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Is Speaking Fluency Strand Necessary for the College Students to Develop in the EFL Class?

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Abstract—This article aims to explore how the EFL teachers and students treat the development of speaking fluency in the EFL class in terms of the teachers' willingness of promoting speaking fluency for their students and the students' demand and preference of the speaking fluency in the EFL class in China. This study also attempts to identify whether there is a dynamic between these two variables. However, the participants in this study including 40 EFL students with a female dominated demography and 10 domestic EFL teachers were randomly convened from a college. Two sets of questionnaire for these EFL teachers and students are a way to observe the result, since the demand of fluency development is a motivational factor for the EFL learners to practice it, while the teachers' willingness of implementation is an effective variable to promote it. Thus, a t-test is applied to precede this outcome and the results indicated that the teachers' willingness of developing speaking fluency for their students is not sufficient. Their students consequently are not familiar with the way of practicing the speaking fluency. Though these EFL students demand a fluent communicative competence in conversations, there is a lack of time, activity, effort and relevant principle of guiding in the current EFL class. The conclusion of this article is that speaking fluency strand is necessary to the college students and therefore further researches should draw attention on its development in the EFL class in China.

Index Terms—fluency, speaking fluency, fluency development, preference of speaking fluency, college EFL students, EFL teaching in China

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades, there was a gradual but significant change of the language policy in China. Students in high school were not required to learn one elective foreign language. Instead, English was the compulsory subject. In 2001, the Chinese Ministry of Education announced and implemented a compulsory language policy: EFL teaching from the grade 3 in primary schools towards to the tertiary institutions. In addition, the Chinese and English bilingual education was encouraged in the tertiary institutions with 5% to 10% of the total courses. This policy did attempt to promote the status of English in this country. Nonetheless, it did not concern the methodology and curriculum more specifically in the EFL context. English language teaching varies from institutions and differs in methodologies across China. Though, there are two common phenomena in summary: EFL is grammar-translation learning and examination-driven teaching. The grammar-translation method is a traditional approach to analyze the grammar structures and rules of a language and students apply these rules to translate their first language into the target language. Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out it focuses on developing the reading and writing competences with little attention on the speaking or listening skills, because the purpose of grammar-translation method is to develop the language learners' reading ability. On the other hand, examination-driven learning limits the communicative language learning as students have to process a lot of paper work in order to pass the exams. These two constraints limit the development of communicative language teaching.

On the basis of current situation, the grammar-translation method is steadily replaced by the communicative language teaching approach, which is not yet dominated in many EFL classes in China. Jin (2006) found most EFL learners learn vocabulary through memorizing and practice their listening and reading skills through the context silently. From the view of communicative language teaching, Nation (2007) suggested that there are four strands in a language course: a) language learning through listening and reading is called meaning-focused input; b) form-focused instruction is focused on language features; c) language learning through speaking and writing refers to meaning-focused output, and d) the fluency development is a fourth strand, which is a retrieval of meaning processing. It clearly mentions the importance of fluency development. Thus, this article attempts to discover how the EFL teachers and students treat the development of speaking fluency in the EFL class. This is identified by questionnaires through the relationship between the teachers' willingness of promoting speaking fluency for their students and the students' demand and preference of the speaking fluency. The main finding in this study is that there is a close link between these two variables through interpreting the results of a t-test. In general, the teachers' initiative of promoting speaking fluency determines the students' efforts on it consequently and the importance of speaking fluency development is neglected to some degrees. Finally, there are some recommendations to raise the attention on the speaking fluency strand for the college students in the EFL Class.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Definition of Fluency

The term 'fluency' is widely used in language pedagogy and 'fluent' is regularly appeared in language testing, which seems the meaning of fluency is easily catchable. But, the definition of fluency is various. Hartmann and Stork (1976) pointed out the term 'fluent' means a speaker is able to use the correct structures of a language at normal speed, which means speaking naturally with concentration on the content delivery, rather than focusing on the form or structure of a language. Fillmore (1979) defined four abilities of speaking fluently: a) the ability to talk at length with few pauses; b) be able to produce the sentences coherently, reasoned and semantically; c) have appropriate expressions in a wide range of contexts; d) be creative and imaginative in language use. Furthermore, Richards et al. (1985) defined fluency is the speech close to a native speaker's pausing, rhythm, stress and intonations, and in EFL class, fluency is about the level of communication competence. In addition, Nation (1989) provided three aspects of fluency: the first one is the speed and flow of language production; secondly, the degree of control of the language items i.e. pausing, rhythm, pronunciation and stress; and the way of content interrupting. So far, the definition of fluency is developed into two main categories. One is called the narrow approach (Lennon, 2000) refers to the speaking speed and smoothness of the language delivery. The other is the board approach (Kopenen & Riggensback, 2000) that considers a wider area including semantic density, appropriateness of expression, the language user's creative ability and some further issues in sociolinguistics. However, the definition of fluency is considered as the narrow approach in this study.

B. The Measure of Speaking Fluency

Defining the term fluency is neither easy, nor is the measure of fluency. It is necessary to set up the relevant criteria to measure speaking fluency in EFL class. To establish the standards of assessing fluency is a complicate task, because fluency is totally a performance with the listener's impression and feeling. Lennon (1990) argued fluency is not inviting the listener to pay attention on production of speaking, but the listener's attention on speaker's message delivered. This is the reflection of the speaker's oral ability. In this circumstance, therefore, many researches attempted to identify the longitudinal fluency development (Towell, 1987; Lennon, 1990 & Freed, 1995); the researches to distinguish the fluent and non-fluent language learners (Riggensback, 1991 & Ejzenberg, 2000); and Arevart and Nation's (1991) fluency improvement in learning an additional language. Most of these researches analyzed the amount of words articulated per minute and the average pauses between the different syllables when speaking. Wood (2001) summarized the speech rate is a key performance indicator of measuring fluency as speech rate shows the overall fluency of speaking. On the other hand, the phenomena of pause and pause filler are also considered in the presence of filled and non-filled pauses in articulation for the four English learners from China (Riggensback, 1991) and the changes in the pause time for another four German students (Lennon, 1990). To sum up, both the definition and the measure of speaking fluency illustrate the importance of developing the speaking fluency in the EFL class.

C. The Importance of Fluency

The goal of learning an additional language is to use it naturally. Brumfit (1984) treated fluency as natural language use like the native speakers. Speaking fluency is also an important component of communication competence, because the ability of speaking fluently can help the speaker to produce continuous speech without comprehension difficulties for the listener and to maintain the communicative ideas more effectively. Richards et al. (1985) argued that the strand of fluency is a measurement of one's communicative proficiency level. So, no language learner refuses to speak fluently. This implies that speaking fluency is necessary for the EFL learners to develop and improve. On the other hand, the issue of fluency or accuracy development, or, meaning or form focused, is widely debated. The best way is to merge them into different sequences in learning because both fluency development and accuracy development are important strands. Nation's (2007) four strands successfully classified them into the different sequence of learning and fluency development is the fourth strand to focus on meaning, which is a retrieval process of the known languages and contents. Moreover, Nation (1997) found that the improvement in speaking fluency also improves qualities of grammar accuracy and the degrees of content control. The practice of the speaking fluency is not conflict with the form-focused instruction, but strongly enhances to the accuracy of a language.

D. Related Empirical Studies

Nation's (1989) and Arevart and Nation's (1991) studies of fluency task: the 4/3/2 activity (Maurice, 1983) improved the participants' fluency, grammar accuracy and control of content. First of all, studies were conducted by calculating the amount of words articulated per minute and pauses per 100 words for identifying the improvement of speaking fluency. The results indicated there was an increase in the amount of words speaking per minute and a decrease in the pause per 100 words. Secondly, the accuracy in terms of the number of errors made in the three speaking session was dramatically reduced from the first round with 4 minutes to the third round with 2 minutes in the 4/3/2 activity. The third improvement is about the control of content, which showed a reduction to a good abstract content in order to meet the requirement of the time reduction in each round. To conclude, the techniques used in the studies lead a positive outcome for the development of speaking fluency.

Nation (1997) listed several conditions for developing fluency. This is the fundamental understanding for the EFL teachers to implement a fluency activity in class. The EFL students should be familiar with all language items, content and knowledge. Fluency development does not allow involving any unknown elements. It is a meaning-focused activity, which means the speakers are required to receive and process meaning and not to analyze language features. Moreover,

there should be some encouragement to push the outcome with a time reduction or speeding up the articulation. If any of these conditions is missing, then it will not be a scientific fluency activity. Nation (2007) further claimed that the four strands should be balanced with an equal share of the class time. That means the EFL teachers and students need to spend 25% of the class time and put 25% of their efforts on the fluency development.

Based on these theories above, there are some further empirical studies about the development of speaking fluency. Schloff and Yudkin's (1991) sixty second strategy advised the learners with a slow speaking speed to choose a context about 180 words to read it loudly and practice for several times. Then, these learners are encouraged to recite the content in one minute without losing the original meaning. Fluency is directly associated with the speaking speed in this circumstance. Porter and Grant (1992) argued the EFL learners should not be trained by speeding up with sacrificing meaning and thus to make the conversation difficult for their audiences to understand. Later, Schneider (2001) proposed the pair-taping activity to encourage the EFL learners to interact each other in class due to few opportunities of speaking. Bresnihan and Stoops (1996) further suggested talking zone, speaking line and conversation game to face the challenge of the first language use in class. The over use of native language may impact on the quality of the lesson. In summary, all these proposed activities create an opportunity for the EFL learners to practice the speaking fluency in the EFL class.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The literature review above provides a board picture on the topic of developing and improving the speaking fluency in EFL class. However, this study lists two questions and seeks relevant answers through two sets of questionnaire.

Stated questions:

1. How the EFL teachers and students treat the development of speaking fluency in the EFL class?
2. Is there any relationship between the EFL teachers' willingness of promoting the speaking fluency for their students and the EFL students' preference of the speaking fluency in the EFL class in China?

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

This study was designed to identify how the EFL teachers and students treat the development of speaking fluency in the EFL class from a selected college in China. Hence, 40 students are randomly selected in this college. Their major is various, but English is a compulsory subject for all the participants. The demography is a female dominated situation since there are 35 females students in this sample. Another 10 domestic EFL teachers with 6 females and 4 males are convened randomly from this college too. These selected teachers are all middle aged EFL specialists with more than ten years EFL teaching experiences at a college level. About their English proficiency, 5 of them are at the intermediate level, 3 teachers consider their English is close to upper intermediate level and the rest 2 rate their English proficiency at an advanced stage and lower intermediate level. The reason to choose the domestic EFL teachers only is that not all colleges in China have foreign or native EFL teachers. The reliability and valid will be decreased, if asking the overseas EFL teachers to observe. A total number of 50 participants involved in this study as a sample.

B. Instruments

There are two questionnaires and a five-point scale judgment is applied in this study. The first one is to investigate the teachers' willingness of promoting the speaking fluency for their students and the students' demand and preference of the speaking fluency in the EFL class is in the second questionnaire. A reminder that these two questionnaires ignore the demographical distribution of the participants in the survey, which means the result is applicable for both males and females in this college. These two lists of questionnaires are derived from the theories of fluency development in the literature review above. The items for the teachers' willingness of implementing speaking fluency are closely related to the students' preference of fluency development, which means in this circumstance the questions for the teachers are similar to these questions to the students. For instance, question 1 in the survey for the teachers is – "As a teacher, I inform all my students' that fluency is a necessary strand in language learning (1–disagreed and 5–totally agreed)"; by contrast, for the students is – "I consider the speaking fluency is a necessary strand in language learning (1–Not preferred at all and 5–Preferred very much)". Therefore, such patterns ensure both parties can understand the questions clearly and answer the questions relatively. In order to further increase the reliability and validity for this research, a Chinese version is translated from the English version. Both versions were approved by an expert in this field.

C. Data Collection

Before doing this survey, there was a demonstration of this instrument with other teachers and students. It is very important to inform all the participants to provide an authentic score on each question. No discussion about the answers among the participants. They must try all questions in the questionnaires form. It is possible to have an interview with the teachers and students in the demonstration in order to find out the weakness in the questionnaire setting, to consider adding some further questions and to ensure the relevance of the Chinese and English versions. Such demonstration will help the data collection and analysis in a reliable and valid condition. When conducting the formal survey, to convene

all 50 participants together, to inform them with the purpose of the study, and to provide an instruction of answering the questions in the intended survey, these are the three steps to collect data.

D. Data Analysis

The SPSS program was used for the data analysis in this study. The descriptive statistics is to analyze the first stated question how the EFL teachers and students treat the development of speaking fluency in the EFL class. There are two related parts: the teachers' willingness to promote the speaking fluency for their students and the students' demand and preference of the speaking fluency. The evaluating criteria for the interpretation of the mean value of two variables are in table 1 below.

TABLE 1:
CRITERIA FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MEAN VALUE FOR THE TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS OF PROMOTING THE SPEAKING FLUENCY FOR THEIR STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' PREFERENCE AND DEMAND OF THE SPEAKING FLUENCY IN THE EFL CLASS OF THE SAMPLE WITH 50 PARTICIPANTS

Mean Value	Level of Teachers' Willingness (Agreement)	Level of Students' Demand (Preference)
4.21-5.00	Strongly agree	Preferred very much
3.41-4.20	Agree	Preferred to some degree
2.61-3.40	Uncertain	Uncertain
1.81-2.60	Disagree	Rarely prefer
0.00-1.80	Strongly disagree	Not preferred at all

For the stated question 2, a t-test is used to identify whether there is any dynamic relationship between the teachers' willingness of promoting the speaking fluency for their students and the students' preference of the speaking fluency.

E. Results

TABLE 2:
THE TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS TO PROMOTE THE FLUENCY OF SPEAKING FOR THEIR STUDENTS IN THE EFL CLASS OF SAMPLE WITH 10 PARTICIPANTS

#	Questions	Mean Value	Level of Agreement
1	As a teacher, I inform all my students' that fluency is a necessary strand in language learning	4.40	Strongly agree
2	I indeed spend 25% of time on fluency development in class	1.60	Strongly disagree
3	I organize different activities for my students to practice speaking fluency regularly	3.60	Agree
4	I certainly understand and apply the conditions of running a speaking fluency activity in class	3.70	Agree
5	I clearly provide instructions on how to practice the speaking fluency in class	2.90	Uncertain
6	I always ask the students to practice the known language and content for their speaking skill	3.20	Uncertain
7	I attempt to create more speaking opportunities for my students to use the known language items	4.30	Strongly agree
8	I am keen to encourage the students to focus on meaning when practice speaking fluency	1.60	Strongly disagree
9	I push the EFL students to speak faster in fluency development	1.70	Strongly disagree
10	I motivate the students to repeat the same context until they easily control the context	3.30	Uncertain
11	I am confident with my students' communicative competence to maintain the real conversations	3.30	Uncertain
	Average	3.05	Uncertain

Table 2 shows two items (Question 1 & 7) are strongly agreed by the 10 teachers. Question 1 has the highest average mean value with 4.40 due to the majority of the teachers agree with the statement of fluency development is a necessary strand in language learning; two items (Question 3 & 4) are agreed by them who understand and apply the conditions for running a fluency activity and organize different activities for fluency development in class; four uncertain items (Question 5, 6, 10 and 11); and the rest three items (Question 2, 8 and 9) are strongly disagreed.

TABLE 3
THE STUDENTS' DEMAND AND PREFERENCE OF THE SPEAKING FLUENCY IN THE EFL CLASS OF THE SAMPLE WITH 40 PARTICIPANTS

#	Questions	Mean Value	Level of Agreement
1	I consider the speaking fluency is a necessary strand in language learning	4.45	Preferred very much
2	I do put 25% of time and effort on fluency development in class	1.70	Not preferred at all
3	I would like to practice my speaking fluency regularly through different activities	3.88	Preferred to some degree
4	I certainly require the conditions for participating in a fluency activity	3.63	Preferred to some degree
5	I can clearly follow the instructions on how to practice the speaking fluency	2.98	Uncertain
6	I attempt to practice the known language and content for the speaking skill	2.95	Uncertain
7	I try my best to be involved in any opportunity to use and practice my known language items	3.28	Uncertain
8	I put effort on focusing and processing meanings when I practice speaking fluency	1.95	Rarely prefer
9	I push myself to increase my speaking with a faster speed in fluency development	2.38	Rarely prefer
10	I repeat the same context until I can easily control the context	2.95	Uncertain
11	I really need a good level of communicative competence to maintain the real conversations	3.18	Uncertain
	Average	3.03	Uncertain

Table 3 shows only one item is strongly agreed by all the participating students. Question 1 has the highest average mean value with 4.45 since 36 out of the students prefer or prefer very much to the statement of fluency development is a necessary strand in language learning; two items (Question 3 & 4) are preferred to some degrees that the students can understand the conditions for practicing a fluency activity and join in different activities for fluency development in

class; the next five uncertain items (Question 5, 6, 7, 10 and 11) and the rest 3 items: Question 2 is not preferred at all Question 8 & 9 are rarely preferred. The average rate of this questionnaire is 3.03 with an uncertain criterion.

TABLE 4:
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS OF PROMOTING THE SPEAKING FLUENCY FOR THEIR STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' DEMAND AND PREFERENCE OF THE SPEAKING FLUENCY IN THE EFL CLASS (PAIRED T-TEST WITH TWO TAILED)

	Teachers (n=10)		Students (n=40)		T Calculated	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	4.40	0.70	4.45	0.75	-0.1993	0.84
2	1.60	0.84	1.70	0.76	-0.3421	0.73
3	3.60	0.84	3.88	0.72	-0.9479	0.35
4	3.70	0.67	3.63	0.74	0.3081	0.76
5	2.90	0.57	2.98	0.86	-0.3328	0.74
6	3.20	0.79	2.95	0.71	0.9130	0.37
7	4.30	0.67	3.28	0.78	4.1527**	0.00
8	1.60	0.70	1.95	0.68	-1.4246	0.16
9	1.70	0.82	2.38	0.74	-2.3647*	0.02
10	3.30	0.48	2.95	0.78	1.7802	0.08
11	3.30	0.95	3.18	0.68	0.3926	0.70
Average	3.05	0.73	3.03	0.75	0.1050	0.92

**Significant at the 0.01 level two tailed t-test

Table 4 shows the paired t-test results: only 1 item (Question 7) among the total 11 questions was identified between the mean value of the teachers' willingness of developing speaking fluency and the students' preference of practicing speaking fluency with a significant difference at 1% ($p < 0.01$) level. The rest 10 items were perfectly related with these two variables between the teachers and students. The statistical figures of item 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9 illustrated that the students' preference is generally greater than the teachers' willingness for the development of speaking fluency. It is necessary to point out item 8 – the student's question: I put effort on focusing and processing meanings when I practice speaking fluency, which is much greater than the teacher's question: I push the EFL students to speak faster in fluency development. However, item 9 – the student's question: I push myself to increase my speaking with a faster speed in fluency development, is even close to a significant difference (Sig. = 0.02, 2 tailed) to the teacher's question: I motivate the students to repeat the same context until they control the context easily. Thus, item 9 will be a significant difference, if the degree of freedom is at 5% ($p < 0.05$) level.

On the other hand, the rest four items 4, 6, 10 and 11 resulted that the teachers' willingness and efforts on developing fluency is greater than the students' preference in the EFL class. These two variables also closely related. For example, item 6 – I always ask the students to practice the known language and content for their speaking skill, and item 10 – the EFL teachers encouraging the repetition of the same context until the language learners are able to control the context easily, which are closely followed by the students. To sum up, the mean value for teachers' willingness is 3.05 and 3.03 is for students' preference. There is a close matching between the teachers' willingness of promoting speaking fluency and the students' preference in this study. Nevertheless, the final outcome is still located in the uncertainty level.

V. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

First of all, the teachers' willingness and students' preference of developing the speaking fluency are internal related in this research, but the overall outcome is with an uncertain attention on the fluency development. This provides a very strong reason to balance four strands in a language program immediately. To analyze these findings more specifically, the strand of speaking fluency is totally ignored by these participated teachers and students, who evaluated a mean value of 1.6 and 1.7 on item 2 – the weight of fluency development in class in the questionnaires. This implies they did not pay attention on fluency development at all. Nonetheless, they have several reasons and one common explanation is that the EFL teachers are usually making progress to focus on teaching new materials in class. They consider homework is a kind of revision and students believe learning new things are worthwhile, whereas the retrieval of the known content is a waste of time. Through an interview after this research, the participants including both the teachers and students think a quarter of the class time on fluency development is too much. Nation (2007) argued that fluency strand is necessary for any proficiency level when learning a foreign language. The purpose for learning is best to use what already known. So, the EFL learners are strongly required to put their efforts on fluency development. It is true that the speaking is the most important skill in learning a foreign language (Ur, 1996). A large demand of the speaking skill creates many opportunity to improve the speaking fluency. Thanesh (2013) explores that there is a shift towards focusing on speaking fluency development in India now. Consequently, the attention should be paid on meaning-focused output and fluency development strands for improving the communicative competence.

On the other hand, though the mean values 3.70 (teachers) and 3.63 (students) with an agreed and preferred criterion on item 4 – the understanding of the condition of speaking fluency, however, the understanding of this concept is not sufficient. Item 6 refers to the known language and content; item 7 is the input and output opportunities; the feature of meaning-focused is related to item 8; item 9 is about speeding up in speaking and item 10 is considered as a repetition strategy. These are all conditions and features for developing speaking fluency. Indeed, they were poorly answered by

either the teachers or the students, which imply item 4 is not reliable and valid. It is necessary to review the conditions and features for these participants. To perform a fluency task, the conditions and features are mandatory to consider first, otherwise the practice of fluency is not standardized or not effective. Thus, if there is an insufficient understanding of the rationale for fluency development; if there is a lack of opportunities for the repetition of the known languages and contents; if speaking is not pushed by speed; it will be difficult to achieve the goal of developing the speaking fluency, which not only has a feature of meaning-focused processing and retrieval, but also contributes to the form-focused instruction in terms of the increase of grammar accuracy and the control of content (Nation, 1989).

Next, the exception of the internal relationship in this study is item 7 – the teachers' effort on creating more speaking opportunities for their students to use the known language items is great, instead, the students response a low preference. No matter how the teachers encourage their students to participate in class, there is always a low response in a grammar translation learning environment. This raises two considerations: the adoption of the communicative language teaching in the EFL class in China is necessary and the other is about motivation is a tool to maintain the learning. Item 7 is a typical situation that the teachers know its importance, but the students do not engage very well. This is a gap between knowing and doing. Therefore, motivation is a strategy to fill this gap. The EFL teachers need to reflect motivational strategies with their learners' achievements together. Motivation is a way to enhance the speaking fluency development, because the teacher's motivation strategies can attract the students' interest of learning and thus the EFL learners gain motivation from their teachers to maintain the EFL learning more effectively (Dörnyei, 1994). In summary, motivation supports to make achievements in EFL learning. This is an analysis why students' engagement is very weak in item 7. Furthermore, Dörnyei (2003) pointed out the motivation also effects on the individual's progress to evaluate what was achieved; how it was achieved and to plan for the next step of learning. One responsibility for the EFL teachers is to use the motivational strategies to achieve what learners expected as well as the objectives of the EFL course. Students will therefore continue to put their efforts on the next level of learning.

Brown (2007) stated motivation is yet an affective variable to be considered in the language teaching and learning. To compare with learning new things, motivation will be more powerful. The motivation strategy increases the quality in learning and enhances the using of language and content repetitively outside the class. The EFL learners should: a) be familiar with the language items and content; b) repeat them until with a fast speaking speed, few unnecessary pauses, and without losing the original meanings; c) understand the practice and learning with motivation; d) easily control and restructure the content; e) maintain a conversation with the similar languages and contents in real communication. In class, the EFL learners can choose the topic that is actually happened in their life (Brown & Nation, 1997). There are many topics and activities for developing the speaking fluency, for example, to describe a place one visited before can be talked through the 4/3/2 activity (Maurice, 1983). Students can cultivate their communicative competence because the topic and content practiced in class can be applied in real life again, but at a more fluent level.

On the whole, Brown (2002) stated that English language teaching now requires diagnosis, treatment and assessment. Diagnosis is the first step to identify learners' needs, necessities and wants (Nation & Macalister, 2010). To diagnose what the EFL learners' target knowledge that is expected to learn. In order to achieve the goal of the course, to explore what the necessity of knowledge they should have; and what is the lack parts. It is obvious that the speaking fluency is lacked in this study. To treat such issue, these teachers need to understand the fluency strand; to believe that speaking fluency is a trainable skill (Arevart & Nation, 1991); to increase the portion of fluency development in class; and to adjust and improve the curriculum of the course if they can. Findings in this study indicate that the teachers should have initiatives to do so. Finally, the assessment is a check point for the treatment and improvement. After processing of the assessment, the EFL teachers still have time to interview the students. The relevant and valuable feedbacks from the interview should be considered for the next improvement session.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore the necessity for speaking fluency development in college institutions in China. In the light of the treatment of speaking fluency in the EFL class, a sample of 10 teachers and 40 students were participated in the survey. The researches indicated that there is a close relationship between the teachers' willingness and students' preference of implementing and developing the speaking fluency. However, the general status of speaking fluency is on a weak attention. In a communicative language teaching environment, the teachers should balance the four strands and shift from a heavy portion of form-focused instruction to meaning-focused processing. In this sense, this study holds a point of view that developing speaking fluency is an important strand in language learning.

There was a little differences between the two variables that the teachers' willingness and students' preference of implementing the development of speaking fluency. However, this study is limited in the area of college EFL courses with a female dominated demography. There might be a significance and uniqueness in other different academic levels or other demographics groups. It will be very interesting if further researches on the opposite demography with a male dominated population. In conclusion, this research provides a picture on the situation of the development of speaking fluency for the college students, it is important to know the way of promoting speaking fluency. It is also a challenging task. Therefore, further research should draw attention on how to improve the speaking fluency.

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Teaching English as a Foreign Language through Literature

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Abstract—This paper presents evidence that literature for children can be effectively used to acquire English as a foreign language in students of all ages. Students benefit from being challenged with language input that is slightly beyond their independent level of comprehension. This comprehensible input can be provided by listening to the reading or the telling of a story. Suggestions for practical applications of language acquisition and learning principles are included in five categories of activities using English language literature—story selection, listening, shared reading, independent reading, and drama.

Index Terms—literature, EFL learners, language acquisition

I. INTRODUCTION

It is well established that a rich language experience during the first years of life are essential for successful first language (L1) development (Chomsky, 1957; Heath, 2004; Wells, 1986). It is also accepted that listening to polished reading contributes to a command of English and development of vocabulary (Adams, 1990; Elley, 1989; Freeman & Freeman, 2007; Short & Harste, 1996). Further, children's literature has been found useful for development of second language acquisition for students of all ages (Neugebauer & Currie-Rubin, 2009; Reid, 2002).

Students benefit from being challenged with language input that is slightly beyond their independent level of comprehension (Krashen, 1982). This can be provided by conversation or listening to the reading or the telling of a story. This notion of using literature for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition is not new. Quintilian (A.D. 35 – 95) advocated the use of Aesop's fables for acquiring Latin as a foreign language. Later, Erasmus (1466—1536) used pictures and then Comenius (1592—1670) wrote a picture book for acquiring Latin as a foreign language (Darian, 1972). This paper explores the efficacy of using quality literature for children for EFL acquirers of all ages.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Qualities of Children's Literature

It is difficult to define literature for children. In reality it is any book that is read to or by children. However, if a book is a Children's book, it usually has the following qualities (Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2004):

“A child protagonist and an issue that concerns children” (p. 8)—often the central character is about the age of the intended reader although not always, as in the case of folktales.

“Straightforward story line” (p. 8) in a simple setting—books for younger children include only one or two main characters. They are simply told from character introduction, goal, problem, conflict, through resolution. Books for young adults have more complex story lines that more closely parallel adult books.

Simple vivid concrete language—young readers understand more of what readers do than what they say or think. Young adult readers can follow more complex language structures (Temple, Martinez, and Yokota, 2004).

These last two characteristics make children's literature ideal for English language learners. Quality children's literature shares the same characteristics as quality literature for other age categories. Authors of quality literature provide differing perspectives and broaden understanding of the world; provide an enjoyable story that does not overtly moralize; deal with significant truths about the human experience; the characters are true to life; the insights are at least accurate and maybe even wise; choose precise words; the plot is convincing; the characters are believable, and the descriptions are telling; and provide a total experience through the book that comes together for a satisfying whole—genre, characters, goals, conflicts, themes and illustrations (Temple, Martinez, and Yokota, 2004).

These qualities engage readers of all ages. Coupled with a straightforward story line and vivid, concrete language, children's literature can provide ideal materials for English language learning.

Comprehensible Input

Krashen (1982) posits that language acquisition and language learning are two distinct cognitive functions. Acquisition focuses on comprehension of language, while learning focuses on the rules of grammar, which produce correct speech. Both functions are necessary. Language acquisition input is most effective when it is natural, interesting, and understood (Krashen, 1982). Thus, rules of grammar are first intuitively acquired through meaningful language use and then later they can be formally learned. English language acquirers benefit from practice in listening comprehension. Students acquire a second language only when they are exposed to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982), which is

listening to or reading the target language that is a little beyond their current level of competence ($i + 1$). Providing learners with comprehensible input facilitates their natural language acquisition (Krashen, 1982).

Early Foreign Language Scholars

The work of early language educators contained elements that are compatible with this current theory on language acquisition. The famous language teacher of antiquity, Marcus Fabius Quintilian (A.D. 35 – 95), was born in Spain, but traveled to Rome as a young man. After an apprenticeship, he became an advocate and a teacher of rhetoric (Darian, 1972). His methodology for teaching Latin as a foreign language was to:

1. Read aloud an Aesop fables. Ask the students to retell the fable in their own words,
2. Later, write the fables, and
3. Students listened to poetry; then paraphrased it into prose (Darian, 1972).

Quintilian included literature and drew upon students' background knowledge in L1. It is understood that his greatest contribution to modern language instruction is that correctness is derived from the usage of the educated. This concept still plays an important part in determining standards of usage in modern English language teaching (Darian, 1972). When learning a foreign language, one wishes to learn the dialect that will offer the most opportunities. However today, we understand the value of less privileged dialects (Delpit, 1995).

Desiderius Erasmus (1466—1536) was a Dutch scholar who followed in the tradition of Quintilian in methodology and language—Latin. Erasmus advocated very little initial formal grammar instruction. The student should be exposed to historical and mythological stories, descriptions of plant and animal life illustrated by pictures (Darian, 1972). Erasmus said:

“I have no patience with the stupidity of the average teacher of grammar who wastes precious years in hammering rules into children's heads. For it is not learning rules that we acquire the power of speaking language, but by daily intercourse with those accustomed to expressing themselves with the exactness and refinement, and by copious reading of the best authors” (*De Ratione Studii or Upon the Right Method of Instruction* Part 3 Section 521C—522A; cited in Darian, 1972, p.10).

Erasmus gave the language learning four points that are the cornerstones of modern language teaching:

1. Rules of usage are derived from an examination of the actual language as it is spoken.
2. The rules of grammar should be taught only after they have been acquired intuitively by reading or other means.
3. All grammar rules should be accompanied by examples.
4. Pictures should be used to illustrate new material whenever possible (Darian, 1972).

Following Erasmus, the most important language scholar of the time was Moravian Bishop Johannes Amos Comenius (1592—1670). He believed that the experiences in the foreign language should draw upon the students' background knowledge, and he advocated using a controlled vocabulary. He differed with his contemporaries by urging teachers to present not just one meaning, but also multiple common meanings. Comenius wrote textbooks that were compatible with his instructional methods (Darian, 1972). His second textbook *Orbis Pictus* published in 1657 was a picture dictionary illustrated with woodcuts. Although it was written as a Latin textbook, it is considered the first informational book for children. This work was used as a textbook until the late 1700s (Temple, Marines, & Yokota, 2004). A picture was placed on one page, while the facing page contained the text. Numbers in the text corresponded with numbers in the pictures to help with the readers understanding (Darian, 1972).

Comenius made the following argument in support of using pictures:

“If the objects are not present, the senses grow dull and flit hither and thither out of weariness. But when the objects are present, they [the students] grow merry, wax lively and willingly suffer themselves to be fastened upon them till [*sic*] the things be sufficiently discerned” (Darian 1972, p.14.)

Comenius continued the tradition started by Quintilian—one acquires language by hearing and reading, followed by learning the rules of grammar (Darian, 1972). It is interesting that much of these early scholars' work is still compatible with current language theory.

III. APPLICATIONS OF LITERATURE

Elley, Cutting, Mangubhai, and Hugo (1996) report on literature based English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in Fiji, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and South Africa. In all cases high interest illustrated books were donated to schools in each country. With variations in each country, teachers were educated to use these books frequently in productive activities, such as shared reading, paired reading, and independent silent reading. In shared reading (Holdaway, 1979), teachers use big books or class sets of trade books to guide students through a reading experience. Teachers discuss the covers, titles, selected illustrations, and content. Students join in the reading when they can, such as reading a familiar repeated phrase. Students also read to each other in paired reading, and silently by themselves. Teachers initially write for students, and then write with students. Finally, students do their own writing.

Non-participating schools used commercial English language basal programs. In all cases students at participating schools outperformed those at nonparticipating schools. There were a variety of English assessments and anecdotal reports supporting these findings. A common thread of these programs was the strong impact on children's language acquisition (Elley et al., 1996).

Story Selection

Matching the reader/listener to the optimal text is an essential art of language and literacy teachers. Language acquirers do not practice language void of meaning. Language, unless reduced to nonsense syllables or individual phonemes, cannot be isolated from meaning. Thus, language is unavoidably about something. This reality is a boon for language educators and acquirers, as working with texts of personal interests can be highly motivational (McCormick, 2007). Language teachers can draw from any conceivable topic or genre that is of interest to acquirers. The importance of this point cannot be overemphasized.

In the late 1990s an impressive body of literature on motivation found its way into the reading community (Alexander and Fox, 2004). The research on this topic has been growing for several decades. We now have evidence that learners' interests, goals, and beliefs about their own language abilities impact the success they experience as language acquirers (McCormick, 2007). This has led to the concept of the engaged or motivated language user (Alexander & Fox, 2004). The concept of student choice is an important part of motivation, however students often do not know the array of options that are available to them. This is where well-read teachers, who intimately know their students' interests and cultural and linguistic backgrounds can be of help.

Using stories that English language acquirers already know in their native language takes advantage of their background information. This story knowledge supports acquirers' English comprehension (Vardell, Hadway, & Young, 2006).

Listening

Listening to an accomplished reading of interesting texts offers benefits for second language acquisition as well as reading development (Neugebauer & Currie-Rubin, 2009). Besides providing a positive experience using the target language, listening helps develop vocabulary and understanding of literary devices. There are also benefits in following along in the text while listening to the story. This listening while-reading technique is also beneficial if used repeatedly on the same story (Rasinski, 1989). Readers/listeners gain insights and understand themes more thoroughly following multiple readings of the same text (Frost, 1990).

In preparation for reading aloud, it is essential that the text be read prior to the performance. There are often unexpected twists that an author may take in sentence construction. Young acquirers also need preparation for the listening session. It is important to remove immediate distractions from them (Lynch-brown & Tomlinson, 2008). After reading the title and showing the cover and the initial illustrations, ask the students to make predictions of what will follow. Since listening to a new language takes a high level of mental energy, do not overtax the listeners. Read clearly and fairly slow with a relaxed voice, but do not distort the natural rhythm of the story (Reid, 2002).

Shared Reading

Shared reading refers to two or more people sharing the reading of a text. In an activity called echo or shadow reading, students are asked to read aloud along with the teacher. The teacher reads aloud at slow pace, but faster than the students can read by themselves. The students' reading should lag slightly behind the teacher's. This helps with learning pronunciation and phrasing. This technique is helpful even for advanced students, because of the word pronunciation support. Resist the temptation to stop at each unfamiliar word. Students should begin to cluster meaning into chunks or phrases. The ultimate goal is for the students to summarize an entire paragraph or page-length passage in their own words after one reading (Reid, 2002).

A follow-up activity for further development is shared sentence reading. The teacher reads one sentence, immediately followed by the student reading the same sentence. Do not translate individual words, but keep the translation general to the sentence. Focus students on just getting the gist of the story. At the end of each paragraph, the teacher should reread the paragraph aloud before continuing to the next. This facilitates a review the paragraph before moving the next. Repeat this set of activities. Encourage the more advance learners to give a general translation for the less advanced learners (Reid, 2002).

Once a book is completed using the above techniques, the teacher may read the book again out aloud, encouraging the students to follow along. Students should not worry about the details. They should focus on getting the general structure of the story and the normal flow and rhythm of English. An audiotape can be useful for this activity. It is often helpful to construct a chart of the events that take place in the story (Reid, 2002).

Independent Reading

Students should be given many opportunities to read independently. Materials should be selected that are at the students' independent English reading level. This means that the student recognizes 99% of the words and comprehends 90% of the passage content (McKenna & Stahl, 2003). Reading levels are not immovable ceilings. They vary with the readers' interests and expertise. If a reader is interested in extreme sports, the reading level will be higher when reading materials related to extreme sports (McCormick, 2007).

There are at least two ways to structure independent reading that maximize language development. The first is to provide a few questions for the reader to answer at periodic intervals through the text (Reid, 2002). These should be general questions that focus the reader on understanding the theme or the gist of the reading. It is important to craft the questions so the readers will be successful. The goal is to build reader confidence. Good questions might be: What has happened so far? Who are the main characters? Do you think the protagonist will succeed? Why? Challenge intermediate students slightly more with questions such as these: What obstacles has the protagonist faced in reaching the goal? What cause-and-effect relationships do you see (Reid, 2002)?

Another way to structure independent reading for all levels of readers is to use a variation of think aloud protocol. Place a red dot or other symbol in the text periodically at strategic spots. When readers come to these markers they must convey what they are thinking by speaking out loud or writing their thoughts down on a separate sheet of paper (Tierney & Readence, 2000). Thinking about the text nudges readers to attend to the meaning of the text, increasing comprehension (Pressley, & Afflerbach, 1995), and provides meaningful English language practice.

A post reading response to independent reading can be beneficial as another opportunity to use English in a meaningful way. One such engagement is the *Onepager* (Personal Communication Bobbi Jentes Mason March, 1995). This consists of a creative response that is limited to one page, which includes the following elements: one visual element (image), two quotes from the reading, one reflective statement from the reader or a related quote from another source, and one personal comment from the reader. These elements are arranged on one page to present a creative and thoughtful response to the reading.

Collecting, discussing, and analyzing common proverbs between L1 and L2 can help learners understand the historical and cultural background of the target language. Proverbs highlight the values held by the cultures of each language. This activity can lead acquirers to identify cultural similarities and differences (Kuo & Lai, 2006).

Drama

There are three simple forms of drama that can be enjoyable ways to use English. Drama provides players alternative perspectives and increases comprehension.

Story theater. The simplest of these classroom drama activities is story theater. The suitability of this drama form is limited to young children. There is no audience for this drama. The value comes from participation. The teacher reads aloud the story, while the students pantomime the action. There are no props or sets. The teacher usually assigns the characters to groups of students. Stories filled with action and minimum dialogue are best for story theater (Temple Martinez, Yokota, 2004).

Creative Drama. Players of creative drama enact stories without narration. The story is conveyed only through action and dialogue. The dialogue is adlibbed. Players know story events and make up their own lines as they are performing. There may be a few props—card stock headbands for animal horns or crowns. Stories with extensive dialogue and action work best for Creative Drama. There should only be a minimum of narration (Temple Martinez, Yokota, 2004).

Role-play. As a related activity, Kuo and Lai (2006) recommend role-play from a socio-cultural approach. Students can dramatize actual incidents, which caused cross-cultural misunderstanding. In this way, the role-play prepares students to overcome miscommunication problems using the target language.

Readers Theater. Readers Theater relies solely on the players' voices to convey the story. As the name implies, the players read a script. They only convey their characters through their voices. This form of drama is a performance. Therefore, players practice voice, inflection, and prosody until their parts are perfected. Players can collaborate, along with the teacher's assistance, to identify the optimum tone of voice for the sly, miserly, and dishonest, as well as the benevolent, good-natured, honest, humorous, and heroic characters. Players must read with expression and energy. Preferably they perform while sitting raised on stools, but chairs can be substituted. Stories filled with dialogue, but little narration and action are best for Readers Theater. Stories with lots of action can be adapted for use.

IV. CONCLUSION

Practitioners understand that language is best acquired from interesting comprehensible input that is within meaningful contexts (Krashen, 1982). It has long been advocated that grammar is best acquired intuitively by listening to speech and good literature, by reading, or by engaging in meaningful conversations before rules of grammar are learned (Darian, 1972). Based upon these assumptions, the paper suggested literary instructional activities that provide comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982), develop intuitive English speech patterns, and benefit reading development (Adams, 1990; Short & Harste, 1996). The evidence presented here suggests that meaningful instruction married to quality literature for children can be an effective approach to second and foreign language acquisition.

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Dystopian Cybernetic Environment in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*

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Abstract—Cybernetics is particularly well-suited to cultural history since it resonated with an American cultural mood that included World War II anxieties and worries that communism indicated that human beings could degenerate into unthinking, perfectly intelligent machines. Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969) illustrates people who become enslaved to a controlling system of cybernetics that carries out its power through time and war. In this study, I examine *Slaughterhouse-Five* in which the cybernetic system creates a dystopian society and reduces human beings into obedient robots. Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* demonstrates that cybernetics as a metaphor for control of the mind leaves no space for individuals to decide for their own lives. This analysis investigates the ways through which cybernetics manipulates human beings in Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

Index Terms—cybernetics, dystopia, war, time, machine, mind control

I. INTRODUCTION

Slaughterhouse-Five (1969) recounts Kurt Vonnegut's personal experience at the bombing of Dresden in February 1945, when thousands of bombs were dropped on the city, and caused a tragedy more devastating than the atomic bomb at Hiroshima. Vonnegut "recalls that he considered writing what he had seen soon after it [war] was over" (Tomedi, 2004, p. 56). Harold Bloom asks, "Indeed, what *can* one say about the madness in our time of human beings slaughtering their fellow human beings—coldly, methodically, scientifically, in numbers heretofore inconceivable?" (2009, p. 5). *Slaughterhouse-Five* narrates Billy Pilgrim's war experience, especially at Dresden, and his traveling through time as well as his kidnapping by the inhabitants of the planet Tralfamadore that is "an equally dubious utopia in which he [Billy] secludes himself" (Simmons, 2009, p. 175).

Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a dystopian fiction in which the border between not only real and fiction, but also human and machine is blurred for the presentation of a more tragic picture of World War II. Robert Tally (2011) states that "The humane fatalism of *Slaughterhouse-Five* suggests one way of looking at the disjointed, often painful, experience of social life in the United States in the twentieth century (2011, p. 85).

The novel begins, "All this happened, more or less" (*Slaughterhouse-Five* 1). The phrase "more or less" negates the accuracy of the claim that "all this happened." But Vonnegut immediately says, "The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true." *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a criticism of war in a cybernetic environment that, according to Paul N. Edwards (1996), is a "closed-world discourse" in which "containment, with its image of an enclosed space surrounded and sealed by American power, was the central metaphor" (1996, p. 8). Cybernetics considers ideas of control and communication. It investigates the feedback processes in self-regulating systems such as machines, animals, and the communication with their environment. The spatiality of these systems considers not only physical locations, but also social spaces and relationships. According to David Porush (1985) in *The Soft Machine*:

[Vonnegut] does not manipulate the very act of fictional communication itself, nor explore language, as tacit ways of eluding the control over communication proposed by cybernetics until his later novel *Slaughterhouse Five* (1969), where he experiments with the structure of novelistic presentation. (1985, p. 86)

Slaughterhouse-Five is an illustration of the American cybernetic environment that surrounds, affects and links all living and dead matters in the world by ways of interaction. In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut uses war context to convey cybernetic war communication that motivates young people to war and massacre.

In addition to war, *Slaughterhouse-Five* introduces time as another controlling factor. For Vonnegut time is different from the physical linear time. According to Christina Jarvis (2009), Vonnegut employs "the vehicle of time travel and a fractured narrative that juxtaposes the firebombing of Dresden" (2009, p. 65). Vonnegut depicts Billy, the protagonist of the novel, like a machine that can move mentally to past, present, and future. Billy finds "himself with a time sense that changes the boundaries of spatial perception for the whole species" (Haraway, 1991, p. 179).

Vonnegut's dark picture criticizes our contemporary world and the devastating direction in which we are headed. *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a criticism of cybernetics that reduce human to intelligent machine. Lawrence R. Broer explains that in *Slaughterhouse-Five* "we encounter the mindless hating and killing, superpatriot machines of Howard Campbell, Colonel Wild Bob, and Bertram Copeland Rumfoord, whose glorifications of war and exhortations to battle appear ludicrous alongside the pitiful suffering of Billy and his comrades" (2009, p. 51). Egotism, sentimentality, materialism, and blind patriotism are the new American values (Giannone, 1977, p. 87) in a cybernetic environment in which time becomes a myth and "we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism" (Haraway, 1991, p. 150).

In this study, I examine *Slaughterhouse-Five* in which the cybernetic system creates a dystopian society and reduces human beings into obedient robots. Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* demonstrates that cybernetics as a metaphor for control of the mind leaves no space for individuals to decide for their own lives. The present study explores war and time as two controlling cybernetic factors that degenerate human being into unthinking, intelligent machines in Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

II. CYBERNETIC WAR MACHINE

While Vonnegut was looking for a muse, he found himself in the house of an old war friend, Bernard V. O'Hare. As these two old friends of war begin to review their war memories, Vonnegut notices that his presence makes Bernard's wife, Mary, upset. He testifies that he does not know why Mary dislikes him as he has never done anything, to his knowledge, to disturb her and her husband. Ironically it is Mary who serves as Vonnegut's muse, and the novel is dedicated to her. Mary shows her fury and says:

"Well, I know," she said. "You'll pretend you were men instead of babies, and you'll be played in the movies by Frank Sinatra and John Wayne or some of those other glamorous, war-loving, dirty old men. And war will look just wonderful, so we'll have a lot more of them. And they'll be fought by babies like the babies upstairs," referring to hers and Vonnegut's children (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, P. 7).

In fact, Bernard's wife accuses Vonnegut of composing a fiction that glorifies the war. Vonnegut understands that she is worried for her children who might be sacrificed by the war. Then he promises her to entitle his novel *The Children's Crusade: A Duty Dance with Death*. Bernard's wife scares that war affects her children's mind and encourages them to massacre. It is exactly what cybernetics does. Through the novel, Vonnegut attempts to consider a historical issue in American public discourse: the ruin of Dresden through killing machines.

Vonnegut shows war as a manifestation of feedback loops that, according to American mathematician, David Tomas (2000), "govern present and future actions according to a past set of meanings" (2000, P. 28). In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, war is a governing system based on past experience. Due to such terrifying experience, people like Mary scare that war can be a governing system for their children in future.

Slaughterhouse Five displays a statement based on the relationship between writer and writing regarding a feedback loop system that considers how human perceives his/her environment and how he/she reacts to it. Norbert Wiener observed that what marks cybernetics as a new discipline is that it focuses not on the inner essence of things but on the systems of feedback and communication regulating the behavior of any entity: organic, human, or mechanical. War is the system that regulates the behaviors of the people in *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Wiener, in his work entitled *Cybernetics: or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, compares human to machine to show how human communication is similar to the way machine functions when given an order to complete a duty. Similarly when humans send messages, they become just aware that the messages have been received when the recipients reply, verbally or nonverbally. Also, Wiener offers that humans function in a machine-like behavior that is quite based on information processing and the desire to control human environment. By his article, *Cybernetics In History*, Wiener (1988) extends his discussion and explains:

society can only be understood through a study of the messages and communication facilities which belong to it; and that in the future development of these messages and communication facilities, messages between man and machines, between machines and man, and between machine and machine, are destined to play an ever increasing part. (1988, p. 15)

Since the emergence of Wiener's notions, controlling systems have turned to be an important part of our society. Vonnegut's concern in *Slaughterhouse-Five* is about war as a controlling system that communicates its values and expects all of its orders to be accepted by the machine-like human. In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, cybernetics transforms people to "fully automated boobs, ready to conform to the most convenient mold, whether in the mistaken interests of survival or friendliness or out of the lack of imagination to do anything better; thus, they become the ready slaves of whatever anonymous bureaucracies, computers, or authoritarian institutions take hold of their minds. (Broer, 2009, p. 52). Vonnegut sees that war turns individuals into machines and leaves them with no power to decide for their destiny.

