern of this study to explore the underlying motivation(s) of using this strategy across different genres. As it was mentioned above, metaphor can be characterized as a mode of intertextual strategy because when we use metaphoric wordings in a text, we bring images from other semiotic systems to the universe of our text and by so doing we establish intertextual connection between the two universes.

## II. METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

### A. Data

This study is concerned with the variations in the textualization of metaphor as an intertextual strategy and its discursive functions across different genres. For this purpose we adopted a corpus linguistic approach and selected a total number of 14 texts to be analyzed. These texts are chosen from three different genres: literary texts, scientific texts & journalistic texts. Text # 1 is taken from Cook & Newson (1995). Text # 2&3 are taken from Kingsbury & Wangner (1990). Text # 4 is taken from Berridge & Winkelman (2003), text # 5 is taken from Tallis (2003), text # 6 is taken from Jenkins & Ambrosini (2002). Texts # 7 to 12 are literary texts. Text # 7 is a piece of a novel written by Jane Austen: *Pride & Prejudice*. Texts # 8, 9 & 10 are poetry. Text # 11 is a piece of *Antigone* written by Sophocles. Text # 12 is a short story written by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Text # 13 & 14 are journalistic articles taken from *Time* and *Newsweek* (1990-1995). The dimension of textual variation focused upon is *variations in rank dimension*.

### B. Variations in Rank Dimension

We speculated that in any text metaphorical wordings can be actualized in different ranks. By rank it is meant what is normally meant in the systemic linguistics as the hierarchical ranks of language structure as clause, group, word, etc (Lotfipour; 1997). It is the concern of this study to look at the variations of textualization of metaphorical wordings, in terms of rank dimension and their underlying discursive values both within a text type and across different genres.

### C. Results of Data Analysis

Having analyzed our selected texts in terms of variations in rank dimension, we summarized the results in the following table and graphs.



TABLE # 1

THE FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS IN SCIENTIFIC, LITERARY AND JOURNALISTIC GENRES.

Scientific text-type			Literary text-type			Journalistic text-type		
Rank	F	P%	Rank	F	P%	Rank	F	P%
Text	0	0	Text	0	0	Text	0	0
Clause-complex	0	0	Clause-complex	18	22.5	Clause-complex	3	11
Clause	0	0	Clause	0	0	Clause		
Pre.P	0	0	Pre.P	4	5	Pre.P		
adj.p	0	0	adj.p	3	4	adj.p		
adv.p	0	0	adv.p	0	0	adv.p	2	7
VP	17	11	VP	9	11	VP	4	15
NP	16	10	NP	12	15	NP	4	15
Individual words	125	79	Individual words	34	42.5	Individual words	14	52
	$\sum F$ or N=158	100		$\sum F=80$	100		$\sum F$ or N=27	100

For calculating P% we use:

$$P\% = \frac{f \times 10}{N}$$

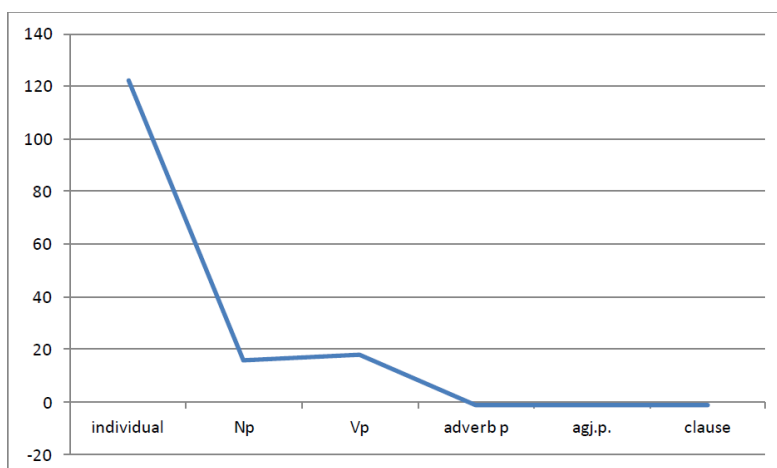
NP stands for noun phrase

VP stands for verb phrase

Adj stands for adjective phrase

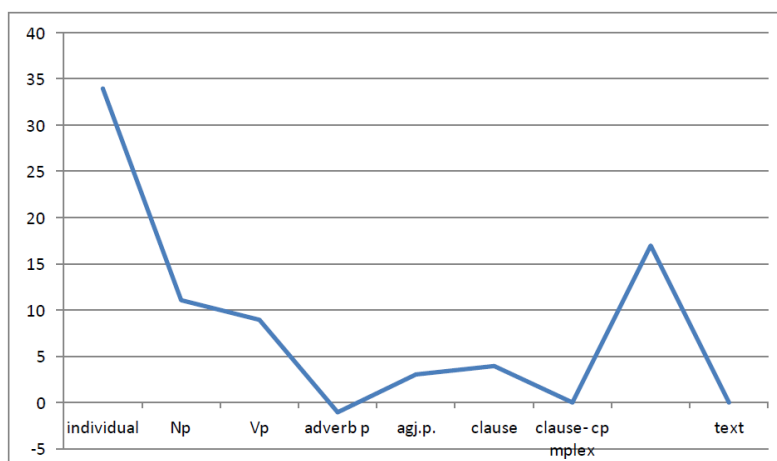
Pre.p stands for prepositional phrase

The following graph (graph # 1) illustrates the variation of frequency of metaphorical expressions in terms of their rank within the scientific text-type, summarizing the data gained from our analysis of scientific texts & data presented in table# 1



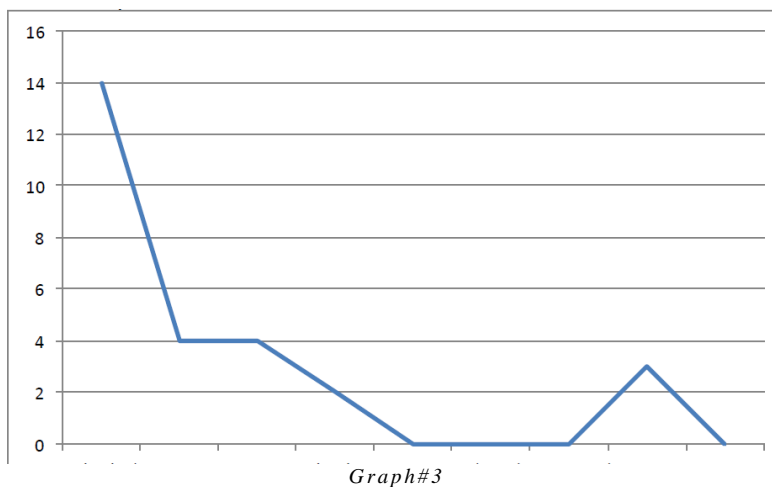
Graph # 1

The graph # 2 illustrates the variation of frequency of textual realization of metaphors in literary text-type in terms of their rank, summarizing the data gained from our text analysis & the data represented in the table#1



Graph#2

The graph # 3 represents the variations of frequency of textual realization of metaphor in terms of their rank in journalistic text-type, summarizing the data gained from our text analysis & the data represented in the table#1



### III. INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. Individual Word Metaphors in Scientific, Literary, and Journalistic Text-types

As illustrated in table.1 and graphs 1-3, individual word (single word) metaphors occupy the highest level of frequency of occurrence in all of our analyzed text-types. In scientific text-types, the incidence of frequency of occurrence of individual word metaphors is 79%, in literature text-type the incidence of occurrence is 42.5% and in journalistic text-type, the frequency of occurrence is 52%. On the basis of our data analysis we find out that, there is no significant difference between these three different genres regarding the frequency of occurrence of single word metaphors. This finding supports our speculation that different genres cannot be differentiated from each other with respect to presence or absence of specific mode of textual strategy. Rather it is the value and function of specific textual elements which draw line between different genres. In data analysis procedure, we noticed that, in scientific text-type out of total number of 125 single word metaphors, only 28 cases are marked. By marked metaphorical expression we mean those instances of metaphors whose literal or congruent equivalents seem more frequency functioning as norm in verbal transactions (see Halliday, 1985). As Halliday argues to any metaphorical expression corresponds another, or perhaps more than one, that is literal ... {or} CONGRUENT. When a metaphorical expression can function as norm and is as frequent as its literal realization, we consider that an unmarked metaphor. For example the following sentence is an instance of unmarked metaphorical use.