As David Porush (1985) argues, cybernetics is "to embrace not only the information sciences but a metaphor so deeply engrained in our culture, so silently driven down to the roots of our imaginations, that it achieves the status of an element in a new mythology" (1985, p. 2) that individuals, and the cultural products of their thoughts, like literature, can be explained in terms of machines, and that intelligence can correspondingly be reproduced by artificial programs. Vonnegut also shows the metaphor of the machine comes into play. As Charlie Chaplin mentions, "machine men, with

machine minds, and machine hearts” comes true; then Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a criticism of the cybernetic war machine that manipulates humans’ mind. Vonnegut shows the ways that war machine provokes humans’ patriotic feelings to sacrifice the children of a nation. Thus, the novel becomes a warning against the war as a system of control and persuasion. As Paul Edward (1996) describes the war machine procedures of the era,

[as] metaphors, such systems constituted a dome of global technological oversight, a closed world, within which every event was interpreted as part of a titanic struggle between the superpowers. (1996, p. 1)

Vonnegut criticizes this system of the war machine in which human is trapped. *Slaughterhouse-Five* is an antiwar fiction, but it asserts that war is an unavoidable mistake that humans are bound to repeat. Vonnegut links all modern war to the Children’s Crusade of 1213. As the narrator of the novel says:

the Children’s Crusade started in 1213, when two monks got the idea of raising armies of children in Germany and France, and selling them in North Africa as slaves. Thirty thousand children volunteered, thinking they were going to Palestine. (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 8)

Vonnegut believes that war deceives young people since they cannot understand the reality. (Schatt, 1976, P. 82). He says: “We had been foolish virgins in the war, right at the end of childhood” (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, P. 7). Billy Pilgrim is a man who is deceived by the war machine. Billy Pilgrim is a man who is deceived by the war machine. He becomes the innocent pilgrim in a cruel and absurd world which controls its people through war. When Billy sees the Americans cleaned and shaved, he is shocked and understands how young they are, and says: “My God, it’s the Children’s Crusade!” (*Slaughterhouse-Five* 46). Vonnegut attempts to illustrate war as a controlling system that manipulates people’s mind.

Even in Tralfamadoria, Billy expects “the Tralfamadorians to be baffled and alarmed by all the wars and other forms of murder on Earth. He expected them to fear that the Earthling combination of ferocity and spectacular weaponry might eventually destroy part or maybe all of the innocent Universe” (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 50). When Tralfamadorians kidnap Billy Pilgrim, they place him in a zoo with Montana Wildhack, a Hollywood porn star. There someone asked Billy “what the most valuable thing he had learned on Tralfamadore was so far, and Billy replied, “How the inhabitants of a whole planet can live in peace as you know, I am from a planet that has been engaged in senseless slaughter since the beginning of time” (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 51). Vonnegut shows Billy’s historical concern about slaughter and humiliation. Billy says:

I myself have seen the bodies of schoolgirls who were boiled alive in a water tower by my own countrymen, who were proud of fighting pure evil at the time. ‘...’ And I have lit my way in a prison at night with candles from the fat of human beings who were butchered by the brothers and fathers of those school girls who were boiled. Earthlings must be the terrors of the Universe! If other planets aren’t now in danger from Earth, they soon will be. So tell me the secret so I can take it back to Earth and save us all: How can a planet live at peace?” (ibid).

Billy asks a Tralfamadorian “How-how *does* the Universe end?”

He answers, “we blow it up, experimenting with new fuels for our flying saucers. A Tralfamadorian test pilot presses a starter button, and the whole Universe disappears.”

“If you know this, said Billy, ‘isn’t there some way you can prevent it? Can’t you keep the pilot from *pressing* the button?’”

“He has *always* pressed it, and he always *will*. We *always* let him and we always *will* let him. The moment is structured that way.”

“So,” said Billy gropingly, I suppose that the idea of, preventing war on Earth is stupid, too.” (ibid)

Billy sees that the idea of war is unavoidable. In fact, it is cybernetics that encourages people to kill each other by pressing a button. Peter Galison (1999) calls cybernetics a “Manichean science” (Hayles, 1999, p. 106). As Katharine Hayles explains:

In a fine grained analysis of Wiener’s collaboration with Julian Bigelow to develop an anti-aircraft (AA) weapon during World War II, Galison brilliantly shows that Wiener’s construction of “the enemy” was significantly different from that portrayed in war propaganda or even in other technical reports. Rather than seeing the enemy in conventionally human (or, in the case of propaganda, subhuman) terms, Wiener modeled the enemy—for example, a fighter pilot trying to evade AA fire—as a probabilistic system that could effectively be countered using cybernetic modeling. (1999, p. 106)

Vonnegut depicts this cybernetic modeling through a story within *Slaughterhouse-Five*. He says about Trout’s book entitled *The Gutless Wonder* that is about a robot, who dropped jellied gasoline on human beings. It was dropped on them from airplanes. Robots did the dropping. They had no conscience, and no circuits which would allow them to imagine what was happening to the people on the ground (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p.72). The robot is a metaphor of a human who becomes an intelligent machine in war time. Vonnegut continues that “robot looked like a human being” and later “was welcomed to the human race” (ibid). Trout’s robot is like Wiener’s imagined firing machine that

could evolve new rules based on prior observation—that is, it could learn. Thus the firing system would evolve to become as Manichean as the enemy it faced. Galison argues that this strategy enabled a series of substitutions and identifications that mapped the enemy pilot onto the servo-controller and ultimately onto the allied war personnel behind the servo-controller” (Hayles, 1999, p. 106)

In cybernetics, pilot acts like a servo-mechanism. Thus, according to Hayles, “through this relay system, the enemy becomes like us and we become like the enemy: enemy mine... The cybernetic machine (and, by extension, cybernetics itself)” becomes engaged in “a bloody struggle in which Manichean tactics were used by both sides to kill as many humans as possible” (Hayles, 1999, p. 107). Cybernetic machine turns human beings into killing machines, as eventually “Billy Pilgrim was armed as he snoozed. His companions had insisted that he arm himself, since God only knew what sorts of killers might be in burrows.... who would never quit killing until they themselves were killed” (*Slaughterhouse-Five* 85). Vonnegut demonstrates that the function of cybernetic war is to persuade people not to leave killing until they themselves are killed. As Todd Davis (2006) notes, “For Vonnegut then, Dresden represents his complete disillusionment with the grand narratives of American culture, especially the narrative of scientific progress in which Vonnegut had innocently placed his trust. After witnessing the awesome power of science in the service of humanity’s hatred, Vonnegut essentially lost faith.” (2006, p. 76). Thus, through *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut attempts to share his feelings towards scientific progress with his readers and make them aware of the controlling power of science.

III. CYBERNETIC TIME MACHINE

Slaughterhouse-Five introduces a new mode of time that deconstructs the traditional notion of time. As Harold Bloom (2009) observes, “More than a conventional reminiscence of war, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is an attempt to describe a new mode of perception that radically alters traditional conceptions of time and morality” (2009, p. 5).

Vonnegut’s most noticeable narrative technique considering time and space is related to the Tralfamadorian view of time. As Vonnegut at the title page of the novel says: “This is a novel somewhat in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner of tales of the planet Tralfamadore, where the flying saucers come from.” For the Tralfamadorians “all moments, past, present, and future, always have existed, always will exist” (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 12).

On the planet of Tralfamadore, time is considered not as a river, but as a range of mountain. This spatial metaphor defines time in relation to space and shows that all moments are present at once. As Billy Pilgrim describes:

All moments, past, present, and future, always have existed, always will exist. The Tralfamadorians can look at all the different moments just the way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance. They can see how permanent all the moments are, and they can look at any moment that interests them. It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 12).

This shows that the novel has a non-linear plot in which Billy Pilgrim jumps here and there and experiences wartime. According to David Simmons, in *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel*, Tralfamadorians “have the capacity to view any moment in time whenever they choose” (2008, p. 121). Actually, considering history as a consistent present tense, or as a spatial phenomenon in which all tenses can be present, is similar to “Henri Bergson’s theory of memory in which all moments coexist in more or less concentrated forms. Memories closer to the present consciousness seem more concrete, concentrated into easily recognizable images; more distant memories are more disparate, fuzzier we might say” (Tally, 2011, p. 13). Thus, space and time are commingled distant memory. “All memories are in fact present at once; they are just dispersed over a landscape that spreads out before the consciousness” and “time is essentially space” (ibid). Billy Pilgrim becomes memory to be free to travel in time and space. Billy who is “unstuck in time” becomes an immortal disk that can fly through time and space and display his memories for the reader. As the narrator says:

Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between. (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 10)

Billy Pilgrim breaks the chronology of the story to retell different overlapping scenes. But he only finds repetition. It is a feedback loop of history that is not able to establish a learning process and is doomed to endlessly recur itself. Considering the epigraph of the novel, this recurring seems to be bitter: “The cattle are lowing, / The Baby awakes. / But the little Lord Jesus / No crying He makes.” Billy has no control over his life. For instance, one moment he might be a prisoner of WWII and another moment he could be back in his childhood in Ilium, New York in 1922. As the narrator notes:

Billy is spastic in time, has no control over where he is going next, and the trips aren’t necessarily fun. He is in a constant state of stage fright, he says, because he never knows what part of his life he is going to have to act in next. (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 10)

Billy adopts a nonlinear time as a defense mechanism to rationalize his terrible war experience. Through flying in time and space he detaches himself the material world and gets into a virtual world far away from the reality he witnessed in Dresden. By Tralfamadoria, Vonnegut represents a world of information existing parallel to the real world. Becoming a time machine or a disk of information makes Billy able to develop virtual technology through which he can step into a world far away from the real world.

In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut, as a war survivor, asks the question “Why me?” In fact, he is tortured by this question and through Billy, he attempts to reduce the guilt feeling which one has when one is accidentally survived from death, while one’s friends and family are perished. For Billy, his survival is not blessing; but instead it is a curse. That is why Billy invents an imaginary world where he can find a justification, where he becomes unstuck in time. Through

this nonlinear time, life and death become insignificant for him and feeling of guilt disappears from his heart. The Tralfamadorians do not live in a three dimensional world. They are not trapped in time to which earthlings are forced to live in. They are able to consider the pleasant moments of their life and ignore the aspects of time they do not like. Therefore, the tragedy of Dresden is insignificant in the vast space time continuum. Also, in the Tralfamadoria death is only a tiny part of existence that is ignored like the bombing of Dresden. Billy finds The Tralfamadorians real since without them he is not able to live. In fact, Tralfamadoria is an unreal world that Billy makes it real to escape from the misery of the real world. Tralfamadorians believe guilt does not exist since people are not responsible for their actions. They believe everything is predetermined and we cannot change the course of events. A Tralfamadorian tells Billy:

Today we do (have peace). On other days we have wars as horrible as any you've ever seen or read about. There isn't anything we can do about them, so we simply don't look at them. We ignore them. We spend eternity looking at pleasant moments (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 51).

By adopting the Tralfamadorian view, Billy makes himself free from the guilt which one feels when one is locked in time and feels responsible for one's actions. Billy accepts the Tralfamadorian philosophy and believes the Tralfamadorian universe exists since it eliminates the question: "Why me?" Through the Tralfamadorian perspective Billy has no feeling of guilt for being saved since that is how it was and always will happen. He does not feel guilty since there is no reason to and there is nothing that can be done about war. Billy is affected by the Tralfamadorians who believe that the world will finally end because of their experiment with new fuel for their flying saucer. But instead of practicing free will and asking for change, they view the moment as "structured" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 37).

In *Art of the Motor*, Paul Virilio argues, in "cybernetic space-time" information is valuable when if it is represented fast. Thus, in such an environment, Billy, who "is multiple places in time at once" (Tally, 2011, p. 14), is able to give the reader information about different scenes, events, and places. Virilio (1995) observes cybernetic space-time as:

one formerly steered a motor vehicle: this is indeed the great aesthetic mutation of INFORMATION technologies. To transfer to the immediate environment the control that until now was exercised over the "object," the engine of displacement--and this, thanks to acquiring a "fractal" dimension, not of space now, but of time, of *real time*, allowing an individual's proximity to be virtualized with the aid of a process that controls their movements: this is indeed the most astounding use of interactivity. (1995, p. 146)

Escaping from earthly time, Billy is trapped by the cybernetic time that controls every action of him. He has no way to escape from the cybernetic time-space and is just able to travel within it. A Tralfamadorian says to Billy about the essence of time:

Earthlings are the great explainers, explaining why this event is structured as it is, telling how other events may be achieved or avoided. I am a Tralfamadorian, seeing all time as you might see a stretch of the Rocky Mountains. All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber . . . Only on Earth is there any talk of free will (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 37).

If time is observed as a linear system, then it can convey meaning. But Tralfamadorians are fatalist because time makes no meaning for them. For Tralfamadorians time is predetermined and unchangeable and this is the lesson that Billy learns from them.

Tralfamadorian fatalism makes Billy feels indifferent toward events. Billy's belief in Tralfamadorian philosophy makes him free from taking any responsibility for his own actions. Billy holds Tralfamadorian idea of time since it sets him free from taking any affairs to change the way things are. Trapped in an artificial universe of imperative signals, Billy is not able to escape a controlling environment that dogs his every step. In fact, Billy has lost his own self as a human and defines himself with Tralfamadorian. He thinks that if all human beings see the world as do the Tralfamadorians, then they would not be in suffering anymore. The trick is to only consider the good times and discard the bad, as Billy does and says repeatedly "So it goes".

Vonnegut shows time as a system of homeostasis that forces human systematically resists change. Homeostasis traditionally is

the ability of living organisms to maintain steady states when they are buffeted by fickle environments. When the temperature soars, sweat pours out of the human body so that its internal temperature can remain relatively stable (Hayles, 1999, p. 8).

In the novel, nonlinear time forces Billy to accept everything unquestionably as a part of his destiny. In fact, Billy accepts war and destruction, and massacre as parts of his life. Those people who cannot adopt homeostasis will be eliminated. In other words, cybernetics attempts to eliminate not only the weak, but also the essence of free will in human being. This is only a metaphor for the delicate enslavement of the human to intelligent machine. Thus, in a sense, Billy has to adopt such a meaning of time to avoid of his elimination.

Furthermore, for Billy, homeostasis occurs mentally instead of physically. It means that being unstuck in time, Billy psychologically regulates his inner environment to ensure his stability in response to his experience in the outside environment. Hiding in a slaughterhouse, Billy sees the bombs falling on Dresden by the military flight apparatuses that carry a body within themselves. The Tralfamadorian illusions act as an outlet through which Billy can tell about his war experiences.

The novel represents a neurotic preoccupation with the concept of time, as the narrator in the first chapter asks himself: "I asked myself about the present: how wide it was, how deep it was, how much was mine to keep" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 8). Then he explains how "the time would not pass. Somebody was playing with the clocks, and only with the electric clocks, but with the wind-up kind, too. The second hand on my watch would twitch once, and a year would pass, and then it would twitch again" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 9). Here the narrator first presents physical time through clocks, and then psychological time that its passage is unlike physical time. Also while reading *C d'ine and His Vision*, a fiction by Erika Ostrovsky, Billy finds out how the main character is similar to him and tends to prevent the rushing movements of a crowd by freezing them. Billy, a flying machine, is controlled by time. In fact, time is both homeostasis and controlling. Billy talks about his being unstuck in time as an impact of having nearly died in a plane crash in 1967. His daughter asks him: "Why is it you never mentioned any of this before the airplane crash?" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 13). Later, after visiting his aging mother in the hospital, the narrator contextualizes the event, describing how "this was before Billy had his head broken in an airplane crash... before he became so vocal about flying saucers and traveling in time" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 19). Through the text narrator attempts to create meaningful relationship between time travelling and flight apparatus that is responsible for both bombing Dresden and Billy's illusion of time travelling.

Tralfamadorians believe people on earth are not two-legged, but "with babies legs at one end and old people's legs at the other" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 38). Thus, in a system that is regulated and controlled by homeostasis and time, change is an illusion, and humans would need just "seeing" only one moment after another, "like beads on a string". For Billy the "true nature of time" is a defense mechanism rationalizing his horrifying experiences in the war. If "all time is all time," then Billy's typical phrase "so it goes" is comprehensible. Because there is no change, free will does not exist, as the narrator says at the end of the novel, "if I am going to spend eternity visiting this moment and that, I'm grateful that so many of those moments are nice" (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 91).

Consequently, Billy's fatalistic attitude leads him to be seen as subhuman, "a broken kite" of a human, and finally results in the destruction of his world. Veas-Gulani traces the root of Billy's mental disorder, as he explains: "Being 'spastic in time' thus is a metaphor for Billy's repeatedly re-experiencing the traumatic events he went through in the war, particularly during the Dresden bombings". Due to Billy's continual re-experiencing and reminding of the war, Veas-Gulani (2003) explains that "Billy experiences posttraumatic mental issues" (2003, p. 176) and becomes a more unconventional coping mechanism.

IV. CONCLUSION

Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* considers the paranoid fear of cybernetic system that is responsible for dystopia in which humanity is devaluated. Vonnegut's antiwar fiction illustrates war machine and time machine that produce thoughtless machine-like humans. Vonnegut reveals a sort of submission to the system and demonstrates that human is doomed to slavery by machine. He shows that such the controlling system is always omnipresent, but human must be conscious not be trapped by it. Consequently, by writing against controlling systems of war and time, Vonnegut leaves the readers in a condition to speculate and ask for change. A word may ask for change, but it requires someone to run it.

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Let's Replace Words with Pictures: The Role of Pictures and Spatial Intelligence in Learning English Idioms

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Abstract—The present study attempted to explore the effects of spatial intelligence—one of Gardner's (1993) eight intelligences—on learning idiomatic expressions through pictures. To this end, 76 Iranian learners of English were assigned to 2 groups: pictorial and non-pictorial. Both groups were comprised of learners with low, moderate, and high levels of spatial intelligence profile. Put differently, there were three subgroups in each group, totaling 6 subgroups. Groups proved to be homogeneous with regard to their understanding of the idioms in focus. During the treatment period, which lasted for 3 months, 2 sessions a week, the pictorial group received idiomatic expressions along with pictures associated with those idioms while the control group received the idioms with no pictures. An omnibus *t*-test run on the scores obtained from a posttest demonstrated statistically significant difference between the pictorial and non-pictorial groups in understanding the meaning of idiomatic expressions. Fine-grained analyses including 3 separate *t*-tests showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the lows and between the moderates in the pictorial and non-pictorial groups. The difference between the highs, however, turned out to reach statistical significance. A one-way ANOVA run on the scores of the 3 subgroups of the pictorial reached statistical difference while the one-way ANOVA run on the scores of the 3 subgroups of the non-pictorial group did not show any significant difference. Viewed generally, the results suggest that learners with higher levels of spatial intelligence would be more privileged to benefit from idiomatic expressions presented along with associated pictures.

Index Terms—spatial intelligence, pictorial idiomatic expressions

I. INTRODUCTION

Classroom research studies (e.g., Emig, 1997; Haley, 2004) have shown that the application of multiple intelligences (MI) is likely to enhance students learning and performance significantly and make students have better attitudes towards language learning experience. The application of MI model in general educational settings as well as language learning classrooms has already been substantiated by the theoretical argumentations which hold that traditional intelligence tests primarily premised on intelligence as a single ability tradition can hardly account for multi-faceted nature of human intelligence (Gardner, 1993). Challenging the traditional IQ test which viewed school children's IQ as a fixed index of their cognitive operations (Gottfredson, 2004), Gardner (1993) argued that every single individual is born with a cluster of different intelligences which can be enhanced under appropriate training circumstances. Stated differently, learners have individual differences part of which is associated with their different types of intelligences. An individual learner might be quite strong in terms of one type of intelligence and at the same time experience frustration in performing activities associated with another type of intelligence. Training and practice, however, are assumed to foster improvement in terms of weak intelligences.

The original model of MI proposed by Gardner (1993) comprised seven intelligences to which he added one more. Included in his model are linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligences (Armstrong, 2009). This list, however, seems to be far from complete as new types of intelligences are thought to be added to it, provided that they meet the tests into which any new intelligence has to be put. An immediate implication of Gardner's rationalist model in language classroom settings is that syllabi prepared, activities delivered and assignments given should take into account cognitive individual differences closely. Such a concern with individual differences is more likely to attract students to the activities which are in harmony with some of their intelligences. Explicit in the model is the claim that if a language learner appears to have a high index of any of the intelligences identified by Gardner and his associates, he/she will benefit from the activities consistent with the intelligences at stake. Put differently, any classroom activity might enjoy the potentiality to stimulate some of the intelligences which each individual possesses. To involve learners in learning process and make them experience success in learning a new language, the learning material has to be structured around the intelligences at which the

learners have proved to be strong. These argumentations should not imply that every single learner can benefit only from the materials which stimulate the intelligence at which the learner is strong enough; Gardner (1993) is of view that weak intelligences can be enhanced to a significant extent through proper training and enough exercise.

MI theory suggests "that teachers need to expand their repertoire of techniques, tools, and strategies beyond the typical linguistic and logical one" (Armstrong, 2009, p. 54) which are practiced in large scale in classroom settings around the globe. One-sided pedagogy has to give way to innovations which are likely to prove more intriguing to learners with individual differences and in particular with differing degrees of capacity in terms of each of the eight intelligences identified. Diversity in materials, tools, techniques, and activities might tap into a spectrum of "proclivities" of learners involved and consequently stimulate more brains to be engaged in learning and L2 development. Approaching the classes with "preferred intelligences" of different learners involved, the teacher will be equipped with an understanding as to learners' preferences for the type of classroom activities which can then lead to their improved performance. It has to be made clear immediately that every single learner might show strength in more than one type of intelligence as one type of activity is likely to engage a cluster of any number of the eight intelligences which have been credited to account for cognitive operations of human beings. It has to be borne in mind that none of the intelligences is assumed to exist or operate by itself; rather they are taken to interact with each other (Armstrong, 2009; Gardner, 1993). As it is the case with general educational settings, language teaching profession has judged the MI theory to be of paramount impact on L2 learning and accordingly has embraced its varying applications under different teaching circumstances. A number of studies have endeavored to substantiate its positive effects on language learning in different situations with different types of research designs.

Different studies have looked at the effect of multiple intelligences or different types of intelligence on learning from a wide range of perspectives. Rauscher, Shaw, and Ky (1997), for instance, reported that students who were exposed to music could develop their spatial/temporal intelligence. Sadoski, Goetz, and Avila (1995) found that comprehension of a text was easier for learners if it had the feature of evoking images than a text which was rich in terms of contextual information. The power of a text in creating images has also been demonstrated to foster more interest on the part of learners in being involved in reading comprehension. Imagery is associated with visual-spatial intelligence of the MI model whose significance in learning has been theoretically elaborated on in Paivo's (1986) dual coding theory. This theory hypothesizes that we use verbal system for linguistic items and resort to our non-verbal system to attend to images, forms, and shapes which can be collectively taken as non-verbal world.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Importance of Spatial Intelligence

The role of spatial intelligence, particularly in the process of language learning, is of significance because this type of intelligence renders form, space, color, line, and shape salient to learners. At the same time, it features the ability to graphically represent some visual or spatial ideas (Christison, 1996). Armstrong (2003, 2009) holds that providing the learners with visual mapping activities and encouraging students to create charts, bulletin boards, establishing class atmosphere in which the learners can draw pictures, watch pictures on TV and voice their opinion about the pictures can stimulate this intelligence. To activate students' spatial intelligence, Armstrong (2009) suggests visualization, color cues, picture metaphors, idea sketching, and graphic symbol. Through visualizations students are advised to close their eyes and picture what they study creating their own "inner blackboard" in their imagination. Color cues simply imply using a spectrum of colors to stimulate spatial intelligence of students and cater for the likings of students with higher indices of spatial intelligence. Immediately available to the teacher are chalks or markers whose different colors can be used to trigger the interest of those students who turn out to possess higher degrees of spatial intelligence. In picture metaphors different ideas are chosen to be expressed through images instead of words. An attempt has to be in place to establish some logical link between what is to be taught and some images or shapes with which students are already familiar with. Such a linkage is perceived to engage students profoundly in learning process. Students with high capacity of spatial intelligence might feel at home with sketching their ideas instead of outlining them through verbal devices. The teacher is expected to offer such an opportunity to foster students' thinking and learning through this strategy in particular with those students who have proven to possess strong spatial intelligence. To assist "spatially inclined" students, the teacher can support his lessons through accompanying pictures. As Armstrong (2009) argues to be the case, graphs—even those roughly drawn ones—can play a significant role in benefiting a wider range of students and particularly facilitating the learning process of those who enjoy this specific proclivity.

As pointed out above, the role of spatial intelligence in learning can be explained by dual-coding theory (Paivo, 1986) which takes the formation of images equally important along with verbal association (Reed, 2010). Verbal and visual information are postulated to be processed in different ways and end up in separate representations (Sternberg, 2003). Explicit in this theory is the significance of associating words and their images in learning new concepts. Learning can take place either verbally or visually. But if linked, they can foster more learning, facilitate learning, or speed learning up (Reed, 2010). The importance attached to the role of spatial intelligence in learning calls for well-designed studies. This study was an attempt to examine the impact of replacing words by corresponding pictures in idiomatic expressions on learning the targeted idioms.

B. Learning Idioms

In all languages there exist phrases or sentences that can pose challenge to language learners and can hardly be understood literally. Even if you know the meaning of all the words in a phrase and understand all the grammar of the phrase completely, the meaning of the phrase can prove to be beyond your ken. A phrase or sentence which enjoys such features is classified as an idiomatic expression. Put differently, an idiom is assumed to be a phrase whose meaning differs from the meaning of its separate components (Celce-Murcia, 2001). One theme common among all definitions of idioms is that they are fixed expressions whose words, the order of their words, and their grammatical forms cannot be changed. Irujo (1986a) defines an idiom as "a conventionalized expression whose meaning cannot be determined from the meaning of its parts" (p. 2). Learning idioms is usually postponed until the learners develop their competence to some advanced level, though they are taken to be one of the basic components of language (Irujo, 1986a). Irujo argues that since there is a lack of appropriate materials on teaching idiomatic expressions they are more often postponed by teachers. There is now an emphasis on addressing this component of language from early stages of language learning due to the importance which attached to it and the keen interest of students in learning them (Irujo, 1986b). As Hussein, Khanji, and Makhzoomy (2000) pointed out, in contrast to syntax which has drawn a great deal of attention, idioms have been neglected in studies conducted. They attribute learners' poor competence of English idioms primarily to this fact. The use of idioms is usually assumed to be a characteristic of advanced EFL learners.

Cacciari and Tabossi (1988) put forward the configuration model which highlights the role of literal meaning in constructing the figurative interpretations of idioms. According to the model, the language comprehension device processes the idiom literally, simultaneously with the emergence of its figurative interpretation. Idiomatic key, here, plays an important role. The notion of key has been defined by Tabossi and Zardon (1995) as the information in the string that has to be processed literally before the figurative meaning of an idiom can be activated. So the configuration model does not give priority to either literal or figurative meanings in idiom processing. A research study carried out by Wu (2008) demonstrated that English idioms associated with illustrations could enhance college students' idioms understanding better.

As it was mentioned, recognizing the pictures is one of the fundamental characteristics of spatial intelligence. In fact, spatial intelligence, with its emphasis on illustrations and pictures, can be used as an important factor in learning idioms. Hence, presenting English idioms accompanied by visual stimuli is likely to facilitate learning idioms. Most idioms can be categorized into groups like fruits, body parts, animals, and numbers, and can be presented through the pictures called pictorial idioms. The present study is an attempt to investigate the effects of pictures and spatial intelligence of the learners of English on learning pictorial idioms. Based on the scope of this study, the following research questions were formulated.

1- Would using pictures instead of words in idiomatic expressions lead to improvements in learning English idiomatic expressions?

2- Would learners with different profiles of spatial intelligence benefit from pictorial idiomatic expressions differently?

III. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

A. Participants

The participants were 76 pre-intermediate Iranian learners of English who had been recruited from some language institutes in Ardabil, a city in northwest of Iran. They were female ranging from 13 to 21 years old and were bilingual in Azerbaijani Turkish and Persian. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Due to the fact that having this number of students in two classes was impossible, we divided the experimental and control groups each into three classes. Two experienced language teachers were trained to run the classes according to the conditions specified for the present study.

B. Materials

Most materials on English idioms available on the market are in black and white and are not topic-oriented. However, in this study, the pictorial idioms selected were colorful and were categorized according to different topics. The idioms used in this study were accompanied by pictures. For example, in the idiom *let the cat out of the bag*, a picture of cat was inserted into the idiom and replaced the word *cat*. The participants' responses to a questionnaire (Appendix A) revealed that they preferred animal idioms over the other categories (e.g., fruit, body, or number). The items for checking spatial intelligence of participants were adapted from an MI questionnaire (Haley, 2004). This questionnaire was comprised of 40 items five of which examined the respondent's spatial intelligence inclination (Appendix B). For each of the rest of the intelligences there were also five relevant items which were excluded for the present study. Cronbach's alpha indices calculated for the reliability of questionnaires were .68 and .73, respectively.

The pretest prepared for assuring homogeneity of participating groups in terms of the dependent variable, i.e., targeted idioms, consisted of 20 multiple-choice items (Appendix C) whose Cronbach alpha was .68. The items were adapted from Solhi and Dargahi (2008). The questions were not pictorial and owing to the fact that the key word of every single idiomatic expression in this book is a picture, we had to replace the picture with the corresponding word in any single item chosen to be included in the pretest. The posttest was a parallel to the pretest and included 20 multiple-

choice items which were from among the idiomatic expressions worked on during treatment period—adapted from Solhi and Dargahi (Appendix D). Cronbach alpha computed for this test was .79.

C. Procedures

Prior to conducting the study, the questionnaires, the pretest, and the posttest were piloted with a small group of language learners of English who had a substantial degree of similarity with those learners who volunteered to participate in the main study. Following the pilot study, all members of the sample selected for the study were asked to indicate their preferences as to fruits, animals, numbers, or body parts. The participating individuals were randomly assigned to an experimental or a control group. Both groups filled in a spatial intelligence questionnaire based on which three subgroups were identified for each of the two groups specified for the study. Differently stated, the experimental group was comprised of high, moderate, and low spatial intelligence learners as was the case with the control group. The high spatial intelligence individuals were those who scored 7–10 on the spatial intelligence questionnaire in both groups; the moderate spatial individuals were those who scored 4–6; and those whose spatial intelligence scores ranged from 0 to 3 were labeled as the low spatial individuals. All subgroups involved in the study took a pretest which included 20 multiple choice items on animal idioms. A one-way ANOVA run on the data obtained from the pretest assured that the groups involved were homogeneous in terms of their idiomatic knowledge, $F = .88, p > .05$.

The treatment lasted for three months, two sessions a week. In each session, almost 10 idiomatic expressions were presented. At the beginning of each session, the participants in the experimental group, which was comprised of high, moderate, and low spatial learners, were required to read the pictorial idioms in pairs. They were asked to pay attention to the pictures inserted into the idioms and consequently to the literal meaning of the idioms. Then, they were required to work in groups to guess the meaning of the idioms collaboratively. Sometimes, they were able to guess the meanings. The pictures were cartoons which were assumed to activate the learners' right hemispheres and nurture their spatial intelligence. Each session, the pictorial idioms were taught to the learners and the participants were asked to work in groups and run a conversation using those idiomatic expressions. This task lasted for 15 min. Then, the students were asked to act out the conversation in front of the class. At the end of the semester, the participants were supposed to know at least 250 idiomatic expressions. The participants in the control group were exposed to non-pictorial idioms. Finally, the posttest was administered to the experimental and the control groups. The scores obtained from the posttest were put into SPSS to be analyzed statistically.

D. Analyses and Results

In order to compare the scores obtained from the posttest of the control group with that of the experimental group, an omnibus t -test was conducted to investigate the possible difference between the two groups involved. Descriptive statistics for the two groups presented in Table 1, showed that the experimental group had higher mean ($M = 17.81$) in comparison to the control group ($M = 14.86$) on the posttest.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE POSTTEST

Group	N	Mean	SD
Experimental	38	17.81	23
Control	38	14.86	39

The results obtained from the t -test run indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control groups in their performance on the posttest, $t(74) = -6.42, p < .001$. One more independent samples t -test was carried out to compare the performance of the experimental group and the control group with low level of spatial intelligence on the posttest. There were eight students with low intelligence in the control group and four students in the experimental group. There was not a significant difference between the scores of the control group and those of the experimental group $t(10) = -.39, p < .70$.

To compare the posttest of the control group and the experimental one with the moderate level of the intelligence, another independent samples t -test was run. There were 18 students with moderate spatial intelligence in the control group and 22 in the experimental group. There was a significant difference between scores of the control group ($M = 14.72, SD = 2.21$) and the experimental group ($M = 17.77, SD = 1.34$), $t(38) = -5.38, p < .05$. Another independent-samples t -test was conducted on the posttest of the control group and the experimental one with high level of spatial intelligence. There were 12 students with moderate intelligence in the control group and 12 in the experimental group. There was a significant difference in scores of the control group ($M = 14.75, SD = 3.10$) and those of the experimental group ($M = 18.58, SD = 1.24$), $t(22) = -3.96, p < .05$.

The second research question addressed the effect of spatial intelligence (low, moderate, and high) on learning pictorial idiomatic expressions of Iranian learners of English. The results obtained from the one-way ANOVA for the control group indicated that there was not a significant difference among the scores of the learners with low level of spatial intelligence ($M = 15.37, SD = 1.84$), the learners with moderate level of spatial intelligence ($M = 14.72, SD = 2.21$), and the learners with high level of spatial intelligence ($M = 14.75, SD = 3.10$), $F(2, 35) = .213, p > .05$.

TABLE 2.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR POSTTEST OF THE CONTROL GROUP

Spatial Intelligence profile	N	Mean	SD
Low	8	14.37	1.84
Moderate	18	14.72	2.21
High	12	14.75	3.10

TABLE 3.

ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR THE CONTROL GROUP

	SS	df	MS	F-value	Sig
Between group	2.60	2	1.30	.213	.809
Within groups	213.73	35	6.10		
Total	216.34	37			

To compare the performance of the experimental with the control group on the posttest, and to examine the possible effect of spatial intelligence on learning idiomatic expressions of the learners in the posttest of the experimental group, a one-way ANOVA for the experimental group was run. The results obtained from this test for the control group, as presented in Tables 2 and 3, indicated that there was a significant difference in scores of the learners with low level of spatial intelligence ($M = 15.75$, $SD = .50$), the learners with moderate level of spatial intelligence ($M = 14.77$, $SD = 1.34$), and the learners with high level of spatial intelligence ($M = 18.58$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(2, 35) = 7.62$, $p < .05$.

TABLE 4.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR POSTTEST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Spatial Intelligence profile	N	Mean	SD
Low	4	15.75	.50
Moderate	22	17.77	1.34
High	12	18.58	1.24

TABLE 5.

ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	SS	Df	MS	F-value	Sig
Between group	24.18	2	12.09	7.62	.002
Within groups	55.53	35	1.58		
Total	79.71	37			

In order to compare the different pairs, S-N-K post-hoc tests were conducted. The results, presented in Table 6, indicated that the participants with high intelligence profile had significantly more improvement than the learners with moderate or low intelligence profile while the latter two groups did not differ from each other significantly. In fact, the difference between the high and the low levels was significant. However, the difference between the low and the moderate as well as the difference between the high and the moderate levels did not reach statistical significance.

TABLE 6.

LSD RESULTS FOR SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE

Contrasts	Mean Differences	SD	Sig.
Low vs. Moderate	-2.02	.68	.006
Low vs. High	-2.83	.72	.000
Moderate vs. High	-.81	.45	.082

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The first research question which was formulated for the present study addressed the influence of using pictures instead of words in English idioms on learning idiomatic expressions by Iranians EFL learners with high, moderate, and low spatial intelligence profile. The results of an omnibus t -test which was run on the data obtained from the groups involved showed that the group which received the pictorial idioms enhanced their idiom knowledge significantly more than the group which received the same set of idioms without pictures. This finding implies that using pictures along with words in idioms is likely to benefit L2 learners in enhancing their knowledge of idioms. This finding lends support to dual-coding theory (Paivo, 1986) which highlights the role of image formation along with verbal associations. In light of this theory we can substantiate the positive effect of teaching idioms through their relevant pictures; the group which was exposed to idioms along with pictures enjoyed the opportunity to associate words with their images in the targeted idioms. Such an opportunity to draw a link between words and images appeared to improve idiomatic knowledge to a significant extent. The outperformance of the experimental group versus the control group can also be related to the fact that pictures serve as a means to motivate language learners by boosting the attraction of the input materials (Male, 2007) and stimulating their aesthetic visual perception (Chiaverina, Scott, & Steele, 1997).

The comparison drawn between the subgroups with low profile of spatial intelligence in the experimental and control groups demonstrated that they did not differ in terms of their performance on idioms, though the subgroup in the experimental group received the pictorial idioms while the subgroup in the control group received idioms without any pictures. The pattern, however, turns out to change as we move on to compare the performance of subgroups with

moderate profile of spatial intelligence in the experimental and control groups. The subgroup with moderate profile of spatial intelligence enhanced their performance on idioms significantly more than the subgroup in the control group. The difference observed between the subgroups with high level of spatial intelligence proved to be statistically significant; the subgroup in the experimental group outperformed the subgroup in the control group. These findings can be explained in light of spatial intelligence of Gardner's (1993) MI theory. As Armstrong (2009) asserts, pictures are likely to engage learners with high level of spatial intelligence more than those who do not enjoy a substantial degree of this inclination. In the current study those who had moderate and high profiles of spatial intelligence could benefit from receiving English idiomatic expressions more than those groups who had the same levels of spatial intelligence but were deprived of pictures along with idiomatic expressions delivered during treatment period.

Interestingly enough, introducing pictures along with idiomatic expressions could not bring about any significant improvement to the subgroup in the experimental group compared to the subgroup which did not receive pictures along with idioms. Juxtaposed with the findings of the subgroups with moderate and high profiles of spatial intelligence, this finding lends support to the claim that learners who possess higher levels of spatial intelligence are more likely to benefit from instructions which embed pictures appropriately in their syllabi (Armstrong, 2009). One of the interesting findings of the current study is that the three subgroups of the control group which received idiomatic instruction without any pictures had almost similar performance on the posttest which examined their knowledge of some of the idioms which had been taught to them during treatment period. Stated differently, the groups with low, moderate, and high profiles of spatial intelligence did not differ in terms of their idiomatic knowledge improvement at the end of the study. In the experimental group, however, the group which enjoyed high profile of spatial intelligence turned out to improve its knowledge of idiomatic expressions significantly more than the groups with low and moderate spatial intelligence profile. This finding is consistent with the postulations of MI theory.

The outperformance of the group with high spatial intelligence index can be explained with MI theory which postulates that learners with high profile of this intelligence would feel inclined towards pictures more than those who appear to possess lower degrees of it. The individuals in the experimental group who proved to be more picture oriented than others could benefit more from the pictorial idiomatic expressions. The pictures used instead of words in the targeted idioms seemed to have been rendered salient to those who outstood in the group in terms of their spatial intelligence. And the other groups labeled as low and moderate in terms of their spatial intelligence failed to benefit from pictures in developing their knowledge of idiomatic expressions. Viewed from another perspective, we can argue that those who had high levels of spatial intelligence in the experimental group could resort to non-verbal system to attend to pictures in addition to resorting to verbal system to attend to the words (Paivo, 1986) and subsequently benefit from pictorial idioms presented as input during treatment sessions more than those who can only resort to their verbal system due to not possessing high level of spatial intelligence.

By the same token since the control group did not receive any pictures along with the idiomatic expressions targeted no significant difference was observed among the three groups involved, although one of the three groups involved possessed high profile of spatial intelligence. Put differently, spatial intelligence proclivity of the high spatial intelligence group did not give them an advantage over the other subgroups since the input was not consistent with the intelligence in question.

Dual coding theory (Paivo, 1986) can also provide cogent argumentation for this part of the findings; since all the subgroups of the control condition, unlike the experimental condition, were provided with just verbal idioms they just activated their verbal system and possessing high spatial intelligence did not turn out to be of any advantage. All taken together, based on the findings of the present study we can argue that using pictures instead of words helps learners improve their idiomatic knowledge to a considerable extent simply because it attracts learners' attention, interests them, and stimulates their aesthetic visual perception. When provided with pictures along with words, learners with high profile of spatial intelligence benefit from input more than those who possess low levels of this intelligence. Deprived of pictures, highly spatial learners lose the opportunity to push their abilities to their limits in learning new pieces of language. Pictures along with words make learners resort to verbal as well as non-verbal systems of attending to new pieces of input during learning which is in turn likely to lead to more learning.

APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE

You are going to learn a large number of idioms this semester.
Which group of idioms would you prefer to be taught?





Group 3:

Group 4: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

APPENDIX B. SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENTS OF THE 1ST QUESTIONNAIRE

Rate the statements from 0 to 2. (2= I completely agree, 1= I fairly agree, 0=I don't agree).

- I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.
- I like to draw.
- When I go an address one, I can easily remember it.
- I prefer looking at reading materials with lots of illustrations.
- Films and pictures are really helpful for me to learn new things.

APPENDIX C. PRETEST

1. The man has a (hard and cold personality).
 - (a) heart in the right place
 - (b) change of heart
 - (c) heart of gold
 - (d) heart of stone
2. The man is beginning to (feel discouraged) because he cannot find a job.
 - (a) search his heart
 - (b) open his heart
 - (c) lose heart
 - (d) wear his heart on his sleeve
3. I had (a serious) talk with my friend about his girlfriend.
 - (a) a heart-to-heart
 - (b) a young-at-heart
 - (c) a heavy-heart
 - (d) a heart-of-gold
4. The man was (very sad) about his son's death.
 - (a) wearing his heart on his sleeve
 - (b) taking heart
 - (c) losing heart
 - (d) sick at heart
5. I had to (keep silent) although I disagreed with everything that the man said.
 - (a) show my teeth
 - (b) loosen my tongue
 - (c) throw my voice
 - (d) hold my tongue
6. I heard about the new store (from my friends).
 - (a) by word of mouth
 - (b) down in the mouth
 - (c) gritting my teeth
 - (d) living from hand to mouth
7. The name of the new book was (at the point that I could almost remember) but I still could not remember it.
 - (a) by the skin of my teeth
 - (b) as scarce as hen's teeth
 - (c) on the tip of my tongue
 - (d) holding my tongue
8. The platter of food in the front window (made me want to eat it).
 - (a) put my foot in my mouth
 - (b) melted in my mouth
 - (c) said a mouthful
 - (d) made my mouth water
9. I stopped work for an hour in order to (have a short sleep).
 - (a) look like a million dollars
 - (b) get forty winks

- (c) cut both ways
- (d) have a stitch in time
- 10. We talked to the employees (individually) when we learned of the serious financial problems in the company.
 - (a) on all fours
 - (b) all in one
 - (c) one by one
 - (d) one and the same
- 11. The actress was (wearing her best dress) at the charity concert.
 - (a) all rolled up in one
 - (b) a stitch in time
 - (c) at sixes and sevens
 - (d) dressed to the nines
- 12. I was (very happy) when I won a vacation trip during the winter.
 - (a) on cloud nine
 - (b) a nine-day wonder
 - (c) dressed to the nines
 - (d) one for the books
- 13. My father is (recovering) after he spent a week in bed because of illness.
 - (a) back on his feet
 - (b) six feet under
 - (c) swept off his feet
 - (d) light on his feet
- 14. My mother was (very eager to listen) when I began to talk about my holiday in England.
 - (a) wet behind the ears
 - (b) in her mind's eye
 - (c) turning a deaf ear
 - (d) all ears
- 15. The city officials welcomed the group of foreign businessmen (warmly).
 - (a) under their thumb
 - (b) arm in arm
 - (c) close at hand
 - (d) with open arms
- 16. We did not have any milk (available) so we could not drink any coffee.
 - (a) hands down
 - (b) on the one hand
 - (c) on hand
 - (d) under my thumb
- 17. I (hope) that our team will win the championship again this year.
 - (a) am crossing my fingers
 - (b) am greasing my palm
 - (c) rapped my knuckles
 - (d) lost my grip
- 18. The man is (very lazy) and he makes everything worse when he tries to fix it.
 - (a) living from hand to mouth
 - (b) high-handed
 - (c) all thumbs
 - (d) burning his fingers
- 19. He is the (most important person) in his company.
 - (a) holy cow
 - (b) dog in the manger
 - (c) alley cat
 - (d) top dog
- 20. The girl never eats and is (very skinny).
 - (a) skin-deep
 - (b) broad in the beam
 - (c) skin and bones
 - (d) a bundle of nerves

APPENDIX D. POSTTEST

1. He's always (restless).

- (a) living from hand to mouth
 - (b) high-handed
 - (c) all thumbs
 - (d) antsy
2. I (have a feeling of anxiety).
- (a) have butterflies in my stomach
 - (b) have a whale of a time
 - (c) flog a dead horse
 - (d) hold your horses
3. The (boss) ordered the killing.
- (a) white elephant
 - (b) scapegoat
 - (c) big fish
 - (d) hen-pecked
4. What should I do with this (useless thing).
- (a) night owl
 - (b) black horse
 - (c) early bird
 - (d) white elephant
5. Can you find me a job? I'm (not busy at all).
- (a) as busy as a beaver
 - (b) as busy as a bee
 - (c) as busy as a hibernating bear
 - (d) as busy as a cat on a hot tin roof
6. The girl never eats and is (very skinny).
- (a) skin-deep
 - (b) broad in the beam
 - (c) skin and bones
 - (d) a bundle of nerves
7. I prefer to stay at home. It's (very cold).
- (a) lovely weather for ducks
 - (b) brass monkey weather
 - (c) under the weather
 - (d) fair-weather friend
8. My brother is (not brave). He's afraid of being alone.
- (a) chicken-hearted
 - (b) as gaudy as a butterfly
 - (c) big fish
 - (d) as gruff as a bear
9. It's (suspicious). I don't believe it.
- (a) fishy
 - (b) dyed-in-the-wood
 - (c) batty
 - (d) slow on the draw
10. We've got to sit down and talk (frankly
- (a) turkey
 - (b) goose
 - (c) duck
 - (d) hen
11. He is as strong as a
- (a) donkey
 - (b) elephant
 - (c) horse
 - (d) cow
12. Jack is-pecked. He's afraid of her wife!
- (a) hen
 - (b) cat
 - (c) mouse
 - (d) goose
13. Our close friend is as poor as a church.....

- (a) dog
 - (b) bat
 - (c) mouse
 - (d) cat
14. My grandfather is as wise as a/an
 (a) cat
 (b) eagle
 (c) fox
 (d) owl
15. The woman in the supermarket was as fat as a
 (a) cow
 (b) elephant
 (c) pig
 (d) bear
16. My neighbor is the blackof the family.
 (a) goat
 (b) sheep
 (c) cat
 (d) dog
17. Nicole is as silly as a
 (a) goose
 (b) duck
 (c) hen
 (d) dog
18. She has a memory like a/an She's a number one the class.
 (a) fish
 (b) pig
 (c) elephant
 (d) bear
19. Don't shed tears.
 (a) crocodile
 (b) bear
 (c) wolf
 (d) snake
20. Don't count your before they hatch.
 (a) hen
 (b) rooster
 (c) duck
 (d) chicken

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The Mood and Modality in the Bible: A Systemic Functional Perspective^{*}

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Abstract—The Bible is an influential classic whose charm is closely related to its language, especially words spoken by the God. With interpersonal function as its theoretical framework, and the whole Bible (King James Version) as its research text, this paper makes a detailed analysis of the interpersonal meaning in the conversations among God, God's chosen people and other people by statistics and illustration, and finds that mood and modality in biblical language has directly or indirectly helped to make closer relationship between God and his people. Mood and modality in the Bible helps construct positive interpersonal relationships, which is one of the essential sources of the Bible's charm and everlasting effect.

Index Terms—Bible, interpersonal meaning, God-human relationship, mood, modality

I. INTRODUCTION

The Holy Scripture, or the Bible, is one of the most important religious books in the world. Its influence on the world especially in western countries cannot be matched by any other books. Almost in every corner of the world, the Bible attracts huge numbers of believers. With such an influential book, its charm is closely related to its language, especially words spoken by the God.

Interpersonal function comes from the metafunctions proposed by Halliday. In his systemic functional grammar, interpersonal function refers to the function in which we use language to interact with other people, to establish and maintain relationships with them, to influence their behavior, to express our own viewpoint on things in the world, and to elicit or change other people's opinions. Interpersonal meaning can be realized in various ways, among them, mood and modality are two most important ones.

By taking interpersonal function as the theoretical framework, this article tries to make a detailed analysis of biblical language especially the language of God, and find out the source of the Bible's attraction. In the whole process, the article develops its study from the aspects of mood and modality. The originality of the present research is embodied in two points: first, it examines religious language from the perspective of metafunction; second, it probes into interpersonal meaning from the level of the whole text (Holy Bible, Authorized (King James) Version).

II. THE STATUS OF LANGUAGE IN THE BIBLE

In the Bible, the world in the Biblical time is created and constructed through language. The very beginning of the Bible saw God's splendid creation of the world. Within just seven days, God finished the creation of the heaven and the earth, filled the world with all necessary elements, and all of the things are simply created through God's words of "Let there be", thus the world has light, air, living creatures. At last, God said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", and then it was so (Genesis 1:30). The creation of the world is the miracle of God's way of doing things. God realized the process of growth out of nothing merely by words.

From the above, we can see that language has extremely high status in the Bible. In Hebrew tradition, the word which represents language and the word which means objects is the same word "*davar*". Therefore, in Hebrew, language has equal or even higher status compared with all the other materials existed in the world.

III. ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL MEANING OF GOD-HUMAN RELATIONSHIP IN *OLD TESTAMENT*

1. God-human Relationship

Human in the Bible, who are living in the real world created by God, have dual identities: they are both the ruler of the real world and the subject of God. But this freewill and control over other living things are also assigned by the divine God, as we can see in "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Genesis 1:26). Therefore, human hope to get rid of the state of being constrained. Through constant betrayal, rebellion and resistance, they are trying to gain more freedom and knowledge from God and improve their subjective status. However, the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscience God obviously

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worried about the rebellion, constantly punishing human and preventing them from any attempts.

Ever since Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they broke the covenant between God and the human ancestors. From then on, there began the betrayal and conflicts between God and human being. When God settled Adam in the Garden of Eden, he commanded the man, saying, “you may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die (Genesis 2:16-17)”. However, even though the LORD God warned Adam and Eve by the punishment of death, they still betrayed God by eating the forbidden fruit after the seducing of the serpent “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:4-5).” Eve believed the serpent because it said that “ye shall be as gods”, this obviously shows Eve’s betrayal of God, she wanted to be God, to have the equal status with God. As for Adam, if he absolutely obeyed God’s will, he would not listen to Eve. Instead, he should criticize her for eating the forbidden fruit, and would not eat it himself. However, he ate it without even think of God’s warning of death as if it did not exist. As written in the Bible “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat (Genesis 3:6).”

2. Mood Analysis of God-human Relationship

Mood element has a clear defined semantic function: it carries the burden of the clause as an interactive event (Halliday, 2008: 120). In the following, three typical biblical stories are analyzed through the mood system of interpersonal meaning.

2.1 The Tower of Babel

Imperative: power

In the story *The Tower of Babel*, human gathered and said one to another “Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly and let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth (Genesis 11:3-4)”. Human use the mood type of imperative in their communication, that is, the pattern of “let us”, which highly imitates the words of God in creating human being themselves: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth (Genesis 1:26).” Such challenge against God is so obvious that God responded, “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech (Genesis 11:7)”, which resulted in human’s scattering upon the face of all the earth, and the confounding of the language.

Here, the use of the imperative pattern of “let us” needs to be analyzed. The Hebrew word for “God” is “*Elohim*”, which is a plural form. So “us” “our” in God’s words for creating human being is for emphasis, and represents the greatness of God, which is called “the plural of majesty”. Although the form is plural, the verb should still be single, which means that God is the only master of the universe (Liu, 2010). The distinction of *let us* and *let’s* should also be clarified. The *us* in *let’s* can include the addressee, but the *us* in *let us* excludes the addressee. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why God use *let us*, for God is one and only one who masters the whole universe. But compare with words said by human in Genesis 11, they imitate the mood and sentence pattern of God, their use of “us” implies that human beings are united as one, which is so great that can contend with God. Thus, it is easy to see that human tried to take over the power of God, and tried to contend against God.

2.2 Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

Interrogative: negotiation

In the conversation between God and Abraham when he was interceding for Sodom, Abraham uses many interrogatives to question God, to consult with God, and to bargain with God step by step. “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? ... Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” When God answered, he required further “Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking. Will you destroy the whole city for the lack of five?” The Lord said “I will not destroy it if I find there forty-five there.” Again he spoke and said, “Suppose forty are found there.” And he said, “I will not do it for forty’s sake.” Then he said “Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” And he said, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” And he said, “Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD. Suppose there shall be twenty found there.” And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty’s sake.” And he said, “Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once. Suppose ten shall be found there.” And he said, “I will not destroy it for ten’s sake.” And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham, and Abraham returned unto his place.

In this conversation, Abraham tried to take advantage of God, and managed to bargain with him step by step by employing the yes/no interrogative of “will you/shall you”. Therefore, Abraham dominated the conversation and induced God to accept his requirements.

2.3 God Appeared to Moses

Vocatives: Initiating the dialogue

When the angel of the LORD appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here am I.” (Exodus 3:4) It is God who initiates this conversation by calling out Moses’ name. In using a Vocative the speaker (God) is enacting the participation of the

addressee (Moses) or addressees in the exchange. This may serve to identify the particular person (Moses) being addressed, or to call for that person's (Moses) attention. The Vocative is used by God to mark the interpersonal relationship, and thereby drew closer the relationship between God and Moses and also claimed superior status or power of God to Moses. However, Moses also employed Vocatives "Oh, my Lord (Exodus 4:10/13)" to complain and refuse God's demands as in "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue (Exodus 4:10)." And "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else (Exodus 4:13)." Vocatives are features of dialogue, especially casual conversation reinforcing the "you-and-me" dimension of the meaning.

Imperatives: demanding

God was constantly trying to establish a closer and harmonious interpersonal relationship between Moses and himself, trying to persuade him to be his representative to guide the Israel out of misery and groaning. But Moses was attempting to refuse God all the time, trying over and over again to break the interpersonal relationship. However, in their conversation, it is still God who dominates the whole situation. God kept using imperatives which represent "demanding" instead of "giving", for example, "Say this to the people of Israel (Exodus 3:15)" "Throw it on the ground (Exodus 4:3)." "Put out your hand and catch it by the tail (Exodus 4:4)." "Put your hand inside your cloak (Exodus 4:6)." And each time after God's demand, Moses did as what God said to him, showing that Moses was extremely passive over the whole conversation.

Interrogative: anger

Moses' constant refusing and excusing made God lose patient gradually, which is revealed through the change of mood types of God from indicatives to imperatives and then to interrogatives. God uses both WH-interrogatives/Yes-No interrogatives and rhetorical interrogatives to express his feelings and ideas. For example, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? (Exodus 4:11)" "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? (Exodus 4:14)" The interrogative mood of God indeed showed his anger towards Moses.

3. Modality Analysis of God-human Relationship

Modality in Hallidayan sense contains modalization and modulation. In the following, we carried out statistical analysis of modal verbs, modal adverbs and interpersonal metaphor so as to examine the god-human relationship in the Bible.

3.1 Modalization and Modulation

In a proposition, the meaning of the positive and negative pole is asserting and denying; positive 'it is so', negative 'it isn't so'. There are two kinds of intermediate possibilities: (i) degrees of probability: 'possibly/probably/certainly'; (ii) degrees of usuality: 'sometimes/usually/always'. The former are equivalent to 'either yes or no', that is, maybe yes, maybe no, with different degrees of likelihood attached. The latter are equivalent to 'both yes and no', that is, sometimes yes, sometimes no, with different degrees of oftenness attached. It is these scales of probability and usuality to which the term 'modality' strictly belongs. We shall refer to these, to keep them distinct, as modalization.

Both probability and usuality can be expressed in the same three ways: (a) by a finite modal operator in the verbal group (see Table 1, e.g. *that will be John, he'll sit there all day*; (b) by a modal Adjunct of (i) probability or (ii) usuality, e.g. *that's probably John, he usually sits there all day*; (c) by both together, e.g. *that'll probably be John, he'll usually sit there all day*.

TABLE 1:
MODAL OPERATORS

	Low	Median	High
Positive	can, may, could, might, (dare)	will, would, should, is/ was to	must, ought to, need, has/ had to
Negative	needn't, doesn't/didn't + need to, have to	won't, wouldn't, shouldn't, (isn't/ wasn't to)	mustn't, oughtn't to, can't, couldn't, (mayn't, mightn't, hasn't/ hadn't to)

In a proposal, the meaning of the positive and negative poles is prescribing and proscribing: positive 'do it', negative 'don't do it'. Here also there are two kinds of intermediate possibility, in this case depending on the speech function, whether command or offer. (i) In a command, the intermediate points represent degrees of obligation: 'allowed to/supposed to/required to'; (ii) in an offer, they represent degrees of inclination: 'willing to/anxious to/determined to'. We shall refer to the scales of obligation and inclination as modulation, to distinguish them from modality in the other sense, that which we are calling modalization.

Again, both obligation and inclination can be expressed in either of two ways, though not, in this case, by both together: (a) by a finite modal operator, e.g. *you should know that, I'll help them*; (b) by an expansion of the Predicator, (i) typically by a passive verb, e.g. *you're supposed to know that*, (ii) typically by an adjective, e.g. *I'm anxious to help them*. Modality has three values, namely high, median and low. Please see Table 2 for specification.

TABLE 2:
THREE "VALUES" OF MODALITY

	Probability	Usuality	Obligation	Inclination
High	certain	always	required	determined
Median	probable	usually	supposed	keen
Low	possible	sometime	allowed	willing

3.2 Statistics and Analysis

3.2.1 Modal Verbs

According to statistics, the numbers of each type of modal operators and adverbs serving as mood adjuncts of modality, including low, median and high, are counted (see Table 3).

TABLE 3:
STATISTICS OF MODAL OPERATORS IN THE WHOLE OT

Value	Modal Adverbs	Number	Total number	Percentage
High	Must	49	53	0.344%
	Ought to	4		
Median	Shall	9961	14108	91.581%
	Should	536		
	Will	3513		
	Would	298		
Low	May	977	1244	8.075%
	Might	267		

From the statistics, it is found that modal operators at median value are used most frequently, while modal auxiliaries at outer value are obviously negligible compared with median value. The dominantly less use of high value modal verbs like *must* and *ought to* is not for the purpose of degenerating the status and power of the speaker (God, the leader etc.), expressing hesitation or uncertainty, but instead, to declare, to demand and to take responsibilities. In fact, it is a revealing of the speakers' overwhelming ideology (Ji, 2011).

"Shall" is used to express the obligation or duty of the speaker. "Will" reveals the willingness of the speaker. They are both subjective and implicit, representing the feelings and ideas of the implied speaker. According to another statistic of the percentage of modal auxiliaries used by God and his people (see Table 4), we can find that modal auxiliaries are mostly used by God, while others are negligible. It is not hard to interpret this phenomenon, the reason is that God is the master of the whole universe, and he has his own freewill (subjective, implied by modal auxiliaries) dominated over all the other creatures, while human's will are subjective to God, they cannot freely express their own ideas and feelings, instead, what they can do is just reporting or imitating the ideas or information received from God (objective, implied by modal adverbs, see Table 5). This part will be analyzed in the following.

Followings are some examples for analysis:

- (1) I will watch over it and protect it for all time. (2 Chronicles 7:16)
- (2) But I will bless the person who puts his trust in me. (Jeremiah 17:7)
- (3) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. (Genesis 3:17)
- (4) If it goes a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. (Exodus 22:31)

We can see from the above examples that verbs after modal auxiliary *will* are *watch*, *protect* and *bless*. Therefore, what *will* express is the commitment and responsibility towards his people. When God use *will*, he also plus the subject *I* for emphasis, revealing clearly that it is God's own freewill to protect and bless his chosen people, not under the pressure of external factors. Through the use of *will*, God shows his power and responsibility to his chosen people, and also shows his own nature. Meanwhile, God win more support from his people. *Will* acts as a close tie between God and his people, bridging the gap between them. This surely helps to build a closer God-human interpersonal relationship (Ji, 2011). On the other hand, verbs come after *shall* or *shall not* are *eat*, *die* and *be dealt with*. *Shall* or *shall not* is a sign showing God's authority and supremacy, but God does not chose *must* or *must not* that of high value to forbid doing something, instead, he uses the median one. The purpose is to offer more choices and freedom to his people. What the God provides is only a rule, a criteria, but whether human will obey or violate it is surely depend on people themselves. Thus, we can find that God is indeed trying to respect man, to offer choices for them to either go to heaven or hell.

TABLE 4:
MODAL AUXILIARIES USED BY GOD AND HIS PEOPLE (Ji, 2011)

Modal auxiliaries	God		Moses	
	Total number	Percentage	Total number	Percentage
will	62	54.87%	4	36.36%
must	22	19.47%	0	0%
mustn't	5	4.42%	1	9.09%
can	9	7.96%	2	18.18%
can't	0	0%	1	9.09%
might	1	0.88%	0	0%
may	6	5.31%	0	0%
shall	7	6.19%	1	9.09%
should	0	0%	2	18.18%
needn't	1	0.88%	0	0%
total	113		11	

Modal auxiliaries	God		Solomon	
	Total number	Percentage	Total number	Percentage
will	11	91.67%	0	0%
shall	1	8.32%	0	0%
total	12		0	

Modal auxiliaries	God		Jeremiah	
	Total number	Percentage	Total number	Percentage
will	61	64.9%	2	15.4%
must	8	8.51%	1	7.69%
mustn't	6	6.38%	0	0%
would	8	8.51%	3	23.08%
wouldn't	1	1.06%	1	7.69%
can't	3	3.19%	3	23.08%
can	4	4.26%	3	23.08%
have to	1	1.06%	0	0%
should	1	1.06%	0	0%
shouldn't	1	1.06%	0	0%
total	94		13	

3.2.2 Modal Adverbs

Probability

TABLE 5:
PROBABILITY

Value	Modal Adverbs	Number	Total number	Percentage
High	Certain	64	402	99.259%
	Certainly	30		
	Surely	277		
	Indeed	31		
Median	Probable	0	0	0
	Probably	0		
Low	Possible	0	3	0.0741%
	Possibly	0		
	Hardly	3		

According to statistics, high degree of probability are used almost by human, that is because modal adverbs are objective and implicit, human only reports God's will, not their own will. As God is the master of the whole universe, he rarely uses modal adverbs, what he uses is modal verbs which implies his subjectivity and his own freewill.

Even a high value modal ('certainly', 'always') is less determinate than a polar form: *that's certainly John* is less certain than *that's John*; *it always rains in summer* is less invariable than *it rains in summer*. In other words, you only say you are certain when you are not (Halliday, 2008:147). This is why God seldom uses modal adverbs.

Usuality

TABLE 6:
USUALITY

Value	Modal Adverbs	Number	Total number	Percentage
High	Always	42	90	100%
	Never	48		
Median	Usually	0		0
Low	Sometimes	0		0

It is shown in Table 6 that what exists in the Bible is all usuality of high value, that is, adverbs like *always* and *never*. The result implies that regulations must be observed, because rules are created by God, they are either black or white, either right or wrong, and there are no conditions in between. Obedience will definitely win blessings from God, while rebellion will surely get punished.

Obligation

TABLE 7:
OBLIGATION

Value	Modal Adverbs	Number	Percentage
High	Required	15	100%
Median	Supposed	0	0
Low	Allowed	0	0

The existence of only high value reveals the objectivity of obligation in Bible. The word "required" are used all by God's people, thus proves that human are required to obey the God.

Inclination

TABLE 8:
INCLINATION

Value	Modal Adverbs	Number	Total number	Percentage
High	Determined	16	16	33.3%
Median	Keen	0	0	0
Low	Willing	13	32	66.7%
	Willingly	19		

Apart from the low inclination represented by “willing/willingly”, which has already been analyzed in the above section (modal auxiliary “will”), all the values appear in Bible of inclination is of high value. This phenomenon indicates that decisions are made by Lord the God, while people who use the word have no subjectivity. The ending is destined by God.

The word “determined” are almost all used to make absolute assertions by human. For example, David said to Jonathan, “but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him (1 Samuel 20:7).”

3.2.3 Interpersonal metaphors

TABLE 9:
INTERPERSONAL METAPHORS

I am sure + clause	1
I know + clause	37

There are also interpersonal metaphors in the Bible, for example, God said to Moses, “And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand (Exodus 3:19).” “I am sure that” is followed by a clause, and this is where the grammatical metaphor takes place. These metaphors are subjective and explicit. Why it is subjective is that it begins with the subject “I”, and why it is explicit is that the subject “I” exists in the proposition instead of hidden by using modal verbs.

Examples of “I know + clause”:

(5) When Abram was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance ...” (Genesis 12:11)

(6) God said to Abimelech in the dream, “yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart...” (Genesis 20:6)

(7) The angel of the Lord said to Abraham, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God...” (Genesis 22:12)

Form the above examples we can find that the circumstances where the speaker uses “I know + clause”, there are hierarchical relations between the two speakers, and the one who use the clause is the one who possesses higher positions. In (5), Abram has higher position than Sarai his wife; in (6), God has higher position than Abimelech; in (7), God’s angel has higher position than Abraham.

“I know + clause” is subjective and explicit, as projecting mental clause + idea clause. In the Bible, there exists obvious and highly intensified hierarchy, thus, only the one who has higher status can express their ideas or feelings subjectively to the lower ones.

IV. CONCLUSION

Systemic functional grammar represented by Halliday identifies three metafunctions of language, i.e. ideational, interpersonal and textual. Among them, interpersonal function is explained as closely related to the human activity of communication, but it has been studied less systematically than the other two because it is more complex and less systematic.

In the study of the interpersonal meaning of biblical language, the author makes the research both from micro and macro levels, from mood to modality to interpersonal metaphor, so as to reach the conclusion that interpersonal meaning in biblical language has directly or indirectly helped to make closer relationship between God and his people. Mood and modality in the Bible helps construct positive interpersonal relationships.

The context of this study mainly concerns the Bible itself, but further researches could also extends to all of human society both in and outside the Bible. So the participants in our interaction have a very large scope. Besides God, there are also people both inside and outside the Bible (Ji, 2007). The interaction between different people in this research is relatively complex, which includes not only that between God and his people, that among his people themselves, but also that between the writer and readers.

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Development of Interlanguage Pragmatic Competence: Input- and Output-based Instruction in the Zone of Proximal Development

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Abstract—Among the Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) studies which have investigated the differential effect of different instructional treatments, little attention has been given to the role of the sociocultural concepts of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and peer scaffolding in the development of pragmatic competence. Furthermore, none have juxtaposed the effect of incorporating an output-based instruction with an input-based one. The study employed an experimental design over a 13 week period with 90 students randomly assigned to the one of the five groups consisting of four treatment groups and a control group. Each treatment group received one of the following kinds of instructions: (a) individual input-based, (b) collaborative input-based, (c) individual output-based, or (d) collaborative output-based. Treatment groups' performance was compared with that of a control group on pretests and posttests consisting of a multiple choice discourse completion task and a written discourse completion task. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between pre- and posttests of the four experimental groups in both awareness and production. The results lend support to Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis and Swain's (1985) output hypothesis and provides evidence for the success of Sharwood Smith's (1991, 1993) input enhancement techniques. However, the results cast doubt on the superiority of output based instruction over input based even in output focused activities. Further results and implications are discussed in the paper.

Index Terms—interlanguage pragmatics, zone of proximal development, peer scaffolding, input-based instruction, output-based instruction

I. INTRODUCTION

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), as a subfield of pragmatics and interlanguage studies, "uses pragmatic theories, principles and frameworks to examine how foreign/second language learners encode and decode meaning in their L2" (Schauer, 2009, p. 15). The findings of ILP studies on the learners' pragmatic development across different proficiency levels indicate that having high levels of grammatical competency will not necessarily guarantee comparable pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Taguchi, 2007, 2009; Takahashi, 1996). That is, even grammatically advanced learners may convey the intended meaning and politeness values inappropriately, in a way that is different from native like performance and pragmatic norms (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, & Fatahi, 2004). Consequently, though it is very difficult to teach pragmatics in the L2 classroom (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996), the teaching of pragmatics is of high importance especially in the foreign language context in which learners have limited opportunities to be exposed to the target language (Kasper, 2001a, 2001b; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

The major models that have motivated many researches in ILP are Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis, Sharwood Smith's (1981, 1993) consciousness raising model, later modified to Input Enhancement (IE), Swain's (1985, 1995, 1998) output hypothesis and more recently Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory (SCT). While there is an abundance of studies that examine and support noticing hypothesis (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Safont, 2005) and IE (Takimoto, 2006, 2007, 2008), just a handful of studies are based on Swain's (1985) output hypothesis in teaching language pragmatics (e.g., Jernigan, 2007, 2012). Vygotsky's SCT is the next theoretical point of view that has been barely applied in the realm of ILP. A quick review of the literature shows that just a few observational studies informed by SCT touch on pragmatics in some way (Donato, 1994; Ohta, 1999, 2001). But none of these studies looks at the role of the ZPD and peer scaffolding in the development of pragmatic knowledge. In addition, the findings of such observational case studies are not generalizable to foreign language classroom contexts (Ohta, 2005). To date, only a very small number of studies have examined the role of the ZPD in ILP (e.g., Khatib & Ahmadi Safa, 2011; Jabbarpoor & Tajeddin, 2013).

Therefore the aim of the present study is to see the effectiveness of instruction in teaching pragmatics not only from a cognitive point of view (input vs. output-based) but also from a sociocultural point of view. More specifically, the

present study seeks to clarify the possible role of ZPD and peer scaffolding in the development (i.e., awareness and production) of L2 pragmatic competence.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Input Enhancement and ILP*

The most compelling evidence that instruction in L2 pragmatics or *acquisitional pragmatics* (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013) is necessary comes from advanced learners, with high levels of grammatical competency, whose communication frequently contain pragmatic errors (Mirzaei & Esmaeili, 2013). Research findings of L2 studies that examined the teachability of pragmatic features suggest the necessity and effectiveness of instruction (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993; Rose, 2005). "The two specific pedagogical approaches to draw the learner's attention to form [...] are visual (textual or typographical) input enhancement and the learners' output" (Izumi, 2002, p.543). To promote learning, the learner should pay attention to forms, functions and contextual features but due to the non-saliency and infrequency of some forms, there should be a focused attention to learning (Schmidt, 1993, 1995, 2001). In this regard, Sharwood Smith (1991, 1993) suggests Input Enhancement (IE) techniques (e.g. stress in speech or boldfacing in printed text) by which language input becomes salient to the learner.

A bunch of studies have provided empirical evidence supporting IE techniques (e.g. Takahashi, 2001; Takimoto, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009). Takahashi (2001) broadened the notion of IE, devising different input conditions which differed in their degrees of IE, namely, explicit teaching, form comparison and form search. In explicit teaching group, teacher-fronted metapragmatic information on the form function relationship (of target request strategies) was provided. In form-comparison condition, learners were required to compare their own request strategies with those of native speakers in similar situations and in form search condition, they were asked to find any native (like) usage in the input. The findings indicated that while learners in both implicit (form-search, form-comparison and meaning-focused) and explicit groups noticed the target request form and used them in the posttest, the learners in the explicit group outperformed those in the implicit one. Takimoto (2009) study evaluated the relative effectiveness of three types of input-based instruction: comprehension-based instruction, structured input instruction, and consciousness raising instruction. Four types of testing instruments were used in pre-, post-, and follow-up test; a planned role-play test, a planned discourse completion test, a planned acceptability judgment test and an unplanned listening judgment test. The results indicated that, while the testing method had an effect on the participants' performance, three types of input-based instruction performed considerably better than the control group.

B. *The Output Hypothesis and ILP*

As mentioned above, learners' output is a specific pedagogical approach to draw the learner's attention to form. The output hypothesis claims that "the act of producing language (speaking or writing) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning" (Swain, 2005, p. 471). That is, output is both the result and contributor of acquisition because production makes the learner notice the gap (Izumi, 2002). While studies on the effects of output have grown in number and influence (e.g., Izumi, 2002, 2003; Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2002), only a very small number of L2 studies have examined the role of output in ILP development (Jernigan, 2007, 2012).

Jernigan (2012), for instance, examined the effectiveness of output-based instruction. The participants were adult ESL learners with different first language backgrounds. The pretest and posttest consisted of a written discourse completion task (WDCT) and a pragmatic acceptability judgment task (PAJT). The results indicated that the instructional treatment had a significant effect on the PAJT. However, no significant effects were identified in the results of DCT, but the output group showed a relatively large effect size.

C. *Sociocultural Framework and ILP*

Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory (SCT) of human learning describes learning as a social process and highlights teaching and learning in conjunction (Nassaji & Cumming, 2000). The first central concept of the sociocultural theory is the Zone of proximal development (ZPD). It refers to the distance between what children can do and what they can do with the guidance from an a more skilled person. It highlights the progressive and step-by-step nature of learning stating that the child gets skills through interaction with a more skilled person. The second cardinal concept in sociocultural theory is scaffolding. Donato (1994) defined scaffolding as a "situation where a knowledgeable participant can create supportive conditions in which the novice can participate, and extend his or her current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence" (p. 40). In language teaching and learning, scaffolding implies both the joint construction of language and the gradually withdrawing support of the teacher as the learner's competence develops, with the aim of making the learner ready to accomplish tasks independently.

While the sociocultural concepts of ZPD and scaffolding have been applied in language teaching and learning (Nassaji & Cumming, 2000; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Ohta, 1999, 2001; Storch, 2005), it has received scant attention in pragmatic development studies. Ohta (2005) considered the applicability of the ZPD to interlanguage pragmatics instruction, and analyzed three interlanguage pragmatics research studies through the framework of ZPD. She believed that although none of these studies have considered ZPD in their implementation and

analysis, their study results could be explained from a ZPD perspective. She noted that in Yoshimi (2001, as cited in Ohta, 2005), for instance, the opportunities provided are the essence of the ZPD. The participants worked with some stories with the help of an expert who assisted them with instruction, revisions.

The dearth of research into the role of ZPD and scaffolding on developing interlanguage pragmatics has motivated only a very small number of studies so far. Khatib and Ahmadi Safa (2011), for instance, investigated the potentiality of role of the ZPD concept and different forms of scaffolding into the development of the foreign language learners' ILP competence. The participants were organized into three experimental and one control groups. While the subjects of the control group received ZPD-insensitive teacher scaffolding, the subjects in the experimental groups were given (either explicit or implicit) ZPD-wise scaffolding by the expert peers, or ZPD-insensitive scaffolding by their co-equals. The results revealed that the expert peers' ZPD-wise explicit and implicit scaffolding outperformed the other two intervention types for the subjects' co-construction of ZPD and ILP development and the co-equals' scaffolding proved to be the third effective procedure.

III. THE PRESENT STUDY

Theoretically motivated by cognitive and sociocultural frameworks mentioned above and based on the fact that, to date, a small number of studies have examined the application of ZPD and scaffolding on developing in L2 pragmatics, the present study is to investigate the role of ZPD and scaffolding in input- vs. output-based instruction. Input is operationalized as the ability of the input-based group to search for forms (form search) and compare them with what they would say in their first language (i.e., Persian) in a similar situation (form comparison). Output, on the other hand, is operationalized as the ability of the output-based group to answer WDCTs and to investigate the ZPD and scaffolding, the participants were divided into individual and collaborative groups. In collaborative groups, the expert peer assisted the other members. Consequently, the following research questions are investigated in the present study:

1. Do instruction type (input vs. output based instruction) and participants' grouping (individual vs. collaborative grouping) have any effect on the awareness of speech acts?
2. Do instruction type (input vs. output based instruction) and participants' grouping (individual vs. collaborative grouping) have any effect on the production of speech acts?

A. Participants

A total of 90 freshman Iranian EFL learners from Islamic Azad University of Gorgan, ranging from 18 to 20 years of age and studying English Literature and TEFL, took part in the main study. Among them 20 participants were upper-intermediate (expert peers) and the rest were lower-intermediate. They constituted five classes and were randomly assigned to four treatment and one control groups. The original number of participants was 130. Twenty seven participants were excluded due to their marks in the placement test and 13 more were excluded from data analysis due to their absence in at least one treatment session. In addition, two American Native English Speakers took part in revising the researcher-made Written Discourse Completion Task (WDCT), and two American Native English Speakers rated the WDCT test.

B. Instrumentation

1. Quick Placement Test

A paper and pen version of the Quick Placement Test (QPT), developed by Cambridge ESOL and Oxford University Press, was used to ensure the homogeneity of the groups. The beginners and breakthroughs were excluded because, considering the participants' performance in the pilot study, at this level the learners had difficulty in writing and this low level of writing skill would affect their performance especially in WDCT. Since there should be a more competent learner as the expert peer (in collaborative groups), 20 upper intermediate students were included in the five groups.

2. Pretest and Posttest

Developing L2 pragmatic competence was operationalized as learners' changes in performance on the two scales: (a 16-item) Multiple Choice Discourse Completion Test (MDCT) and (a 10-item) Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT). For MDCT, 16 situations validated by Birjandi and Rezaei (2010) were modified and used. The 10 items developed for WDCT was done through exemplar generation, likelihood investigation, metapragmatic assessment and piloting (see Jianda, 2007). For each speech act there were 5 and 8 scenarios in WDCT and MDCT respectively, which the participants completed in about two hours prior and subsequent to the experimental treatment in each of the five groups. Also the participants first took WDCT and then MDCT so as not to benefit from the items of MDCT.

The WDCT Development and Validation

Exemplar Generation. In order to approximate authentic situations the student encounter in their real life, 20 TEFL students of Azad University were asked to write either, in Persian or English, at least five situations in which they apologize, and ask (request something). In this way, a total of 200 situations were generated. A qualitative analysis of the situations showed that many of them were overlapping, thus 20 situations (10 situations for each speech act) were selected.

Likelihood Investigation. To test the naturalness of the situations, thirty other students from the same pool were asked to rate the 20 selected situations from 1 to 5 on the basis of their frequency of occurrence and naturalness and the 10 scenarios with the highest mean scores were selected.

Metapragmatic Assessment. The 10 situations were balanced according to three sociolinguistic variables. This involved assessing the Imposition (the burden put on the hearer), social distance (the relationship between the interlocutors) and Power (the status of the speaker with respect to the hearer). An attempt was made to select those situations with different combinations of features. To approve the authenticity of the described situations for the realization of the intended speech acts, two NSs read and revised the WDCT test items.

3. Treatment Materials

The treatment materials were 24 native speakers' dialogue extracts adopted from ESL podcasts and tailored to the level of the participants by paraphrasing or deleting some difficult vocabularies, idioms and expressions. The number of prompts for each speech act was 12 covering various situations such as work, school, and home. To select each prompt, besides formality, sociopragmatic issues such as setting, imposition and power relations were taken into account.

C. Pilot Study

The pilot study involving 20 university students from the same pool as the main study was conducted three months before the main study. The participants were asked to answer a 16-item MDCT and a 10-item WDCT. Based on the results of this pilot study, some changes were made in the test items and also the procedure of the experiments. The items which had the lower correlation with the total scores were revised. The results indicated that the MDCT and WDCT scales were reliable at .78 for and .85.

D. Procedure

The study was done as an integrated part of the "Conversation I" course of the BA level. First, the Oxford Quick Placement Test was given to the participants in each of the five classes to ensure the homogeneity of the participants by including lower intermediate and upper-intermediate. Then the participants were given the pretest, first they took WDCT and then MDCT. Having administered the pretest to five groups, the researcher provided them with the designed instructional approach. The control group was exposed to the same material as the four experimental groups without any pragmatics-focused instruction. The dialogue extracts of each speech act was presented in four hours (four consecutive sessions of 60 minutes), therefore, the whole instructional treatment lasted for 8 such sessions. In addition to the eight treatment sessions, five sessions were devoted to the introduction to course, administration of placement, pre and post tests. The first step for all the five groups was the presentation of the scenarios (dialogues) regarding speech acts. Following the presentation of the material, the control and experimental groups underwent the following procedures:

1. The individual and collaborative input-based groups (IIG & CIG)

The participants in input groups received two types of materials: an instruction sheet and 24 native speakers' dialogue extracts. Having received and read the instruction sheet, the participants were presented with the transcripts of dialogues containing the focused speech act. In each session three dialogues were studied and each speech act was covered in four consecutive sessions. While they were not required to produce output, they were required to find and underline the different elements of the speech act under study (form search) on the basis of the short explanation of the instructor at the beginning of the session. Then, in both input-based groups, the participants compared what they would say in their first language (i.e., Persian) in a similar situation (form comparison). There was no interaction among participants in the classroom and it was only the teacher who selectively provided feedback when needed.

The participants of the collaborative group, on the other hand, worked in groups of four and five in which there were constant interaction and feedback on the part of members. The teacher assigned an upper intermediate member as the expert peer whose role was to scaffold other members. Before starting the treatment, to ensure that the expert peers knew how they were going to scaffold other members of the group, the teacher held two extra practice sessions with expert peers. To operationalize scaffolding strategies and to avoid over and under assistance by peer experts, Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale which starts with the most implicit (level 0) and ends up with the most explicit instruction and feedback strategies (level 12) was applied. In the case there was a problem, the leader could get help from the teacher. The teacher constantly monitored the groups to ensure the interaction and feedback among the members. Just like the IIG, the participants of CIG didn't produce any speech acts.

2. The individual and collaborative output-based group (IOG & COG)

The IOG and also COG participants received two types of materials: an instruction sheet and 24 native speakers' dialogue extracts. The participants of the output groups received the same materials as the input ones except that the 24 native speakers' dialogue extracts of the output based groups were followed by the description of the similar situation, having the same situational features as the dialogue, in which they were going to write what they would say in that situation. While the IOG participants were presented with the same dialogue extracts and then they were required to answer the WDCT individually, the participants of COG worked in groups of four and five to answer similar discourse completion tasks. The expert peer, following the Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale, scaffolded the other members of the group.

3. The control group (CG)

The participants read the same dialogues and then they were asked to answer comprehension questions. That is, the focus was merely on meaning and activities following the presentation of the input didn't address pragmatic issues.

IV. RESULTS

A. Reliability of Scales

To check the internal consistency of the MDCT, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of pretests and posttest was calculated and it was found that the reliability index exceeded 0.7 in both pre and posttest (.79 and .83 respectively). To check the reliability of the WDCT, first, internal consistency of pre- and posttest were calculated. The results showed the reliability of WDCT to be higher than that of MDCT and in both pre- and posttest: the scale enjoyed the Cronbach's alpha of .94 and .95 respectively.

With regard to the interrater reliability, first, two NS were trained in two sessions and they were asked to rate WDCTs on the basis of Jernigan's (2007) four point scale in which scores of 1 or 2 is indicative of a generally unacceptable or unacceptable response while a score of 3 or 4 indicate that the response is generally acceptable or completely acceptable. Therefore, there is a noticeable contrast in the scoring levels between the scores of 2 and 3; while a score of three is generally appropriate, a score of two is generally unacceptable. Then, to check the internal consistency of each scoring, the raters' Cronbach's alpha values of each of the raters were calculated and it was found that they were reasonably high at .83 and .81. Then, the correlation of the rater's scores was examined as a way to estimate the interrater reliability. The results showed that there was a strong, positive correlation between the ratings of two raters [$r = .82$, $n = 90$, $p < .05$].

B. The First Research Question

The first research question was to explore the possible effect of instruction and grouping on the learners' awareness (perception) of speech acts. To check for this effect, an MDCT was used. Based on the native speakers' answers in similar situations, a correct answer was awarded a score of 1 and a wrong answer 0. The maximum possible score was 16. Table 1 presents a general overview of the trends of the MDCT in the pre- and posttests.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR MDCT

		Input based		Output based		Control
		Individual	collaborative	individual	collaborative	
Pretest	Mean	20.5	25.64	19.79	22.32	17.79
	SD	5.403	4.431	5.056	4.485	5.432
posttest	Mean	24.64	27.07	22.25	23.58	18.26
	SD	4.986	4.411	5.252	4.414	5.576
N		14	14	24	19	19

As depicted in Table 1, it seems that, among the four treatment groups, there is an increase in the score means from the pretest to the posttest. The highest difference (gain score) in the mean is in IIG ($24.64 - 20.5 = 4.14$) and the lowest difference is in COG ($23.58 - 22.32 = 1.26$). Also, a glance at the mean differences of input and output-based groups indicates that the input group outperformed the output group.

To further analyze the data, a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA was conducted. The results showed a main effect for grouping $F(1, 85) = 6.735$, $p = .011$; a main effect for instruction type $F(1, 85) = 5.07$, $p = .027$; and a main effect for time interval $F(1, 85) = 14.756$, $p = .000$ with a benefit for posttests. As for the interactions, none of the interactions turned out to be significant. Post-hoc comparisons for the five groups showed that there was significant difference between the individual and collaborative grouping and both were significantly better than the control group. As for the instruction type, post-hoc comparisons showed that the input group is significantly better than the output group, and both are significantly better than the control group. Post-hoc comparisons also indicated the following contrasts ($p < .05$): the IIG, COG, CIG, and IOG groups performed significantly better than the control group and among the four experimental groups, CIG outperformed IIG, IOG, and COG. The two collaborative groups outperformed their individual counterparts. There are no statistically significant differences among the IIG, IOG and COG.

C. The Second Research Question

The second research question concerned the effect of instruction and grouping on the *production* of speech acts as measured via the WDCT. As can be seen in the Table 2, the collaborative output based group has the highest mean difference among the five groups and collaborative input based group has the lowest gain score.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR WDCT

		Input based		Output based		Control
		Individual	collaborative	individual	collaborative	
Pretest	Mean	28	53.57	35.54	40.37	41.68
	SD	14.191	7.683	8.832	10.101	12.234
posttest	Mean	41.93	63.79	49.08	58.32	38.74
	SD	7.184	5.381	7.824	10.398	10.759
N		14	14	24	16	19

To further assess the impact of two different interventions (instruction and grouping) on participants' scores on the WDCT, a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA was conducted. The results showed no main effect for instruction type $F(1, 85) = .205$, $p = .65$; a main effect for grouping $F(1, 85) = 49.000$, $p = .000$ ($p < .0005$); and a main effect for time interval $F(1, 85) = 120.45$, $p = .000$, with four groups showing an increase in MDCT scores across the two time periods. As for the interactions, there was a significant interaction between grouping and time, $F(1, 85) = 4.85$, $p = .04$ and a significant interaction between instruction and time, $F(1, 85) = .80$, $p = .02$. There was also a significant interaction between Instruction and grouping, $F(1, 85) = 49.00$, $p = .000$.

Post-hoc comparisons for the five groups showed that the collaborative group outperformed both individual and control group and there was no significant difference between individual and control group. As for the instruction type, post-hoc comparisons showed no significant difference between input and output group, and both were significantly better than the control group. In addition, Post-hoc comparisons revealed the following contrasts ($p < .05$): CIG perform significantly better than IIG, IOG, COG and CG. COG outperformed IIG and IOG and as in MDCT, the two collaborative groups outperformed their individual counterparts. However, there was no statistically significant difference between individual groups (IIG and IOG) and CG.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the differential effects of instruction and grouping on the awareness and production of speech acts. More specifically, the present study examined whether expert peers' scaffolding through output and input instruction promote noticing and learning of pragmatic features. The first research question concerned the effect of instruction and grouping on the participants' *awareness* of speech acts measured by MDCT. The results indicated that the input based groups performed significantly better than the control group. This is consistent with Takimoto (2007, 2008, 2009) in which input based groups outperformed the control group. In addition, the results support noticing hypothesis and provide evidence for the success of input enhancement techniques showing that the pedagogical intervention had made specific target features of the input more salient and directed the learners' attention to these features and resulted in the increased depth of processing of speech acts.

Furthermore, the output-based groups significantly outperformed the control group which is in harmony with Izumi's (2002) and Jernigan's (2007) finding in which +output instruction improved the participants' awareness more than - output instruction. This supports theoretical claims of the output hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995). The output produced by the learners, as Swain (1995) proposed, can help them notice their area difficulty that makes them search their own developing interlanguage system.

The CIG outperformed the two output-based groups (IOG & COG) confirming the claims made by Ellis (1997) and VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) who proposed "that it is the manipulation of input (how learners perceive and process input) rather than output (how learners produce language output) that is more likely to result in the integration of intake into learners' implicit/declarative knowledge".

The results also showed that the two collaborative groups outperformed their individual counterparts in the awareness of speech acts. That is, collaborative pair work facilitated learners' attention to the target forms and learners who carried out the input and output tasks collaboratively were more successful. This is harmonious with those obtained by Khatib and Ahmadi Safa (2011) in which the expert peers' ZPD-wise explicit and implicit scaffolding were more effective than the other two intervention types for the ILP development.

The second research question explored the potential effects of instruction and grouping on the *production* of speech acts measured by WDCT. The results indicated that in spite of the observable mean increases from pretest to posttest in the output-based groups (comparing to those of the input-based groups), the output-based groups didn't outperform the input-based group in the WDCT. This may have more than one possible reason. First, because two speech acts are involved, they may need more time than the eight weeks of instruction in production oriented activities and as Jernigan (2012, p. 8) suggests, there may be the need "for more perception-focused activities early in learners' development, with more output-focused tasks integrated as learners advance". The second reason is related to "the number of scores which may have been too low for the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to identify the significant effects and interactions suggested by the trends in the raw data and effect size measures" (Jernigan, 2007, p. 124).

The fact that the IIG groups didn't outpace the CG where production was concerned is in line with skill based learning asserting that "a particular skill is learned as a result of practice". The skill based learning is contrasted to 'information-processing theory which claims that input-based instruction will serve to develop the participants' ability

to comprehend and produce the target features drawing on the same underlying knowledge source” (Takimoto, 2009, p. 1041).

With regard to role of peer scaffolding, the collaborative groups showed significantly greater gains than their individual counterparts in the production of speech acts, showing the an advantage of collaborative pair work over individual work. With regard to the effects of pair work, the results of the study confirmed the results of ESL studies that have shown that engagement in collaborative activities may improve the learners’ accurate production of the target forms (Swain, 1998; Lapkin & Swain, 2000). However, the findings do not support the findings of ESL studies (e.g., Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Storch, 1997, 2005) in which collaborative pair work did not lead to superior learning of targeted forms in comparison to individual work. This indicates that the context (ESL vs. EFL) might have a potential role in implementing ZPD and scaffolding. However, more research is needed to examine the application of SCT for learning pragmatic features in an EFL context.

Of the interesting results of WDCT analysis was that the CIG outperformed the COG even in the production of speech acts. This may have more than one possible reason: The first reason may be related to the fact that the same amount of time was allotted to both collaborative groups. Due to the interactions and the written task involved there may be the need to give more time to the collaborative output-based group. The second reason may be related to the nature of the interaction. Although the researcher constantly monitored the groups, as indicated by some of the participants, in some cases the interactions were, brief, and limited. This suggests that in future output-based studies learners’ interaction must be taken into account. An analysis of transcripts of the interactions may be of great help in this regard.

The main contribution of the present study to the existing research literature is that it adopts a more comprehensive look towards the effect of instruction on developing pragmatic competence in EFL context. Taking into account the notion of ZPD and peer scaffolding in the implementation and analysis of the study, the present study juxtaposed the effect of incorporating learner output, whether individual or collaborative with the other cognitively oriented approach, that is, input enhancement. The findings of this study can have some pedagogical implications for the language teachers and learners in an EFL context. Due to the lack of adequate materials and training and a lack of emphasis on pragmatic issues in EFL courses, the pedagogical implication then for teachers is that they should attempt to make students recognize the importance of the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features which is rife throughout the language learning. This can be accomplished by providing learners with extended opportunities to receive contextualized, pragmatically appropriate input and produce output. An important implication of the present study is that peer scaffolding is relatively effective for EFL learners’ ILP development. The other implication of the present study is that the constructs of pragmatic perception and production must be conceived as a multifaceted phenomenon. Instructors might be encouraged to employ more perception-focused approaches to pragmatic instruction earlier and focus on production activities at later stages of learners’ development (Jernigan, 2012).

As the study and research into the area of interlanguage pragmatics in EFL context is somehow young, further investigation is needed to find out the effective ways of teaching pragmatics in EFL context. This study investigated the instruction of speech acts in reading and writing modality. The same study can be conducted in listening modality using audiovisual materials to see to what extent the change of different modalities affects the awareness and production of speech acts. Moreover, the instruments employed in this study were WDCT and MDCT. Research is suggested to be conducted using other instruments such as the Oral Discourse Completion Task (ODCT), the Discourse Role-Play Task (DRPT), and the Discourse Self-Assessment Task (DSAT) to triangulate the data (see Brown, 2001). Also of interest in this regard is how input- and output-based activities may be combined to promote greater pragmatic learning. One question that is worth researching is to examine the learning strategies that are implemented by Persian EFL learners in their acquisition of interlanguage pragmatics.

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Efficiency, Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Autonomy Based on Teachers' and Learners' Point of Views

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Abstract—Learner autonomy has been a recent trend in education which highlights the students' engagement in their own learning. Although over the past 30 years, a large body of research has been carried on learner autonomy, limited attention has been paid to the sense teachers in comparison to learners would make of this concept. The present study is an attempt to shed light on the general existing pattern of the way teachers and learners view learner autonomy. To do so, applying the convenience method of sampling, a structured questionnaire consisting of five sections was emailed to most of the teachers teaching English as a foreign language in Isfahan, Iran. In order to have a more precise analysis, an interview was carried out to see what reasons are behind the participants' answers. Employing the referential statistics, the results indicated that nearly all the teachers and learners agreed on the fact that learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more efficiently than they otherwise would. Furthermore, in relation to desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy, almost all the participants agreed that it is more desirable than feasible. The findings of this study might benefit those teachers and institution officials interested in enhancing learning autonomy among their students and even educating themselves or the other teachers to make use of it practically in classrooms.

Index Terms—learner autonomy, efficiency, feasibility, desirability

I. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is one of the most challenging activities one has to deal with. Such lifelong learning process, obviously, involves making a good use of the latest methods, strategies, technologies and materials and even attitudes. Therefore, regarding the noticeable speed of technology enrichment in the field of second/foreign language learning (ESL/EFL), as well as, the new strategies and methods, it is really crucial to take steps in the right directions to train better language learners. There are many different influencing strategies which can efficiently help the learners become able to compensate for this high-speed advancement of technology. One of these efficient strategies or better to say attitudes is making the best efforts to educate independent as well as autonomous language learners in order to provide them with opportunities to take charge of their own learning. To do so, being aware of teachers' and learner's perceptions of the term is really important since it can powerfully affect the selection of methods, materials, activities and so forth. Autonomy does not mean a new methodology but an attitude adopted by the learner in his/her learning process which is based on the learner's responsibility needed to be recognized and improved (Andreu, 2007). So, as long as teachers are not aware of the ways to make their students responsible of their own learning in the way of becoming autonomous learners, the classroom will remain a place where students have to go with the only aim of passing the exams fixed in their curriculum. Therefore, as a teacher, one of the most important moral duties which is expected to be considered is to help students become more independent and autonomous.

However, it has been approved that during the last decades, a large body of research has been performed to investigate what autonomy is, how it can be promoted, or even the interrelationship between autonomy and gender, learning styles, motivation, teaching and learning activities.

Nevertheless, little has been done in the field of teachers' beliefs and perception of the matter. In fact, it is not known that whether teachers generally accept the views about learner autonomy or even to what extent they know about it. Palfreyman (2003) did acknowledge the gap that may exist between theoretical discussions of learner autonomy and teachers' own perceptions of the concept and made the point with specific reference to the manner in which learner autonomy has been conceptualized from technical, psychological, and political perspectives (Benson, 1997) and, additionally, from a sociocultural perspective (Oxford, 2003). Furthermore, most of the studies in the field of beliefs on learner autonomy have aimed to delve into the meaning of autonomous language learners and little is related to the teachers' beliefs, perceptions and ideas, in comparison with their learners' opinions. Actually, it is not exactly clear if generally language teachers come to a common point of view and whether learners' perception toward the matter is significantly different or not. The present study, consequently, is an attempt to fill the existing gap.

Experience in language institutes reveals the fact that students usually come to these centers with limited study skills and they only depend on their teachers to improve their language skills. Therefore, EFL teachers need to train their students in skills and techniques which will enable them to be more independent and effective learners in higher levels.

In this regard, we need to be informed whether learning to become autonomous is reliable and feasible also, we need to become aware of the challenges which teachers and learners encounter in this learning process.

Moreover, some individual, pair and group work learning activities, such as working with multimedia software, checking the words in dictionaries, studying supplementary books for further practice, and doing some projects like surfing an article online or writing a piece of paper are proposed and utilized in these institutes; however, there is a concern among both managers and teachers that whether the existing activities are beneficial and efficient or not.