Metaphorical realization: <<I haven't grasped it>>>

Literal realization: <<I haven't understood it>>>

In the example above, the metaphorical expression is as frequent as its literal realization. But there are other cases of metaphorical expression which do not function as a norm. In these cases the literal realization seems more direct and frequent. Consider the following example:

Metaphorical: <<A flood of protests poured in following the announcement>>>.

Literal realization: <<A large quantity of protests came in ...>>>.

In the above example, the metaphorical expression seems to be marked metaphor. (The examples are taken from Halliday 1985 p. 319). Following this line of thinking, we classified metaphorical expression according to their markedness. As it was mentioned above, out of total number of 125 single word metaphors occurring in our analyzed scientific texts, only 28 metaphors are marked. That is to say only 22% of single word metaphors used in scientific text-type is marked, while 78% of single word metaphors are unmarked.

According to our data, in literary text-type, from total number of 34 single word metaphors used in our analyzed text, 21 cases are marked. That is to say 62% of single word metaphors used in literature texts is marked while only 38% of single word metaphors used in literary texts are unmarked.

Regarding journalistic text-type, 13 cases of single word metaphorical wording, out of the total number of 14 number of single word metaphors are marked and only one case is unmarked. That is to say 93% of single-word metaphors are marked, and only 7% is unmarked.

The difference in degree of markedness of single word metaphorical expressions across different genres is meaningful. Unmarked single word metaphors, which in most cases are abstract word "with concrete origin", have lost their metaphorical force during ages of use, and have become part of the system of language (see Halliday, 1985). The reason for why words with concrete origin are used to refer to abstract notions is that human beings always use 'knowns' to understand 'new-s' and 'unknown'. This is the natural procedure of cognition. According to cognitive

psychology, understanding is based on reaching unknowns through knowns. That is to say, understanding takes place on the basis of old information. The same procedure takes place in the natural process of language change. Human beings use an already established and already coined word, with concrete denotative and referential meaning, to talk about more abstract thing 'resembling' to what the word denotatively refers to. We suggest that in the process of evolution of language, human beings who probably could only communicate about concrete subjects became able to talk about more abstract things by using metaphoric expressions, and words gradually have gained new and more additional layers of meaning. Through use, these words have lost their metaphoric force and as Halliday (1985) argues they become the part of the language'.

As it was mentioned above, in scientific text-type 78% of single words metaphors are unmarked and only 22% is marked. This is because those scientific texts are 'information oriented', and subject matter should be presented to reader as directly as possible. The producer of scientific text uses unmarked single word metaphors because they are part of the language and he has no other choice but using them.

As far as literary texts are concerned, as it was mentioned above 62% of single word metaphors in literature texts, seems to us, contributes to the literariness of literature texts by making the process of cognition and comprehension more prolonged. As Shklovsky (1965) argues "the act of perception in art is an end in itself and must be prolonged. In art, it is our experience of the process of construction that counts, not the finished product" (Shklovsky, 1965 quoted in Lotfipour, 1989). As Lotfipour suggests this prolonged voluntary, dynamic, imaginative and goal-oriented search for a meaning contributes to literariness (Lotfipour, 1989). For example consider the following marked use of single word metaphor in a literary text:

Metaphorical expression <<*The heart's flower withers at the root*>>

In the above example the word root is a marked metaphor as a textual/intertextual strategy, bringing the image of a tree from outside universe to the universe of the text establishing an intertextual connection between the two universes. The presence of marked metaphors, like the one in the above examples, by making the process of cognition more prolonged contributes to the literariness of literature texts.