In general, it seems that even language teachers, especially the novices are not familiar with the concept of learner autonomy so, they are not able to develop it in their learners. Therefore, it is vital for both the experienced and the novice teachers to become aware of the concept of learner autonomy, the characteristics of autonomous language learners, the ways to develop and enhance it and the ways and means to deal with the challenges practically. Therefore, being aware of teachers' and learners' beliefs of the matter can be regarded as the first step to promote learner autonomy and make use of the most influential autonomous activities in EFL classes.

In the present research the following questions are going to be answered:

1. Do L2 teachers and learners believe that learner autonomy would enhance L2 learning? If yes, to what extent?
2. Do L2 teachers and learners believe that the promotion of L2 learner autonomy is desirable and feasible? If yes, to what extent?
3. Are there any significant differences between L2 teachers' and Learners' beliefs regarding the degree of L2 learning enhancement through autonomy and desirability and feasibility of L2 learning autonomy promotion?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Although much has been written about learner autonomy, there has been little research carried out into teachers' perspectives so no much is known about what learner autonomy means to language teachers in various contexts and educational settings around the world (Borg, 2003). Due to the fact that teachers play a crucial role in the promotion of learner autonomy, addressing their beliefs in this area is effectively influential. In this section some studies which have explored teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy are discussed.

As far as this study investigates, Camilleri (1999) had done the first study to investigate teachers' views about learner autonomy. The study was carried out with teachers in various European countries. The main findings were:

- A willingness of teachers to change and develop practice
- Strong support in incorporating learner autonomy in different areas of teaching (material selection, areas of classroom management, learning strategies, learning styles)
- A reluctance of teachers to involve learners in aims and methodological decisions
- Constraints from higher authorities made it hard to encourage learner autonomy or offer more learner choice

Camilleri, on the other hand, (1999) presented questionnaire data collected from 328 teachers in six European contexts (Malta, The Netherlands, Belorussia, Poland, Estonia and Slovenia). The questionnaire consisted of 13 items each asking about the extent to which learners, according to the teachers, should be involved in decisions about a range of learning activities, such as establishing the objectives of a course or selecting course content. As a result, teachers were found to be positive about involving learners in a range of activities, such as deciding on the position of desks, periodically assessing themselves and working out learning procedures. In contrast, teachers were not positive about learner involvement in the selection of textbooks and deciding on the time and place of lessons.

In another study, Chan (2003) examined teacher's perspectives of learner autonomy in a large-scale study at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Her findings show that teachers felt mainly responsible for the methodological decisions within the classroom. Moreover, respondents reported a clear awareness of autonomy as a goal of teaching and felt fairly positive about students' decision making abilities in different aspects of the language learning process. Teachers did feel, however, restricted by curriculum constraints and consequently did not provide decision-making opportunities for learners in areas of autonomous learning (e.g. learning objectives, activities). This study reveals the fact that learner autonomy cannot be encouraged without support from the teacher. In addition, it shows that thinking about our beliefs and teaching practices is important as it allows for reflection and change if needed. The instrument from the above study was used once again by Balçıkanlı (2010) to examine the views about learner autonomy of 112 student teachers of English in Turkey. Additionally, 20 participants were interviewed in focus groups of four teachers each. The results suggested that the student teachers were positively disposed towards learner autonomy – i.e. they were positive about involving students in decisions about a wide range of classroom activities, though, again, they were less positive about involving students in decisions about when and where lessons should be held. Al-Shaqsi (2009) was another survey of teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy. This was conducted with 120 teachers of English in state schools in Oman. A questionnaire was devised specifically for this study and it asked respondents about (a) the characteristics of autonomous learners (b) their learners' ability to carry out a number of tasks (each of which was assumed to be an indicator of learner autonomy – e.g. deciding when to use a dictionary or identifying their own weaknesses) and (c) how learner autonomy might be promoted. The three characteristics of autonomous learners most often identified by teachers were that they can use computers to find information, use a dictionary and ask the teacher to explain when they do not understand. The teachers in this study also assessed their learners positively on all of the indicators of learner autonomy they were presented with. The three most highly rated indicators were asking the teacher

to explain when something is not clear, giving their point of view on topics in the classroom and using the dictionary well. The final study presented here is Martinez (2008), who examined, using a predominantly qualitative methodology, the subjective theories about learner autonomy of 16 student teachers of French, Italian and Spanish. These students were studying at a university in Germany and were taking a 32-hour course about learner autonomy at the time of the study. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations during the course; copies of the instruments were, though, not included with the paper and it was not possible therefore to critique or draw on these in this study. Results showed that student teachers had positive attitudes towards learner autonomy and that these were informed largely by their own experiences as language learners. The conceptions of autonomy held by the student teachers generally reflected the view that (a) it is a new and supposedly better teaching and learning methodology; (b) it is equated with individualization and differentiation; (c) it is an absolute and idealistic concept; (d) it is associated with learning without a teacher. Such perspectives do not align with those currently promoted in the field of language teaching (and actually reflect several of the claims Esch (1998), above, made about what learner autonomy is not).

Bullock (2011) conducted a small-scale study of English language teachers' beliefs about learner self-assessment which highlights a gap between teachers' positive theoretical beliefs about this notion and their beliefs in its practicality.

Nakata (2010) compared English language teachers' (positive) theoretical views about the value of learner autonomy with their (less positive) reported classroom practices (and finds a substantial gap between the two). Both these studies, then, add to existing concerns in the literature that learner autonomy is a notion around which theoretical ideals and pedagogical realities may not always concur.

Reviewing the literature on learner autonomy reveals the fact that although a large body of research has been carried out to investigate learners' views toward learner autonomy, little has been done on explore teachers' point of view.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Participants*

The participants of this study were divided into two groups, including the EFL teachers and learners. In order to have a large number of participants to be able to generalize the gained results, two different methods of sampling i.e. snowballing and convenience sampling were employed. It was done through sending emails or asking the participants to fill out the questionnaires in print.

The population from which the group of teachers was chosen consisted of nearly all the teachers, teaching English as a foreign language at Gooyesh Language Institute (GLI, an English language institute with ten branches all over the city of Isfahan) and many other teachers in other institutes in Isfahan, as well. Due to the fact that the population was really big at first, an opportunity was created to select only the experienced teachers out of all the participants (It should be noted that the final selection of teachers was done after filling out the questionnaires). Therefore, the chosen group of teachers included 150 male ones having more than five years of experience in teaching English, being originally from Isfahan, having not been to any other countries, holding bachelor's, master's or doctorate degrees just in TEFL. This way the negative effects of diversity in the above factors were ruled out of the results of the study.

The second group of the participants consisted of the students chosen from the same language centers out of which the teachers were selected. Regarding the proficiency level, in order to have a homogeneous group of students, this study made an attempt to select only those students who passed the advanced levels of the language institutes and attended in the preparation courses for TOEFL. Therefore, it was possible to become convinced of the fact that all the students are proficient enough to take part in this research and they are able to comprehend and answer the questions as well. Since the purpose of the study was to gain the general pattern of the existing view point of the learners, the factors such as age range, gender and culture were not strictly controlled. Nevertheless, for minimizing the negative impact of the above factors, among all the learner participants only those who were male, originally from Isfahan, in 25 to 40 age range, having not been to any other countries and holding at least bachelor's degree were selected. With regard to the number of the teacher participants, 150 learner participants who had the above characteristics were selected.

B. *Instrument*

The instruments used for collecting the required data were a structured questionnaire and an interview.

1. *Questionnaire*

Questionnaires are inaccurately considered to be an easy to use instrument for collecting data in research. It is undeniable that they possess several advantages in comparison to other instruments, for example, they can be administered relatively economically, can reach a large number of participants in geographically diverse areas and can be analyzed quickly (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). However, such merits are futile if the questionnaire is not well-designed. So, with regard to the fact that a comprehensive and complete questionnaire is required, this study has made a good use of the existing questionnaires designed by Borg & Al-Busaidi, (2012). They took a noteworthy amount of time to prepare the questionnaire.

2. *Interview*

Interview was the other instrument employed (after the questionnaires were filled out). The questions for the interview were prefabricated and they were about more personal information related to the answers the participants gave in the questionnaires to see what reasons were behind their answers. In order to develop the interviews, the

questions were designed based on what the participants chose and wrote on the questionnaire; they were asked to clarify their answers by reasoning, giving examples and explanations. The participants were also asked to talk about the challenges they have encountered in this regard. Therefore, the interviews helped the researcher analyze the participants' answers better and more precisely. One example of an interview schedule can be found in Appendix C.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Phase 1

As beforehand mentioned, in order to design the questionnaire which was used in this study, a systematic method was employed (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Although one may make sure that this questionnaire is reliable, it was piloted in a population of 30 teachers. Applying SPSS 18, the value of Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.87 which confirmed the reliability of the questionnaire. In order to check the validity of the questionnaire it was given to four experts (university teachers who teach testing) and they were kindly asked to check its content validity. They all expressed their agreement about relevance of the content validity of the questionnaire. Making use of convenience and snow-balling methods of data collection, these questionnaires were distributed among more than a thousand teachers in Isfahan through emails or on papers.

Prior to having been invited to complete questionnaires, the teachers had received an email with information about the study and explanation of the concept of learner autonomy. Then, a day later a request was sent and they were asked to fill out the attached questionnaire as soon as possible. Moreover, they were kindly asked to do their best to contribute it toward other teachers they know. This process lasted almost three months. After receiving about 324 responses from teachers, demographic parts of these completed questionnaires were investigated and only 150 ones who were male, originally from Isfahan, more than five years experienced, holding bachelor's, master's or doctorate degrees, were included to play a role in results of the study. Eventually, another email was sent to thank those who sent back the questionnaires.

B. Phase 2

This phase of the study was made up of follow-up interviews with teachers who filled in the questionnaires and volunteered to speak (the ones who were eager to take part in the interview wrote their names at the bottom of their questionnaire). The interviews were carried out for the purpose of exploring the reasons of teachers' responses in more detail in order to provide the possibility of analyzing the questionnaires with highest accuracy. All the interviews were held in the participants' first language to let them clarify their reasons in detail effortlessly. Furthermore, getting permission for the volunteers in advance, they were audio recorded for further analysis. Out of the 150 selected questionnaires respondents, 48 volunteered to do an interview. As handling the interview with all these volunteers was really time-consuming and daunting, among them all, merely 30 participants were chosen to be interviewed. These 30 teachers were selected using criteria from two specific questionnaire responses: (a) teachers' beliefs about how autonomous their students were and (b) teachers' years of experience in ELT. Each interview lasts for almost 25 minutes. These 30 interviews took place nearly 15 days; all interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio recorded.

C. Phase 3

As this phase of the study deals with acquiring the learners' beliefs and perceptions toward learning autonomy, the students' questionnaire (which was piloted in a group of 42 advanced-level students; the amount of Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was calculated to be 0.81) were printed and given to the students who passed the advanced levels of the language institutes and attended in the preparation courses for TOEFL exam. After filling out the questionnaires by the learners, an attempt has been made to select only those students who were studying in advance levels of the same institutes from which the selection of the teachers had been done; thus, analyzing the data could be more valid. Owing to the fact that the students may have difficulties in answering the items of questionnaire, the researcher herself, explained the topic and objectives of the study to them and gave the questionnaires and helped them with their questions as well.

As managing an interview with all the students was kind of difficult, the questions of the interview were also printed and given to the students. However, based on the mentioned criteria which were used for the selection of the teachers to be interviewed, the learners were chosen, and then they were asked to take time answering the open ended questions of the interview in the presence of the researcher to answer probable questions.

V. ANALYSIS

Aiming at answering the first question, items 8 and 21 of the first part of the questionnaire were seen influential. There is also a section in the questionnaire which is related to feasibility and desirability. Therefore, the second research question was answered based on the items of this part of the questionnaire. The final research question was a kind of comparative one, so the obtained data of the previous parts were compared and contrasted.

In the case of analyzing the questions, SPSS18 was made use of and the data obtained from teachers' and students' questionnaires and interviews were analyzed statistically. Descriptive statistics including frequency counts and

percentages were calculated for the two questions then, the frequency tables and bar graphs were drawn for each one. Inferential statistics also used to investigate the relationships, similarities as well as differences among the variables.

However, the information gained from interviews was categorized through the process of qualitative thematic analysis (see, for example, Newby, 2010). This process involved reading the data carefully, identifying crucial factors and issues, and then classifying these issues into a set of broader categories. The questions in the questionnaire and the interview provided a structure within which specific answers could then be further categorized. It should be pointed out that the items of the interview gave us a support to see what the reasons are regarding the answers (which the participants gave beforehand).

A. Addressing the First Research Question

Do L2 Teachers and Learners Believe that Learner Autonomy Would Enhance L2 Learning? If Yes, to What Extent?

In order to answer the first research question, items 8 and 21 of the first part of the questionnaire were taken into account. These two questions were:

- Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would
- Learner autonomy has a positive effect on being a successful language learner

All the participants expressed the degree of their agreement-disagreement on five point Likert scale ranging from 0 for “strongly disagree”, to 4, for “strongly agree”. Then the teachers and learners opinions about these two items were analyzed statistically. In order to investigate the teachers’ and learners’ views about the effect of the learner autonomy on language learning, descriptive statistics (frequency tables and bar graph) was employed.

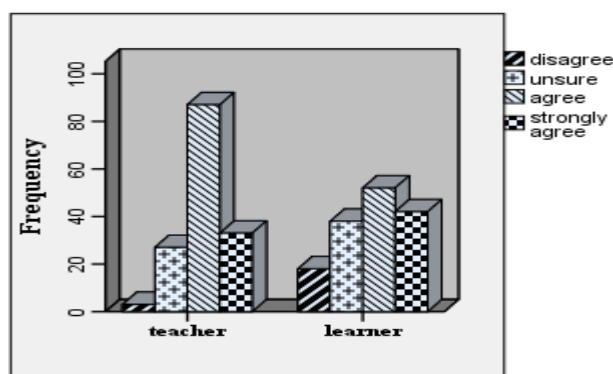


Figure 5.1. The Frequency Graph of the Question Does Learner Autonomy Allow Language Learners to Learn More Effectively Than They Otherwise Would?

The results demonstrate that more than a half of learners (62.7 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that learner autonomy allow them to learn more effectively than they otherwise would. On the other hand, almost all the teachers (80 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that learner autonomy has the above effect.

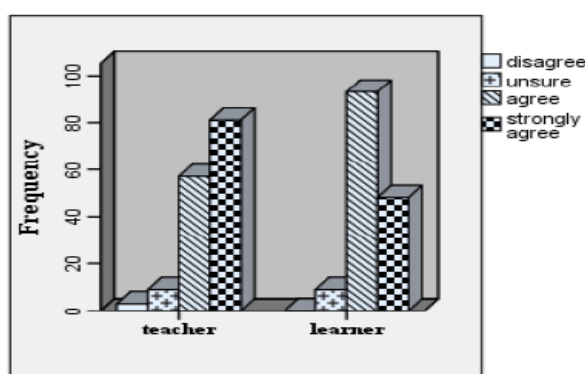


Figure 5.2. The Frequency Graph of the Question Does Learner Autonomy Have a Positive Effect on Being a Successful Language Learner?

The above figure shows that nearly all of the teachers (92 percent) and learners (94 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that learner autonomy has a positive effect on being a successful language learner.

B. Addressing the Second Research Question

Do L2 Teachers and Learners Believe that the Promotion of L2 Learner Autonomy Is Desirable and Feasible? If Yes, to What Extent?

As beforehand discussed, having decided to answer this question, the data obtained from second section of the questionnaire which is about desirability and feasibility of the learner autonomy was analyzed. Section 2 of the

questionnaire addressed two issues. The first was the desirability and feasibility of involving learners in a range of language course decisions and the second includes desirability and feasibility of the learners' abilities.

The procedure of Likert scale ranging from 1 for "strongly disagree", to 4, for "strongly agree" was employed here to ask the learners to answer the questions of this section. Descriptive statistics was used for all the questionnaire items.



Figure 5.3. The Frequency Graph of Desirability and Feasibility of Student Involvement in Decision-Making Based on Teachers' Point of View (1=Undesirable/Unfeasible; 4=Very Desirable/Feasible)

The above figure summarizes the teachers' responses and shows that in all cases teachers were more positive about the desirability of student involvement than they were about its feasibility. Student involvement in decision making was seen to be most feasible and desirable in relation to topics, and least feasible and desirable in relation to classroom management and teaching methods.

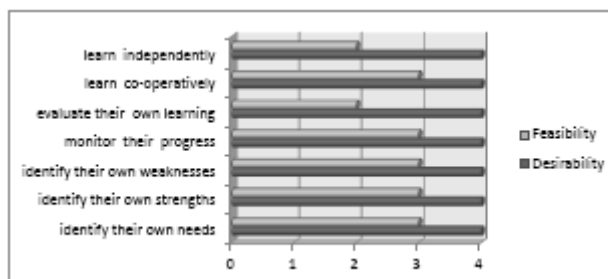


Figure 5.4. The Frequency Graph of Desirability and Feasibility of Learners Abilities Based on Teachers' Point of View (1=undesirable/unfeasible; 4=very desirable/feasible)

The second part of this section asked teachers how desirable and feasible they felt it was for their students to develop a range of abilities that were commonly seen as indicators of learner autonomy. The above figure shows the results of this comparison. Once again, desirability was consistently higher than feasibility of the students' abilities in all cases. In contrast to the previous set of items, all those listed here were considered desirable for learners.

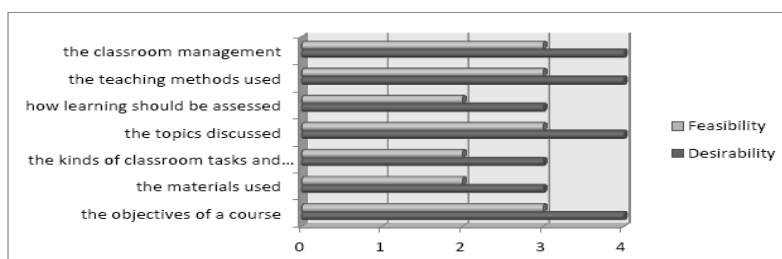


Figure 5.5The Frequency Graph of Desirability and Feasibility of Student Involvement in Decision-Making Based on Learners' Point of View (1=Undesirable/Unfeasible; 4=Very Desirable/Feasible)

The above figure summarizes the learners' responses and shows that in all cases learners were more positive about the desirability of student involvement than they were about its feasibility. Student involvement in decision making was seen to be most feasible and desirable in relation to topics, classroom management, teaching methods, and objectives of the course. On the other hand, student involvement in decision making was seen to be the least feasible and desirable in relation to materials, classroom tasks and assessment.

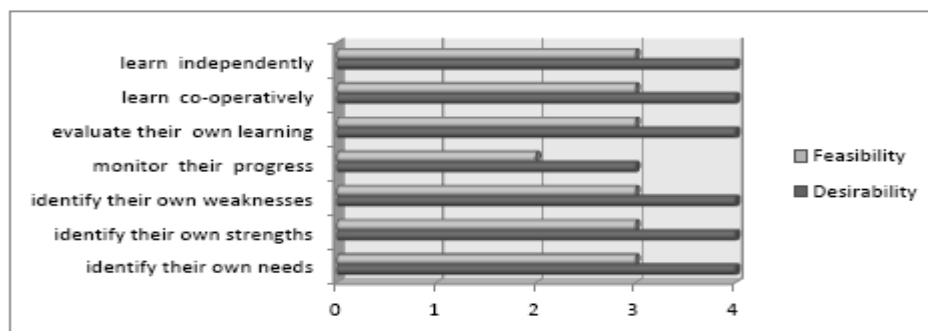


Figure 5.6. Desirability and feasibility of Learners Abilities Based on Learners' Point of View (1=undesirable/unfeasible; 4=very desirable/feasible)

The above figure shows the results of the learners' Point of View on how desirable and feasible they felt it was to develop a range of abilities that are commonly seen as indicators of learner autonomy. Desirability was again consistently higher than feasibility of the students' abilities in all cases.

C. Addressing the Fifth Research Question

Are There any Significant Differences between L2 Teachers' and Learners' Beliefs Regarding the Degree of L2 Learning Enhancement through Autonomy and Desirability and Feasibility of L2 Learning Autonomy Promotion?

For the purpose of answering the final research question, inferential statistics were applied. In order to answer the first part of the final question which is about contrasting the teachers' and learners' views on the effect of learner autonomy on L2 learning, before comparing the mean of the variable (does learner autonomy enhance L2 learning which is the result of adding the item number 8 and 21), the Levene's test for equality of variances should have been applied.

TABLE 5.1.
THE RESULT OF LEVENE'S TEST FOR EQUALITY OF VARIANCES

Variable	F	Sig
learner autonomy would enhance L2 learning	3.5	0.062

Since the amount of sig is more than 0.05, the variance in the two groups of teachers and learners is equal. Considering the equality of the variances, it is allowed to compare the teachers' and learners' views about the effect of learner autonomy on L2 learning.

TABLE 5.2.
THE RESULTS OF TWO INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST FOR THE QUESTION 'WOULD LEARNER AUTONOMY ENHANCE L2 LEARNING

Variable	t	df	sig	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
learner autonomy would enhance L2 learning	2.719	289	0.007	0.393	0.145	0.109	0.678

Regarding the amount of sig (p-value<0.05) it can be concluded that the teachers and learners do not have exactly the same idea about the effect of learner autonomy on L2 learning.

The last part of final question deals with comparing the teachers' and learners views about the desirability and feasibility of the learner autonomy.

TABLE 5.3.
THE MEAN OF DESIRABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

Variable	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Desirability	Teacher	40.49	9.025	0.737
	Learner	40.95	7.350	0.600
Feasibility	Teacher	31.06	7.848	0.641
	Learner	34.22	7.232	0.590

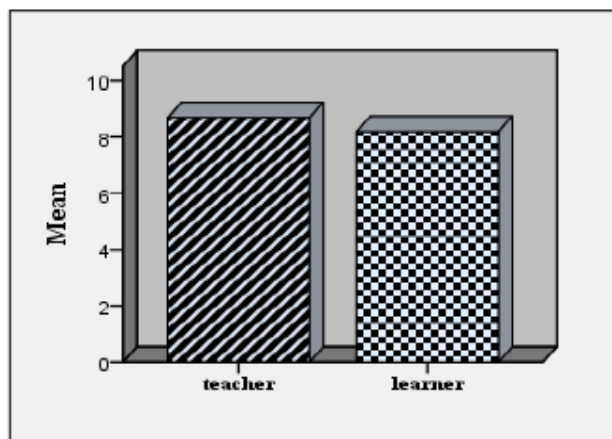


Figure 5.7. The Frequency of Desirability

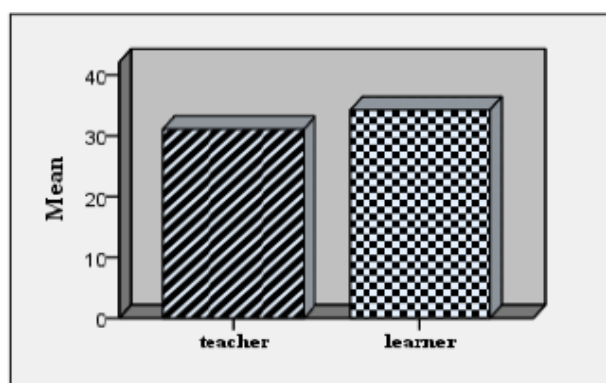


Figure 5.8. The Frequency of Feasibility

The above table and bar graphs show the amount of descriptive statistics (mean) for the two variables (desirability and feasibility) in two groups of teachers and learners. Now in order to see if based on teachers' and learners' views the promotion of L2 learner autonomy is desirable and feasible the Two-independent sample test was used. Prior to draw a comparison, Levene's test for equality of variances should be done.

TABLE 5.4.
THE RESULT OF LEVENE'S TEST FOR EQUALITY OF VARIANCES

Variable	F	Sig
Desirable	7.372	0.007
Feasible	3.424	0.065

Owing to the fact that variances for desirability are not equivalent but are equivalent for feasibility, the comparison of teachers' and learners' views about desirability and feasibility has been done.

TABLE 5.5.
THE RESULTS OF TWO INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST FOR DESIRABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

Variable	t	Df	sig	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Desirability	-0.484	286.264	0.629	-0.460	0.950	-2.330	1.410
Feasibility	-3.626	298	0.000	-3.160	0.871	-4.875	-1.445

Regarding the amount of obtained sig for feasibility ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$), it can be concluded that there is not a significant difference between teachers' and learners' views. Also, due to the amount of obtained sig for desirability, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between teachers' and learners' views in this regard.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. Addressing the Third Research Question

In the questionnaire 62.7 percent of the learners and 80 percent of teachers agreed that learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would. Moreover, 92 percent of the teachers agreed that learner autonomy has a positive effect on being a successful language learner, while 94 percent of the learners agreed that learner autonomy learner autonomy has the above effect. Therefore, the two groups came in to an agreement that learner autonomy has a strong positive effect on L2 learning.

- In the interviews the teachers and learners were asked to provide justifications for their positive views. They suggested a number of relationships between learner autonomy and successful language learners in the following:

- The teachers as well as the learners thought that autonomous learners are more motivated. Teachers also added, the more autonomous the learners are, the more motivated they can be. So learner autonomy can strongly influence the learners' ability to learn a language well.

- Autonomous learners are more dedicated and responsible. They do not need their teachers to make them forced to do their homework. They themselves are willing to take the responsibility of their own learning.

- Autonomous learners are able to concentrate on their own learning so they can independently learn.

The obtained results which contribute to teachers' ideas go in line with the results reported by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). In their questionnaire, 93.4 percent of the teachers agreed that learner autonomy has a positive effect on their success as a language learner, while 85.2 per cent agreed that learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would. Overall, then, the teachers expressed strong positive views about the contribution of learner autonomy to language learning. Besides the reasons they gave in the interview were almost like the one the participants of this study gave.

B. Addressing the Fourth Research Question

The results show that in all cases teachers were more positive about the desirability of student involvement than they were about its feasibility. Student involvement in decision making was seen to be the most feasible and desirable in relation to topics, and the least feasible and desirable in relation to classroom management and teaching methods.

The comparison between desirability and feasibility of the learners' abilities which are the indicators of learner autonomy indicated that once again, desirability was consistently higher than feasibility of the students' abilities in all cases. In contrast to the previous set of items, all those listed here were considered desirable for learners.

These results to some extent overlap with the results of Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012). The results obtained from the interviews support these results since the participants exclaimed everything contributes to learner autonomy is desirable but its feasibility is under question (because of educational systems and other obstacles).

C. Addressing the Fifth Research Question

Considering the results obtained from the first part of the final question which is about contrasting the teachers' and learners' views on the effect of learner autonomy on L2 learning, it can be concluded that the teachers and learners do not have exactly the same idea about the effect of learner autonomy on L2 learning. However this difference is not too big. The interview results revealed that this difference is related to the way the teachers and learners perceive the concept of learner autonomy.

Paying attention to the results obtained from the last part of final question which deals with comparing the teachers' and learners views about the desirability and feasibility of the learner autonomy, it can be inferred that there is not a significant difference between teachers' and learners' views about feasibility. On the other hand, due to the results obtained for comparing the teachers' and learners' views' about desirability of the autonomy, it can also be concluded that there is a significant difference between teachers' and learners' views in this regard. In the interviews the two groups of participants expressed that all the factors and conditions contributing to learner autonomy are really desirable but because of the traditional educational system in Iran they are not really feasible.

VII. CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, despite a substantial amount of research over some 30 years, research on learner autonomy has paid limited attention to the sense teachers make (as well as comparing teachers' and learners' senses), theoretically and in practice, of this concept. Yet, without such insights, we lack a basis for understanding how teachers interpret the notion of learner autonomy and where necessary for encouraging them to make it a more central aspect of their work. The following is a summary of the salient findings to emerge here which in most cases overlap with the findings of the study done by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012).

One of the salient findings of the study was that the teachers and the learners positively agreed (as in Bullock, 2011; Camilleri, 1999; Yoshiyuki, 2011) on the notion of learner autonomy and its highly effective advantages specifically for language learners.

As Borg and Al-Busaidi mentioned in their research, there was a significant gap between the extent to which teachers felt it was desirable to involve learners in a range of decisions about their learning and teachers' beliefs about the

feasibility of doing so, particularly in relation to objectives, assessment and materials. However the two groups of participants in this study agree on desirability of learner autonomy in general.

Regarding the gained results from the interviews, the teachers highlighted some of the factors which limited the extent to which they felt they were able to promote learner autonomy. These are related to learners, the institutions and teachers, though learner-related factors were those most widely cited by the teachers. whereas teachers felt that their students did not understand the importance of developing autonomy, and some thought because of the educational system in our country most of the students expect their teachers to play the main role in the class and if the teacher tries to hand over some part of this responsibility to students, they think he or she is not an active well- experienced teacher. Some others mentioned that they are not allowed to have creativity and they have to just observe the rules of the educational system in which they work. However some argued that they need to attend in some in-service training courses to teach them how to develop learner autonomy in their classes.

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Martin Eden's Pursuing Process and Spirit

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Abstract—Martin Eden is a novel with a property of autobiography written by American realistic writer Jack London. Its main characteristic is the exposure of American society's hypocrisy and decay. The essay mainly discusses the struggling process of Martin Eden, and is divided into three parts: love, knowledge and the world, and the hero himself to display the hero's pursuing spirit and his self—improvement. The latter part describes the hero's disintegration in "mind" and the success on the "surface" at the same time, reveals the contradiction between the main part of the society's hypocrisy and the hero's pure pursuing mind, thus deepens the precious quality of the hero's active pursuing spirit in the complex, uncertain society.

Index Terms—Martin Eden, pursuit, love, self—improvement, disintegration

I. INTRODUCTION

Written by Jack London in 1909, *Martin Eden*, with a property of autobiography, is seen as a famous novel which represents the author's achievements in art and his writing style. Martin was a young sailor about twenty-one years old; by chance he went to the hall of a high class family, knowing Ruth for the first time. The entire atmosphere in the room and the beauty of her made him excited and thrilled. And in order to match himself with Ruth and win her, he started the process of pursuing: love, beauty, knowledge and the world, and set himself as a writer. Indeed Ruth was attracted by Martin's enthusiasm and strength and fell in love with him. But the process of Martin's success was so long that before his success, during a time of hardness, all people around him including Ruth, did not understand him. Even worse, Ruth left him due to her family's class discrimination and the pressure of her environment. However, after his success, all things were changed. People of the upper class began to respect him and invited him to dinner. And Ruth came back to show her love. So Martin was puzzled. When he realized the reason of people's changed attitude were his fame and money, he felt disappointed and even despaired. At last he committed suicide in the sea.

On a whole the novel criticized the upper class's hypocritical quality through Martin's success and suicide. But a large part of the novel described the process of Martin's pursuit. His strong desire was love at first, accompanied by more understanding of beauty and the world. Despite of his last tragic end, in the process of pursuing, Martin was like a lovely cobble with strong power, conceiving a big dream and struggle for it. Even though the cobble disappeared before it has changed to jade, it displayed beautiful color, for it did try and struggle for its dream.

II. THE PROCESS OF PURSUING

Life can always be seen as a process of pursuing. For Martin Eden, this process started from the moment he saw Ruth to the moment of his success. Though his first twenty years can also be seen a process of pursuing, for example, pursuing a short-time work on the sea, or pursuing a happy time in the drinking place. But it's not the pursuit in the real meaning. What happened was just because of his nature, not from his heart. Inspired by Ruth's beauty, he gradually awakened himself to another world, a world in which he knew what he wanted, "he knew at last, clearly and definitely, that it was beauty, and intellect, and love that he must have." [1]

A. The Pursuit of Love

Love plays an important part in Martin's life. It was out of love for the beautiful girl that he started the process of struggle, and the beauty property in his mind sustained him to insist on his dream. It can be said that all he did was just because of love, because of his desire to win the beauty in his heart. And in the process of pursuing, his love matured as well as his view on love. He enjoyed the beauty of love.

1. The Beginning and the development of Love

For Martin Eden, the abstract word "love" became concrete in the existence of a beautiful girl Ruth. He himself was sensitive toward beauty and love. For "he had starved for love all his life. His nature craved love." [1]. At the first sight of Ruth, he likened her to a pale gold flower upon a slender stem, and looked at her as a spirit, a goddess. He thought of her laughter as tinkling silver bells, the girl was so different for him, because in her eyes he saw immortal soul, and at the thought of her, he wanted to be better to catch her, win her, and conquer her. He stuck to love resolutely. "The best that was in him was pouring out in splendid flood. The very thought of her ennobled and purified him, made him better" [1] Ruth's cleanness and purity reacted on him, so that he underwent a moral resolution. He got rid of the bad habits and began to wash his teeth and scrub his hands, even drank no more. "He dared not go near Ruth's neighborhood in the daytime, but night found him lurking like a thief around the Morse home." [1] Peeping secretly at the windows and looking at the very walls that sheltered her made him feel that his blood turned to wine and sang through his veins.

Martin's mind on love is pure and firm. He settled on the idea of "God's own mad lover dying on a kiss", and did all things for the win of love. Facing the problem of love, the beautiful girl, he was worried and self-abased. So he did not know what was the proper time for him to visit her for the second time. So only standing under the tree near her house to look at her window was so much a happy thing for him. And the night he rejected Lizzie Connolly and looked up at Ruth's window and murmured "that date was with you, Ruth, I kept it for you [1]showing the innocent heart of a young lover.

With much more time of meeting Ruth, and with a process of his self-improvement, Martin's view on love developed into a clear mind. Although he went to the field of knowledge, and was attracted by it, he always knew that he was a lover first and would always so. All other things he pursued were subordinated to love. The love for Ruth was the reason for his pursuit, and was also the reason for him to sustain his pursuit. In the discussion with Olney, he realized the shortcoming of Ruth's logic mind. But he thought it did not matter, and he formed a new love concept, which was "Reason had nothing to do with love. It mattered not whether the woman he loved reasoned correctly or incorrectly. Love was above reason." [1] His view of love was in a hasty speed of development.

2. The maturity of love

Attracted by Martin's outside strength and inside power, Ruth fell in love with Martin. Unfortunately, this kind of "maturity of love" was not referring to their happy ending, but Martin's attitude toward love.

Before Martin and Ruth's part, Martin's love toward Ruth was the fresh air of a young first-lover's heart. There was not so much reason in it. But when Ruth came back to show her love after Martin's success, he realized that the part of illusion in his past love was more than the part of reality. His love toward Ruth was much more of the image in his mind than Ruth herself; he did not understand Ruth fully. At this time he knew that the reason of Ruth's coming back were his fame and money, and it contradicted with his love principle that "All things may go astray in this world, but not love." He realized that his feeling then toward Ruth was not love at that moment, and he saw clearly the hypocrisy of the upper class, to which Ruth belonged, so he rejected her.

Martin's mature view on love can also be shown at his attitude toward Lizzie, a girl who loved him deeply all the time. When they met again Lizzie expressed her love heart, but Martin did not accept it, for he knew that he was different from the man he was, and he could not accept a lover easily as past. And he must be responsible for it. Also he could not bring his past time back, nor could he go back to the class he had belonged to, but Lizzie just belonged to it. So in this condition Martin analyzed their positions in a clear love mind. He rejected Lizzie, just because he was still faithful to love, from soul, and it could not be the one with a simple love heart and a little blind mind.

B. The Pursuit of Knowledge and the World

For the hero Martin Eden, love was the first and the most important reason of his pursuit. But all the things he did under this reason displayed his pursuit of knowledge and the world. This pursuit is the addition of the pursuit of love, but the role of his pursuing knowledge was so important that it influenced his view on love, even his view on the concept of value.

1. A field which frightened the hero

Martin had little education, and things that he knew came from his experience. So when it comes to books, grammar, and knowledge, he seemed so ignorant and self-abased. At first, the field of knowledge frightened him, but also stimulated him at the same time. He did not know what trigonometry was, even math, he did not know what the meaning of English major was, and in the library, he was appalled at the vast edifice of etiquette, thinking that it would take all of a man's time to be polite. In addition, due to his lack of basic knowledge, it was not easy for him to read even simple works, let alone works on philosophy, physics, economics, and so on. So what he could do was reading the dictionary to resolve the new words for him, and look up the phrases he had never seen. This process was hard for him.

2. A field can be conquered

Martin Eden grew from a young sailor to a famous writer who knew more about the world and a clear form of life philosophy. An important reason was that he was a man loving knowledge himself. If Ruth was the person who led him get into the gate of knowledge, the whole process of his pursuit in that field ascribed a lot to himself. He told Ruth that he took study kindly, like a duck to water. And for the pursuit of knowledge, he did a lot which was not easy for others. In the writing field, which he loved, he wrote prolifically and intensely, from morning till night, and he was occupied by a desire of creation. Besides, his reading dealt with different fields, from physics to chemistry, from algebra to economics. With so much time he devoted to study, and with so many fields he devoted to read, his curiosity toward the world increased. When reading Spencer's works, he conceived a mood of wondering. It attracted him a lot. And after reading it, he comprehended the organization of the world, the play and interplay of force and matter. This kind of understanding excited him. In the process of pursuing knowledge, he had been mastered by curiosity all his days. He wanted to know. In the novel, the author thus described Martin's ability: "he did not dream that such persons who were given to probing the depths and to thinking ultimate thoughts were as lonely eagles sailing solitary in the azure sky far above the earth and its swarming freight of gregarious life." [1]

And indeed Martin found something in the field of knowledge. Facts proved this point. In chapter XIII, in the conversation between Martin, Ruth and Olney, who was Ruth's classmate and also belonged to the upper class, pointed out Martin's ability. He pointed clearly to Ruth that Martin knew what's best for himself, and Martin knew more about the world, and life, and man's place, and all the rest, than Arthur, or Norman, or Ruth, or himself. This was the first time

of challenging Ruth's "teacher position" toward Martin, because Martin surpassed her in the field of knowledge, although Martin and Ruth both didn't realize it.

There were two other examples of Martin's achievement in the ocean of knowledge. At Ruth's family party, in the conversation with professor Caldwell, who taught at California University, Martin contaminated the professor with his own earnestness, challenging him to speak his mind. And indeed he achieved his goal. Then the conversation went on, while Martin found out the shortcoming of the knowledge of that college professor, that was, he lacked the knowledge of biology. And professor Caldwell was surprised to acknowledge that what Martin said was right. It showed that the knowledge Martin mastered had provided him the ability to stand in a clear position to look at the world around him, including the college, which was like a paradise for him in the past. Another example was Martin's acquaintance with Brissenden, who was a socialist, owning a deep background of knowledge and talent, saw clearly the upper class's hypocrisy and emptiness. Such a person appreciated Martin's writing talent and his concept of value, and took him to a crowd of people who conceived their own view on different fields of philosophy one night. That night was a glimpse of fairyland according to Martin. At last after Martin's success, when he met one person of that crowd again, he said: "That night was the only one night for me, I was in paradise."

From things above, it can be seen that in the process of pursuit, Martin walked on the road of knowledge, and gradually enriched himself. No matter what was the end of him, his pursuit proved that the field of knowledge could be conquered by him.

C. *The Pursuit of Himself*

The knowledge Martin gained was the accessory of his pursuit of love, so was his pursuit of himself. He did not pursue the real one of himself on purpose. It's just from the whole process of pursuing that he knew himself better, and always improved himself from all possible ways.

1. **The fighting spirit**

Besides the role of love that played on Martin Eden's success, an important factor was his fighting spirit. In the process of pursuing himself, he always showed it. Whether it was in the fight of his childhood, or in the hard time of writing, he never gave up, and his fighting spirit grew as well as himself.

The novel describes an unforgettable fighting that lasts more than ten years between Martin and a boy. "It reminded him of his first fight, when he was six years old, when he punched away with the tears running down his cheeks while other boys, two years his elder, had beaten and pounded him into exhaustion. He saw the ring of boys howling like barbarians as he went down at last, writhing in the throes of nausea, the blood streaming from his nose and the tears from his bruised eyes ... But he felt strengthened by the memory of that. He had always stayed and taken his medicine. Cheese-Face had been a little friend at fighting, and had never once shown mercy to him. But he had stayed! He had stayed with it!" When Martin was eleven, they had a fight which was indeterminate. But he never had such a mind of stopping fight to allow Cheese-Face to whip him. The last fight was when Martin was seventeen years old. Though Martin was beaten black and blue, he continued fighting. It was impossible for him to quit. Finally, Martin won the fight. From this fighting, we can see that Martin was a brave and indomitable fighter when he was young.

While studying magazines, Martin took notice of the stories, articles and poems that editors see fit to publish. He drew up lists of effective and fetching mannerisms that included the tricks of narration, exposition, style, point of view, contrast and epigrams. He sought thoughts and collected lists of strong phrases, the phrases of living language, phrases that hit acid and scorched. "His was deliberate, creative genius, and, before he began a story or poem, the thing itself was already alive in his brain, with the end in his conscious possession." [1] He found that the writing was the culminating act of a long mental process that drew together scattered threads of thought and finally generalized upon all the data with which his mind was burdened. Writing is full of hardship. You can not make achievements until you have experienced difficulties and conquered them. Martin made full use of time to write and study by cutting his sleep to five hours, writing creatively, intensively and industriously from morning till night. He was so amazed at writing that he had to give up his working as a sailor. Life was real and cruel. He ran out of money, and publisher's checks were far away as ever. At this time, he was living on credit. The owners of the fruit shop stopped his credit, even his landlord urged him to move away. Martin encountered the difficulty that at any time he would be forced to leave home and wander about. He had to pawn all his valuable things to pay for his rent and food. The rejection slips accumulated and the money dwindled until Martin had nothing but potatoes to eat, three times a day. Even if he was at the elbows, he firmly stuck to his great ideal of becoming a writer, refusing to get a fixed job to work at Ruth's father's law office. London depicts how difficult it is for a young writer to find success in writing. The people around Martin were indifferent, cold and hostile to him when he concentrated on writing instead of finding a job and fought against starvation. Even under such serious environment, Martin stuck to his writing.

2. **The improvement of appearances**

Martin was a sailor at the beginning, and all the atmosphere and culture of the working class people influenced him, and reflected on him. For example, he felt uncomfortable of wearing the suit's collar for the first time. And before meeting Ruth, he had never washed his teeth. Ruth's cleanness and purity made him feel in himself a desire to be clean. So he washed his teeth, and began to use nail-brush and toilet-tool, and so on. All this may be tiny for anyone who belonged to the upper class, but it was unusual for Martin Eden, a person who was used to a sailor's life. This kind of action showed that Martin wanted himself to be better. Even though it was in the appearances, it reflected Martin's

process of pursuing himself from a profiling point.

3. The improvement of the inner mind

The appearance of Ruth awakened Martin's mind of beauty to a certain extent, more properly speaking awakened Martin himself. From the process of pursuing, Martin grew gradually from a kind of a bleak mind to a mature and clear mind. He slowly found what he wanted, and what was suitable for him.

Martin had a habit of self-asking. In the evening after meeting Ruth, he conceived that his childhood and youth had been troubled by a vague unrest, and he had never known what he wanted. It was Ruth that made him realize that it was beauty, intellect, and love that he must have. That was a clear and definite hope for him then.

Martin's awareness of writing plays an important part in his self-pursuit. He compared himself to a dog sleeping under the sun, for he saw noble and beautiful visions, but he could not express them to Ruth. So he decided to stand up with open eyes, and he would struggle and toil and learn until he could share his versioned wealth with Ruth. The way to realize it was writing. So he started his writing career for this simple and pure reason.

In the process of his self-pursuit in writing, there was an inevitable doubt about himself. He asked himself when he gazed at the looking-glass curiously: "Who are you, Martin Eden? What are you? Where do you belong? Are you going to make good?" [1] But the beauty of famous works attracted him, the desire to create occupied him, and the love for Ruth encouraged him. So he sustained in that writing field which he loved, and gradually became mature in his mind toward himself, and had confidence in himself. In a conversation with Ruth, he expressed that writing was the most vital thing in him, and had he been a mere clod, he would not have desired to write. Writing as a media had enriched Martin Eden, and helped him to found his way of career, to form his view on life, and even toward the world. The most important was that it provided a clear mind for him to recognize himself. And that was enough for a person's pursuit of himself.

III. MARTIN'S SUCCESS AND DISINTEGRATION

A. Success and Disintegration

In the latter small part of the novel Martin's success in his career started. One of his works was accepted by a publishing house, then one after another. Most of his works changed their past destiny, and were published by magazines or newspapers or companies. People's attitude toward him changed suddenly. The Judge, the bank manager, and all people of the upper class invited him. And Ruth came back to his arms. This was the success on the "surface." At the same time when all the people crowded around him, Martin Eden's concept of value collapsed. The difference of people's attitude toward him expressed their deep hypocrisy clearly. And indeed he hated it. It seemed for him that the world was not the one he once lived in. The words "WORK PERFORMED" occupied his mind. He just couldn't understand the world, for it was contradicted with his concept of value. At that moment, he lost his purpose, for there was no need for love, and no impulse to write. In a word, he was empty inside. It was a time of disintegration.

That kind of disintegration was expressed vaguely from his self-denying. Different from the long process of his unceasing self-pursuit, after his success, when Ruth came back to him, he told her that he was sick, and there was something wrong with him, not in his body but in his mind, his soul. It seemed that he had lost all values. He cared for nothing. So life had no meaning for Martin then, and all of his pursuits just were in disintegration then. If Martin's muttering aloud the poem "I have had my singing minute. I have done. Put by the lute" showed his potential tiredness toward love, toward knowledge, and toward the world, the line "That dead man rise up never" perfectly reflected his mood at that moment when he read Swinburne's poem in the ship. So he went up and jumped into the sea, totally showed his despair of the disintegration of his concept of value.

B. Hypocrisy of the Society

Jack London depicts the world as cold, godless, indifferent and hostile to human desire through the fate of Martin Eden. He has succeeded in exposing the bourgeois nature of hypocrisy and being interested only in material gain through full expression by contrasting two completely different attitudes which two typical representatives of bourgeoisie treat Martin Eden's failure and success with.

The first category is the so-called wealthy class people, such as lawyers, bankers, the Morses and Judge Bount etc. Though these rich people lived comfortably, dressed well, they were extremely selfish and money-oriented in their dark souls. By contrast, Martin Eden who had written many valuable literary works, was talented, intelligent and scholarly, but he had no opportunity to publish them when he was nobody, and the Morse couple looked down on him and they thought "he had no place in the neither position nor salary. He is impractical." [1] But to arouse her daughter's interest in mankind in general, they began to let their daughter contact Martin because "she has been so singularly backward where men are concerned." [1] And they didn't think their daughter, Ruth, would fall in love with Martin. They held the view that Ruth only did a safe experiment by making use of this uncouth sailor who considered love the finest thing in the world. Once they felt "the experiment has succeeded. She is awakened at last." [1] Mr. Morse spoke briskly in a business tone "then we'll have to get rid of him." [1] When they found that plan had been broken and that Ruth could not help loving Martin and had become engaged to Martin, the Morse couple tried many ways to take them apart.

Later, Martin finally had succeeded in writing. "Money poured in on him, fame poured in on him; he flashed, comet-like, through the world of literature." [1]. At this time, those bourgeoisie politicians, celebrities strived to be the

first and feared to lag behind to invite him to dinner. Even Judge Blount invited him to dinner, although Martin had insulted him and treated him abominably. What made Martin most surprised was Mr. Morse, who “had forbidden him going to the house and broken the engagement” [1] and who found an excuse to meet him in the hotel Metropole. In fact, Mr. Morse had gone there for the direct purpose of inviting him to dinner. In the face of the inconstancy of human relationships, Martin was more puzzled, and he couldn’t help assailing, “When he wanted dinners, no one gave them to him, but when he could buy a hundred thousand dinners and was losing his appetite, dinners were thrust upon him right and left. But why? There was no justice in it; no merit on his part. He was not different, so were his works which were the original ones. Mr. and Mrs. Morse had condemned him for an idler and a shirk, and Ruth had urged that he take a clerk’s position in an office. Furthermore, they had been aware of his work performed. Manuscript after manuscript of his had been turned over to them by Ruth. They had read them. It was the same work that had put his name in all the papers, and it was his name being in all the papers that led them to invite him.” [1] His query touched the filthy soul of bourgeoisie and exposed their true face of time-serving. He pointed out further: “the Morses had not cared to have him for himself or for his work. Therefore they could not want him now for himself or for his work, but for the fame that was his, that was the way bourgeoisie society valued a man.” [1] And it revealed the hypocrisy of bourgeoisie.

Ruth was the Morse couple’s daughter. “She was a pale, ethereal creature, with wide, spiritual blue eyes and a wealth of golden hair.” [1] Her purity and beauty gave such a deep impression on Martin that he likened her to a pale gold flower upon a slender stem. “She was a spirit, a divinity, a goddess; such sublimated beauty was not of the earth.” [1] Actually, Ruth loved Martin based on following reasons. The first one was due to the mysterious and novel psychology. She found that Martin was quite different from those macaroni she had met. Martin was full of youthful spirit and perseverance. Moreover, he was honest and intelligent. In contrast with Martin’s true love, her love to Martin was conditional. Martin must meet the demand of the bourgeois standard of valuation. She once said to Martin “her ideal of the successful man was largely in her father’s image, with a few unmistakable lines and touches of color from the image of Mr. Butler” [1] It meant either Martin had a profession, social status and money or he realized the dream from a nobody to a wealthy man like Butler. Although Martin thought there was nothing alluring in the picture she drew, he was determined to realize his great ambition because of love. However, she could neither understand Martin’s outstanding talents nor appreciate his great aspiration of becoming a famous writer at all, which contributed to a lack of thought exchange and soul mixture. Based on her narrow mind, she reached such a conclusion that she deserted him without hesitation when the people around her began to attack him, saying Martin was the most notorious leader of the Oakland socialists. She held the view that Martin had brought her shame and destroyed her fame and her family. What she had done proved that her prejudice of being snobbish and superficial outweighed her love to Martin.

When fortune was smiling on him and his works were published, Ruth came to Martin’s room to resume the engagement. She told him “You know I love you that I am here because I love you.” [1] Martin thought “yet I am not a bit more eligible now than I was when she broke our engagement.” [1], so he said “When I was just as I am now, as a man, as an artist, the same Martin Eden? That’s the question I’ve been propounding to myself for many days-not concerning you merely, but concerning everybody. You see I have not changed, though my sudden apparent appreciation in value compels me constantly to reassure myself on that point. I’ve got the same flesh on my bones, the same ten fingers and toes. I am the same. I have not developed any new strength nor virtue. My brain is the same old brain. I haven’t made even one new generalization of literature or philosophy. I am personally of the same value that when I was nobody wanted me. And what is puzzling me is why they want me now. Surely they don’t want me for myself, for myself is the same old self they did not want. Then they must want me for something else, for something that is outside of me, for something that is not I! Shall I tell you what that something is? It is for the recognition I have received. That recognition is not I. It resides in the minds of others. Then again for the money I have earned and am earning. But that money is not I. It resides in the banks and in the pockets of Tom, Dick, and Harry. And is it for that, for the recognition and the money, that you now want me?” [1] At this moment, Martin had seen through Ruth who was narrow-minded and selfish. As a result, when Ruth begged his pardon and wanted to regain Martin’s love, Martin gave an ironic remark, “I’m afraid I am a shrewd merchant, peering into the scales, trying to weigh your love, and find out what manner of thing it is.” [1]

Ruth’s attitude toward Martin changed greatly because of his fame and money. Her love was based on wealth and social position instead of Martin’s talent and hard work. She loved money more than Martin. When Martin became rich, she wanted him without considering her class, her parent and friends, even her own dignity. This indicates that Ruth was very selfish. Martin realized that Ruth’s strength of love for him arose from his publication and public notice, thus exposed the false love.

The second category is the selfish and vulgar businessmen, such as Martin’s brother-in-law, Bernard Higginbotham and Herman von Schmidt. Before his success, Martin had to live with sister and brother-in-law because of poverty. Higginbotham was a snobbish, mean and tricky businessman. He looked down upon Martin, looking at him with a weasel-like and cruel eye that showed irony and imperiousness. It is a sharp contrast when he made a sale in the store, the same eyes were smug oily and flattering. Therefore, “Martin Eden never looked at him without experiencing a sense of repulsion. What his sister had seen in the man was beyond him. The other affected him as so much vermin, and always aroused in him an impulse to crush him under his foot.” [1] Higginbotham treated Martin cold and sharp, even with disgust. When the name of Martin was mentioned, he always snorted. He often examined whether Martin had paid

the board. If Martin read in bed, he would charge him half a dollar for gas. Furthermore, he constantly made trouble for Martin and found excuses to drive him away. As to Martin's writing, he simply sneered. The worst was that he wrote an anonymous and slanderous letter about Martin, with assertions that the "so-called Martin Eden" was no writer at all, that in fact he was stealing stories from old-magazines, typing them, and sending them out as his own. He tried to destroy Martin's fame, and asked editors not to publish Martin's manuscripts. Because of propagandizing for socialism, Martin was surrounded by bourgeoisie presses with violent speeches. "Higginbotham was furious with him for having dragged the family into public disgrace, and that he had forbidden him the house." [1] When Martin suffered from starvation, he didn't give him a hand at all. But when Martin succeeded in writing, he fawned on him and invited him to have a rich dinner. During the dinner, Higginbotham opened up his heart to Martin, showing his keenness and enormous planning with which he has made the store. It is the fact that he flattered Martin in order to borrow money from him for the only purpose of realizing his ambitious plan.

Herman von Schmidt, Martin's brother-in-law, was a businessman who set up for himself a bicycle-repair shop. He was as selfish and vulgar as Higginbotham. When Martin was poor and not famous, he looked down upon him. He even said "it was indecent, obscene" [1] when Martin wrote an airy and delicate verse for Marian, Martin's sister. In addition, he asserted that he didn't want anything to do with him in any shape, manner or form. However, when Martin had become a famous writer, a magazine published this poem on a striking page with decorations. Herman von Schmidt forgot that he had called the verses obscene. He announced that his wife had inspired Martin to write the poem, and the news reached the ears of a reporter, the result was a full page in a Sunday supplement, filled with photographs and idealized drawings of Marian, with many intimate details of Martin Eden and his family. It caused a stir in the neighborhood, making Herman and his repair shop famous. Many people came to his shop for repairing, so he made a fortune. He told Marian "Better than advertising and it costs nothing." [1] He invited Martin to dinner because he found that his brother-in-law was a goodly asset to him. Through these two vivid figures of Higginbotham and Herman, this novel narrates that the bourgeoisie only search for money. The word of kinship means nothing to bourgeoisie. The relationship between people is based on money.

IV. CONCLUSION

The novel's main part deals with the process of Martin Eden's hard pursuit, including his strong desire for love, beauty and knowledge, and a clear idea of himself. In this process the author describes in vivid words the hard condition of the hero's life and his unusual diligence, thus portrays an image of a young man with strong power and enthusiasm inside to continue his pursuit and realize his dream. At the same time, the exposure of hypocrisy of the upper class forms a clear contrast with the hero. The tragic ending of Martin Eden strongly criticizes the society's concept of value. The background of the empty upper class and the society reflects Martin's truly pursuit of his dream. And his pursuing spirit seems especially precious in that kind of world.

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Students' Attitude towards Using Cooperative Learning for Teaching Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—This study project was launched in order to contribute to the studies conducted for investigating the efficiency of different models of reading instruction. The aim of this paper was to investigate students' attitude towards using cooperative language learning techniques for reading instruction. Although cooperative methods are becoming more prevalent in private language schools, there are few studies regarding evaluating the students' attitude towards using cooperative learning for instructing reading comprehension in Iranian context. Evaluation of students' attitude towards the cooperative language learning in this research project was conducted using a survey questionnaire. Analysis of the quantitative questionnaire results showed that the participants generally tend towards supporting the implementation of cooperative strategies in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, cooperative learning, attitude

I. INTRODUCTION

Debate over the most effective pedagogical technique to be used in education is a strong challenge now facing the educators in higher levels of education. While some believe in imposing knowledge on students, others suggest that although structures are known within disciplines, it makes sense for students to discover them (Lasley and Ornstein, 2000 p. 20). Today, there seems to be a move towards allowing learners to be more actively involved in the teaching and learning process. To many teachers, one way to make learners shareholders in their learning is to become more of a facilitator of the process of learning, providing guidance for the learners. Scholars have come to the conclusion that one way to improve the intellectual ability of learners is incorporating cooperative learning in teaching. In this instructional method, learners work together as a team to achieve a specific target or objective. However, the incorporation of innovative well-documented methods into the educational context is quite often fraught with difficulties. Learners' perceptions, views, attitudes, and behaviors are major determinants of the success of an instructional program.

Typically in Iranian classrooms at all educational levels a teacher-centered approach seems to be utilized. In such classrooms, the lecturer is typically seen as the repository of knowledge with students passively taking notes, asking very few or no questions. Taking this into account, this study was conducted to investigate students' attitude towards using cooperative learning techniques for teaching English reading comprehension in Iranian private language schools.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to gain a clear understanding of Iranian EFL learners' attitudes about cooperative learning techniques, one overall research question is needed to be answered:

What are the attitudes of Iranian intermediate level English language learners with regard to using cooperative learning techniques in language instruction?

III. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

A. Reading Comprehension

Reading is one of the four basic skills in language learning. Reading provides the learners with a source of comprehensible input and serves to facilitate communicative fluency in other language skills. Furthermore, reading ability has always been viewed as critical to academic success. Reading is a receptive and decoding skill in which the reader receives the writer's message and tries to recreate the writer's message to the extent possible (Chastain, 1988, p. 216). The reading goal is to read for meaning or to recreate the writer's meaning. By definition, reading involves comprehension. When readers do not comprehend, they are not reading (ibid, p. 217).

Scholars of reading believe that reading is a dynamic process which is varied from reader to reader and from text to text and that the key factor in understanding this process is the interaction between readers and text variables. Therefore, according to Alderson (2000), reading-related research has been commonly divided into two different factors:

the reader and the text. Reader's knowledge constitutes one highly significant reader variable. The nature of the knowledge brought to the reading process by the reader affects the way the text is processed and understood to a great extent. Moreover, the reader's linguistic knowledge, especially, vocabulary size and metalinguistic knowledge are important factors. Schema theory has been developed in order to determine to what extent readers' knowledge affects what they understand. In addition, according to Bernhardt and Kamil (1995), the transfer of reading ability from L1 to L2 must be considered in this regard. The reader's motivation for reading constitutes another significant reader variable. When it comes to text variables, the major variable is known to be the language of the text. Many aspects of text, including text content, text type, text organization, and sentence structures might help facilitate or complicate the reading process.

Theories and models of reading have undergone dramatic change in recent years. Reading is no longer seen as a primarily receptive process from text to reader. Instead, reading is regarded as an interactive process between the reader and the text (Adams, 1990). A taxonomy of different types of comprehension is developed based on the ideas of Pearson and Johnson (1972) and Nuttall (1996). This taxonomy includes six different types of comprehensions which are thought to help students to become interactive readers. They are: literal comprehension, reorganization, inference, prediction, evaluation, and personal response.

B. What Is Cooperative Learning?

A survey of research and trends in cooperative language learning reveals that the incorporation of cooperative learning into educational programs was first initiated in content areas such as social studies, science, and mathematics. However, after these innovative methods proved to be effective in educational research, the researchers in the field of language teaching and learning turned their attention to this approach. Cooperative learning is a teaching approach in which learners of diverse abilities, talents and backgrounds work together in small groups to attain a common goal. "Cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others" (Olsen and Kagan, 1992:8, as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001). There have been many studies that have been conducted that have placed a high value on cooperative learning. Cooperative learning aims at learner-centered learning and claims to increase the level of understanding and reasoning, develop critical thinking, and increase the accuracy of long – term retention (Koppenhaver & Shrader, 2003). In addition, Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne (2000) suggest that cooperative learning be absorbed in the mainstream of educational practice because it is a theoretically-based approach which has been proved to be highly effective in enhancing student learning and improving social relations compared to other non-cooperative instructional methods, and there are plenty of cooperative learning techniques available to be employed by teachers. It is further believed that active participation in the learning experience will result in an improvement in academic performance. In addition, in this approach an "atmosphere of achievement" is created because learners will work on the assigned task until all members of the group achieve the goal of successfully understanding and completing the assignment (Panitz, 1996). As Bourner (1997) states "teaching methods are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end, they are the vehicle (s) we use to lead our students to particular learning outcomes."

The cooperative learning approach encompasses a variety of instructional strategies, including Jigsaw Procedure, Group Investigation (GI), Three-Step Interview, Student-Team-Achievement-Divisions (STAD), Academic Controversy (AC), and Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), to mention but a few. Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne (2000) report that in the literature the following methods have received the most attention:

TABLE 2.1:
MODERN METHODS OF CL (ADOPTED FROM JOHNSON, JOHNSON, & STANNE, 2000)

Researcher-Developer	Date	Method
Johnson & Johnson	Mid 1970s	Learning Together (LT)
DeVries & Edwards	Early 1970s	Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)
Sharan & Sharan	Mid 1970s	Group Investigation (GI)
Johnson & Johnson	Mid 1970s	Constructive Controversy
Aronson & Associates	Late 1970s	Jigsaw Procedure
Slavin & Associates	Late 1970s	Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)
Cohen	Early 1980s	Complex Instruction
Slavin & Associates	Early 1980s	Team Assisted Instruction (TAI)
Kagan	Mid 1980s	Cooperative Learning structures
Stevens, Slavin & Associates	Late 1980s	Cooperative Integrated Reading & Composition (CIRC)
Kagan	Early 1990s	Three-Step Interview
Kagan	Late 1980s	Inside-Outside Circle

James A. Duplass (2006) believes that cooperative learning incorporates the following eight basic features:

- Teacher supervision: the instructor should always monitor group activity in order to make sure that learners are not veering too far off the assigned task. Also, the instructor should also be available for answering questions raised by the learners and guiding them through the discussion.
- Heterogeneous groups: groups of diverse levels of ability and from different backgrounds should be created.

- Positive interdependence: to achieve positive interdependence, the group should work towards a reward or final learning objective.
- Face-to-face interaction: the teacher should encourage the learners to use verbal and nonverbal communication to explain learning materials to each other or deal with problems encountered.
- Individual accountability: learners are assigned specific roles in the group to ensure they are accountable for completing their tasks. In addition, each member of the group should assist the whole group in meeting the learning outcome.
- Social skills: cooperative learning promotes social skills such as speaking in an appropriate manner, being respectful, and wisely utilizing the time allocated to a task.
- Group processing: learners should reflect on the way the group functioned during learning activities.
- Evaluation: assessment can take the form of both individual and group assessment.

Review of related literature indicates that two main theories guide the studies related to cooperative learning. The first theory is constructivism which emphasizes the need for the learner to actively participate in the teaching-learning process. According to Hein (1991), the term constructivism refers to the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves individually and socially as they learn. The second is the theory of motivation which suggests that it is not only the instructional style that influences a students' academic performance, but how much that individual wants to succeed. Woolfolk (2006) defines motivation as an internal state that provokes, guides and sustains behaviour. Motivation can either be intrinsic (internal stimuli) or extrinsic (external stimuli). At times it might be necessary to provide students with incentives for accomplishing a task, but ideally we should attempt to nurture our students to be intrinsically motivated.

C. Importance of Students' Attitude

Researchers constantly maintain that reading instructions that emphasize active, learner-centered approaches prove to be effective. According to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action, "attitudes are a function of beliefs" (p. 7). Based on this theory, believing that performing a task will result in mainly positive outcomes results in taking a favorable attitude towards the task. On the other hand, mistrust of the success of performing a task will lead to taking an unfavorable attitude. Therefore, if participants believe that, for example, cooperative methods will have a significant effect on their reading comprehension, then this method will be to their benefit. Attitudes, once formed, can shape the way students think, understand, feel, and behave. "Attitudes and beliefs are a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions" (Richardson, 1996, p. 102, as cited in Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004). The evaluation of students' attitude may provide new insights into the way these attitudes may hinder or facilitate learning.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This section of the study outlines the methodology. In the following sections, information about the participants of the study, research design, the instrument used and the procedure for the study is presented.

A. Participants

The participant pool for the study was 52 intermediate EFL learners, 16 male and 36 female, attending Gouyesh Language School in Gachsaran in 2013.

B. Design of the Study

In this study a descriptive, survey-based design is employed. To determine the views of intermediate level students towards cooperative learning strategies, a survey questionnaire was used.

C. Instrument

As mentioned before, a survey questionnaire was distributed among the participants in order to determine their views about employing cooperative techniques for instructing reading comprehension. The questionnaire survey technique is a very effective tool since it enables large scale numerical data to be obtained over a short period of time. It can also be easily administered. In this particular study, the researcher wanted to gain numerical data to indicate students' views on cooperative learning methods.

The uni-dimensional questionnaire used in the study was developed by McLeish (2009) and had 12 items (See Appendix B). For the purpose of analyzing the gathered data, the respondents were allowed to rate each item on a scale of options which were numerically coded as 1 (strongly disagree); 2 (disagree); 3 (neutral); 4 (agree); 5 (strongly agree). Needless to say, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were already determined by the afore-mentioned researcher.

D. Procedures

This section discusses the procedure for data collection. 54 intermediate EFL learners, 16 male and 38 female, attending Gouyesh Language School in Gachsaran, agreed to take part in this research project. The participants had already been instructed reading comprehension by the researcher using cooperative language learning strategy called

Jigsaw Procedure for a period of five weeks. To determine the views of the learners towards cooperative strategies, the survey questionnaire was distributed among them after they had received the treatment. Finally, the results of the survey were analyzed to identify the learners' attitude towards cooperative techniques.

V. DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

In this section the process of data analysis and the results achieved are presented. As mentioned in previous sections, the data collected for this study was gathered through the distribution of a questionnaire among 52 intermediate EFL learners, drawn from the available pool of intermediate-level English language learners at Gouyesh Language School in Gachsaran. The data obtained from the survey were analyzed and interpreted using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19. Figure 1 tabulates the results. Section V consists of two parts. While the first subsection of the data analysis aims to interpret the results of per-statement analysis, the second subsection aims to interpret the data at an overall analysis level.

A. The Results of Per-statement Analysis

The results of per-statement analysis, demonstrated in Figure 1, will be discussed in detail in this part.

Item 1: I willingly participate in cooperative learning activities.

On whether or not the learners willingly participate in cooperative learning activities, the mean value is 4.42. So, it can be said that the vast majority of the respondents believe that they are perfectly willing to participate in such learning activities. This is the statement students agree with the most.

Item 2: When I work with other students I achieve more than when I work alone.

As noted in the literature, cooperative learning techniques claim to result in higher educational achievement. The second item of the survey questionnaire addresses this issue. The mean value for this item is 3.96. This indicates that participants support the idea that when they work with other students they achieve more than when they work alone.

Item 3: Cooperative learning can improve my attitude towards work.

This item asks the respondents' opinion on whether cooperative learning can improve the attitude towards work. The approximate mean value for this item is 4.00. Therefore, we can conclude that the learners almost agree that cooperative learning can improve their attitude towards work and this may result in mostly positive outcomes.

Item 4: Cooperative learning helps me to socialize more.

Cooperative learning is a teaching approach in which learners of diverse abilities, talents and backgrounds work together in small groups to attain a common goal. Proponents of this approach believe that individual accountability needs to be combined with teamwork in order to help learners acquire both knowledge and social skills. As indicated in Figure 1, the mean score of 4.39 indicates that the participants support the statement that cooperative learning enhances socialization.

Item 5: Cooperative learning enhances good working relationships among students.

One of the basic principles fundamental to cooperative learning is positive interdependence. This requires creating an atmosphere in which learners feel that they depend on each other in order to complete the assigned task. Figure 1 shows that learners believe that more positive and supportive relationships with peers can be one of the advantages of using cooperative techniques in teaching and learning context. The mean value for this item is 4.21.

Item 6: Cooperative learning enhances class participation.

On whether or not cooperative learning enhances class participation, the participants completely agree with the statement. The mean value for this item is 4.35 which is one of the highest mean scores in the questionnaire.

Item 7: Creativity is facilitated in the group setting.

Participants tended towards the opinion that creativity is facilitated in the group setting, as evidenced by Figure 1. The mean score for item 7 is 3.85 which is one of the lowest scores in the questionnaire.

Item 8: Group activities make the learning experience easier.

Concerning the issue of whether group activities make the learning experience easier, participants agree on the statement. The mean score for this item reached over 4.00.

Item 9: I learn to work with students who are different from me.

As mentioned before, in cooperative learning, to achieve a common goal, students of various talents, abilities, and backgrounds need to work together. Item 9 of the questionnaire addresses this issue. The mean score of 4.17 indicates that students agree with this item.

Item 10: I enjoy the material more when I work with other students.

To evaluate the extent to which learners enjoy the material when they work with other learners, the respondents' answers to item 10 of the questionnaire were analyzed. Although the mean value for this item is one of the lowest scores, the mean value of 3.82 indicates that participants generally tend to support this statement.

Item 11: My work is better organized when I am in a group.

The statement regarding whether the learners' work is better organized when they are in a group scored the lowest mean in the questionnaire. The mean value for this item is 3.46. This is probably because, in some cases, one or two team members have to do all the work and the other members simply go along for the ride, and in others cases, dominant students desire for a good grade and as a result stifle their teammates' efforts to contribute.

Item 12: I prefer that my teachers use more group activities / assignments.

Finally, Figure 1 shows that, like item 7, the participants tend towards the opinion that more group activities and assignments be used in teaching and learning context.

B. The Overall Results

Figure 1 indicates that the three statements students agree with the most are attitude items 1, 4, and 6 with mean values of 4.42, 4.39, and 4.35. These items investigate learners' attitude regarding willingly participating in cooperative learning activities, cooperative learning helping learners to socialize more and cooperative learning enhancing class participation, respectively. On the other hand, attitude item 11 is agreed with the least with mean value of 3.46. This item asks participants whether their work is better or less organized when they work in a group. The overall results demonstrate that the respondents generally tend towards supporting the implementation of cooperative strategies in teaching and learning context.

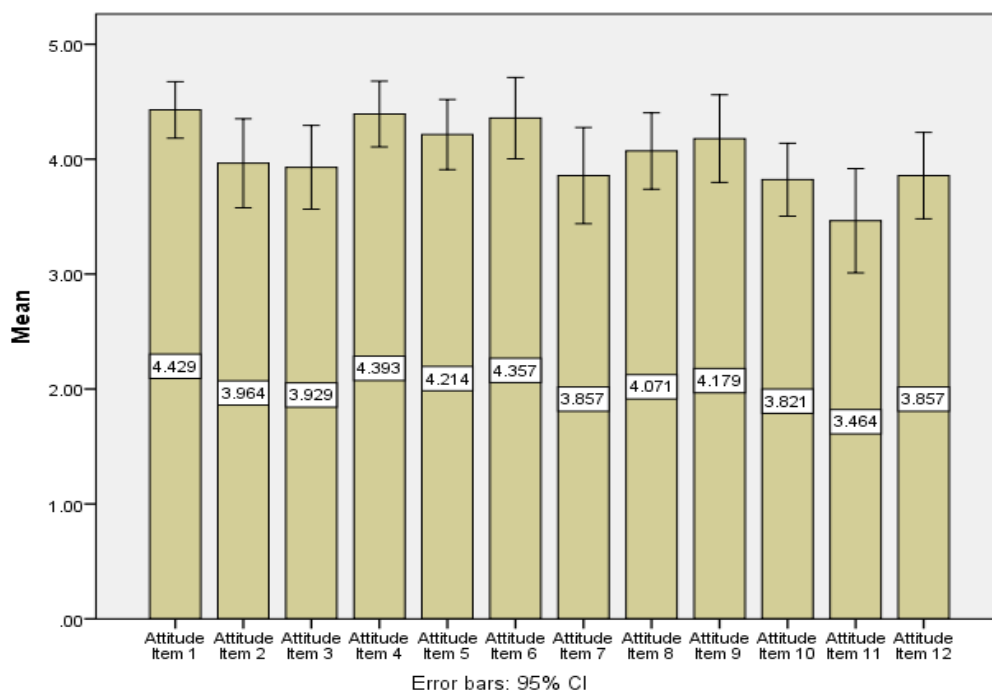


Figure 1: Students' Attitude towards Cooperative Language Learning

VI. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the participants hold generally a positive view of the implementation of cooperative strategies in teaching and learning context. This is probably because when students work in groups they feel that they can depend on others for help and this gives them the confidence to solve problems and enjoy learning. Positive attitude towards cooperative approaches may indirectly change the learners' attitude towards language learning and encourage their interest.

Based on findings of the study, it is necessary that teachers use cooperative learning approach side by side with non-cooperative learning approaches. It is worth mentioning that successful implementation of cooperative learning techniques requires structurally planned teaching and learning activities. Also, it is recommended that this approach be employed for skills like reading comprehension because cooperative learning collects suggestions and ideas from different group members and contributes the concepts become easily clear. Moreover, this approach can also be used for the instruction in other skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. In addition, the literature suggests that additional reasons may motivate the instructors to use cooperative learning techniques. For instance, "the ability to work with others within a group and to develop interpersonal skills" might be an acceptable justification for implementing cooperative learning strategies (Abu and Flowers, 1997). Increased interaction in English and easy management of large classes may be other motivating factors for employing cooperative learning approach.

APPENDIX A. THE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Students' Attitude towards Cooperative Learning

Respondent Number: _____

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to investigate students' attitude toward Cooperative Learning. The researcher really appreciates your cooperation and participation.

INSTRUCTION: To respond to this questionnaire, please put a check mark (√) in the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements:

1 (strongly disagree); 2 (disagree); 3 (neutral); 4 (agree); and 5 (strongly agree)

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I willingly participate in cooperative learning activities.					
2	When I work with other students I achieve more than when I work alone.					
3	Cooperative learning can improve my attitude towards work.					
4	Cooperative learning helps me to socialize more.					
5	Cooperative learning enhances good working relationships among students.					
6	Cooperative learning enhances class participation.					
7	Creativity is facilitated in the group setting.					
8	Group activities make the learning experience easier.					
9	I learn to work with students who are different from me.					
10	I enjoy the material more when I work with other students.					
11	My work is better organized when I am in a group.					
12	I prefer that my teachers use more group activities / assignments.					

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Collaborative Negotiated Feedback versus Teacher-written Feedback: Impact on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Writing

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Abstract—Nowadays, having a good mastery in writing skills plays a pivotal role in achieving success. Hence, it seems that further improvement in teaching writing in general, and providing corrective feedback on students' errors in particular, might be necessary. There is no doubt that teacher written feedback plays an essential role in English writing classes. However, in spite of tremendous contribution of time and attempt from teachers and students, the feedback provision process is yet far away from ideal. Thus, a search for potential ways to improve the effectiveness of providing corrective feedback makes the motivation for this research study. The current study aimed at exploring the impact of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing and compared it with Teacher-written feedback. The study involved two groups of Iranian Intermediate EFL learners (30 students in each), consisting male and female, aged from 19 to 25, who were chosen through convenience sampling. In both groups, the same materials regarding different kinds of essay and paragraph organization were covered and implemented. While experimental group was provided with collaborative negotiated feedback, the control group was provided with the teacher's written feedback during the sessions. After Carrying out the treatment, the mean scores of the extracted data from *pre-test/post-test* of both groups were compared using independent sample t-test. The present researcher came to this conclusion that participants of the experimental group, who were exposed to collaborative negotiated feedback, outperformed the other group. The triangulation of three different sources; Pre/Post-test comparison, the questionnaire and interviews provide evidences in support of the efficacy of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback.

Index Terms—corrective feedback, written feedback, collaborative negotiated feedback

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, having a great mastery of writing skill plays a crucial role in our lives. Writing is one of the bases that your occupation, your learning achievement, and your intellect will be judged upon. Writing is considered not only a tool to having success at school but to be successful in occupation in the future (Bradley-Johnson & Lesiak, 1989). People knowledge can be revealed by the ways they write (Graham, 2005). As one technician suggests, writing in the mother tongue Language learning is bothersome for many students, but when it comes to writing in the second language the students' difficulty and ache are deteriorated (Gilmore, 2009). Hence, this skill of language should be seen as a crucial and vital component of Second and Foreign Language Learning.

Cooperative learning is one of techniques which can be employed in language pedagogy in general and teaching writing in particular. It seems that using collaborative activity in writing classes can be applicable in order to expand individuals' writing proficiency. Cooperative learning is one of the recent issues which has been supported by both researches and practical application. Cooperative learning helps students learn numerous things from their peers and also it motivates them to argue on a subject matter (Parker, 1985). As Bolling (1994) emphasized, cooperative learning has number of advantages such as increasing self-confidence, expanding communicative skills, reinforce critical thinking abilities, and take part in teaching-learning process actively.

Corrective feedback is one of the few areas in which, recently, become a subject of special interest among scholars and researchers. Teachers sometimes provide their students with feedbacks in the hope that they benefit from that but it may turn out to be more harmful than beneficial because it is not provided in a proper way. These kinds of feedbacks may result in many deleterious consequences such as lack of students' confidence or even frustration. So choosing a proper way of giving feedback to the learners in writing classes can be considered as one of the most significant issues in developing a writing course. The role of corrective feedback has been emphasized in most theories of second language learning and language pedagogy. In both behaviorist and cognitive theories of second language learning, corrective feedback is seen as a contributing factor to language learning (Ellis, 2009). In both structural and communicative approaches to language teaching, feedback is seen as a means of fostering learner motivation and

ensuring linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2009). While a significant number of studies have discussed the types and roles of feedback in this particular field, there are still debates about whether and how to provide second language students feedback on their written errors (Truscott, 1996, 1999, & Ferris, 1999, 2002, 2004). Many researchers are currently examining the potentiality of interactional feedback which is obtained through negotiation in second language development (Pica, 1994; Long, 1996; Ferris, 1999, 2002, 2004; Truscott, 1996, 1999).

As a writing teacher, there has always been a question for the present researcher that how one can improve the efficiency of writing classes in general, and finds an applicable solution to providing effective feedback in particular. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback which is taken place in the class as the result of negotiation between teacher and students.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

A. Theoretical Background regarding Corrective Feedback

In literature of foreign and second Language teaching corrective feedback is seen differently. As Ur (1996) summarized, feedback is given different role in different methods of Language teaching; In audio-lingual method, “negative assessment is to be avoided as far as possible since it functions as punishment and may inhibit or discourage learning”. In humanistic methods, “assessment should be positive or non-judgmental” in order to “promote a positive self-image of the learner as a person and language learner”. But in skill theory, “the learner needs feedback on how well he or she is doing”.

From the beginning 1970's the field of second Language teaching has been predominated by communicative approach to language teaching. Communicative approaches aims at constructing an atmosphere that promote natural and lifelike acquisition, including incidental and implicit learning (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Long, 1985; Skehan, 1998). On the basis of the nativist ideology that first and second Language acquisition are follow from similar processes (e.g. Krashen & Terrell, 1983), it is believed exposing to plenty comprehensible input is the necessary and sufficient condition for second Language acquisition. Hence, grammatical competence of second language was thought to be acquired automatically, without any need for corrective feedback (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985; Schwartz, 1993).

However, in the current views of Language teaching, acquisition of first and second languages are not considered the representatives of the same process, “the cognitive processes involved in L1 and L2 acquisition do not fully overlap” (Doughty, 2003). Consequently, in absolute absence of corrective feedback learners fail to achieve target-like accuracy and they may “proceduralize” some idiosyncrasies linguistic resolves for their communicative deficiencies, and as the result errors fossilization might be inevitable (Skehan & Foster, 2001). Hence, in the modern view of Language teaching as Ellis (2009) summarized, while corrective feedback has a place in accuracy work, it should be avoided in fluency work.

B. A Review of Major Studies on Corrective Feedback

There have always been some ambiguous and controversial issues centered around giving corrective feedback in process of Language teaching and learning. Ellis (2009) pointed out a number of controversies regarding to corrective feedback:

The controversy concerning CF centers on a number of issues: (1) whether CF contributes to L2 acquisition, (2) which errors to correct, (3) who should do the correcting (the teacher or the learner him/herself), (4) which type of CF is the most effective, and (5) what is the best timing for CF (immediate or delayed). These controversies will be discussed by drawing on both the pedagogic and SLA literature and by reference to both oral and written CF. (Ellis, 2009, p. 4)

1. The Efficacy of Corrective Feedback

One of the most critical questions which has existed regarding to feedback and teaching writing is that whether providing corrective feedback exerts an influential effect on writing improvement or not. In 1996, Truscott published an article under the title “The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes” which caused a great argument about whether and how to provide corrective feedback on written grammatical errors which are made by second or foreign language learners (Truscott, 1996, 1999; Ferris, 1999, 2002, 2004). In 1996, Truscott came to the conclusion that correction of linguistic errors is not beneficial in teaching writing and be supposed to be excluded from teaching writings' programs. He supported his claim by two major reasons. Firstly, he indicated that correction of error as it is commonly exercised neglects the fact that second language learning is a slow and ongoing and process of acquiring the structures and forms. Secondly, he summarized a number of difficulties which exist in terms of practicality of providing corrective feedback in actuality of situation. Above and beyond that, he claimed that error correction can be operated as an obstacle in the way of productive aspects of the writing classes and waste a great deal of time and energy. Not surprisingly, ever since this claims have proposed, a great extent of controversial debates have arisen at articles and conferences (Ferris, 1999; Truscott, 1999).

A number of researches take position against Truscott, on the top of them Ferris (1999) claimed that Truscott's conclusion was made overly strong and the evidences that he observed for making his conclusion was not sufficient at all. Ferris maintained that there were equally strong evidences for teachers to keep on providing corrective feedback. Even so, she did acknowledge that it is crucial to contemplate ways of improving issues emphasized by Truscott. Ur

(1996) also comments about the importance of using feedback, “the learner needs feedback on how well he or she is doing” and “there is certainly a place for correction”.

There are only a few researches which have directly attempted to investigate the effectiveness of giving corrective feedback on improvement of the accuracy on writing in second or foreign language learning and make a comparison between it and the groups of subjects who are not received feedback on their errors. A number of these researches (Kepner, 1991; Sheppard, 1992; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998) concluded that there is no meaningful difference in the accuracy of the students’ writing, using corrective feedback. Even though, Fathman and Whalley (1990) initiated that the learners who received corrective feedback made fewer grammatical errors in comparison to those who were participated in purely meaning focused group. Hence, as Ferris (2002) and Truscott (1999) declare, further investigations are needed which observe the long-term impacts of such kinds of feedbacks and not simply compares the impacts of existence of them. Latterly, a number of recent studies (Sheen, 2007; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008) have also produced evidences to show that written corrective feedback can be beneficial in language acquisition. Hence current researches have shifted from examining efficacy of corrective feedback to investigations of which types of them impacts better.

2. Different Types of Corrective Feedback

A number of investigations have also been investigating the efficiency of different kinds of corrective feedback on writing improvement. Some of them have distinguished between the dichotomy of direct (or explicit) and indirect (or implicit) corrective feedback (Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998). Nassaji made distinction between two types of negotiated feedbacks in terms of explicitness:

“Interactional feedback can occur in different ways. In general, two broad categories of such feedback can be distinguished: reformulations and elicitations. Reformulations are those feedback strategies that rephrase a learner’s erroneous production, providing the learner with the correct form. Elicitations, on the other hand, do not provide learners with the correct form. Instead, they push or prompt the learner directly or indirectly to self-correct.”

(Nassaji & Fotos, 2011, p.73)

The investigations on the effectiveness of the dichotomy of direct and indirect sorts of feedback provision have resulted to some kinds of findings in an interesting way. Although, the surveys which have been taken place, demonstrate the fact that teachers and learners have a tendency for explicit feedback (direct), rather than implicit feedback (indirect) (Komura, 1999; Ferris, Cheyney, Komura, Roberts, & McKee, 2000; Rennie, 2000; Ferris & Roberts, 2001), but a considerable number of studies manifest that indirect, implicit feedback result in higher level of linguistic accuracy over time (Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed 1986; Frantzen, 1995; Lee, 1997; Ferris & Helt, 2000).

Another issue concerning to the types of written corrective feedback is about combining different kinds of feedback strategies to increase its efficaciousness. A recent study on combination of different types of feedback on writing development suggests, “direct oral feedback in combination with direct written feedback had a greater effect than direct written feedback alone on improved accuracy over time” (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005). Bitchener’s (2008) investigation also led to positive evidences on the effect of written corrective feedback when it merges with oral metalinguistic explanation, but these investigations only represent findings in response to the upper intermediate second language learners.

Another dichotomy of feedback in respect to the types of written corrective feedback is the focused and unfocused types of correction. By unfocused approach to feedback provision, we mean having a variety of different categories and types of error correction to deal with, that “is likely to produce too much of a cognitive overload for learners” (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, p. 204). In order to deal with this criticism, some scolders tend to use focused feedback provision in which only few predetermined items will be rectified. These studies have resulted in positive findings when indicating particular categories of error (Doughty & Varela, 1998). In recent times, Anderson (2010) looked into the serviceability of “tiered corrective feedback”. He defined it as “the various stages of focused corrective feedback beginning with the concentration on one grammatical feature and proceeding upwards in increments of one” (p. 4). The findings of Anderson’s study indicate that corrective feedback has influential impacts, when it targeted up to two categories of errors.

3. Correction regarding Different Categories of Errors

One of the fundamental questions in error correction is which categories of errors should be rectified and which of them should be tolerated. Corder (1967) suggests correcting ‘errors’ but not ‘mistakes’. Errors occur because of a lack of knowledge but mistakes are simply performance errors. The distinction between ‘local’ and ‘global’ errors (Burt & Kipersky, 1974) might be helpful:

Focus on ‘global’ rather than ‘local errors’. Global errors are errors that affect overall sentence organization. Examples are wrong word order, missing or wrongly placed sentence connectors, and syntactic overgeneralizations. Local errors are errors that affect single elements in a sentence (for example, errors in morphology or grammatical functors).

(Burt & Kipersky, 1974, p. 71)

Ferris (2000) also suggests direct written corrective feedback at “treatable errors” might be more justifiable. He defines “treatable errors” as the errors that follow from a regular pattern or happened in “rule-governed way” (Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts, & McKee, 2000).

4. Choice of Corrector: Teacher vs. peer

With the gradual appearance of learner-centeredness concept in teaching methodologies, the implementation of peer feedback has got significantly more credibility in pedagogy. Nowadays, scholars frequently recommend giving students the opportunity to self-correct. Under condition that s/he is not able to self-correction, encourage other students to participate in process of correction (Hedge 2000). According to Rollinson (2005), using peer feedback is beneficial because:

1. *Peer feedback is less threatening than teacher feedback. Because students are more comfortable with their classmates and therefore, getting corrected by own friends evokes less anxiety.*

2. *When correction comes from the teacher, it reinforces teacher's authority. In a traditional language class, the teacher is the authoritative figure and s/he is considered the sole source of knowledge. Students play the role of just a passive receiver of information. But through the practice of peer feedback, the classroom becomes less dominated by the teacher.*

3. *The involvement of peers in the correction process makes the classroom atmosphere more supportive and friendlier. (Rollinson, P., 2005, p. 25)*

As the foregoing part have brought out, a brief literature regarding to the value and the kinds of corrective feedback on students' writing development have been reviewed, but it is equally clear that additional investigations center around corrective feedback might be helpful. As Hyland and Hyland (2006) commented “it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions and generalizations from the literature as a result of varied populations, treatments and research designs” (p. 84), the result of applying different kind of feedback in different context can differ to a great extent regarding to different nationality and different levels of proficiency. Hence, the following study is applied to examine the extent to which Collaborative Negotiated Feedback will help students to improve their writing skill.

C. Statement of the Problem

Different investigation have demonstrated the fact that the writing sections typically get fewer scores than reading, listening and speaking sections in different language exams. Students who have received several years of formal English instruction frequently face difficulties to produce the written form. The other phenomenon which is common among foreign language learners is rote learning. In this regard, the problem lies behind their passive participation; that is, they rely on teachers to a great extent and they are treated like empty vessels which need to be filled with facts and knowledge. This phenomenon leads the students to the regular spoon-feeding and strictness of the teaching processes which is known as teacher-centered classes. Thus, a need is felt for methods and strategies in which learners' participation and responsibility become more highlighted and these modifications can be done by providing different ways of corrective feedback on errors.

Undoubtedly, teacher written feedback on student's papers plays a significant role in English writing classes. Nevertheless, in spite of great deal of efforts from both students and teachers, the process teaching writing is still far away from ideal. Thus, a search for potential ways to improve the effectiveness of providing corrective feedback makes the motivation for this research study.

D. Research Question

In order to examine the effect of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback, the present study centered on the following question:

Is there any significant difference between Collaborative Negotiated Feedback and Teacher-Written Feedback in terms of their influence on the development of writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

E. Research Null Hypothesis

Drawing on the research question presented above, the following null hypothesis is proposed in the present study:

There is no significant difference between Collaborative Negotiated Feedback and Teacher-Written feedback in terms of their influence on the development of writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

In order to carry out the present study and recruit research subjects, the researcher spread out advertisement in some educational places such as libraries, high-schools, universities and language institutes in Sari, to collect intermediate volunteers for participating in the current research. One hundred and eight EFL learners had volunteered to participate in this program. They were between the age range of 19-25 who were studying English in Sari, Mazandaran province as EFL learners. They were all native speakers of Persian including both males and females. The next step was choosing sixty homogenized participants for executing the study. The two homogenized groups of 30 learners were selected over administering Nelson proficiency test (Flowler & Coe, 1976). In order to meet homogeneity criteria and choosing a

sample with the more frequent variance, 60 volunteers who were at the range of one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were chosen. These 60 chosen participants were randomly assigned to 30 experimental and 30 control groups. The researcher has carried out this research at Hoonam Language Academy in Sari. Considering they are picked out from 108 available intermediate language learners, they should be considered as a Convenience sampling which may or may not be representative of the most characteristics of target population.

B. Instruments

In order to carry out the investigation three sets of tests were administered: The Nelson Quick Check A4 Test (1978) for the purpose of measuring the participants' level of proficiency and homogeneity. Pre-test and Post-test which are based on the IELTS Scoring Rubric (2012).

The Nelson Quick Check A4 Test consists of 25 multiple-choice items. The questions are separated and measure the examinees' general knowledge of grammar as well as vocabulary. The A pilot study was carried out with 30 intermediate learners for the sake of estimate the reliability of the Nelson Test through the application of Cronbach's alpha, one of the methods of estimating reliability and the reliability of the test is estimated at "0.836" is greater than "0.70", which indicates a high level of internal consistency for our scale in Nelson proficiency test.

Pre-test and Post-test which are based on the IELTS Scoring Rubric (2012) were administered to the participant of Experimental and Control groups. The IELTS Scoring Rubric (2012) was used as the criteria for rating of Post-test and Pre-test. This study takes advantage of Inter-Rater Reliability procedure in order to avoid subjectivity in scoring.

Along with the tests, the present researcher took advantage of using a teacher-made questionnaire to assess the attitudes and preferences of participants towards the newly implemented treatment on their writing tasks. The Content and Face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by some ELT experts with PhD degrees in the field. The Construct validity of the questionnaire was measured by using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) technique. Its reliability was ".80" measured by "Cronbach's Alpha" measure of internal consistency.

C. Procedures

The investigation commenced on April 8, 2013 and came to an end on May 24, 2013. It consisted 12 sessions. In terms of materials selection, the book "Paragraph Development" was chosen as the main source for the application. Alongside the book, some supplementary materials regarding different types of essay writing were covered.

The lesson plan for both Control and Experimental groups was based on the following synopsis (Table 1):

TABLE 1:
OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHING PROCESS FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Session Number	First half of the class time (Paragraph Development)	Second half of the class time (Essay Types)
1	Chapter 1	Review essay
2	Chapter 2	.....
3	Chapter 3 & 4	Expository essay
4	Chapter 5	.....
5	Chapter 6	Persuasive essay
6	Chapter 7	.....
7	Chapter 8	Cause and Effect essay
8	Review	Argumentative essay (part1)
9	.....	Argumentative essay (part 2)
10	.....	Literary essay
11	.....	Informal essay
12	.....	Research essay

In the course of six weeks treatment, both groups attended to the class two sessions per week. In both groups the same materials regarding to writing structures, paragraph organization and types of essays were taught and implemented. As the homework, at the end of each session, a topic was chosen for writing assignment.

In terms of treatments, two different methods of error correction (corrective feedback) were applied. In the Experimental group, the half of the class time was devoted to teaching and the other half was devoted to Collaborative Negotiated Feedback. In Collaborative Negotiated Feedback procedure, the students were given a copy of other students writing assignment; that is, in each session, one of the students was assigned to provide other students with a copy of his or her writing assignment. In each session, heterogeneous groups of five members were formed. They were also given time to contemplate, collaboratively, the writing sample in terms of linguistic accuracy and organization through negotiation between members. Then, the writer of the text was assigned to read each paragraph. Subsequently, the writing was discussed sentence by sentence. The problematic areas could be pointed out either by teacher or students. Students were asked to participate in corrections of errors and express their own ideas about the way it can be rectified. The solution for the way the erroneous parts should be rectified was discussed by students and the teacher wrapped it up with the best available alternate. On the other hand, the Control group was provided with Teacher Written Feedback; that is, the assignment papers were gathered by teacher in order to be provided with feedbacks by the next session.

In term of design of study, the present study followed pre-test/post-test design along with Control group. Due to the impact of having convenience sampling, the present study should be considered as a quasi-experimental research. This

study took advantage of Gain Score design and Inter-rater Reliability procedure of scoring. It should be mentioned that the average amount of scores of Rater's 1 and Rater's 2 for each participant was considered as raw scores for all calculations in the study. While writing improvement was the dependent variable of the investigation, the independent variables were Collaborative Negotiated Feedback and Teacher-Written feedback.

TABLE 2:
SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Experimental group	T1	X1	T2
Control group	T1	X2	T2

X1 (treatment; Collaborative Negotiated Feedback), X2 (treatment: Teacher written feedback),
T1 (pre-test), T2 (post-tests).

The triangulation of three different sources; Pre/Post-test comparison, the questionnaire and observations provided the present researcher with suitable pieces of evidence regarding the potentiality of administration collaborative negotiated feedback. In the current research, the following statistical analyses comprising descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed as follows. Sampling was conducted through the descriptive analysis (mean and standard deviation of the participants' scores) of Nelson Proficiency Test were estimated. "Cronbach's Alpha" measure of internal consistency was utilized in order to estimate the reliability of Nelson Proficiency Test. Since two different raters scored the Pre-test and Post-test, the correlation was used as the index of Inter-Rater reliability. Hence, "Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient" and its non-parametric equivalent "Spearman's correlation" were utilized for examining the reliability of Pre-test and Post-test. Inter-Rater reliability of Pre-test of writing for Experimental group was " $r_s = 0.94$ ", post-test of writing for Experimental group " $r_s = 0.95$ ", pre-test of writing for Control group " $r_s = 0.93$ ", and post-test of writing for Control group " $r_s = 0.97$ ". "Levene's test" was employed for reassuring the homogeneity of Control and experimental groups At Pre-test. "Kolmogorov-Smirnov" test of normality was used for checking the normality of all sets of scores. In order to compute the amount of Gain scores for each group, every participant's Post-test score was subtracted from his/her Pre-test score. Considering each test in this study has scored by two separate raters, an average amount of the two scores for each student is regarded as the raw score for each of them. With this procedure, two sets of gain scores, one for Experimental group and the other for Control group were obtained. In order to compare the means between the Gain scores of Control and Experimental groups, "Independent Sample T-Test" was applied to see whether the difference between groups means is statistically influential or not. The construct validity of the questionnaire was measured by using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) technique. Its reliability was measured by "Cronbach's Alpha" measure of internal consistency. It should be mentioned that in doing all these statistical processes "SPSS software (version 17)" was employed.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As pointed out above, the present study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback which is carried out in the class as the result of negotiation between teacher and students on development of the writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, as well as, to compare it with Teacher-Written feedback which is the current norm of the most writing classes. The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference between Collaborative Negotiated Feedback and Teacher-Written Feedback in terms of their influence on the development of writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The t-test result for the hypothesis comes in the following table.

TABLE 3:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST FOR COMPARING THE MEANS OF CG AND EG

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
GainScores	Equal variances assumed	.999	.322	-10.305	58	.000	-1.22500	.11887	-1.46295	-.98705
	Equal variances not assumed			-10.305	56.346	.000	-1.22500	.11887	-1.46310	-.98690

As "Table 3" demonstrates, in the Levene's Test for equality of variances (first row in the Table), the observed significance is ".32" > ".05", so we can safely assume the equal variances exist. As the value being observed in the "Sig. (2-tailed)" row is ".00" and less than ".05" so, the observed P is less than the cutoff point ($P=.05$) and the null

hypothesis is strongly rejected and confirm a meaningful difference. The difference between the means of gain scores between Control and Experimental groups is represented in following Bar graph:

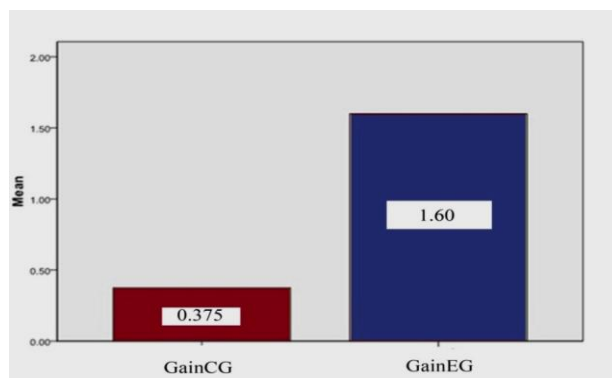


Figure 1: means difference of gain scores between control and experimental groups

It can be deduced that the participants of the Control group, comparatively, achieved the lower gain scores than the participants of the Experimental group at the end of the program and it demonstrate the efficacy of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback.