As far as the journalistic texts are concerned, 93% of single word metaphors are marked while only 7% of the total number of single word metaphors is unmarked. It seems to us that the markedness of individual word (single word) metaphors in journalistic texts contributes to the *indirectness* of journalistic texts. As we know, it is the characteristic of political texts, journalistic texts included, to say something and to mean something different and more than what is actually said. Most of what the reader of journalistic texts comprehends unconsciously takes place through metaphoric use of language in this text-type. Take, for example, the following sentence from a journalistic text:

<<The queen's staggering wealth and unique tax breaks are always good for stories in the *British press*. >>

The theme of the article from which the above example is taken, is that the queen should pay her tax. The writer of the text does not directly express his attitude, but through strategic use of some textual strategies imposes his own attitude on the reader. The reader is not consciously aware of what is imposed on him. This is done through strategic use of textual resources. One of these strategies is the use of marked metaphors. In the above example the word *staggering* denotatively means: 'walking or moving unsteadily.' Metaphorically, the word means <<*causing deep shock*>>. By using this metaphor, the writer suggests that the queen being very rich should pay her tax. The function of marked metaphor in this case is to reinforce the theme of the text indirectly.

We can infer that the same textual /intertextual strategy, in this case single metaphors may contribute to fulfill different functions in different text- types. That is to say, it is not the form, but it is the value of textual /intertextual strategies which distinguishes different genres from each other.

#### B. Variations in Metaphorical Phrases in Scientific, Literary, and Journalistic Text-types

As far as metaphorical phrases (i.e. noun phrase, verb phrase, adverb phrase and adjective phrase) are concerned, there is no significant difference between the different text types of our data in terms of frequency of occurrence of these phrases.

In scientific text type, noun phrase (NP) metaphorical elements are mostly used to make the process of understanding more comfortable. For example the metaphorical noun phrase <<*tree diagram*>> occurring in texts about linguistics, are used firstly by linguists to help the reader to understand subject matter better, by bringing image of tree as a concert object from outside universe to the universe of linguistic texts with the aim of making the process of cognition easier and more possible. In a physiological text, the metaphorical noun phrase <<*free-floating anxiety*>> is used to refer to a certain type of disorder by connecting the attribute of floating from concrete and observable universe to more abstract realm of affairs and by doing so the writer helps the reader in the process of cognition.

As far as literary texts are concerned, the presence of NP metaphors, besides contributing to the process of cognition, indirectly reinforces the underlying discursal theme of the text. The example below illustrates an NP metaphors appearing in Antigone:

Metaphorical expression :<< *the long blade of the sun* >>

Here by using the concrete word 'blade' and establishing a resemblance between it and the sun, the writer strategically helps the reader to transfer what he already knows about blade to his understanding of the text. The producer of text by doing so creates the condition of indeterminacy of *intended meaning* contributing to the literariness of the text (see Lotfipour, 1989). Besides, by using the above metaphor, the producer of the text indirectly reinforce the

theme of the text. The text is about cruel murder of a girl named Antigone, and the metaphor is used indirectly to motivate the theme.

In scientific texts, the NP metaphors like in the literary texts are related to the theme of the text. The difference is that in the scientific texts, the reader is conscious about the relationship between the NP – metaphors and the topic (i.e. theme) of the text, while in literature the reader unconsciously creates this connection.

As far as journalistic text-type is concerned, the presence of NP – metaphors contributes to the *indirectness* of the text. Consider the below example:

.... A drop believed of equal magnitude this year had left Cuba <<*an economic orphan*>>.

The above metaphorical expression appeared in a journalistic text about the relationship between Castro & Boris Yeltsin. By using this indifferent way of describing Cuba, the writer indirectly expressed his own attitude toward the topic.

As far as VP metaphors are concerned we found no noticeable difference between these three genres regarding textual manifestations and discourse values.

### C. Clause Complex – Metaphors in the Scientific, Literary, and Journalistic Text – types

As far as the scientific texts are concerned, the frequency of occurrence of clause complex metaphors is approximately zero in our data. By clause – complex metaphors, we mean those instances of metaphorical expressions which are realized in the textualization process as a sentence. As far as literature texts are concerned, the frequency of occurrence of clause complex metaphors is 22.5%. In the journalistic text type, the frequency of occurrence is 11%. The fact that there is no incidence of occurrence of clause – complex metaphors in scientific texts is meaningful.