Beside, the present researcher by running a Paired Samples T-test between the scores of Pre-test and Post-test for the Control group tried to examine the potentiality of teacher-written feedback itself. The corresponding t-test results can provide further insights.

TABLE 4:
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR CONTROL GROUP

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PreCG	4.6083	30	.69071	.12611
	PostCG	4.9833	30	.98027	.17897

TABLE 5:
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST FOR CONTROL GROUP

PAIRED SAMPLES TEST FOR CONTROL GROUP									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Mean				Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper
Pair 1 PreCG - PostCG		-.37500	.41910	.07652	-.53150	-.21850	-4.901	29	.000

As it is reported in "Table 5", the "Sig. (2-tailed)" is ".00" and less than "0.05" so, the observed P is less than the cutoff point ($P=0.05$). On the other hand, by looking to "Table 4" we can see that the mean of Post-test is greater than Pre-test and it confirms the fact that the Teacher-Written feedback could still be contemplated as an influential method of feedback provision, when other creative methods are not feasible.

The Descriptive Statistics of the teacher made questionnaire is presented in "Table 6" as follow:

TABLE 6:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TEACHER MADE QUESTIONNAIRE

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	30	3	5	3.90	.803
Q2	30	3	5	4.40	.621
Q3	30	2	5	3.73	.785
Q4	30	3	5	3.93	.691
Q5	30	3	5	3.77	.774
Valid N (listwise)	30				

The descriptive statistics in "Table 6" indicates that the mean scores of all participants on the items of the scale was greater than '2.86' which was set the cutoff point (because the mean score of population was '2.86'). The high mean scores on these items verifies that the participants have a positive attitude towards learning writing by receiving collaborative negotiated feedback.

One of the pivotal reasons, in which, Collaborative Negotiated Feedback outperforms Teacher-Written Feedback was the existence of interaction element. Considering the benefits which scholars have taken in to account for having interaction in the classroom (Pica, 1994; Long, 1996; Truscott, 1996, 1999; Ferris, 1999, 2002, 2004), it seems that the

combination of interaction and feedback provision in the way that correction of errors have taken place through negotiation plays the key role in the achieving success. Secondly, when a written feedback is given to students, there is no guarantee that what the teacher writes on the paper is understood the same way by the learner. This problem had been solved by Collaborative Negotiated Feedback as far as the corrections have been done at the presence of students and all the ambiguities have been solved through questioning and answering. The next point is that other students were able to benefit from the correction of an error performed by their peers. Another element was having active participation in the class which is promoted through the practice of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback.

This study has supported the benefit which some scholars have considered for having interaction in the classroom (Pica, 1994; Long, 1996; Truscott, 1996, 1999; Ferris, 1999, 2002, 2004). Also, it has supported Hedge (2000) preference for self-correction and Rollinson (2005) orientation for using peer's feedback instead of teacher's feedback. The findings have also supported Burt & Kipersky's (1974) recommendation, in which, focus on 'global' rather than 'local errors' is beneficial in error correction process. This study has provided pieces of evidence in support of Bitchener & Knoch (2008), Doughty & Varela (1998), and Anderson (2010)'s investigations, in which, providing focused feedback on only few predetermined items would be more advantageous as opposed with unfocused types of correction.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this study the present researcher intensely observed that using Collaborative Negotiated Feedback enhanced process of teaching writing more than one way. Students' autonomy, alacrity, active participation, and better performance are all observed through the practice of this method of feedback provision. The triangulation of three different sources; Pre/Post-test comparison, the questionnaire and observations provide evidences in support of the efficacy of Collaborative Negotiated Feedback. Hence, it is safe to conclude that there is a significant difference between Collaborative Negotiated Feedback and Teacher-Written Feedback in terms of their influence on the development of writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The Collaborative Negotiated Feedback outperforms the Teacher-Written Feedback more than one way. It is also confirmed that the Teacher-Written Feedback could still be contemplated as an influential method of feedback provision, when other creative methods are not feasible.

In this study the following pedagogical implications for textbook developers, foreign language teachers, and learners can be taken into consideration:

1. Instructors and program developers should be aware of potentiality of interaction and collaborative learning. In doing so, they will be able to help their students to improve their writing proficiency. Teachers can put emphasis on interaction which can bring about many positive outcomes. This study is significant to understanding better how we can encourage fun cooperative learning atmospheres that permit students to act together and develop both socially and intellectually. The Collaborative Negotiated Feedback is one of the strategies which are fully capable of doing so.
2. Collaborative Negotiated Feedback can help materials developers and Syllabus designers incorporate more motivating and challenging exercises, activities, tasks, and materials which can encourage students to participate more effectively and eagerly in English classes.
3. The results of this study are beneficial for language testing. Instead of the threatening and unpleasant testing, teachers can evaluate students constantly in a fun cooperative-competitive class during the term.
4. Collaborative Negotiated Feedback can save the teachers' time and energy. The teachers don't need to carry a number of papers home to provide feedback on them.
5. Teachers are expected to gradually release responsibility to the students, allowing them to do what they can on their own. Teachers are allowed to intervene only when support is needed. Teachers also can encourage language learners to seek out appropriate strategies and use them independently to correct themselves. The Collaborative Negotiated Feedback is one of the strategies which fully capable of doing so.

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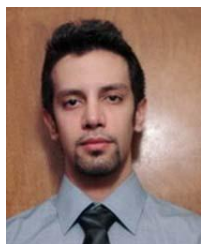
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De-foreignizing a Sound: Computer-assisted Pronunciation Practice in Learning a Foreign Language

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Abstract—This paper examines the use of computer-assisted pronunciation practice in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. The paper is based on the concept of de-foreignizing sounds for a foreign language. Ten participants in 2012 and 40 participants in 2013 from the University of Zimbabwe participated in this study. Participants were recorded producing some Chinese sounds under strict guidance of the teacher, and then edited audios were given back to the participants for their own listening practice. The results showed that after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice, over 75% of the students had better perception of the Chinese second and third tones which they were not able to differentiate before the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. This paper concludes that; though this computer-assisted pronunciation practice might be time consuming, it can be also an effective method to stimulate students' interest in Chinese.

Index Terms—computer-assisted pronunciation practice, sound perception, foreign language environment, deforeignizing a sound

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to explore the possibilities of using computer-assisted pronunciation practice in foreign language teaching in order to help students develop better perception of Chinese sounds. The paper is based on the concept of de-foreignizing sounds from a foreign language. The term “de-foreignizing” or “deforeignization” is not a new term in linguistics; for instance Rajagopalan (2010) used this term to describe a situation whereby English language loses its ‘foreign’ status and develops a “distinctive local flavor and coloring”. As a result, it becomes a local language like any other languages. In this paper the term deforeignization is defined as a process of making sounds for a foreign language appear to be more native or more familiar by using the learners themselves as the producers of near native sounds. The main argument is that when students listen to their own pronunciation the sounds they hear will be more familiar, thus more perceivable than when they listen to a foreigner pronouncing sounds for a foreign language. Since students learning a foreign language are normally in an environment where they rarely listen to native speakers in daily conversations it is therefore difficult to comprehend certain sounds for the target language, hence deforeignizing foreign sounds attempts to make the learner grasp the foreign sounds faster.

Listening and speaking Chinese is a fundamental challenge for students at the University of Zimbabwe, a situation which causes many students to give up learning Chinese language. Gilbert (1995) argues that “if learners cannot hear well, they are cut off from the language they are studying, and if they (learners) cannot be understood easily, they are also cut off from conversation with native speakers” (p. 1). Wong (1987) also agrees with this point thus he says that even when the non-native speakers' vocabulary and grammar are excellent, if their pronunciation falls below a certain threshold level; they are unable to communicate efficiently and effectively. This shows that there is the need for all foreign language learners to strive for good pronunciation. However, as Nooteboom (1983) noted, speech production is affected by speech perception, thus there is need to work on speech perception first for the learners to have better pronunciation as well as better listening abilities.

This paper aims to show the possibilities of using students' own pronunciation through sound editing software to help improve sound perception of Chinese's sound system, which in turn helps to create a base for better pronunciation. We believe that use of computer-assisted pronunciation practice which in this case helps to deforeignize the Chinese sounds, making sounds more native and easy to comprehend thus students' interest to learn Chinese language will be raised. Though this practice method was done based on the University of Zimbabwe's Chinese language teaching and learning experience; it is also expected to benefit other researchers, foreign language teachers and learners who are not necessarily researching, teaching or learning Chinese language.

II. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

At the University of Zimbabwe the majority of Chinese language students do Chinese as a third subject for their Bachelor of Arts curriculum or as a foreign language course for Tourism and Hospitality Degree. There are however a few students from such departments as Psychology, Linguistics and Business Studies who opt for Chinese language as

an optional course. All of these students normally speak their mother tongues or English both during Chinese class time and outside class time, this thus entails that these students are over-occupied with other core-courses, and the environment is not conducive for practicing both listening and speaking Chinese. This in turn affects students' language proficiency, such that even after studying Chinese language for a long time, they are not confident to speak. This problem is a chain problem that results from poor perception of Chinese sounds which in turn affects students' ability to imitate the foreign sounds which they learn.

The major challenge we were facing at the University of Zimbabwe during Chinese phonetic and lexical practice was that the teacher would engage students in repetitive practice which were proving to yield little results since the majority of students would forget what they practice and during review of previous lesson the majority of students would have forgotten what they practiced in the previous lesson. Since the weekly contact hours were limited to 6 hours only, the process was not only tiresome but also time consuming and discouraging for both the students and the teacher.

In our classroom phonetic practice the teacher would make the student or students imitate him until that given student or the majority of students are able to at least imitate the given sound or phrase correctly or just fairly correct. This practice method has the following indirect assumptions:

1. The student has already grasped the sound or given phrase;
2. The student will remember that given sound or phrase;
3. After class the student will be able to imitate the teacher without the teacher's guidance.

After class students would be expected to listen to audios and practice on their own, however the majority of students complained that the voices they were hearing from the Chinese language audios made by native speakers were too difficult to imitate and they would not hear anything except just a combination of sounds thus they would forget most of the sounds and phrases learnt in previous class practice. In other words as Badin, Bailly and Boë (1998) would put it; they were 'phonologically deaf'. As a result, poor perception of the Chinese sounds was negatively affecting students' pronunciation, hence there was need to improve students' sound perception for Chinese sound system. In 2012 this computer assisted practice was done as a way of stimulating students' interest in Chinese language and later in 2013 it was done mainly as remedial work to help students improve their pronunciation.

Listening and pronunciation seem to be common challenges that are faced by students learning a language outside the target language environment. There is much research relating to sound perception and pronunciation practice in second language learning such as Major (1987), Flege (1995) and Rochet (1995). Many of these researchers agree with the notion that language learners outside the target language environment normally experience listening challenges. For instance, Flege (1995) states that "foreign accents may make non-natives difficult to understand, especially in non-ideal listening conditions" (p. 234). It is also generally agreed that poor sound perception is the main cause for listening challenges. Tomatis argues that "before children speak a language they must be able to hear the particular sounds and auditory frequencies of that language" (Thompson, 1993, p152). This therefore suggests that the base for good pronunciation is good perception of the target language's sounds. There are many suggestions from different researchers on how to attain good pronunciation; for instance, Ashby (2012) recommends that at tertiary level a short introduction course in articulatory phonetics course could be helpful for foreign language learners. Field (1995) proposes dictation as one of the ways of promoting lexical perception.

However, in order to improve language learners' sound perception and pronunciation practice especially outside the target language environment there have been so much technological developments across the world. Computer-assisted language learning popularly known as (CALL) is one example of such developments. Levy (1997), defines CALL as an "attempt to apply computer technology in language teaching" (p. 1). Some scholars call it Technology-enhanced language learning. Nazlı (2005) observes that in CALL the learner is first presented with a rule and some examples, and then answers a series of questions which test his/her knowledge of the rule and the computer gives appropriate feedback and awards a mark, which may be stored for later inspection by the teacher. Many scholars believe that CALL method can strengthen learning motivation and provide immediate feedback that encourages subsequent learning (Heift & Rimrott, 2008; Hmard, 2006). The method can be used to reinforce what the student has already learnt in the classroom or as a remedial tool to help learners who require additional support. Some of these CALL manifestations include virtual learning environment and Web-based distance learning.

One such development includes the Virtual Talking Head and Speech Mapping proposed by Badin, Bailly, and Boë (1998). In this method the teacher uses audio-visual speech stimuli in order to evaluate and improve the learner's perception of the target language's sounds as well as helping the learner produce the corresponding articulations by acquiring the internalization of the relations between articulatory gestures and resulting sounds. All such methods, however, require skilled and expensive technological support that might not be afforded in developing countries such as Zimbabwe.

Most developed countries are now developing language learning software programs to help language acquisition mostly outside the target language environment. For example, there are so many foreign languages' learning software programs such as; the Rosetta Stone software, the 101 Languages of the World software, the Instant Immersion 33 Languages software, and many others. Such software programs follow the notion that "in second language teaching many teachers test listening rather than teaching it" (Sheerin, 1987). The modern language learning software programs allow the learner to practice their pronunciation by giving the learner an option to record him or herself, and a computer

compares the learner's pronunciation to that of the native speaker after which the computer gives a score for resemblance level. For example, when using Instant Immersion 33 Languages software, one needs a computer or just a CD player, a sound card and a microphone for the practice. This learning software is more like a game where you play and win or lose. For pronunciation practice the speaker plays a word and immediately repeats it into the microphone, then play back the sequence and can hear the speaker's pronunciation compared to the native speaker. Former president of Alamo PC, in a review of the Instant Immersion 33 Languages software, mentioned that at the end of practice session she felt quite confident with several words and phrases. Also she felt the process was quite funny since the program is totally aural and does not require reading (Ives, 2004).

While all such software programs might be effective in language learning in many countries, the situation is completely different in Africa especially in Zimbabwe. Though at the present many people are now using computers and have access to internet in Zimbabwe, it should be noted that the motivation to learn foreign languages is low and cannot be compared to that of students in developed countries. Also students do not buy these software programs due to economic hardships, lack of interest, lack of information about such software programs, lack of technological know-how, and many other reasons.

Apart from the above, there are also other pronunciation learning methods such as shadowing; this is a language learning technique through which an audio in the language that one is learning is used as the bases, while listening to the audio, one attempts to repeat immediately after hearing it (Nagel, 2011). This method might be effective if the student is able to discern the sounds he or she hears from the audio, so for the University of Zimbabwe students it could have been ineffective since the students were having problems in imitating what they hear from the audio.

In this paper we argue that perception for "foreign" sounds is difficult to perceive because sounds are produced by a foreign person, however if the same sounds for the target language are produced by the learner himself then the pronunciation will become localized. Wagner (2012) argued that perception of unfamiliar foreign language sounds without first language equivalent is troublesome. This therefore implies that in second language learning sound perception of the first language forms the base of acquisition of the target language. Wagner (2012) further explained that; "once perception of foreign speech sounds is accurately established, this perception provides a foundation for accurate production" (p. 12). It is also believed that when one has learnt a first language, other speech sounds are typically perceived in terms of the phoneme categories of the native language (Van, Broerse and Pacilly, 2011).

In this research it is therefore hypothesized that it is possible to improve learners' sound perception for a foreign language by deforeignizing foreign sounds. Deforeignizing a sound as already noted implies "nativizing" a sound that does not belong to first languages, in other words it is a way of making those sounds of a foreign language be perceived through the native language's sound system. This is achieved by recording the learner under strict guidance of the teacher, after which among the learner's recorded sounds a closer to standard pronunciation sound will be selected. After computer editing, the learner will then listen to his or her own pronunciation which is native to him or her in the sense that the sound is not produced by a foreigner; this will then form the base of acquiring a foreign sound.

The assumption is that by comparing his/her own pronunciation to that of the native speaker, the learner will be able to attain better perception and pronunciation of the foreign sound. The sound will become native to the learner because at the end he or she will be listening to his or her own pronunciation. In this paper we therefore seek to answer the following questions:

1. Does computer-assisted pronunciation practice make Chinese tones familiar to the learner?
2. Does computer-assisted pronunciation practice improve students' perception of Chinese tones?
3. Does computer-assisted pronunciation practice help retain the practiced tones?

III. METHODOLOGY

This computer-assisted pronunciation practice was administered initially to 10 University of Zimbabwe part one Chinese language students; the students were having pronunciation difficulties and they would easily forget what they learn. The first trial of computer-assisted pronunciation practice was for Chinese lexical and semantic pronunciation practice, where participants were given short written dialogues which they had to memorize or just familiarize with over a period of 2 days. The dialogues were written in both characters and *pinyin* because almost all the students could not read Chinese characters by the time of recording. On the day of recording each word or phrase was then read under the guidance of the teacher. During recording the teacher would read the sound or phrase while the student imitate.

The recorded sounds were edited to make continuous audios which were then given back to the participants as part of their sound practice. The impact of this computer-assisted pronunciation practice was then evaluated by both teachers and students through discussions and questionnaires. Discussions with other Chinese language teachers were quite helpful in terms of providing ideas on how to improve this approach of computer-assisted pronunciation practice. Apart from discussions, questionnaires were also used to gather information about the students' experience and feelings during the practice and after listening to their own pronunciation. Recorded audios were also played to other students who were not part of the computer-assisted pronunciation practice and questionnaire method was used to gather their comments and opinions on this Chinese learning approach. This was helpful in evaluating the possible impact of this computer-assisted pronunciation practice on both the participants and non-participants.

Participants

Fifty students aged between 19 and 28 years from the Confucius Institute at the University of Zimbabwe participated in both the first and second computer-assisted pronunciation practice. All the participants had studied Chinese for a period of about 6 months when the recordings were done, participants' Chinese proficiency level was still for early beginners. In 2012, 10 out of 41 students from the 2011 Bachelor of Arts level 1 class were randomly selected to participate in the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. In 2013, 40 out of 64 Bachelor of Arts level 1 students who were having problems in differentiating Chinese second tone and third tone were selected to take part in the computer-assisted pronunciation practice.

Procedures

Since the first practice could not be evaluated quantitatively to find out the actual impact of the practice on students' pronunciation, in 2013 a follow up computer-assisted pronunciation practice was carried out, 64 students were initially recorded producing the Chinese 4 tones using the syllable /ma/ and all the audios were analyzed using Praat software. Forty out of the 64 students who were having problems in differentiating between second and third tones were invited to take part in the computer-assisted pronunciation practice.

All the recordings were done in the Confucius Institute's language lab where there was minimum noise. An Intel Core 3 Toshiba Satellite laptop and a new microphone were used for recording. AVS screen capture was used for all voice recordings. During the recording, students would imitate the teacher's pronunciation while reading the same sound or phrase written on the paper (see appendix). A given tone, consonant, word or phrase would be repeated for several times until the student manages to produce the sound or phrase correctly or at least perceived by the teacher as fairly good. As many sounds as possible would be recorded until the teacher feels that the student has managed to imitate the sound or phrase either correctly or just fairly well. This was following the same practice method in the classroom but this time everything would be recorded in order to capture that moment when the student manages to produce the sound or phrase correctly.

After recording all audio files were imported to AVS Video editor and would be then dragged to the sound editing column, where each audio file could be cut, separated and or mixed. This was an important stage because if wrong sounds were mixed this could have given the listeners an inappropriate point of reference during participants' pronunciation practice. After cutting, the inappropriate parts and wrongly produced sounds were deleted; the proper or fairly well produced sounds were then rearranged to make continuous audios.

For the Chinese lexical computer-aided practice the edited phrases were alternating with those of other students producing continuous dialogue, despite the fact that during recording of these phrases were done separately. The edited audios were produced as videos in AVI video format, however they were later converted into mp3 formats playable on cell phones and other media players so that participants could play them on their different mp3 media players. The entire pronunciation practice was done within a day for all the 40 students and the editing was done over night, after which edited audios were given back to individual participants, students were encouraged to listen to their own audios and imitate their own pronunciation as much as they could. Five days after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice the 40 students were recorded again producing the same 4 Chinese tones. Audios recorded before and after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice were then compared.

Acoustic analysis

For the 2013 computer-assisted pronunciation practice, we used Praat software to analyze the students' pronunciation of Chinese tones before and after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. This acoustic analysis was done in order to establish students' tone perception before and after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. The analysis followed simple procedures where wave audios would be imported to the Praat software page and annotated to text grid, thus producing a text grid file. Then by simultaneously selecting the original sound as well as the textgrid file and clicking the edit option a textgrid in picture form would then pop up showing tone forms represented by lines above the labeled areas. Results for pre and post computer-assisted pronunciation practice were then compared to see if there were any changes in students' tone pronunciation after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. Results of the acoustic analysis are shown in the following section.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Feedback from the 2012 and 2013 computer-assisted pronunciation practice was extracted in different ways; the evaluation of the 2012 computer-assisted pronunciation practice was more qualitative while that of 2013 was more quantitative. In 2012 after participants listened to their own audios, a questionnaire was used to extract feedback from both participants and non-participants. Responses to the questionnaire showed that after the computer assisted pronunciation all the 10 participants were excited to hear themselves speaking fluent Chinese and they mentioned that it was now easier to imitate the phrases they pronounce on their own than imitating those that are produced by native speakers of Chinese, thus they expressed eager to use the same method in their future pronunciation practice.

Apart from participants' personal feedback, it was observed that students would keep on playing the audios either on their cell phones or computers. Also it was observed that some participants were even playing these audios to their friends and or family members. Whether the participants were showing off or not it is assumed that by repeatedly playing the audios this was a sign of motivation to learn Chinese, thus there was potential for the students to improve their listening and pronunciation skills.

The computer-assisted pronunciation practice proved that the recording process is a method of pronunciation practice in itself, because as participants were following teacher's pronunciation repeatedly in a way they were practicing both pronunciation and listening. As observed from this pronunciation practice method after recording some participants would spontaneously say out sounds, words or phrases they produced during the recording. This shows that the recording process leaves a profound impact on the participants' thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards the target language. It was also observed that in a class where about 20 students dropped out Chinese, all the 10 participants of the 2012 computer-assisted pronunciation practice continued to take Chinese language in their second year. However, this might be possibly regarded as coincidental.

Apart from the above, the 2012 computer-assisted pronunciation practice also proved that students could imitate themselves better than they could imitate either the teacher or the voices of native speakers they hear from the Chinese audios. This was shown by the fact that the students could no longer forget their pronunciation as they used to do in class. All the ten participants of the 2012 exercise mentioned in the questionnaire that they could no longer forget the phrases they learnt also during class exercise; the participants were still able to use some of those phrases from the computer-aided practice. Thus this shows that if the recorded sounds are well edited leaving those sections that the student produced well then, it will be easy for the student to imitate his or her own pronunciation and achieve better pronunciation.

The 2013 follow up computer-assisted pronunciation practice which was done for those students who had problems in differentiating the Chinese language's second and third tone shows that after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice 31 students out of 40 had significantly improved as would be shown in the praat pictures in the following section. Students were recorded before and after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice and audios were analyzed using praat software. Students who could not differentiate between the second and third Chinese tones could now able to differentiate between these tones. This implies that after the pronunciation practice participants' perception for Chinese tones had improved. In this case we measure perception by the students' ability to different two sounds which he or she could not differentiate before the pronunciation practice. Below are samples from four participants chosen as representatives of the 40 samples which show the praat textgrid pictures for Chinese second tone and third tone forms before and after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice. Since all the praat pictures had almost a similar improvement as the ones below not all pictures could be used for the purpose of data presentation in this paper;

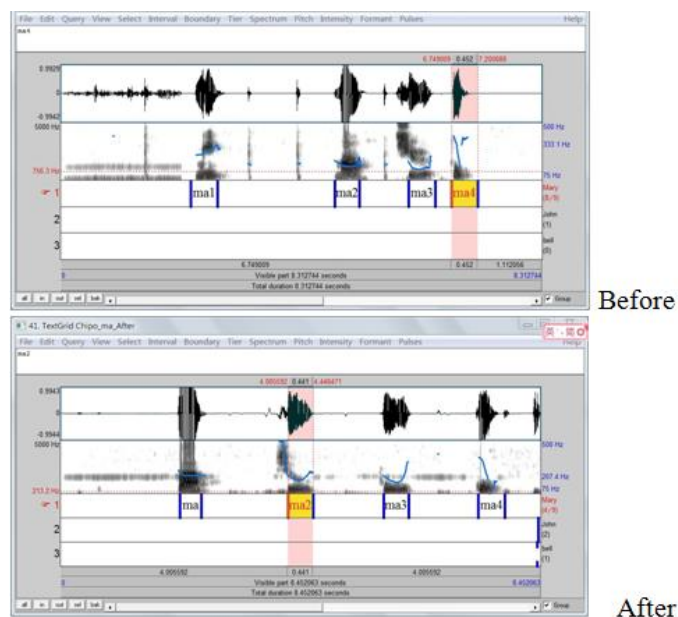


Figure 1: Student A, second and third tone before and after the practice

This textgrid picture for the student A shows that the student was producing Chinese second and third tone both as a low slightly curving tone. In these pictures /ma2/ represents second tone while /ma3/ represents third tone; both tones were produced with the sound [ma]. The /ma1/ and /ma4/ which are not part of this analysis represent first tone and fourth tone respectively. In the textgrid picture above it can be seen that the lines above the slot /ma2/ and /ma3/ almost look the same. The Chinese second tone is a rising tone while the third tone is a curving tone also known as falling-rising tone (Olle Linge, 2011; Liu & Samuel, 2004). For the audios which were recorded before the computer-assisted pronunciation practice these students could not discern the difference between these two tones as can be seen above and in other textgrid pictures below. After the computer-assisted pronunciation practice the student was recorded again and the new tone form shows that the student could now distinguish /ma2/ and /ma3/ as can be seen from the above textgrid picture labeled "after". The line above /ma3/ has a more pronounced curving shape different from that of /ma2/, showing that this time the student had better perception of these two tones. The same results were also observed for

student B below;

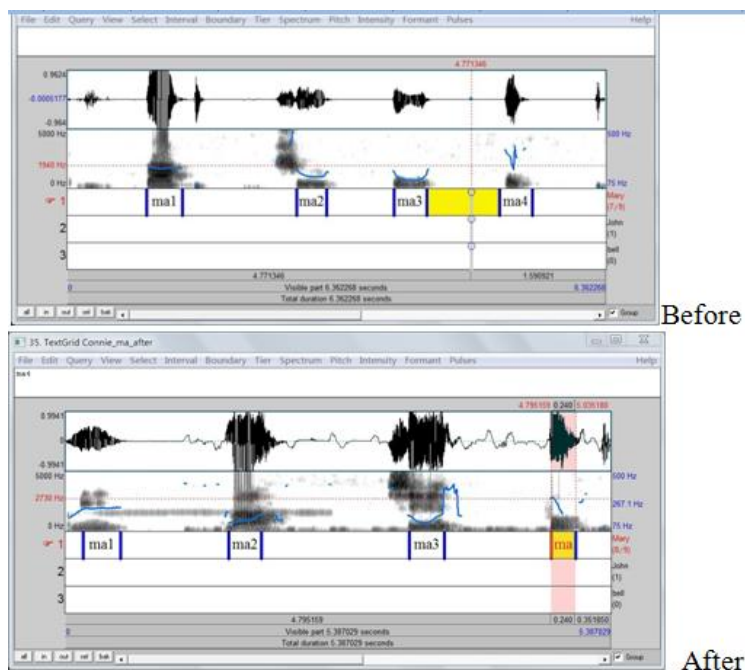


Figure 2: Student B, second and third tone before and after the practice

Before the computer-assisted pronunciation practice student B just like the student A was producing /ma2/ tone almost like /ma3/ tone both as low and slightly curving tones, but after the practice as can be observed from the textgrid picture labelled “after” the student’s /ma2/ was now a clear rising tone without any curving shape as before, the student’s /ma3/ could now be differentiated from /ma2/. In **figure 3** below just like in the previous cases of student A and B, before the practice student C produced the /ma2/ and /ma3/ tones as long low level tones with a slight rise at the end.

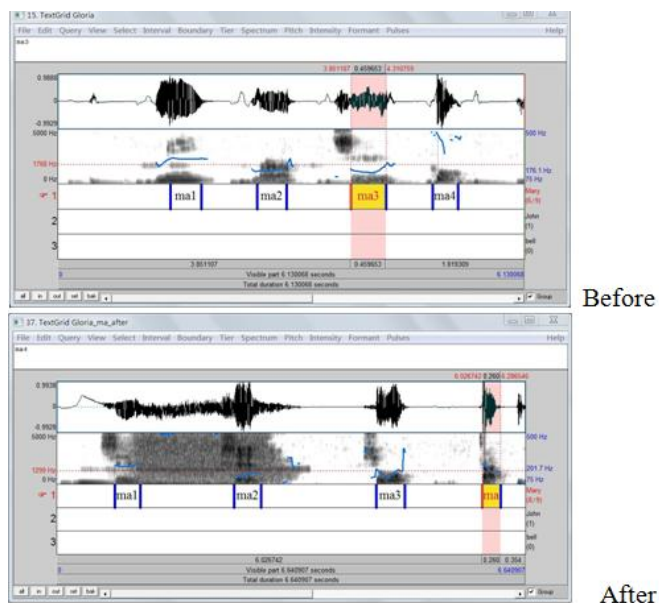


Figure 3: Student C, second and third tone before and after the practice

However, after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice the student C’s /ma2/ tone was now a slightly rising tone which can be seen represented by the line above the slot labeled /ma2/, rising just below the dotted line. Above the /ma3/ slot the tone form shows a small curving line below the dotted line as shown on the picture labeled “after”. Though the above student C’s textgrid picture shows that the student’s pronunciation of the Chinese second and third tone was not yet as perfect as it is supposed to be, but it should be noted that unlike before the practice there was now remarkable difference in this student’s production of rising and curving tone. The last sample below also shows the same changes as in the above cases.

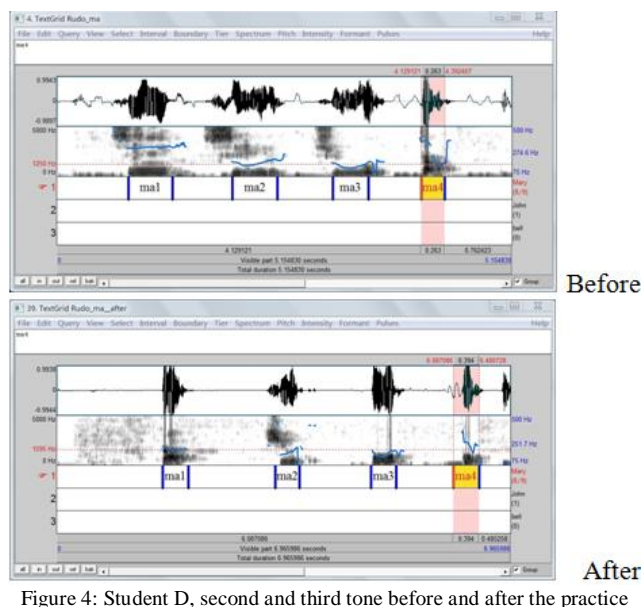


Figure 4: Student D, second and third tone before and after the practice

Before the practice student D also could not differentiate between the second and third tone, as can be seen from the above textgrid the /ma2/ tone and the /ma3/ tone were looking alike, with a slight curve at the beginning and a long slightly rising end. After the practice it was completely different. On the picture above it is shown that /ma2/ unlike before the practice, was now rising slightly from below the dotted line, while /ma3/ was falling from the dotted line to some point and then rising up again, producing a clear curving tone. This suggests that after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice Student D could now differentiate between second tone and third tone. Though this might not be the perfect Chinese third tone, it should be also noted that in all the samples for these four students before the computer-assisted pronunciation practice the students could not differentiate the second and third tone, but after this practice all of them were producing these two tones differently.

Based on the results measured by praat software for all the 40 students it can be concluded that the 2013 computer-assisted pronunciation practice is a potential teaching and learning tool. Both the recording process and the product of computer editing contribute to the sound practice, thus producing a unique pronunciation practice. In other words, the whole practice method shows that it is possible to solve sound perception problems by making students listen to their own pronunciation for a given sound. Thirty-one out of 40 participants of this pronunciation practice could differentiate the tones which they could not different before the practice, in other words about 77 percent of the participants positively benefited from this computer-assisted pronunciation practice.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first computer-assisted pronunciation practice which was done in 2012 was more general and was done as a remedial work to raise students' interest in Chinese. The evaluation did not show any measureable results for actual improvement in pronunciation but as already mentioned all the 10 students could imitate themselves better than they could imitate the native speakers. In other words students could discern their own pronunciation. Though it was concluded that students seem to find it easy to discern the pronunciation for the phrases they produce on their own, the results for this first computer-assisted pronunciation practice were too qualitative, such that we could not establish whether the practice had direct impact on student's pronunciation or not. It can be concluded that; the initial practice was more of raising interest in Chinese rather than pronunciation oriented; this is one major weakness of the first computer-assisted pronunciation practice. Despite this major weakness it should be noted that, students were motivated mainly by the fact that the Chinese sounds were no longer sounding "foreign" rather they were now more native to the participants, thus there was hope that they (students) would one day grasp this language.

While 100% of the questionnaire respondents for the 2012 practice showed that this method is a possible effective method for pronunciation practice, some Chinese language teachers argued that the method was likely to promote pronunciation errors which are directly caused by the students' mother tongue. The worry raised was that using learners' own personal pronunciation as the base of pronunciation practice promotes mother language negative transfer. However, considering that the pronunciation problems which were being experienced were mainly due to lack of motivation, the majority of teachers argued that this method was a crucial part of Chinese pronunciation practice outside the target language environment because it stimulates interest in the target language.

The praat results for the second computer-assisted pronunciation practice shows that after the practice students were now able to differentiate between the second and third tone which they could not differentiate before. Therefore, it can be argued that this computer-assisted pronunciation practice does have the potential to improve students' perception of the sounds for a given target language. The results suggest that editing of students' sounds and retaining the correct or

partly correct sounds helped to show the students' potential. All the participants had potential to speak Chinese well but they possibly did not know that until we captured the moments they could imitate the teacher well. Therefore, when students listen to their own pronunciation from the audio they find it easy to imitate because it is something they once achieved.

In this paper we attribute the 77% improvement which was achieved after the computer-assisted pronunciation practice to the process of deforeignizing the Chinese tones. We argue that through the computer-assisted pronunciation practice the pronunciation of Chinese tones were deforeignized, thus making it easy for the students to imitate and differentiate between second and third tone which they could not different before the practice. There might be possibilities that the continuous imitation of the teacher helped the students to grasp the differences between second and third tone, however during class time students would always imitate the teacher but they would easily forget the proper pronunciation.

While some critics may argue that deforeignizing a sound promotes pronunciation which has a kind of "foreign accent", in this paper we reiterate that the most important thing in second language learning is for the learner to be able to communicate with natives without any misunderstanding. Elliott (1994) points out that; researchers are divided as to whether second language learners should acquire native pronunciation or just a near native pronunciation. In other words while native pronunciation is the main target in second language learning however the possibilities to achieve it perfectly is something that is still subject of discussion. Lund (2003) also states that; "only a tiny percentage of those who begin to learn a language as an adult achieve a pronunciation without an accent" (p. 10). For adult learners it is quite difficult to achieve native pronunciation, thus the majority of second language learners normally achieve near native pronunciation rather than accurate native pronunciation. Kadenge (2009) mentions that there is a distinct variation of English in Zimbabwe which is a sub-branch of African Englishes and this is as a result of 'indigenization of English sounds'.

This process where sounds of a foreign language are indigenized means that the process is natural. Therefore, deforeignizing a sound is just but an artificial method where foreign sounds are intentionally 'indigenized' so that they become easier to perceive for the learner. The main argument in this paper is that use of technology helps to determine the 'indigenization of foreign sounds' while learners are still beginners. In foreign language teaching teachers normally spend a lot of time trying to make learners achieve native pronunciation while at the end what is achieved is still a kind of pronunciation with foreign accent. Therefore, computer-assisted pronunciation practice helps learners to practice their pronunciation based on something that is achievable. The role of technology in this case is to combine those sounds which are well produced thus by cutting and joining these sounds which were once achieved gives students hope and preserves their own standard pronunciation for future reference.

The concept of deforeignizing a sound through computer-assisted practice gives assurance that students can speak Chinese better than they are currently doing; it predicts level of perfection that one can achieve before the student achieves that level. In other words, it gives students hope that they will be able to achieve the same fluency they achieved in the audio. Unlike in the classroom activities where students do not have a record of their potential, this computer assisted practice keeps student's 'best moments' thus it keeps on reminding them (students) that they can achieve better pronunciation.

The fact that students' correct pronunciation is retained such that student can refer back to the correct pronunciation if he or she forgets is an interesting part of the process of deforeignizing a sound. In classroom activities we do not keep the correct pronunciation for the students' future reference thus some students tend to forget what they would have practiced. During class when students' imitation of the teachers is good teachers will obviously use such words as 'good', 'excellent', 'well tried' etcetera, all such comments are motivational. Semke (1984) thus says that "supportive comments have a positive effect on students' motivation" (p. 201). In this deforeignizing a sound practice method the preserved sounds are not only evidence of students' achievement but also an act of appraising students' performance, since the editor will remove all wrongly produced sounds. Therefore, we recommend that since this pronunciation practice method is motivational, it is worth trying in teaching second language. We also recommend that for those students who might be having serious pronunciation problems for words and phrases this can be a good remedial activity.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper we attempted to answer three major questions which were raised earlier on in this paper. Firstly, we wanted to know if computer-assisted pronunciation practice would make sounds for foreign language familiar to the learner. Secondly, we wanted to find out if this method was going to help students to improve their perception of Chinese sounds. Lastly, but not least we wanted to know if computer-assisted pronunciation practice would help students not forget what they practice. To a larger extent all these questions were answered.

The research shows that allowing language learners an opportunity to listen to their own voices while producing sounds for the target language is a helpful technique in learning a foreign language because it makes the sounds for the target language perceived as native or familiar to the learner, thus helping the learners to have a better perception of target language's new sounds. Students can also compare their own pronunciation with that of native speakers and through self-evaluation they can slowly be able to imitate near native speaker pronunciation. Also, this computer-

assisted pronunciation practice can be a way of motivating language learners outside the target language environment, by capturing students' correct pronunciation, students are even able to forecast the level of fluency they can achieve, thus giving them hope in learning the target language. The recording process is also a way of preserving student's correct pronunciation, thus when the student forgets how to pronounce certain sounds he or she can still refer back to the audio and imitate his or her own pronunciation. It will be awkward if one cannot discern what he or she himself or herself is saying, hence in other words; self produced sounds are easier to perceive than sounds produced by somebody else let alone a foreigner. This process is what was termed deforeignizing a sound in this paper, making sounds for foreign language perceived as they are produced by the learners themselves.

Apart from the above, this computer-assisted pronunciation practice is also affordable; the researcher suggests that language learners can use this practice method with even cheap and locally accessible resources. Instead of using expensive computers and editing software, a simple phone with a recorder can be used for recording and then compare the pronunciation of the recorded sounds with that of the native speakers. The objective is for the learner to feel the difference between his or her own pronunciation with that of the native speaker.

One major weakness of this research is that, the practice was done at one institution only and it was done to help Chinese language students only, thus the questions that remain unanswered are; will this method produce similar results if it is used in teaching other languages other than Chinese and will the results be positive if it is used in other institutions? Apart from that we could not implement two or more different methods to measure the extent to which this method is effective. The question that might be asked is that; is this method the best method for teaching a foreign language? It is our hope that researchers and critics will continue to experiment with similar teaching methods and raise constructive criticisms in order to improve the teaching and learning of languages outside the target environment. From the results of the first pronunciation practice in 2012 and the second pronunciation practice in 2013 it was shown that this computer-assisted pronunciation practice is a worth trying method since positive results were obtained. The role of technology in language teaching and learning is ever growing and cannot be undermined, therefore, this method can be adopted as a foreign language learning and teaching technique. It is our hope that more extensive similar research projects will be carried out so as to develop cheaper and motivational computer-assisted teaching methods.

APPENDIX 1. RECORDINGS

Recorded Chinese Tone practice (2013 practice)	
Tones	
First tone mā	Second tone má
Third tone mǎ	Fourth Tone mà
Recorded dialogue	
<p>Dialogue A</p> <p>老师：你们好，你们三个是。。。</p> <p>Lǎo shī : Nǐ men hǎo , nǐ men sān gè shì 。。。</p> <p>学生：您好老师，我来介绍一下，这是我的朋友他是津巴布韦大学的学生。这是我的男朋友，他是一个医生，他不会说汉语。</p> <p>Xué shēng : Nín hǎo lǎo shī , wǒ lái jiè shào yī xià , zhè shì wǒ de péng yǒu tā shì Jīn bā bù wéi dà xué de xué shēng 。 Zhè shì wǒ de nán péng yǒu , tā shì yī gè yī shēng , tā bù huì shuō hàn yǔ 。</p> <p>老师：认识你们我很高兴。</p> <p>Lǎo shī : Rèn shí nǐ men wǒ hěn gāo xìng 。</p> <p>学生：老师你周末有时间吗？</p> <p>Xué shēng : Lǎo shī nǐ zhōu mò yǒu shí jiān ma ?</p> <p>老师：有，你有事吗？</p> <p>Lǎo shī : Yǒu , nǐ yǒu shì ma ?</p> <p>学生：我请你到我家来做客。</p> <p>Xué shēng : Wǒ qǐng nǐ dào wǒ jiā lái zuò kè 。</p> <p>老师：好啊</p> <p>Lǎo shī : Hǎo ā</p> <p>Dialogue B</p> <p>学生：妈妈我回来了。</p> <p>Xué shēng : Mā mā wǒ huí lái le 。</p> <p>妈妈：哟，你怎么带来了这么多人？</p> <p>Mā mā : Yō , nǐ zěn me dài lái le zhè me duō rén ?</p> <p>学生：真不好意思。</p> <p>Xué shēng : Zhēn bù hǎo yì sī 。</p> <p>妈妈：没关系，你们进来吧。坐，坐。。。</p> <p>Mā mā : Méi guān xi , nǐ men jìn lái ba 。 zuò , zuò ...</p>	
<p>学生：爸妈，我来介绍一下，这是我的朋友，这是我的老师，这位是。。。</p> <p>Xué shēng : Bà mā , wǒ lái jiè shào yī xià , zhè shì wǒ de péng yǒu , zhè shì wǒ de lǎo shī , zhè wǒ shì ...</p> <p>妈妈：你的男朋友？</p> <p>Mā mā : Nǐ de nán péng yǒu ?</p> <p>爸爸：我认识他</p> <p>Bà ba : Wǒ rèn shí tā</p> <p>男朋友：爸妈你们好。</p> <p>Nán péng yǒu : Bà mā nǐ men hǎo 。</p> <p>爸爸：你们好，认识你们我很高兴</p> <p>Bà ba : Nǐ men hǎo , rèn shí nǐ men wǒ hěn gāo xìng</p> <p>他们：谢谢</p> <p>Tā men : Xièxiè</p> <p>爸爸：欢迎来我们家</p> <p>Bà ba : Huān yíng lái wǒ men jiā</p> <p>他们：谢谢</p> <p>Tā men : Xièxiè</p> <p>爸爸：今天我请你们吃 pizza</p> <p>Bà ba : Jīn tiān wǒ qǐng nǐ men chī pizza</p>	

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A Short Analysis of Rule-based Linguistic Knowledge

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Abstract—It is widely accepted by both linguists and psycholinguists that our implicit linguistic knowledge consists of both abstract rules that enable speakers to construct sentences productively and exemplars that are represented in the form of unanalyzable chunks that are memorized, stored and accessed as wholes. There are two major perspectives towards the rules of language: generativist and emergentist. In this study rule-based linguistic knowledge is looked at concisely from these two perspectives and some studies concerning some related issues are introduced briefly. At the end, a possible new perspective towards our rule-based linguistic knowledge, suggested by O’Grady (2008), is introduced.

Index Terms—linguistic knowledge, rule, generativism, emergentism

I. INTRODUCTION

It is commonly recognized both by linguists (e.g. Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992) and second language acquisition researchers (Myles, Mitchell & Hooper, 1999) that a substantial part of our linguistic knowledge is composed of formulaic chunks. Cognitive psychologists also believe in the existence of both formulaic chunks and abstract rules (Hulstijn, 2002).

The interest observed in the early years of the twenty-first century in how L2 rules (morphology and syntax) are acquired has not decreased in the previous two decades (Macaro, 2010). The interlanguage concept was suggested independently in the late 1960s early 1970s (Adjénian, 1976). It was pointed out that interlanguage is systematic and rule-governed. This led to the suggestion that the acquired language by L2 learners, like native speakers, is represented in the form of a complex linguistic system.

Since SLA research advocate diverse theoretical positions, different Therefore, theory-driven hypothesis are guiding the research issues in this field (Juffs, 2011). Therefore, a problem-solving approach towards SLA research is emphasized by influential scholars (Long, 2007; VanPatten & Williams, 2007). Certain issues have been closely associated with the acquisition of the L2 grammar:

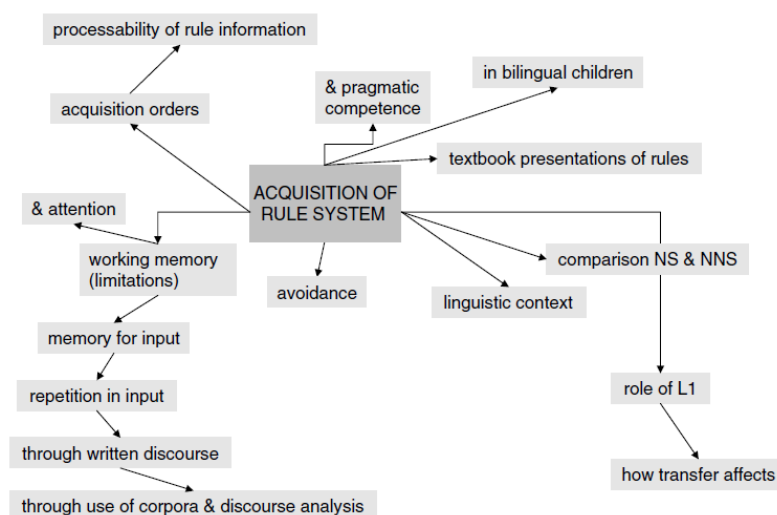


Figure 1: Acquisition of rule system
 Source: Macaro (2010, p. 10)

These areas of interest, in many respects, deal with *constraints* being placed on the acquisition of the L2 rule-system. They are sometimes looked at from a general perspective. For example, considering the studies of Pienemann (2005), Goldschneider and DeKeyser (2001), Hulstijn and De Graaff (1994) and N. Ellis (1996), R. Ellis (2009) considers the following factors as the criteria which can be used to determine the difficulty of grammatical features as implicit knowledge:

(1) Frequency (i.e. the frequency with which grammatical features appear in the input) (N. Ellis, 1996, 2002). However, the order in which implicit knowledge of different grammatical features is acquired cannot be accounted for just through frequency (see, e.g. Gass & Mackey, 2002).

(2) Saliency (i.e. whether the grammatical feature can be easily noticed in the input) (Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2001)

(3) Functional value (i.e. whether there can be an association between a clear, distinct meaning and a grammatical feature) (Andersen, 1984)

(4) Regularity (whether a grammatical feature and some identifiable pattern can be associated) (Hulstijn & De Graaff, 1994)

(5) Processability (whether the grammatical feature can be easily processed) (Pienemann, 2005)

According to this theory, the sequence of acquisition and learning difficulty is determined by the nature of the processing procedure employed in producing a specific grammatical feature.

However, generally speaking, the research questions which deal with these areas or the acquisition of a rule system are underpinned by two major theories of acquisition (Macaro, 2010; for alternative approaches to second language acquisition refer to Atkinson, 2011). The first theory deals with the relationship between language and the human brain: since languages have things which are the same in all languages (universal properties), it might be the case that human brain, at birth, already is 'set up' to learn all languages in a certain way (a theory of linguistic competence). The second theory sets a comparison between the human brain, or rather human memory, and an extremely powerful and intelligent computer which processes received information and acquires the rules through developing patterns of language as it is used by others (an emergentist theory). In spite of the great body of research conducted in this respect, many attempts are still made to validate one of these theories against the other regarding morpho-syntax.