As we mentioned before, the scientific texts are information and topic – oriented. We discussed before in discourse production, the topic of the text is broken into sub-topics. These sub – topics are more elaborated in textualization process in the horizontal and vertical dimensions (see Candlin & Lotfipour, 1982). The sub-topics are determined by the topic (theme) of the text. But the nature of relationship between the sub- topics to topic of the text varies across different genres and is governed and determined by the overall function of the text. In the scientific text- type which is an information oriented text-type, the nature of relationship between topic and subtopics is direct and explicit. So a metaphorical clause complex may hardly appear in this text type. Because in scientific texts what is more important is transferring the information, and what is said has a higher degree of significance compared with how something is said. The clause complex in lexicogrammatical level is the manifestation and actualization of a subtopic. In scientific text – type, as it was mentioned above the nature of the relationship between the topic of the text and the subtopics is direct. Metaphorical clause complexes being indirect manifestation of underlying discursive subtopics have low chance of appearing in scientific texts.

As far as literary texts are concerned, the incidence of frequency of occurrence of metaphorical clause complexes is 22.5%. This higher level of frequency compared with scientific and journalistic texts is meaningful and motivated. In literary texts, like any other texts, the theme or the topic of the text is broken into subtopics but the nature of the relationship of the subtopics to the topic of the text is indirect helping to make the process of understanding and cognition more prolonged. As it was mentioned above, this prolonged search for meaning contributes to literariness of literary texts. We believe that metaphorical clause complexes are indirect surface manifestation of underlying subtopics. In literary texts how something is said is as important as what is said. So metaphorical clause complex, being indirect way of saying and being indirectly related of the topic of the text contributes to indeterminacy and indirectness of literature-texts.

As far as journalistic text-type is concerned the frequency of occurrence is 11%. This frequency is lower than the frequency of occurrence of metaphorical clause-complexes of the literature texts but is higher than the frequency of occurrence in the scientific texts. This finding suggests that the degree of indirectness of journalistic texts is higher than scientific texts but it is lower than literature texts regarding this specific metaphoric wording.

## IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study after defining `metaphor` as a textual / intertextual strategy bringing `quest images` from the outside real world to the universe of the text, we looked at variations in the textualization of this strategy and its discursive values across different genres of scientific, literary and journalistic texts. We investigated the textual variations of this strategy in terms of variations in rank dimension across the different genres of the scientific, literary and journalistic texts. We found that these textual variations are meaningful both within a text-type and across different genres.

Regarding variations in rank dimension, we noticed that metaphors mostly appear in `single word` form in all text-types. But the value of this strategy is different in different text-types. While in the scientific texts, single word metaphors contribute to ideational function of the text, in the literature and journalistic texts, the single word metaphors by being marked and strategic uses of language, contribute to the way of saying rather than to what is said. That is to say it is textual function rather than ideational function that single word metaphors mainly make contribution to.

As far as metaphorical phrases are concerned, there is again no significant difference across different genres regarding the frequency of occurrence. Here again what distinguishes different genres from each other is the values of the metaphors in different text- types. In literature, metaphorical phrases indirectly reinforce the underlying topic and so

metaphors are thematically motivated. In journalistic texts, metaphorical phrases contribute to the indirectness of the texts.

As far as clause complex metaphors are concerned, the frequency of occurrence is zero in the scientific text-type. In literature, the frequency of occurrence is 22.5% and in journalistic text-type the frequency is 1.1%.

We conclude that it is not the form but the discursual functions of metaphoric wordings which distinguish different text-types from each other.

## V. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Defining metaphors as one mode of intertextuality, the finding of this study may be of use to the theory of intertextuality. The findings of this study may deepen our understanding of the interrelation between language and power system of the society by looking at why and how language may influence the way people look at the outside realities of the world. The findings of the study are also useful to language pedagogy and language teachers. We believe that the study and teaching of language should not be restricted to vocabulary, grammar, and semantics. In addition to these aspects, pragmatic dimension of language should also be taken into consideration.

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