II. EMERGENTISM

The arguments in favor of some kind of biological basis for the acquisition of the first language are renowned (e.g. Chomsky, 1986; Gregg, 2003; O'Grady, 1997; Pinker, 1994). However, it might be argued that an innate capacity for language acquisition is not domain specific but rather general and that cognitive principles involved in learning other things than language might be involved (O'Grady, 1997, 2003, 2008). Certainly, there is substantial evidence that other primates use a large portion of the perceptual system used by humans for speech (e.g., Hauser, Newport & Aslin, 2001; Fitch, Hauser & Chomsky, 2005). The same point is observable regarding the conceptual system. First, there might not be a correspondence between semantic representations and linguistic objects (Jackendoff, 2002). Second, there is a possibility that a foundation which is shared with other animals is the basis of the conceptual structure communicated by language (Fitch et al., 2005; Pinker & Jackendoff, 2005).

The concept of modularity, proposed by UG, in the sense that language is set apart from other higher cognition in the form of a distinct module of the mind is denied by many cognitive linguists (Tomasello, 2003, 2005). However, in order to be able to explain the acquisition of different aspects of phonology and morpho-syntax elaborate sets of categories that might emerge from input and that may be abstract are required. Cognitive linguists put emphasis on probability and frequency patterns in language structure instead of *a priori* rules and constructs.

Emergentism focus on frequency, the cognitive constraints on processing as sources of regularity and universals, communicative function of language, and reduces the significance of abstract constraints on structure (N. Ellis, 2007; MacWhinney, 2008; Tomasello, 2005). This perspective is completely different from the Chomskyan approach. Instead of abstract features, idea is that the structure of language is driven from communicative events and needs. The prototype theory of psychology where prototypes *emerge* from 'chunks' or different instances of a form is the key to learning and representation (Taylor, 2008). The Prototypes can include syntactic structures, the lexicon, and phonology. Besides, conscious learning can play a role in emergentists, unlike some generative researchers (N. Ellis, 2007). The work of Shirai and coworkers is considered as one of the most significant statements in the use of prototype theory in SLA (Andersen & Shirai, 1996; Li & Shirai, 2000). This work explained the development of aspect and tense marking in English and other languages.

Emergentist perspectives learning process is based on the input matching with communicative notions and situations such as saliency and frequency in the input. The term 'cue' is used by many emergentists in, for example, morphology for case marking, word order, gender and plurals, but they do not consider them as part of a closed system which is separate from all other higher cognition. In a series of studies, MacWhinney and his collaborators conducted a series of carefully limited experiments in order to provide some evidence to show that basic syntactic acquisition and representation depend on the strength of cues such as animacy, case marking and word order (Kempe & MacWhinney, 1998; MacWhinney, 2008). The idea is that the cues used for showing grammatical relations are different among languages. MacWhinney argued that combinations of different cues vary across different languages and that the L1

patterns compete with, or influence, the L2 patterns. This competition explains developmental patterns and errors, leading to the name of the framework, the 'Competition Model'.

Hawkins (2008) points out to a curious fact about contraction and agreement in English: a many speakers use plural NPs in the contracted form *there's*, but refuse to use it in its uncontracted counterpart:

(1) a. There's two books on the table.

b. *There is two books on the table.

Source: Hawkins (2008)

In total, it seems that *here's* and *there's* (and to a lesser extent *where's*) demonstrate an 'antiagreement effect': they demonstrate the default third person singular form irrespective of the number and person properties of the associated NP. One possibility, proposed by O'Grady (2008), is that the observed phenomenon is the effects of both contraction and grammaticalization, a process that is highly sensitive to frequency and often accompanies contraction (e.g., Bybee, 2003; Tomasello, 2003).

The emergentist perspective as well as formal linguistic approach consider L1 to have great effect on the developing L2 from. However, apart from the effect of the L1, the two approaches are different from each other significantly.

III. UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR

UG is considered to be part of an innate language faculty which is biologically endowed and enables the L1 acquirer to develop a grammar based on exposure to input (e.g. Chomsky, 1981b; Pinker, 1994; Crain, Goro & Thornton, 2006). Accordingly, UG determines how grammars can be based on a *genetic blueprint*. In other words, UG provides a repertoire of possible grammatical features and categories in the widest sense (i.e. syntactic, semantic, morphological and phonological), placing requirements on the form of grammars. Furthermore, it determines the computational system can be in its nature, that is, the kinds of operation which can occur and principles that grammars follow and in this way it constrains the functioning of grammars.

This perspective assumes that language consists of modules (is modular) in two ways. First, it is believed that purely formal linguistic principles are to be separated from other forms of higher cognition and should be considered as significantly independent of the communicative role language. Second, those principles within the language module are separate from each other; for example, formal structures for phonology and syntax may be independent of each other (Jackendoff, 2002). It is also believed that this linguistic module incorporates invariable principles, that is, principles generally shared across different languages and parameters which lead to variation from language to language. Parametric differences between grammars are sometimes considered to be the result of properties of lexical items, especially so-called functional categories (Chomsky, 1995; Ouhalla, 1991; White, 2003a). Changes have occurred in formalization of universal principles and parameters as linguistic theories (e.g. Government-Binding, Minimalism, Optimality Theory) have developed. Parameters have been largely associated with the lexicon, hence being more constrained. Nonetheless, irrespective of how UG is formalized, it is generally accepted (within the generative linguistic perspective) that some particular properties of language are so subtle, complex and abstract their acquisition is not possible without the assumption that there are some innate linguistic constraints on grammar acquisition and grammars (White, 2003b).

A fundamental claim of parameter theory, introduced in the Principles and Parameters framework, is that a cluster of apparently dissimilar syntactic properties can be brought about by a single parameter setting (Chomsky, 1981a). This idea of clustering is supported by some evidence from L1 acquisition research, demonstrating that properties associated with a parameter setting emerge almost simultaneously (e.g. Snyder & Stromswold, 1997).

The model of acquisition based on UG states that the child's initial state (S_0) is comprised of UG constitutes. As the child is exposed to primary linguistic data (PLD), a language-specific lexicon is created and parameters values of UG are set according to the language, forming the precise form of the grammar. The grammar (G) may be altered over time as the child becomes sensitive to various input features. Eventually, a steady state grammar for the mother tongue (S_s) would be obtained. Figure 2 represents this model of acquisition:

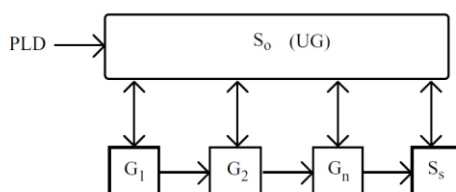


Figure 2: Model of L1 acquisition based on UG

Source: White (2003a)

Like L1 acquisition, it has been argued that L2 learners are faced with a similar task in acquiring a system accounting for L2 input. Furthermore, L2 learners are also to cope, at least potentially, with the problem that there is an incongruity between abstract, complex and subtle properties of grammar and the L2 input (a logical problem of language acquisition) (Schwartz & Sprouse, 2000). For such reasons, L2 researchers try to identify situations where the existing grammatical

knowledge together with available L2 input cannot explain acquisition unless one accepts that UG constrains interlanguage grammars (Schwartz & Sprouse, 2000; White, 1990).

As hypotheses about UG access developed, interest began to shift from central questions such as 'Is UG available?' to a closer investigation of the nature of the interlanguage grammar, particularly whether interlanguage grammars demonstrate properties typical of natural language (e.g. Martohardjono & Gair, 1993; Thomas, 1991a; White, 1992). The issues of the mediation of UG in L2 acquisition and the extent of this access has been studied and discussed since the early 1980s. The first decade of research on UG in L2 acquisition focused mainly on the so called *access* issue, that is, whether there is any access to UG in non-primary acquisition (Cook, 1997; Schwartz, 1990; White, 1996).

Formerly, lack of total success in acquiring a grammar like that of a native speaker was interpreted as the absence of UG (e.g. Bley-Vroman, 1990; Schachter, 1990). Later, it was argued that UG can constrain an interlanguage grammar which diverges from the native grammar (MacLaughlin, 1996; Lightfoot, 1999; White, 1996, 2003a).

The focus of generative SLA studies for over two decades has been on finding answers to such questions as whether there is an equivalence between grammar a second language and a knowledge system parallel to the system which operates in an first language, whether it is initiated like an L1 but develops differently over time and whether it is a system not constrained by UG at all (Juffs, 2011). The table 1 represents the various positions taken towards these questions. These positions are briefly discussed in the following sections.

A. UG-impaired Interlanguage Grammars

The first major perspective is referred to as the *no access* position (Cook & Newson, 1996; Epstein, Flynn & Martohardjono, 1996). This position is expressed through by the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis (Bley-Vroman, 1990) and some related ideas (Clahsen & Felser, 2006). This position argues that interlanguage grammars are not (fully) constrained by UG and that they suffer from local or global impairment.

The Global Impairment Hypothesis claims that there is a radical breakdown in interlanguage representations (parametric system) at any point in development (Clahsen & Hong, 1995; Neeleman & Weerman, 1997). The initial state is not explicitly discussed in this position. It seems that the possibility of L1 parameter settings is being rejected altogether (White, 2003a). Considering this perspective, end-state grammars are completely different from the grammars of native speakers and in fact totally different from natural language grammars (not constrained by UG). It has been tried to be argued that L2 input is in fact sufficient to induce the relevant contrasts without resort to principles of UG (Kellerman & Yoshioka, 1999).

TABLE 1:
L2 ACQUISITION AND UG: INITIAL TO STEADY STATE

	UG-impaired		UG-constrained		
	Global Impairment	Local Impairment	No Parameter Resetting	Full Access (without Transfer)	Full Transfer Full Access
Initial state	?	L1 grammar + inert features	L1 grammar	UG	L1 grammar
Development	Pattern matching; separate constructions	Some L2 properties acquirable. Features remain inert.	No parameter resetting	Parameter setting, directly to L2 values	Parameter resetting (L1 to L2)
Final outcome	Grammar essentially different from native-speaker grammar. L2-like grammar not attainable.	Features still inert. L2-like grammar not attainable.	L1-like grammar. L2-like grammar not attainable.	L2-like grammar.	L2-like grammar possible but not inevitable.

Source: White (2003a)

The Local Impairment Hypothesis provides another proposal for defective grammars. According to this hypothesis there is a local breakdown in interlanguage grammars. This breakdown is claimed to be related to inert feature values. This claim implies that interlanguage grammars are not fully UG-constrained. According to the Local Impairment Hypothesis, not only in the initial state but also the developmental states and even in the steady state are expected to be characterized by the inertness (Lardiere, 1998a, b).

B. UG-constrained Interlanguage Grammars

In contrast to approaches that interlanguage grammars defective are the various claims that maintain that interlanguage grammars are UG-constrained in all stages of development from the initial to the steady state (Cook & Newson, 1996; Juffs, 2004; White & Juffs, 1998). The differentiating factor in these Hypotheses is the extent to which the L1 grammar is involved in interlanguage representations. On the one hand, No Parameter Resetting Hypothesis claims that interlanguage grammars have access *only* to those parameter settings which were realized in the first language, implicating that subsequent parameter resetting is impossible (Bley-Vroman, 1990; Clahsen & Muysken, 1989; Schachter, 1990; Sorace, 1993). However, the results of the study conducted by Montrul and Slabakova (2003) suggested that the steady-state grammar of L2 Spanish speakers characterizes aspectual contrasts not realized in the L1, hence demonstrating that L2 speakers cannot be restricted to L1 features.

Finally, there are two perspectives which claim full access to UG. In other words, not only UG constrains interlanguage grammars but also L2 learners and L2 speakers can go beyond the L1 grammar representations. According to these hypotheses, the parameters of UG can be set or reset to L2 values. Full Access (without Transfer) hypothesis, the first hypothesis, claims that L1 grammar plays no role in interlanguage representations, initially or subsequently (Flynn, 1996). The Full Transfer Full Access Hypothesis proposes that both UG and the L1 grammar influence the functioning and form of the interlanguage grammar (Cook & Newson, 1996; Hale, 1996; Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White, 2003a). According to this hypothesis, the initial state of the interlanguage is completely based on the L1 grammar and that restructuring occurs in response to L2 input and within the bounds of UG (Inagaki, 2001; Thomas, 1991b, 1993).

IV. CONCLUSION

According to O'Grady (2008), the aim of emergentism is not to repudiate the UG-based perspective but to develop a more suitable version of the innateness hypothesis. He believes that many different possibilities are included in this enterprise and perhaps considering one single position as appropriate at this time is premature. However, he considers that certain promising lines of inquiry might be discerned such as the idea that many of the classic mysteries that at first inspired curiosity in Universal Grammar can be illuminated through a processor which is sensitive to frequency as well as computational efficiency.

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The Bewitching Maze of the Past: The Study of Nostalgia in Goli Taraghi's Short Fiction

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Abstract—Nostalgia, a sentimental longing for a desired lost past, forms a considerable part of the literary works produced by authors during their migration experience. By recounting the desirable memories of their past, the characters of these stories find redemption despite the loneliness and depression that surround them as strangers in the new environment. The present study deals with the analysis of the nostalgic aspect of the short stories written by Goli Taraghi, the contemporary Persian migrant writer. The result indicates that Taraghi's characters still live in a homogenized universe and define their identities by clinging into their past life. Consequently, nostalgia becomes the central theme of Taraghi's fiction.

Index Terms—nostalgia, migrant author, Goli Taraghi, short story

I. INTRODUCTION

Nostalgia, originally a psychological term, is a recurrent concept in the literary works. The meaning of the term encompasses homesickness, regret for past, and a desire for an earlier time. All through the history of literature, nostalgic narratives and lyrics paced hand in hand with the variations in the spirit of the age, taken from the Romantic nostalgia for childhood innocence to the longing for the pre-industrial life in the Victorian fiction.

The migrant authors have also dealt with the theme of nostalgia and homesickness to a great extent. Their characters are immersed in the memories of places and events which are, for them, associated with pleasure, satisfaction or regret of some sort. This emotional response is considered as a defense mechanism against the isolation and despair they are experiencing in their new environment.

Most critics of modern Persian literature would agree that the Persian migrant literature forms an inseparable and significant part of the modern Iranian literary trend, in which such concepts as identity, nostalgia, nationality, unfulfilled hopes and unfamiliar spaces challenge the current themes of traditional literature back then. By the acceleration of the Iranian migration trend, a great number of intellectuals and artists have spread around the world and established publication centers and created so various forms of books, magazines and professional journals that "the contemporary history of Iran is not possible to be composed while neglecting this branch of the tree of the Persian literature" (Saifi, 1999, p. 26).

Goli Taraghi (1949), the Iranian writer, having been living in France for about 25 years, is the author of several works of fiction such as *Two worlds* (1381), *A mansion in the skies* (2003) and *Scattered Memories* (1992). The author tends to make a thorough review of Taraghi's short stories, which are mostly written after her migration to France and are frequently categorized as examples for the Persian migration literature. The research aims at shedding light on the hidden and often-neglected aspects of Taraghi's stories which would bring about a better understanding of the mentioned works and consequently establishes Taraghi's position as one of the most demanding literary figures of the Persian modern literature. This is done by analyzing and identifying particular patterns of the concept of nostalgia that the artist has chosen in her attempts to express the conflicts of the modern individuals and their personal struggles and desires through the application of a universal framework.

II. NOSTALGIA

A. The Development of the Concept

SAMMLER: I see you have these recollections.

WALLACE: Well, I need them. Everybody needs his memories. They keep the wolf of insignificance from the door. Saw Bellow, *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970, p.190)

Approximately 2,800 years ago, Homer recited the story of the brave adventurer Odysseus, who fought in Troy for 10 years and wandered another 10 years on his journey back to Ithaca, his homeland, to reunite with his wife Penelope and his son, Telemachus. All through these 10 years of wandering, Odysseus never forgot Ithaca, and even refused the beautiful Calypso's suggestion to give him immortality. He confessed this inner desire for home in the following speech to Calypso:

ODYSSEUS – Full well I acknowledge prudent Penelope cannot compare with your stature or beauty, for she is only a mortal, and you are immortal and ageless. Nevertheless, it is she whom I daily desire and pine for. Therefore, I long for my home and to see the day of returning. (Homer, 1921, pp. 78-9).

Odysseus was obsessed with return to home, and the Greek word for it is "nostos". His burning wish for "nostos" caused him great sufferings, which in Greek meant, "algos". Nostalgia then, is the psychological suffering caused by ceaseless yearning to return to one's homeland. The term "nostalgia", however, was actually coined by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in his medical dissertation in 1688, although references to its meaning can be found in mythologies, epics, and Bible. Contrary to our intuition, "nostalgia", as a professional concept, came from medicine, not from poetry or mythologies.

Hofer studied the behavioral symptoms of Swiss mercenaries fighting on behalf of various European rulers in far-away lands. Characteristic symptoms included – as Sedikides, Wildschut and Baden (2004) quote from Hofer in their article – "emotional lability ranging from despondency to bouts of weeping, anorexia, and suicide attempts" (p. 201). Hofer suggested that the mercenaries suffered from nostalgia (or homesickness), "a cerebral disease of essentially demonic cause" (Ibid). It was widely believed at that time that nostalgia was a disease confined to the Swiss. In a race to offer the most bizarre explanation of them all, military physicians speculated that the cause of the disease was "the unrelenting clanging of cowbells in the Alp, which inflicted damage to the eardrum and brain cells! (Davis, 1979, p.140) The definition of nostalgia as a medical disease persisted in the 18th and 19th centuries, although the condition was no longer considered specific to Swiss and its definition also shifted from brain to "psychiatric disorder" (Sedikides, et al, 2004, p. 201). This conception of nostalgia was carried into the mid-20th century and various psychologists verified it according to their studies and achievements. Some classified it as an "immigrant psychosis" (Frost, 1938, p. 801), a "monomaniacal obsessive mental state causing intense unhappiness" (Fodor, 1950, p. 25), arising from a subconscious desire to return to one's primal state, and a "mentally repressive compulsive disorder" (ibid). Such perceptions also drifted into the present century. Kaplan (1987) considered nostalgia as a variant of depression, and Tedesco (1980) labeled it "a regressive manifestation closely related to the issue of loss, grief, incomplete mourning and, finally, depression" (p. 110). The emphasis in all of the various perspectives that the contemporary experts express is on the universality of this experience. Wright Morris (1963), the literary critic, who wrote an article on the element of nostalgia in F. Scott Fitzgerald's works, demonstrates this inclusiveness of the concept through the following passage:

The power and sources of nostalgia lie beyond the scalpel. Nostalgia sings in the blood, and with age it grows thicker, and when all other things fail, it joins men in a singular brotherhood. Whenever they live in the present, or hope to live in the future, it is in the past that you will truly find them. In the past, one is safely out of time but not out of mind. (p. 26)

Nostalgia is not associated with any particular era or any particular civilization or culture. It is ancient and modern, rural and urban. It is found in primitive societies as well as advanced. It is a phenomenon fundamental to the human creature. Beardsly Ruml, in an article entitled "Some Notes on Nostalgia" (1946) Says:

Recognition of the fundamental and pervasive influence of the nostalgic, under whatever names, will enable us to interpret human behavior with a new realism. This re-interpretation of human behavior will make it possible for us to rewrite the drama of sin and self and sex... the understanding of interpersonal relationships also requires an appreciation of the role played by nostalgic sentiments. We need to realize that friendship, affection, love, whether between persons of the same or different sexes, have an emotional basis that is always in part and frequently dominantly nostalgic. (p. 7)

B. Nostalgia and Literature

The study of nostalgia is not limited to psychology but the approaches of literary criticism have also attended to this concept in their analysis of the literary productions. Nostalgia became a favorite concept for the writers, and particularly poets, during the Romantic period and acted as a basis for the whole ideology on which the Romantic Movement was based. The analysis of the poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge shows how the Romantics mourned the fleeting natures of time and looked back to the golden age of childhood – which can only be recaptured through nostalgia. Nostalgia, in this period, allowed the poets the opportunity to not only recapture the past, but to manipulate and control it. This nostalgic looking back at the past seemed to be an excuse to seek "reassurance of a ruder, but simpler, less complicated way of life than that which the present offered or the future promised" (Haghighi, 1993, p. 44).

The concept of nostalgia remained as a central theme in the Victorian novel as well. In Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (1857), the heroine speaks of a longing that represents the dual meaning of nostalgia – a homesickness that causes physical pining and a wistful regret of the past – at the same time capturing the nostalgic mood that pervades so much of Victorian literature. Amy Dorrit's confession expresses a desire that is against her family's wishes to forget the past and to move forward; "For I must now confess to you that I suffer from home-sickness – that I long so ardently and earnestly for home, as sometimes, when no one sees me, to pine for it. [...] So dearly do I love the scene of my poverty and your kindness. O so dearly, O so dearly!" (p. 538).

In *Tennyson and the Text* (1992), Gerhard Joseph describes Tennyson as "the most persistent nineteenth century poet of melancholy recessionary space" (p. 73), emphasizing the potential nostalgia in his poetry. This collection of criticism on Tennyson has mainly consisted of critical comments on the sentimentality and pathos of his melancholy, nostalgia, or depression, in which he is accused of "wallowing".

The speed of change in the nineteenth century naturally created an increase in nostalgic narratives. Victorian ideologies of the home arose predominantly as a relief to the anxieties of the market place. The "warm, comforting

bosom of home" has been called a "refuge from a business world which was risky and perilous, hard-headed and hard-hearted" (Phillips, 1978, pp. 97-8).

Nostalgia and consequently nostalgic literature lost its favor among the writers and critics in the following century. In the contemporary world of literature, nostalgic literature is responded variously by different views. It is frequently critiqued as affected, sentimental and passive and by some others as a way to see the present more clearly.

Frederic Jameson, the film critic who has made researches on postmodernism and its different aspects, attacks the nostalgic tendencies in literary works by calling them "regressive" (cited in Hutcheon, 2000, p. 203) and "desperate attempts to appropriate a missing past" (Jameson, 1991, p. 19). Timothy, J. Reiss (1983), the contemporary critic and the professor of Comparative Literature at New York University, strongly called nostalgia to be "functionally crippling" (p. 193) and the inherent grief and despair in nostalgic themes as "regressive" tones which doesn't have any other function but to "disable" (ibid).

The postmodern theorist, Paul Ricoeur (2004), says that nostalgia "remains the disturbing threat that lurks in the background of the phenomenology of memory and the epistemology of history" (p. 412). This refers to that quality of nostalgia which meanders away from the truthful, historical, or the precise, and which is the reason of the contemporary criticisms on the concept as connoting a mistake or evasion.

There are other views towards the status of nostalgia as the theme of literary productions. For instance, Linda Hutcheon (2000) gives a new insight towards the concept. The basis of her argument is that, "denying or at least degrading the present as it is lived, nostalgia makes the idealized [and therefore always absent] past into the site of immediacy, presence, and authenticity" (p. 197). In this regard, nostalgia may depend precisely on the changeless nature of the past for its emotional appeal. It is the "pastness of the past", its being out of access, that accounts for a large part of nostalgia's power. This is seldom the past as it really happened; it is the past as imagined, as "idealized through memory and desires" (p. 195). In this sense, nostalgia is more about present than past and this lessens the quality of passivity or paralyzing that has been attributed to it for a long time.

Nostalgia may occur, as central or marginal theme, in the works of migration literature, in which moving, uprooting, and exile are foundational events. Postcolonial critics have pointed to nostalgic moments in fictional events when the oppressed has shown a strong and understandable nostalgia for what is perceived as their once unified identity. This nostalgia for a lost coherence and cultural unity is experienced by the colonized characters who long to re-achieve their centrality during pre-imperialism, pre-colonization era.

In most of these writings, nostalgia is equivalent with "homesickness", psychological state caused by the social isolation and the failure to integrate into the new homeland. Van Tilburg, Vingerhoets and Van Heck (1996) define homesickness as "the commonly experienced state of distress among those who have left their house and home and find themselves in a new and unfamiliar environment" (p. 899). It is often dealt with in migration literature in close association with displacement of the characters who can't overcome their inner obsession with home and as a result generate negative feelings towards the new home.

Goli Taraghi (b.1939) is an Iranian novelist and short story writer who migrated to Paris in 1980 and has lived and worked there since then. Her works are usually categorized as migration literature by different critics. *Sad Saal Dastan Nevisi-ye Iran (One Hundred Years of Fiction Writing in Iran)* by Hasan Mirabedini (2004) which is one of the major contemporary texts of Persian literary criticism, refers to Goli Taraghi as a Persian migrant short story writer whose works depict a nostalgia for lost home which gradually becomes one with lost homeland, a movement from personal nostalgia to a cultural one (p. 1403).

While the migrant literature basically deals with the protagonist's identity crisis in the new environment and his attempts for integration and adjustments, Taraghi's protagonists live in their memories of the lost home, family ties and in general the past life. Zarlaki (2010) highlights this nostalgic aspect of Taraghi's work as follows: "Goli Taraghi has not returned [to homeland] and is pleased with that untouched world of memories... her heart lives in memories, and she writes of past and of motherland. This is the nostalgic nature of Taraghi's stories" (p. 112).

The aim of this article is to study three collections of short stories by Taraghi namely; *A Mansion in the Skies* (2003), *Scattered Memories* (1992) and *Two Worlds* (2002) in order to shed light on the hidden and oft-neglected aspects of Taraghi's stories which would bring about a better understanding of these works.

As a result of this study, the current theme of most of the stories in the three collections is nostalgia and this nostalgia is manifested through three distinguished contexts that the author of the present research classify them as: nostalgia and the time, nostalgia and the place, and nostalgia and the objects.

III. DISCUSSION: NOSTALGIA IN TARAGHI'S STORIES

A. *Nostalgia and the Time*

Time and its maddening ticking which is frequently heard in Taraghi's stories reminds us of the most famous "watch" of the world of literature: Quentin's watch; the watch that Quentin's father gives him so that he might forget the time. It is a watch to be broken and destroyed: "I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought" (Faulkner, 1931, p. 73).

This conflict with time is a universal motif in the literary works and each author illustrates his worries and fears of the passage of time through various images and characters. Most of her stories begin at the present time, but an event, a scene or sign takes her back to the past and this past is usually the years she was living in Iran before her migration abroad.

In most cases, future does not have any significance in the stories, and the characters migrate to their past life, not to define a new identity, but to find a secure place in the past memories. "Taraghi lives in a huge fear of a terrifying emptiness" (Zarlaki, 2010, p. 80) which is felt in her confrontation with the new home after migration. She finds that the only way to escape this emptiness is to take refugees in the "hidden layers of memory" (Zarlaki, p. 81). Memory is activated and the past events find a new life on the paper sheets.

This escape from the present and finding peace in past memories is manifested in many of her stories. The narrator in "The First Day" (Taraghi, *Two Worlds*, 2002). Confesses that "I have to go beyond the past and come back to present. I have to know this present 'I', but I can't. I'm afraid of the future. The past is only real and like mother's colorful skirt, embraces me within" (p. 19).

She should have run away from this mother's skirt. There is no use remaining there: "I tell with myself: If I find the ability to write, I will improve... my psychological improvement is in writing my thoughts, my memories, my nostalgias" (p. 24). And the narrator starts to write.

She watches the sudden snow in Paris and remembers the winters in Tehran in a story entitled, "Shemiran Bus": "I am put in mind of Tehran in winter, dominated by the tall, snow clad Alborz peak underneath the turquoise-blue skies, the bare, sleeping trees in the far end of our garden, dreaming of the return of migrating birds. In my childhood, snowy days had no end" (*A Mansion in the Sky*, p. 9).

In another story entitled "The Little Friend", the narrator's gaze stops on a woman's face laying on the hot and humid sands of the French Riviera beach, and stretching beyond the present scene goes to her twelfth and her memories of childhood friendship and of an old wound; of Svetlana:

Svetlana! I still feel an onset of anxiety at the sound. I try to block the rush of memories, but my heart races and I forget the children and where I am. Countless flickering pictures of Svetlana, as if scrambled by a whirlwind, are scattered in my head, breaking down the flimsy partitions of time, like it was just yesterday, the morning before... (*A Mansion in the Skies*, p. 23)

In "The Other Side of the Wall", the narrator goes back to her fourteenth and describes her worries and involvements:

The fourteenth, colorful, full of sweet temptations is sitting at the end of the hot summer days, waiting to take me with it. I'm frightened and stick to the remaining days of the secure and peaceful childhood... I don't want to grow up and no one understands me. (*Two Worlds*, p. 65)

The ticking of Quentin's watch is repeatedly heard as the ticking of the narrator's grandmother's watch in a story with the name of "Grandma's House":

Grandma's house has now been sold and the big wall clock moved to the residence of one of my uncles – the last remaining one. Sometimes, in my head I hear its pernicious ticking, and I am reminded that it will be here "after we are all gone". I always resent the persistence of its revolving hands. [...] I have a sense that in this touch there is a timeless message – simple, wholesome, and light as the melodic chants of fairies that drown out the fearsome ticking of all the clocks in the world. (*A mansion in the Skies*, p. 58)

B. Nostalgia and the Place

The nostalgia for the lost place is represented in Taraghi's stories in two considerable forms: nostalgia for the lost home and nostalgia for the lost fatherland.

1. Nostalgia for the lost home

Home has got a peculiar position in Taraghi's stories. It is the framework within which most of the events take place. Home is the lost paradise for the narrator, and with its destruction, the happy years of cheerful past come to an end. The best representation of this nostalgia is in the story entitled "Father":

The Shemiran house with its bright days and its trees casting mysterious shadows: its magically translucent nights echoing with the deliciously muffled voices of neighborhood boys outside its walls; its immanent apprehensions and sorrows; its surface benevolence and deepest malice; its transient revelries and resilient doubts; its dynastic ostentations. (*A mansion in the Skies*, p. 59)

Father's house. That's a universal nostalgia. Childhood house, good or bad, has a colorful and pleasant disposition in our memory. That's the very first place we have come to know; a building at the farthest end of our memory; the most secure place on the earth.

The Shemiran house is the axis of the life of the whole clan. As children we grow as fast as the aspens, jolly and carefree, roaming the stretches of the green lawns and the fecund orchard, thinking them unbounded and eternal. I don't think of people as being mortals – least of all myself, my mother, Hassan Agha and others – ensconced as we are under the safety umbrella of Father, the Grand Magician, immune to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. "I am steel," father declares, "and steel never rusts". (*A Mansion in the Skies*, p. 61)

Later on, at the midst of the bitterest moments of living in a strange land, during the early years of migration, the narrator blames herself of causing her children leaving behind this secure paradise of home:

The children do not understand. They feel exiled from the warm bosom of grandma and aunts and relatives, and from among a non-ending source of love and kindness, to a land of coldness, sorrow, and darkness and do not comprehend the meaning of this injustice. (*Scattered Memories*, p. 143)

2. Nostalgia for the Lost Fatherland

While the nostalgia for the lost home of childhood is not limited to the migrants and all the people may in some phases of their lives feel this homesickness, the nostalgia for the homeland is an inseparable part of the migration experience. Essentially, the word nostalgia, as it was fully described in previous chapters, was coined to show the soldier's homesickness when they were far from their homeland. This nostalgia has become the main theme of many migrant writers, while it acts as a stimulus to criticize and analyze their present condition in the new land for other writers. Taraghi is among the first group.

She is involved in her memories, and writes of past and of her fatherland. In *Two Worlds*, there is a story with the name of "The First Day" in which Tehran is illustrated as a utopia, emerging from the far end of narrator's memory:

She asks: - Nationality?
- Iranian.
- Profession?
- Writer.
- Birth place?
- Tehran.

I feel the sweet clamor of a familiar city and Shemiran garden, like a green sleep, sits on the back of my eyelids.

Tehran, with that playful letter "R" that rolls under the tongue, and that long "A", like the tempting gate of a colorful bazaar, pulls me in. Someone calls me from far away, someone beyond those mountains and seas. (*Two Worlds*, p. 13)

In "The Bizarre Comportment of Mr. Alpha in Exile", Mr. Alpha lives and breathes with the memories of Iran, which are kept alive by the letters he receives regularly from his friends in the homeland:

He drifted to the visions of the moon sailing past the tall aspens and the craggy heights of the Alborz, the sun-filled houses, dusty lanes. In his nocturnal fantasies, Mr. Alpha was transported to his ancestral home and the neighborhood in which he had grown up. Within the safe radius of these old remembrances of hereditary forms and native tribal sounds, he felt himself in a secure orbit in which he could sleep. (*A mansion in the Skies*, p. 119)

Sometimes, this nostalgia moves beyond the general concept of a certain city or country (here Tehran, Iran) and includes the streets, markets, cinemas and other components of the lost society: "... I could think of bike-riding in nearby streets, Friday-evening strolls in the public square, Bahar movie theatre, Vila ice-cream, neighborhood boys, the Shemiran bus, and Istanbul Avenue" (*A mansion in the Skies*, p. 58). Or: "... I love Istanbul Avenue. The odor of fish and aroma of coffee and roasted nuts and seeds blend in my nostrils feel steeped in languor and drowsiness" (*A mansion in the Skies*, p. 49).

The desire to return the homeland has even caused the narrator to furnish the balcony of her small apartment in Paris with petunia and other flowers and "all these reminds [her] and [her] children of Tehran, and Shemiran, and Darband Gardens" (*Scattered Memories*, p. 142).

Eventually, the deep pressure of this nostalgia results in the narrator's desperate decision to return:

I tell to myself: I will return. In my own city, there is at least a mother, an aunt or uncle, who may help you when you need it. There is no one living underneath nor anyone living above you. I will not be afraid of neighbors and can make noise and shout in my own home; can laugh, cry, dance, jump. I will definitely come back the very following day. (*Scattered memories*, p. 150)

Of course, coming back is not an easy task for a migrant and the narrator is not an exception. She does not return and continues to overcome the hardships of living in the strange land by clinging to the secure corner of the past memories of lost home and country.

C. Nostalgia and the Objects

We live with the objects. We love some and hate the others. But it makes no difference: the objects can bring memories into life in our minds. They remind us of the dear ones who were once and now do not exist; of places that were once a part of our lives and now mere inaccessible memories.

But what are the dear objects for Taraghi, which she remembers in the isolation of migration and soothes her worries by clinging to the memories they evoke? These are the objects of the past life. One of these objects is Shemiran Bus, whose image and memory is so vivid in the narrator's mind that she can imagine herself in her tenth, waiting for the Shemiran bus and its driver, Aziz Agha, whenever waiting at the bus station in Paris:

I can hear the groan of the approaching bus. Hassan Agha jumps up, but I am not sure if we will board this bus. [...] Before I go to bed at night, instead of the prayer mother has taught me, I repeat three times, "I will not board any bus not driven by Aziz Agha!" This is a vow between us in effect till Resurrection Day. (*A Mansion*, p. 13)

The objects in her childhood home are often referred to nostalgically. One of them, which is repeatedly referred to, is the statue of a mermaid at end of the pool in their dreamy garden: "At the far end of the pool, a chunky mermaid, not unlike Fakhr-Azam Khanum in contour, has raised herself on its gilded tail, balancing a blinking light upon her head" (*A Mansion*, p. 60). This mermaid becomes a central motif when the narrator remembers his father's illness and death: "The Shemiran house is spiritless and cold and the winter harsh and implacable. Under the cover of snow, the figure of

the mermaid in the yard looks like an old, bent-over woman" (p. 68). Even the destruction of Sehemiran house after a governmental decision to make highway, is depicted by the mermaid at its center:

The demolition day arrives. We wonder if this is a bad dream. Or perhaps the Shemiran house was a dream from which we have now wakened... A thick cloud of dust like the fiery breath of a gargantuan monster engulfs the flowerbeds and manicured lawns. The house itself, with its ostentation and showy adornments, slips out of sight like an evanescent memory. The mermaid holding the light over her head drowns in a sea of debris and is no more. (*A Mansion in the Skies*, p. 70)

The narrator even remembers the smell of the objects. The smell of the garlic in sausage sandwich she and her friends used to buy from Andre restaurant (*Two Worlds*, p. 96); "the pungent smell of tobacco from [her] grandmother's water pipe, Bibi Jan's herbal tea, the fragrance of saffron being spread over the rice along with rose water and caraway seeds and cinnamon, the smell of onions frying in the pan and strips of lamb grilled to a crisp on hot coals" (*A Mansion*, p. 10); and more nostalgic than all, the smell of her mother:

My mother smells different from anything else. Here is the smell of perfume and powder, of film stars, fashion magazines, Lalehzar Avenue, and the Municipality Dance Hall. Mother smells of future days, of tomorrow, and all the good things that are in store for me. (*A Mansion*, p. 14)

IV. CONCLUSION

The migrant writer in his struggle for adjustment usually finds himself captive to a mind filled with jousting images of the past. As a result, nostalgia may occur as central or marginal theme in the works of migration literature, in which moving and displacement are the basic events. The recounting of the memories of the past brings them to life from their passivity in the corner of the writer's mind and gives them immediacy, presence, and authenticity.

Goli Taraghi, the Persian migrant writer, has dealt with the theme of nostalgia in most of her short stories. Her characters live with their memories of the happy past and redefine themselves in their new homeland through the images of their past identities. The present study is done with the aim of clarifying the nature of Taraghi's short fiction and shows that nostalgia is the prevalent theme in most of these stories. This nostalgia might happen in various levels, such as nostalgia for the past time, for father's home, for homeland and the nostalgia for objects.

Undoubtedly, such a study would serve at least one major goal: it tries to make known the various aspects of the works of the celebrated Iranian author, Goli Taraghi, to the Persian readers. The necessity of recognizing and appreciating the cultural figures of every nation is an undeniable fact which helps the enrichment of the community life.

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An Analysis of *The Treatment* and *Pushing Hands* from the Perspective of Intercultural Communication

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Abstract—This paper which is on the basis of two movies, *The Treatment* and *Pushing Hands*, mainly demonstrates cultural differences and conflicts between China and the west, and analyzes them in some aspects as well as the causes of it. And finally it also probes the ways to settle the cultural conflicts on the basis of the analysis.

Index Terms—*The Treatment*, *Pushing Hands*, cultural differences and conflicts, China and the west, intercultural communication

I. INTRODUCTION

During the process of intercultural communication between China and the west, Chinese have always been advocates and practitioners. The Silk Road, Zheng He's Voyage to the west, as well as the Westernization Movement are all the best telling witnesses. Four great inventions of China spread to Europe through the communication of Chinese and western cultures, which played an important part in driving the development of Europe and even the whole world (Li Xinliu 2005, p.99). With the development of globalization, the economic and social connections of cross-nations, cross-languages and cross-cultures are increasing, which result in the appearance of cultural conflicts. Nowadays, a large number of literary works and movies turn to the conflicts of multi-cultures and meanwhile Chinese directors attempt to show the whole world the traditional culture of Chinese nation. There is no doubt that the movie plays an important role in knowing about western cultures, with the popularization of internet in China. A classical movie is often a brief summary and conclusion of the realistic society. By watching classical movies, we can experience the charm and essence of western cultures to make up ours, and learn about the differences or conflicts between Chinese and western cultures so that we could communicate with each other better.

The founder of intercultural communication, Mr. Hall ever expressed: Culture exists in two levels, public culture and hidden culture. The former is visible and easy to be described, but the latter is invisible - even the specially trained observer can't find it. It is because of the existence of the hidden culture that makes cultural conflicts become a kind of objective existence. *The Treatment* which was made by the director Zheng Xiaolong in 2000 and *Pushing Hands* which was made by the director Li'an in 1992 are two typical movies showing us the cultural conflicts between China and the west in aspects of outlooks on life, values, moral ethics, family humanities, friend relationship, national tradition and thinking patterns. Some of the cultural conflicts will be discussed as follows.

II. THE MAIN CULTURAL CONFLICTS IN *THE TREATMENT* AND *PUSHING HANDS*

First of all, let's have a discussion about the conflicts of family values between Chinese and western cultures. Since ancient times, China was a country connected with blood ties and clan relations. Traditional family ethics stem from the social and political structures connected with blood ties and clan relations, self-sufficient economy, and group-oriented values. The traditional family ethics above has its own characteristics, indicating family-centered, father-son relationship-valued, and piety-oriented. (Li Guimei 2002, p.1) Traditionally, Chinese people prefer extended families, especially three generations or even four generations at one roof which represents happiness. In *Pushing Hands*, Xiaosheng, a Chinese striving in America has adjusted to the American culture. But influenced by traditional Chinese culture, Xiaosheng had a strong sense of extended family value, the filial piety to the elders, and also took it for granted to support and take care of their parents. On account of it, he brought his father to America to enjoy the company of their families. However, this kind of extended-family pattern is quite different from the western one.

There is no very traditional culture in America. And more importantly, America is a huge country of immigrants. The deficiency of traditional civilization, the effect of immigration and western culture make American people full of self-awareness, that is to say, they emphasize individual-oriented culture, pay great attention to private rights and privacy, and require their own space and independence. In the west, children who are at or over the age of 18 will

choose to leave home to make their own living whether they are married or not. It is quite unbelievable for them to live with their parents. However, children's independence does not mean they give up their parents. They will visit their parents on weekends or holidays. American parents value their children's spirit of independence and their own independent life when they are getting old. Therefore, the elder in America are reluctant to live with their adult children even though they have fantastic economic conditions. In western cultures, people praise the spirit of the independence, unwilling to count on their relatives. The value orientation in western cultures gets more individualistic. (Zhu Xiying, Xu Shuxia, 2005, p.224) Similarly, when discussing the issue of caring for the elder, most of the elder take it for granted that it is themselves rather than others that they should rely on even though they are over 80 years old, and their adult children are no exception, or if necessary they would go to the nursing home. This type of family pattern and family ties are quite unacceptable to Chinese. In China, if the young generation sent the elder to the nursing home, people around them would believe the elder are unfortunate and their children are not filial to the elder.

Therefore, the core of traditional Chinese family ethics is harmonious, while independence is emphasized by the westerner. That is Chinese group orientation and western individualism orientation. For example, in *Pushing Hands*, at the beginning, it was very difficult for Xiaosheng's American wife to understand the reason why they had to live with her father-in-law, who entered her personal space. She was a writer with enthusiasm which meant she stayed at home very often, while her father-in-law made her distracted when she focused on her writing. According to American family value, they prefer the nuclear family which just includes parents and their underage children, and do not include grandparents. So she argued that her father-in-law should not live with them and persuaded her husband to send the old man to the nursing home which was completely in line with American family values. Xiaosheng was in a dilemma and not sure what was the best way to deal with the conflicts between his Chinese father and American wife. After the old man moved out, she concentrated on her writing and her book was highly accepted, all of which seemed to suggest that the parents should not live with their children.

As we know, respecting the elder is a good social atmosphere in China, which doesn't influence the westerners' mind. In *Pushing Hands*, Martha, as a daughter-in-law, never treated her father-in-law with full respect in a Chinese way. In contrast, she often interrupted while he was talking. That is to say, she destroyed a Chinese father's authority in the family. Actually, for a long time, Xiaosheng's father had been treating himself and the relationship between him and his son's family as a Chinese way. He treated his son's home as his own; he did whatever he wanted in the house, such as watching TV, singing Peking Opera, exercising, etc., regardless of Martha's feelings. After a series of conflicts with Martha, he finally realized that American family values were quite different from that of Chinese and his son's home was no longer his own, so he had to adjust to American culture.

Second, let's compare Chinese emotions and western sensibility. In China, friend relationship ranks only second or equals the relationship among family members. Honesty and trust are very important in friendship. Friends can help you out no matter when you are in trouble. But if you betray your friends and do something to harm the interests of your friends, you will be condemned by your friends and even the whole society.

In *the Treatment*, when Datong's family was involved in the lawsuit, he asked his best friend Boss Quinlan for help. Although his boss dealt mostly in the cases of intellectual property right, Datong still trusted him because he treated his boss as a real friend. Datong thought his boss would try to defend him, no matter what happened. However, Quinlan was convinced by the picture that the child was under child abuse for quite a long time and refused to defend Datong out there. Because westerners are rational rather than emotional. On the processing of business, they still obey the law even though it had something to do with their relatives or friends. Not only that, influenced by the honest education from Christianity, Quinlan stood on a witness stand. Honesty is the best policy. However, it was unacceptable for Datong, because he thought that his friend betrayed him according to Chinese Morality and Ethics. Although his boss explained to him over and over later and asked for his forgiveness, Datong still refused to talk to him. Datong, as a Chinese, thought that it was the right thing to break up with his boss.

In this movie, Chinese emotions and westerner's sensibility conflicted violently. Later, Quinlan figured out the truth by experiencing "the treatment" personally in China. He then told the lawyer and judge what he had been through and eventually helped Datong's family out. They became friends again which also shows the common characters between Chinese friendship and western friendship, namely, friends should help each other, and never give up on each other.

Third, the misunderstanding of the essence of traditional Chinese culture must be mentioned. In the film *The Treatment*, the focus of the conflicts between Chinese and western culture is whether "the treatment" is legal or not. "The Treatment", the essence of traditional Chinese medical treatment, which is legal, has been popular for its excellent efficiency for thousands of years in China. However, it was thought as child abuse by American people. The traditional Chinese treatment, which could not be proved its rationality, was not recognized in America, because American people knew little about traditional Chinese medicine. Xu Datong tried his best to explain what is "the Treatment" in English and sometimes in Chinese (such as Dantian - lower abdomen, seven jing and eight mai) in court, which was difficult for American people to understand, for there were no corresponding words in American culture. As the attorney for Datong said, there was nothing about "the Treatment" in any American medical textbook, so it was unscientific and nobody would testify its legality. Maybe Datong's father and most of Chinese audience would take it for granted that it was American people's fault, because they were not familiar with "the Treatment", a common traditional Chinese medical treatment. Actually, we should not impose our culture to another culture in cross-cultural communication.

Martial arts, the other essence of traditional Chinese culture, is the gem of Chinese traditional culture. With the increase of international communication, more and more foreigners are crazy about Chinese martial arts, which are becoming one of the world cultures. The birth and development of Chinese martial arts are dependent on the intelligence of Chinese ancestors. Chinese martial arts aim to keep fit and be against violence. However, many people in western countries still misunderstand Chinese martial arts as violence. For example, in the movie *Pushing Hands*, when Xiaosheng's father complained that Xiaosheng and Martha indulged his child in the cartoons with violence, Martha dismissively refuted: "He's complaining? He (Martha's father-in-law) is a martial arts expert himself. Isn't it violent enough?" Obviously, she misinterpreted the essence of Chinese martial arts.

What's more, let's discuss the issue of face concern. Family members will adopt different methods of face concern, because of different ideas of family values between China and the west. On the basis of hierarchy in the family and traditional Chinese filial piety culture, Chinese parents and their children live in a system of hierarchy and courtesy while American family members live in a system of respect and courtesy, on the basis of the concept of individualism orientation, freedom, democracy and equality. As one of the complete equal family members, the parents or their children are independent, and respect each other's space and willingness. (Gong Xiaoping 2007, p.108-109)

In *the Treatment*, Datong's son Dennis fought with Quinlan's son, and Dennis was not willing to apologize as his father's order, so he was slapped by his father in front of Quinlan couple. As we know, Datong just wanted to show his respect for his boss and friend, Quinlan, by punishing his son according to Chinese way of education. Obviously, it is traditional Chinese view of face concern, which is understood by anyone who lives in China or who ever lived in China. However, it was so difficult for Quinlan to understand Datong's conduct, which is unseemly in American people's eyes.

The Chinese and the westerner interpret face concern differently. China is a country of face-saving. In traditional Chinese concept, you can lose anything except losing face. In most cases, the Chinese tend to show respect as well as save each other's face by belittling themselves, as explains why Datong beat and scolded his beloved son to save Quinlan's face. This was deemed as stupid by Americans whose core of cultural values is individualism, not to mention respecting others. In any case, the American cannot understand the concept of face-saving. The westerners have their own idea of face concern, which is an image that every individual tries his best to earn in the public. Chinese idea of face-saving is one form of collectivism, that is to say, the Chinese hope to be recognized by others in the specific collective. Whereas, the westerners are in seek of independent characters, just caring about his own success and satisfaction and never minding other people's comments on what he said and did. In short, the idea of face concern between China and the west is quite different.

In addition, let's turn to different educational methods in different cultures. Generally children in the west accept liberal education from an early age. They have to know making choices by themselves will make up a powerful force, which enables them to be creative and maintain good relationships with others. Because of love, parents must guide their children not to lag behind in the competition and encourage them to learn to do things themselves. (Xiao Qunzhong 2001, p.420) For example, in *Pushing Hands*, Jimmy interpreted his own edited book for Martha. There was a turtle, a fish, a mouse and a pool of liquid medicine. And finally all of these went to hell. It seemed that Martha did not know the relationship among them, but she still praised Jimmy: "Jimmy is so creative!" Maybe Chinese parents will comment on the book: "it is so bad, I cannot understand!" we can see that American parents tend to respect their children's opinions and encourage them. In their eyes, it is impossible for anyone to limit the development of children, not to mention imposing their own values on their children.

On the contrary, Chinese would prefer to pass on wisdom and experiences to the young generation. For example, in *Pushing Hands*, the grandpa hopes to pass more Chinese cultures to Jimmy, such as learning to write Chinese characters, learning calligraphy and so on. On the other hand, generally speaking, Chinese parents always ask their children to do as what they said. And the parents especially the grandparents are keen in doing everything for children, such as doing some washing for them which actually deprives children's rights of living independently.

Last but not least, China is a society of human relationship and sometimes emotions will be superior to the law while western countries are legal societies in which the law is sacrosanct. In America, if you lied in the court, it was possible for you to be charged with perjury and be put into the prison. Datong had been in America for more than ten years, so he knew clearly the consequence of his lying. However, in order to protect his father, his personal emotions prevailed over his sensibility in the risk of breaking the law, and Chinese called it filial piety. Obviously, sometimes in China, emotions will be above the law. While for American people, what Datong did was impenetrable. There appeared a conflict between Chinese emotions and American value of respecting the law. In *The Treatment*, Datong lied to the judges that he took the treatment rather than his father. Also in order to be reunited with his family on Christmas Eve, Datong dressed as Father Christmas climbed up the ninth floor risking his life. The above mentioned, which cannot be allowed in accordance with American law, showed us a Chinese-style deep sense of kinship. As for Datong, it was ridiculous to provide the judges with the evidence that he loved his own son. What's more, the judges needed the evidence to prove "the Treatment" was legal in America, but it was so hard for Datong to get any material about it. So "the Treatment", a legal traditional Chinese medical treatment, which has been famous for its excellent efficiency for thousands of years in China, was thought as child abuse by American people. All of these reflect the opposition between Chinese-style emotions and the law of America.

III. THE CAUSES OF CULTURAL CONFLICTS

The differences between modes of thinking, national customs, mentalities and attitudes towards nature lead to the cultural conflicts between China and the west, therefore, it is necessary for us to probe the root of the cultural conflicts between China and the west. The details will be discussed as follows:

One of the causes is different modes of thinking. Oneness between heaven and man paying attention to intuitive integrity and having the characteristics of image thinking and imagery thinking constitutes a mode of thought in Chinese philosophy. From the image "crow feedback", the Chinese will think of how to reward their parents, which is dependent on the association and imagination. Whereas, the westerners divide the world in half, which is substance and spirit, subjectiveness and objectiveness. People would like to analyze what they feel with rational principle putting aside emotional elements. (Hao Lili, Yang Xiaofeng 2007, p.1-10)

The differences between the modes of thinking have been reflected in the film *The Treatment*. For example, in court, the prosecution attorney inferred that Datong had a tendency of violence, just because Datong ever told his son the story about Sun Wukong (孙悟空) eating the peach slinky and making havoc in heaven in *Journey to the West*. Apparently by means of logical thinking, the prosecution attorney reasoned, judged and then drew a conclusion. In Chinese opinion, what the attorney did was ridiculous. However, it was recognized by the judges, for they had the same cultural background. The prosecution attorney and the judges could not understand the underlying culture in the *Journey to the West*, and it was impossible for them to associate, imagine and even enjoy the underlying culture just as Xu Datong.

And the second cause is the different national customs. Here we have to mention the plot again in the movie that Datong slapped his son to show his respect for his boss Quinlan, however, Quinlan could not understand. Actually, what Datong did was typical of Chinese-style educational method and attitude. For Datong and his father, they both agreed that it was right to beat children as an educational method. It seemed that this kind of authoritative education, feudal management and strict discipline of Confucian ethics had become traditional customs in China. By contrast, the westerners emphasized human right, advocated individual character, and claimed people-oriented deed. Everyone is equal whether you are a father-son relationship or a husband-wife relationship. They believe that children and their parents enjoy equal rights, so the parents cannot beat their children and cannot leave them alone at home in accordance with American law. In fact, Americans inspire and guide children in the education without violence. So now we can understand why Quinlan could not understand what Datong did, and why the parents leaving the child alone at home violated the American law.

The difference between mentalities and attitudes is another cause of cultural conflicts. In China, out of courtesy, people would like to say what you like, no matter which is true or not. While for American people, it is dishonest to say hypocritical words, and what matters most is sincerity and trust. For example, in America, if you say a bad thing about a person, the most offensive remark is: "You can not trust him". In the movie *The Treatment*, Quinlan said the truth that he thought, which deeply hurt the feelings of Datong. Datong thought Quinlan betrayed him. Whereas, Quinlan thought himself right, what he did was nothing with the friendship between them.

Last, let's discuss different attitudes towards nature. The Chinese attach importance to the harmony between human beings and nature. China is a time-honored agricultural country, so farmers in China have the customs to worship the heaven and the earth to pray for good weather, and bumper grain harvest in the coming year. During natural disaster farmers will worship the heaven to bless them while during good harvest they will express their thanks. Therefore, human beings are closely related to nature. However, people in the west pay much more attention to the conquest and reformation of nature for the survival and development of human beings. For example, Newton put forward the theory of universal gravitation and optical theory; Watt invented the first steam locomotive; the famous American writer Ernest Hemingway created the novel *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Above all, cultural differences in different countries won't necessarily happen, they are the consequences of comprehensive functioning of various factors in the long history of thousands of years, rather than being influenced by merely a certain factor.

IV. THE SUGGESTIONS FOR SETTLING CULTURAL CONFLICTS

In western culture, individualism protrudes social problems, while in Chinese culture, the idea of inaction set China back decades or even hundreds of years compared to western developed countries. Therefore, by learning from each other, eastern and western cultures will regain vitality and new life.

To tell the truth, we must criticize the ideology of two extremes: completely rejecting western culture and overall westernization. Chinese scholars have made great efforts in finding out the solutions to the conflicts between eastern and western cultures. Both totally repudiating western culture and total westernization should be given up. Chinese culture fully demonstrates its charm in a time of extreme individualism and belief crisis. If Chinese are totally westernized and abandon traditional Chinese culture, traditional Chinese social structure will be damaged, and social politics, economy and culture will be in imbalance. In the process of reform and opening up in China, the values of collectivism fully arouse the enthusiasm of people from all walks of life, enhance the cohesion of Chinese people of all ethnic groups and promote the development of reform and opening up. The achievements of China's reform and opening up prove that western culture is not the sole reference to modern culture and global cultural system; "western

center theory” can’t hold water. (Jin Yuanpu, Tan Haozhe, Lu Xueming 1999, p.707)

On the other hand, harmonious and different value concept has positive significance to cultural integration, which has been identified by many scholars. Habermas, a German sociologist is one of them. He thought justice and solidarity are two important principles which must be followed when different cultures are seeking dialogues. The former must guarantee each nation’s cultural independence, because it owns the rights of developing itself; the latter refers to the culture whose duty is to sympathize with, understand and respect other cultures. (Lin Surong 2011, p.47) The culture will either continue to exist or it will decline among the conflicts of heterogeneous cultures. (Jiang Ning kang 2005, p.31-32) First, a kind of culture needs its special basis, and then moves with times and absorbs positive factors, which will make itself much wider, more fulfilling and more vigorous. (Xie Shaobo, Wang Fengzhen 2003, p.4) The development of Chinese culture and world civilization shows that harmonious and different value concept will be in the leading position of cultural development and social progress. Only by strengthening intercultural communication and mutual integration can all kinds of cultures achieve common development.

At the end of the movie *The Treatment*, we can also find cultural integration in it. Quinlan who was touched by what Datong did, dropped his prejudice and experienced Chinese culture. He experienced “the Treatment” himself and felt amazed at its wonderful treatment. Eventually, the gap between him and Datong was eliminated as well as the gap between Chinese culture and American culture, and the two cultures started to integrate.

V. CONCLUSION

Cross-cultural communication among different countries is the only way to keep cultures dynamic. The communication between different cultures has been repeatedly proved a kind of milestone in the development of human civilization. When we compare two cultures, donot determine the relative merits of Chinese and western cultures, but indicate the mainstream of two cultures. It will be easy for people from different cultural backgrounds to understand, communicate with and learn from each other and build an ideal human civilization. As a result of the limitation of various factors, most of us cannot experience cultural differences abroad. The only way for us to know western cultures is to get access to books and movies. By introducing two well-known movies and analyzing cultural conflicts in them, the paper explores the causes of cultural differences and conflicts and presents suggestions for settling them.

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Pragmatic Knowledge Assessment in Listening Sections of IELTS Tests

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Abstract—Recently, a lot of attention has been paid to the use of pragmatic knowledge as a component of communicative competence in standardized tests. This research aims to assess the degree of pragmatic knowledge assessment in the first section of IELTS listening tests based on the component parts of pragmatic competence proposed by Bachman (1990) and developed by Jung (2002). In order to conduct this research, a set of IELTS tests administered between 1999 and 2009 was gleaned. Then, the first sections of the listening tests were chosen. After that, the component parts of pragmatic competence were meticulously identified and elicited. To delete the most frequently used constituents of pragmatic competence; a comparative analysis was carried out. After that, the pragmatic knowledge was meticulously scrutinized at five macro levels of the ability to perform speech acts, convey and interpret non-literal meaning, perform politeness and discourse functions as well as using cultural knowledge. Chi-Square tests were employed to assess the degree of difference across these five component parts. The findings suggest that the degree of difference was significant ($p < 0.05$). The most frequent constituents were discourse markers and politeness functions, while the cultural knowledge aspect was totally ignored. Despite the fact that the test aims to assess language proficiency, the findings show a low priority to assess pragmatic knowledge. Additionally, they indicated an unequal assessment of the component parts of pragmatic competence.

Index Terms—pragmatic knowledge, communicative competence, speech acts, non-literal meaning, politeness functions, discourse functions

I. INTRODUCTION

As numerous varied models of communicative competence suggest efficient and efficacious interaction in any given language requires more than purely linguistic knowledge. Indeed, pragmatics is the part and parcel of language ability in order for L2 learners to comprehend and be comprehended in their everyday communications with native speakers. Despite the fact that this significant domain of second language acquisition was over looked over the past two decades, pragmatic has been recognized as an acceptable focus of enquiry in today's mainstream SLA research. It is just recently that some noticeable advances have been made in the understanding of the pragmatic facets of language.

Leech (1983) asserts that if one intends to achieve pragmatic competence, s/he needs to achieve paralinguistic and socio-pragmatic competence. As Jung (2002) argues, in order to be pragmatically competent, one needs to have the ability to execute speech acts, convey and interpret non-literal meaning, carry out discourse and politeness functions in addition to making use of cultural knowledge. These five facets of pragmatic competence are closely interconnected. Indeed, they do not act individually but they interact with each other systematically so as to manage learner's linguistic knowledge. Some standard language proficiency tests (SLP) like IELTS have sought to evaluate and examine learners on these components of pragmatic competence. This study aims to assess the degree of pragmatic knowledge assessment in the listening section of IELTS as an international language proficiency test with regard to each component of pragmatic competence.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

According to Leech (1983), learner's ability to make use of appropriate speech acts in a particular speech event in addition to opting for suitable linguistic forms to grasp a speech act is a principal component of pragmatic competence. In order to have the command of a successful speech act performance, learners must recognize the extra-linguistic facet that is cultural constraints acting in a NS's choice of a particular speech act suitable for the context. Furthermore, learners must know how to identify any speech act at the linguistic level and based on the L2 sociocultural norms. Cohen (1996a) defines it as sociocultural knowledge: a "speaker's ability to determine whether it is acceptable to perform the speech act at all in the given situation and, if so, to select one or more semantic formulas that would be appropriate in the realization of the given speech act" (p. 254).

Another constituent of pragmatic competence which enables learners to be pragmatically competent is the ability to interpret and convey non-literal meaning. Grice (1975) distinguishes between sentence meaning which applies to the

propositional sense of an utterance, and speaker meaning which makes an allusion to the indirectly transferred sense transcending the surface-level linguistic form of an utterance. In the words of Carrell (1984), “one aspect of pragmatic competence in an L2 is the ability to draw correct inferences” (p.1). Fraser (1983) puts an emphasis on the importance of the ability to construe figurative language as part of pragmatics in that such sentences are overt and purposeful violations of the conversational maxims. Furthermore, such specific kinds of conversational implications may be difficult for L2 learners to soak up. Therefore, interpreting and conveying non-literal meaning can be regarded as an integral part of L2 pragmatic competence.

Learners seeking to achieve pragmatic competence need also to have the ability to execute politeness functions. According to Leech (1983) and Thomas (1995), indirectness enhances the amount of negotiability and optionality on the part of listener and thereby reduces the imposition upon the listener. Yet some of the cross-cultural researches into politeness have recommended that the application of this principle takes advantage of a systematic variation in languages and cultures. The researchers suggested that the ability to opt for the suitable linguistic directness with regard to the L2 norm is pivotal for pragmatic competence. Such cultural principles which pertain to politeness as shared by members of the L2 community attach great importance to the development of learner’s pragmatic competence.

The capability to execute discourse functions is one of the other facets of one’s pragmatic competence. In the words of Blum-Kulka (1997), “a full pragmatic account would need to consider the various linguistic and paralinguistic signals by which both participants encoded and interpret each other’s utterances” (p. 49). According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), learners must be conscious of the discourse differences between their L1 and the L2 so as to attain pragmatic competence. If learners want to effectively impart their intentions in discourse, they need to produce two kinds of discourse management capability, one is the ability to recognize and create the right discourse markers in terms of their pragmatic functions, and the other is the capacity to construe and fill the discourse crack as L2 conversational conventions prescribe.

The fifth component of pragmatic competence deals with the capability to tap into cultural knowledge. Specific L2 culture-bound knowledge is viewed as a hindering factor that underpins various parts of pragmatic ability. In fact, culture is considered as the heart of L2 pragmatic competence. Jiang (2000) argues that metaphor efficiently captures the nature of language and culture as a whole: “communication is like transportation: language is the vehicle and culture is the traffic light” (p. 329). In other words, a precise competence of L2 cultural rules of behavior is needed to acquire L2 knowledge.

Recently, test-makers have made an attempt to incorporate some short pragmatic understanding queries into their listening sections of standardized exams such as IELTS, TOFEL and so forth to gauge the learners’ pragmatic knowledge. They have fathomed the significance and crucial role of pragmatic knowledge so as to extract genuine language abilities of learners. Therefore, they have sought to incorporate the above five components of pragmatic knowledge into their exams.

Some SLP’s like IELTS have made an attempt to examine learners on these components of pragmatic competence. This research aims to evaluate the extent of pragmatic knowledge assessed in the listening section of IELTS tests in terms of each component of pragmatic competence. The 1999-2011 tests have been analyzed and worked at in the research to ascertain the amount of pragmatic knowledge incorporated in these exams with regard to each component of pragmatic competence.

A. *Statement of the Problem*

Language teaching/ learning has gone through remarkable changes since Hymes’ (1972) introduction of communicative competence as the main index of a learner’s language command. Canale(1983) and Bachman’s (1990) taxonomies have made a lot of contributions to the development of novel perspectives on language skills and components. Second language evaluation by nature has gone through considerable modifications. The evaluation of communicative competence then has become the principal objective of most Standard Language Proficiency Test (SLP). Pragmatic knowledge is a significant component of communicative competence, whose importance has been deservedly identified by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) practitioners and researchers. Although, it turns out not to have found its right place in Standard Language Proficiency Test. Albeit receiving insubstantial attention given to it especially in recent SLP tests, the evaluation of pragmatic knowledge must be still more highlighted in such exams. This research is aimed at evaluating recent SLP tests more particularly the listening section in IELTS test in terms of pragmatic knowledge assessment. The outcomes obtained from this research may alert test-making teams to paying more attention to this less needed facet in Language Proficiency Assessment.

B. *Research Question*

This study attempts to find an answer to the following questions:

1. Do listening sections of IELTS tests assess pragmatic knowledge?
2. Are components of pragmatic knowledge assessed equally in listening sections of IELTS tests?

C. *Research Null Hypotheses*

Based on the research questions above the hypotheses are made:

H1: The listening sections of IELTS tests do not assess pragmatic knowledge.

H2: Components of pragmatic knowledge are not equally assessed in listening sections of IELTS tests.

III. METHODOLOGY

Several IELTS tests were collected, and the listening sections of these tests were chosen and analyzed. As this study attempted to take pragmatic competence into consideration, the researcher took an interest in analyzing the first parts of the listening sections in some IELTS tests in terms of the components of pragmatic knowledge.

To that end, a corpus comprised of a set of IELTS listening tests administered between 1999 and 2011 was collected. All these tests were actual past papers of IELTS tests published by Cambridge University Press which are reliable enough as the sources of data. Following the collection of some IELTS tests (1999 to 2011), the first parts of the listening sections, adding up to thirty two short conversations, were derived from the tests. The first section of each IELTS listening test contains a short conversation on a familiar everyday topic between two people. Then in order to analyze this application in addition to the underlying function throughout each test, I did my utmost to elicit each component of pragmatic knowledge put forward by Jung (2002).

In order to make more clarification for the readers, the researcher identified the pragmatic components within the whole available tests.

IV. RESULTS

The results of these analyses are reported in the following sections.

A. Diachronic Results for Speech Acts

In this part of the study, an analysis was developed to the nature of pragmatic categories involvement over time.

Accordingly, there was an overall significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the use of various representative categories over time.

TABLE 4.1:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF REPRESENTATIVE CATEGORIES OVER TIME

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.190	49	.913	.000
Likelihood Ratio	42.419	49	.735	
Fisher's Exact Test	.000			
Linear-by-Linear Association	.451	1	.502	
N of Valid Cases	218			

In relation to representative categories, it was found that the highest frequencies belonged to 1999 (16.5%), 2011 (15.6%) and 2000 (14.7%). Meanwhile, in 2005 the lowest number of these categories was employed (6.4%).

Besides, in relation to disagreeing, 2011 had the highest (8.8%) and 2005, 2007 and 2009 the lowest frequencies (0%). Concerning describing, 2002, 2005 and 2009 (14.3% each) had the highest and 2000 (6.2%) the lowest record. As to informing, 2005 (14.3%) was the most and 2002 (3.6%) the least frequent years. With respect to predicting, 2000 (12.5%) was the highest and 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2009 the lowest frequent years (0%). As to reporting, 2007 (13.6%) and 2005 (0%) were the most and least frequent years. In terms of criticizing, 1999 (8.3%) had the highest and 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2009 the lowest records. With respect to confirming, 2005 (21.4%) and 2011 (5.9%) were the highest and lowest rates.

In relation to the next, speech act category, that is directives, the difference in the employment of various directives did not prove significant.

TABLE 4.2
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF DIRECTIVE CATEGORIES OVER TIME

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.122	56	1.000	1.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.159	56	1.000	
Fisher's Exact Test	24.251			
Linear-by-Linear Association	.158	1	.691	
N of Valid Cases	266			

Yet, certain tendencies in the involvement of different subcategories were observed over time. In relation to asking, 2009 (14.7%) and 2005 (7.5%) were the highest and lowest frequent years. Meanwhile, for ordering 2009 (8.8%) and 1999 (0%) were the highest and lowest frequencies. As to requesting, 2011 (10.5%), 2000 (10%) and 2007 (10%) were the most and 2007 (3.3%) the least frequent years. As to suggesting, 2000 (10%) had the highest and 2006 (2.6%) the lowest records. Concerning demanding, 2005 (2.5%) and 2007 (10%) had the lowest and the highest rates. In relation to

dismissing, 2011 (2.6%) and 2006 (7.9%) were the lowest and highest frequent years. In terms of warning, 2006 (5.3%) and 2005 (5%) were the highest and 1999, 2000, 2007, 2009 and 2011 the lowest (0%). Finally, with respect to advising, 1999 (13.6%) had the highest record as against 2006 (2.6%) with the lowest record.

In relation to the next major commissives category, the overall differences over the years was found significant ($p < 0.05$) in the employment of different subcategories.

TABLE 4.3
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF COMMISSIVE CATEGORIES OVER TIME

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.080	49	.989	.000
Likelihood Ratio	28.354	49	.992	
Fisher's Exact Test	.000			
Linear-by-Linear Association	.077	1	.781	
N of Valid Cases	246			

As to a close analysis of the commissives subcategories, in agreeing 2006 with 16.7% and 2002 with 3.8% were the highest and lowest records. As to inviting, 2002 (11.5%) and 1999 (4.2%) had the highest and lowest positions. Concerning committing, 2011 with 8.3% had the highest rate while 1999, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2006 and 2007 had no records (0%) in this case. As to refusing, 2000 and 2006 (10% each) were the most and 2009 (2.8%) the least frequent years. Concerning accepting, 2002 (19.2%) and 2006 (6.7%) had the highest and lowest records. In terms of offering, 1999 had the highest (12.5%) and 2009 (5.6%) the lowest rates. In relation to promising, 2009 (11.1%) was the highest year while 2011 (2.8%) was the lowest year.

As to expressive category, an overall significant difference was not found among the subcategory frequencies ($p > 0.05$). Meanwhile, certain tendencies were found among the years.

TABLE 4.4
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF EXPRESSIVE CATEGORIES OVER TIME

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.607	35	.998	.975
Likelihood Ratio	19.548	35	.984	
Fisher's Exact Test	18.52			
Linear-by-Linear Association	.024	1	.877	
N of Valid Cases	146			

As to apologizing, 2000 (21.4%) had the highest while 2011 (4.2%) the lowest rates. Concerning congratulating, 2005 and 2011 (6.2% each) were the highest and 2000, 2002 and 2006 (0%) the lowest records. In relation to deploring, 1999 had no occurrences while 2009 (11.5%) and 2007 (11.1%) had the highest frequencies. In terms of thanking, 1999 had 2006 (25% each) had the highest records while 2007 with 5.6% was the least frequent year. Finally, concerning complimenting, 2002 (12.5%) was the most and 2009 (3.8%) the least frequent years.

B. Synchronic Results for Speech Acts Categories

In this part of the study, the involvement of four speech act categories were compared in each particular year.

The frequencies and the extent of difference based on the chi-square tests in each particular year were reported as follows:

In 1999, the frequency differences in representatives, commissives and expressive proved significant ($p < 0.05$) while not significant for directives ($p > 0.05$).

TABLE 4.5:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 1999

1999	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	48.444	1.545	26.167	10.875
Df	7	5	6	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.908	.000	.028

In 2000, only the differences in representatives and commissives were significant ($p < 0.05$). Yet, the other directives and expressives differences were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

TABLE 4.6:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2000

2000	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	43.000	2.267	32.533	8.857
Df	7	6	6	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.894	.000	.065

In 2002, the difference in the use representatives, commissives and expressive proved significant ($p < 0.05$) while not significant in directives ($p > 0.05$).

TABLE 4.7:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2002

2002	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	31.500	3.235	30.538	9.625
Df	6	7	6	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.862	.000	.047

In 2005, the difference in the involvement of representatives and directives categories was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$) as against the two commissives and expressive categories with significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

TABLE 4.8:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2005

2005	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	4.857	2.400	28.385	14.000
Df	3	7	6	5
Asymp. Sig.	.183	.934	.000	.016

In 2006, all the differences but the difference in the employment of directives category proved significant ($p < 0.05$).

TABLE 4.9:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2006

2006	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	19.500	3.316	33.467	10.875
Df	5	7	6	4
Asymp. Sig.	.002	.854	.000	.028

In 2007, similarly, the mere difference in the directives was not significant ($p > 0.05$) while the other usage differences proved significant ($p < 0.05$).

TABLE 4.10:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2007

2007	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	12.545	1.333	41.947	15.333
Df	4	6	6	5
Asymp. Sig.	.014	.970	.000	.009

In 2009, in line with some of the earlier patterns, the mere directives differences was not significant ($p > 0.05$).

TABLE 4.11:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2009

2009	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	15.929	4.824	48.000	22.000
Df	4	6	7	5
Asymp. Sig.	.003	.567	.000	.001

Finally, in 2011, all the representatives, commissives and expressive usage differences were significant ($p < 0.05$) while the only directives category did not suggest a significant usage difference ($p > 0.05$).

TABLE 4.12:
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF PRAGMATIC CATEGORIES IN 2011

2011	Representatives categories	Directives categories	Commissives categories	Expressives categories
Chi-Square	45.529	4.211	47.556	20.500
Df	7	6	7	5
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.648	.000	.001

C. Pragmatic Competence Aspects

There are five aspects for pragmatic competence. They are listed below.

1. Speech Act Aspect

In an assessment of various pragmatic competence aspects, the involvement of speech act categories was analyzed over the years. Based on the results of a chi-square test there was not an overall significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in employing various speech categories over the years. Meanwhile, certain tendencies were found worth mentioning.

TABLE 4.13
DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF SPEECH ACT CATEGORIES OVER TIME

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.685	21	.883
Likelihood Ratio	13.464	21	.892
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.393	1	.122
N of Valid Cases	440		

In 1999, representatives (36.7%) and commissives (24.5%) were the most frequent categories followed by directives (22.4%) and expressive (16.3%). In 2000, representatives (30.2%) were the highest record followed by directives and commissives (28.3% each) and expressives (13.2%). In 2002, the directives (32.7%) were the highest frequent category with representatives (26.9%), commissives (25%) and expressive (15.4%) in the next levels. In 2005, directives (41.7%) had the highest frequency followed by commissives (27.1%), expressive (16.7%) and representatives (14.6%). In 2006, the frequency order was as directives (37.5%), commissives (26.8%), representatives (21.4%) and expressive (14.3%). In 2007, commissives had the highest rate (35.2%) followed by directives (27.8%), representatives (20.4%) and expressives (16.7%). In 2009 the frequency order was commissives (29%), directives (27.4%), representatives (22.6%) and expressive (21%). Finally, in 2011 directives (28.8%) were followed by commissives (27.3%), representatives (25.8%) and expressive (18.2%).

2. Discourse Function Aspect

This part of the study dealt with the number of questions attending to certain discourse markers fulfilling discourse functions.

Based on the results of a chi-square test there was a significant difference concerning the year in the discourse function frequencies ($p < 0.05$).

In a more detailed account, in 2009 (16.9%), 2007 (16.1%), 2006 and 2011 (15.3% each) the highest number of questions dealt with discourse functions. Meanwhile, in 2002 (5.9%) and 2005 (7.6%) the lowest rates were recorded.

3. Non-Literal Meaning Aspect

This section was concerned with the inclusion of non-literal meaning in the questions. Although not significant ($p > 0.05$), the difference over the years is clearly depicted in the following graph.

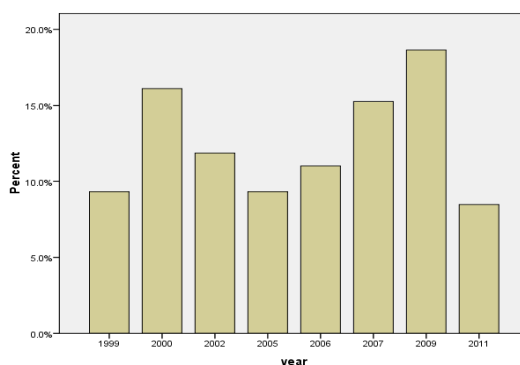


Figure 4.1: Non-literal Meaning Frequencies over Time

Accordingly, in 2009 (18.6%) and 2000 (16.1%) the highest number of questions entailed non-literal meaning while in 2011 (8.5%), 1999 and 2005 (9.3%) the least number of questions dealt with this aspect.

4. Politeness Function Aspect

Concerning the issue of politeness, the questions were analyzed with respect to the inclusion of direct and indirect functions. Based on the results of the non-parametric parallel to independent samples T-test, i.e. Mann-Whitney U test, the differences over the years were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

On the whole, 60 percent of the questions entailed direct functions as against 40 percent of indirect politeness functions. More particularly, the questions in 2000 highly dealt with direct functions (70%) as opposed to 1999 and 2007 (53.3%). On the other side, the highest rate of indirect politeness functions were included in 1999 and 2007 (46.7% each) as against to 2000 (30%) with the lowest frequency.

D. An Overall Comparative Account of Pragmatic Competence Aspects

In this part of the study, an overall account of the pragmatic aspects inclusion is provided.

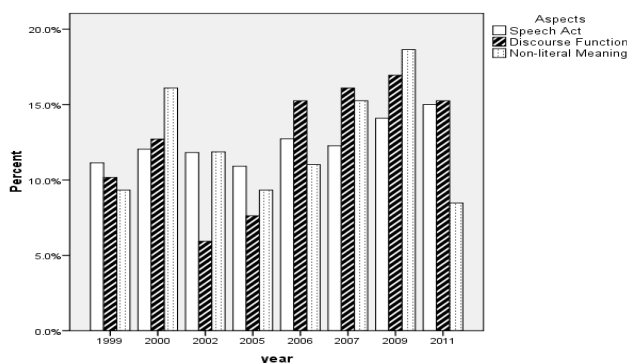


Figure 4.2: Pragmatic Aspects Frequencies over Time

To account for the extent of difference over the years across the pragmatic aspects, an analysis of variance was conducted.

There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level in the inclusion of various aspects over the years [$F(7, 668) = 5.28, p = 0.000$]. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tamhane's T2 test indicated that the inclusion of pragmatic aspects in 2011 was significantly different from 1999, 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2007. Apparently, in 2011 while the use of speech act and discourse function aspects were relatively the highest, attending to non-literal meaning was the least, hence this difference.

V. DISCUSSIONS

This section provides a specific discussion for each research question and makes attempt to link each finding to the existing literature.

The findings of this study show that pragmatic competence is assessed in IELTS listening module test but according to the detailed findings, it can be concluded that the components of pragmatic knowledge are not assessed equally in IELTS tests in different years. In a cross sectional study Jalilifar (2009) investigated pragmatic competency in the form of the request strategies used by Iranian learners of English as a Foreign Language and Australian native speakers of English. The sample involved 96 BA and MA Persian students and 10 native speakers of English. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was used to generate data related to the pragmatic (request strategies) used by each group. Selection of request situations in DCT was based on two social factors of relative power and social distance. Although results revealed pragmatic development, particularly in the movement from direct to conventionally indirect strategies on the part of EFL learners, learners with higher proficiency displayed overuse of indirect type of requesting; whereas the native group was characterized by the more balanced use of this strategy. The lower proficiency learners, on the other hand, overused the most direct strategy type. In terms of the influence of the social variables, the findings of this research revealed that as far as social power is concerned EFL learners display closer performance to native speakers. But considering social distance, it seems that Iranian EFL learners have not acquired sufficient sociopragmatic knowledge to display proper social behavior.

Unfortunately, as mentioned in Aryadoust (2011), there are very little literature related to listening module in IELTS and TOEFL tests, and as far as the researcher of this study is concerned there are no studies related to pragmatic competence in listening parts of these two tests.

Because of the paucity of published research on the IELTS Listening Module, and the findings of studies, mentioned in chapter two, which are not generally about the nature of the listening questions, many outstanding questions preclude the investigation about the nature of items in IELTS listening module. Therefore the researcher made an attempt to investigate about the pragmatic competence of IELTS listening items. The findings of this study showed that pragmatic

competence is assessed in IELTS listening module test but it is found that the components of pragmatic knowledge are not assessed equally in IELTS listening items in different years.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This paper investigated the involvement of pragmatic competency and the equally distribution of pragmatic subcategories in IELTS listening items from 1999-2011. The existing literature involves different studies. Some researchers have investigated the effect of different language skills and knowledge on listening comprehension, some other researchers have considered the validity or reliability of IELTS different modules including listening module. Some studies are for and some others are against the relationship between listening and other modules or different language competencies and theories.

The difference between this study and other studies is that, in the process of our research the focus is on the essence and nature of the items of listening module in IELTS. The items are considered only with regard to their representativeness of pragmatic competency not any other trait or relation. Based on the identification of the IELTS listening items in recent years, contained in this study as the instrument, there appears that in some years at least one pragmatic category was ignored. This failure in involving all pragmatic categories in some tests might be intentional or unintentional. Listening skill has been regarded as a source for improving pragmatic competence, and the absence of one or more pragmatic categories in a reputable test like IELTS is not expected. Therefore the researcher believes that concentrating IELTS module studies on special aspects of different competences can help improve the test. Based on the findings, it seems that there is a need to help IELTS test modules especially listening module with construction, in order to compensate any possible lack of scholarly attention to this module.

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On Effect of Soft Music on Learning English Language Vocabulary

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Abstract—The aim of this paper is to search whether the use of soft music during studies improves student's learning of English language words, especially students learning and memorizing words in real-life situation .This study was conducted with 70 male intermediate EFL learners of 16-20, studying at Talash Language Institute (TLI), Kazeroun branch. A proficiency test was administered to show their homogeneity and equivalency. They were put into two groups namely: experimental group and control one .Four passages were used in this study, and the students were given an English passage with difficult words with their definitions written below. They were reading the passage and learning the words with their definitions while listening to soft music .This was pursued for four months. But each month the passage was a different one. The researcher applied the T-test to find out the differences, if any, between the two groups. The result showed that the students learned and memorized significantly better and more while accompanying with soft music.

Index Terms—soft music, intermediate level, EFL learners, proficiency test, control group, experimental group, T-test

I. INTRODUCTION

“Soft Music stabilizes mental, physical, and emotional rhythms to attain a state of deep concentration and focus in which large amounts of content information can be processed and learned Brewer (2005), and as Plato states "music is a moral law .It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, and a life to everything”. Jones (2005) states, “Much research has been devoted to the role soft music can play in developing or focusing the mind in learning English language words”. Others suggest other techniques in the classroom. For computer time, studying and testing, it is suggested a CD played at a medium volume can relax and de-stress students. The volume should be low and it should create a filter for unwanted noise (Gourley, 2001).

The study also suggests that effectively incorporating soft music in an elementary classroom is a positive experience for children. “How is it that for most people music is a powerful part of personal life and yet when we go to work or school we turn it off?” (Brewer, 1995, p. 1). Soft music can be used for learning and memorizing the dialogue as well. It can also promote the attention, attitude and atmosphere. Soft music can welcome students into a classroom at the beginning of the day; help prepare students for a task, or transition children from one activity to another. It can be said that music have the tone for a lot of the activities that people participate (Giles, 1991). From shopping to eating to relaxing music is something that is used frequently to provide a backdrop for human activity. In short, music is of the power to enthuse or relax, produce a feeling of happiness or sadness, and even alter physiological states of heart rate and blood pressure (Giles, 1991).Special education teachers have used soft music to alter mood and assess emotional problems. Kids generally enjoy listening to music, singing, and humming. Music may effectively increase the capability to encounter the stress. Mixing literature with musical content helps to bring books alive and that musical classrooms encourage children to connect and take part in more activities. The need for music in both music rooms and regular education rooms is suggested (Giles 1991).

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this paper is to search whether the use of soft music during studies improves students' learning of English language words. This will show the positive or negative effects that soft music elicits and make recommendations for use in the classroom. This study, therefore, seeks answers to the following question:

What are the effects of soft music on student's learning of English language words?

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study, therefore, seeks answers to the following question:

What are the effects of soft music on student's learning of English language words?

IV. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The present research has been conducted based on the above- mentioned hypothesis:

There is a very significant relationship between soft music and English language vocabulary learning.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

As it has been seen and said many assumptions have been made in the past about the link between music and children's intellectual development. The "Mozart Effect" is a familiar term to the general public. "Many claims are made about music's value (or lack thereof) vis-a-vis intelligence, development, academic performance, and personality" (Costa-Giomi et al., 1999, p. 29). The volume of research regarding this topic yields differing opinions and results.

A. *Music Adds Emotional Content to Learning in Some Way, Thus Aiding Long Term Memory Retention*

Music is a way of building multi-sensory variety. It can act as a symbol of something else, as can stories, metaphors etc (Jensen, 1994). Also makes a suggestion to the learner – according to Lozanov, one cannot not suggest something to the learner, so maybe this is one way of suggesting something useful (BBLT p. 36). Eric Jensen (1997) says that most material can be set to music, written about in music, performed as rap or opera. He also said that music can be used as the key words to rewrite a familiar song or tune and then performed. (BBLT p. 187) This boosts understanding and meaning, by offering the material to students in different ways that they can get involved with. (Music here is alongside many other things like pictures, debates, etc) (Eric Jensen 1997).

"In other words, motivation and emotion can be triggered with no relationship to the instantaneous state of the environment and the actual response of the organism to it." He adds "We must seek a lead toward understanding the emotional response to music." Roederer (in Clynes, 1982).

Goldstein (1998) at Stanford experimented with medical and music students. He had them listen to their favorite types of music, and gave them shots of the endorphin blocker naloxone, or a saline placebo. In this double blind study, a third of the listeners (those who had the blocker) reported less intense feelings than they usually got from music (Goldstein 1998). People tend to have the same emotional responses to music regardless of race or gender. (Reported in Jensen, 1994).

Film directors use music to enhance emotional response; for example Boorstin (1995): "Directors often think they won't use the music they spot, but they order it to be on the safe side. Unless they're in trouble, they're likely to tell themselves that the scene will play fine without it. Yet usually by the time it is finished there is much more music than the director planned on, because once the music is in place the director realizes how much more juice it gives the scenes. It seems the right music makes us feel more intensely than we thought we could (Boorstin 1995).

B. *Mood*

Music has a way of altering our current state of mood. We listen to music that makes us happy, motivates, encourages, energizes, focuses, and calms us. Music has an impact in our personal lives, so it would seem to be beneficial for use in the classroom to alter the moods of students in order to foster productive learning. Soft music, played while students are working, can create a welcoming environment which can set the mood for desired behavior, stabilize students' mental set, accelerate learning, and promote creativity.

When conducting an activity during a lesson, simply playing music while students are working, sets the desired mood. According to Brewer (2005), "The rhythms and tempo of musical sound can assist us in setting and maintaining our attention and focus by perking us up when we are weary and helping us find peace and calm when we are over-energized in some way" (11). If students are working in groups and certain individuals need to be enlivened, playing upbeat music can get students energized and motivated to participate. If students return from P.E. hyper and need to quickly begin sustained silent reading, playing softer, slower, music can aid in soothing and calming students down in order to have them focus. Since music has the power to facilitate desired moods, it can have a positive impact on those students who have disorders.

VI. METHODOLOGY

A. *Participants*

The participants in this study are 70 male intermediate EFL learners of 16-20, studying at Talash English language Institute, Kazeroun branch, Iran. And the reasons for the selection of the participants are that they are a part of the researcher's classroom, and they are at hand. So they will better reflect the processes they go through, while listening and learning the words.

B. *Instruments*

Four passages will be used in this study. The students are given an English passage of difficult words with their English definitions written below, while they are listening to soft music. The passages are taken from Internet, and the contents are about everyday issues. They are reading the passage and learning the words with their definitions, while

listening to soft music. Of course, students were pre- tested to determine their homogeneity as well. This is pursued for four months, but each month the passage is a different one.

C. Procedures

In this study, a passage of everyday content was used to pre-test the 70 intermediate male EFL learners of English language words to show that they were of the same proficiency and were homogeneous. Then Four passages will be used in this study. The students are given an English passage of about 25 lines, and of at least 20 difficult words with their English definitions written below, while they are listening to soft music. The time allocated is 35 minutes. The passages are taken from Internet, and the contents are about everyday issues. They are reading the passage and learning the words with their definitions, while listening to soft music. Participants in the study will be divided into two groups, and both groups will receive the same passage per month, however the experimental group receives the treatment, that is listening to soft music during studying and learning the words, while the control group receives no treatment. Then next session, which is a five day interval, both groups will be given a questionnaire and the same passage but without definition, to choose the best choice given for each word. And later on, the questionnaires will be collected, analyzed and the results will be interpreted. This is pursued for four months, but each month the passage is a different one.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

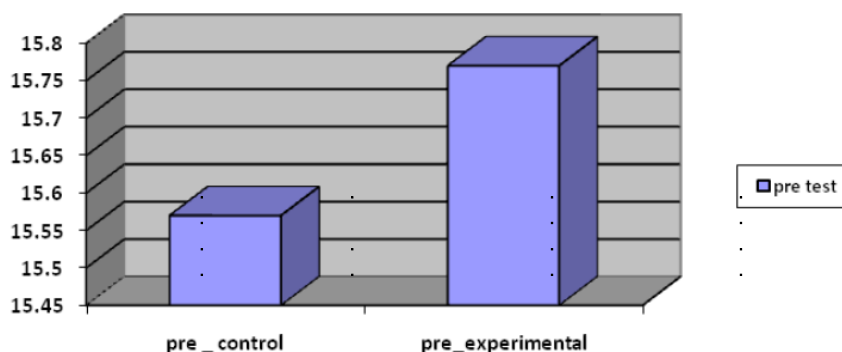
When the raw data needed were gathered, the participants' responses of both groups in the two conditions namely, with music and without music were considered, and then mean scores, standard deviations, and standard error of measurements were shown. After that, a T-test was used to present the comparisons of the different conditions of the groups. A T-test was run to show the differences presented concerning the different conditions of both groups at the end and at the beginning of the work. Then ten comparisons were made and the results and information are indicated in the following paired sample test tables and graphs.

Paired Sample 1

As it is shown in table 1, the calculated T value shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of pre -control group and the pre-experimental one. So the homogeneity and equality of the two groups are undoubtedly obvious.

TABLE 1
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST REFERRING TO THE PRE-TEST

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
pre_control	35	15.57	1.95968	.33125
pre_experimental	35	15.77	1.68184	.28428

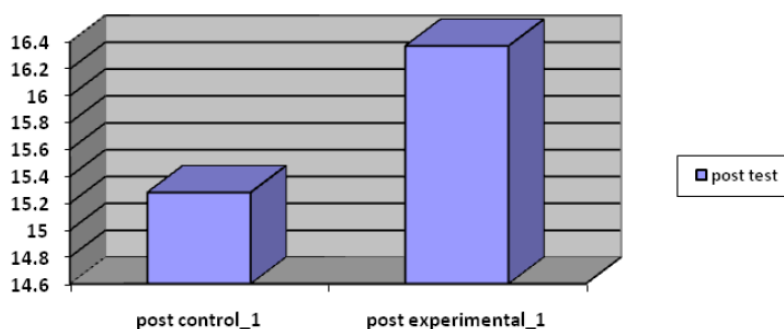


Paired Sample 2

As it is shown in table 2, the students' performance of the two groups is of statistically significant difference. That is to say, the mean score of the pre-experimental 1 receiving the treatment is significantly higher than that of the post-control 1 having no treatment. It shows that students better learn and memorize words in context while accompanying soft music.

TABLE 2.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST REFERRING TO THE POST-TEST

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
post_control_1	35	15.28	.32169	1.90312
post_experimental_1	35	16.37	1.53557	.25956

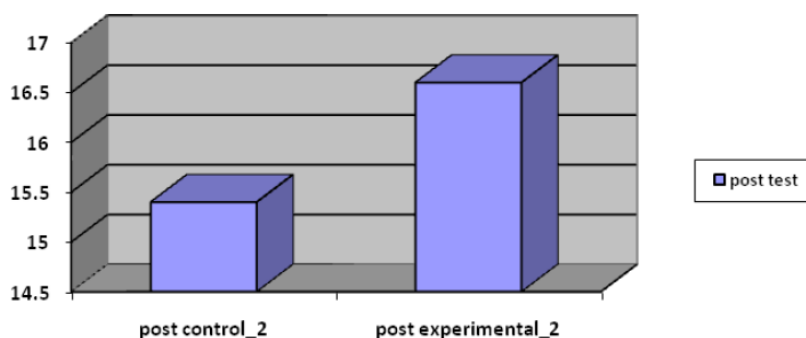


Paired Sample 3

Table 3, shows that the students' performance of the two groups is of statistically significant difference. In other words, the mean score of the pre-experimental 2 receiving the treatment is significantly higher than that of the post-control 2 having no treatment.

TABLE 3.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST REFERRING TO THE POST-TEST

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
post_control_2	35	15.40	1.76901	.29902
post_experimental_2	35	16.60	1.63059	.27562

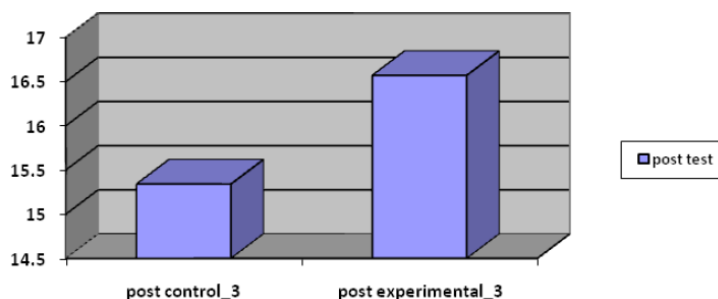


Paired Sample 4

Table 4, shows that the students' performance of the two groups is of statistically significant difference. In other words, the mean score of the pre-experimental 3 receiving the treatment is significantly higher than that of the post-control 3 having no treatment.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST REFERRING TO THE POST-TEST

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
post_control_3	35	15.34	1.71401	.28972
post_experimental_3	35	16.57	1.42014	.24005

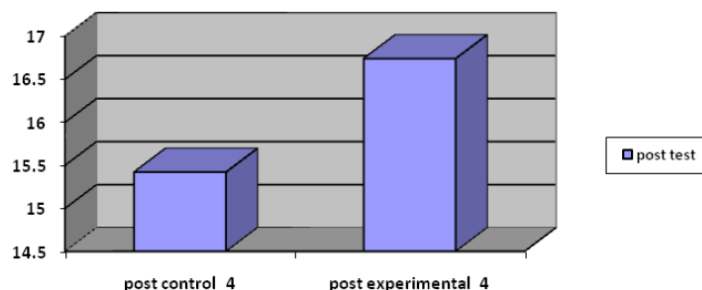


Paired Sample 5

Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference between the two groups. The post-control 4 and post-experimental 4 have the mean of (15.42) and (16.74) respectively. Having four times Post –testing of the students, the researcher has tried to have a more reliable result.

TABLE 5.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST REFERRING TO THE POST-TEST

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
post_control_4	35	15.42	1.55839	.26342
post_experimental_4	35	16.74	1.37932	.23315

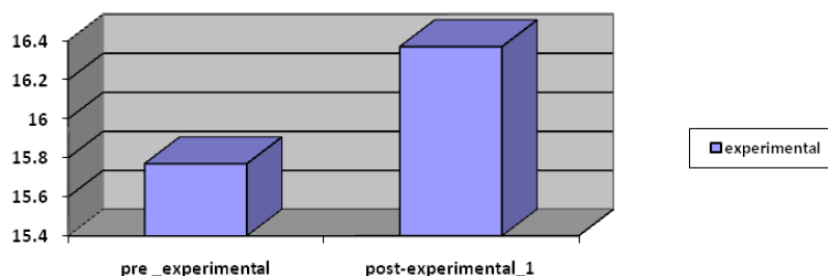


Paired Sample 6

Table 6 shows that the T value of pre- experimental and post- experimental 1 is statistically significant, therefore the students' performances are different and this difference is statistically significant. In other words, soft music enhances student's learning and memorizing of English language words as shown in post-experimental1 with the mean score of (16.37) compared to that of the pre- experimental (15.77) while having no treatment.

TABLE 6.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST 6

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2_tailed)
pre_experimental	35	15.77	1.68184	.28428	0.005
post_experimental_1	35	16.37	1.53557	.25956	

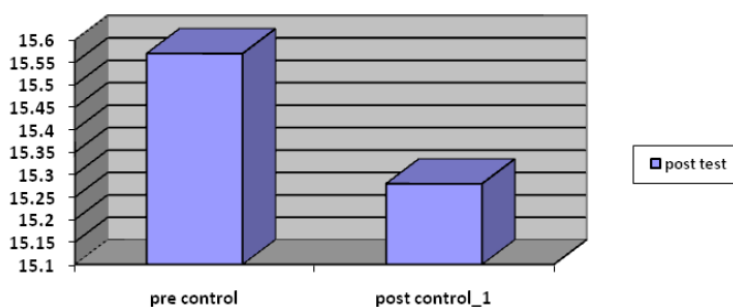


Paired Sample 7

In this part an independent sample T-test was used to show the differences between the performances of the control groups in pre-test (mean=15.57) and post-test (mean=15.28) on learning English language words. The table shows that there is no significant difference in the students' performances of the pre- control and post- control 1 tests.

TABLE 7.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST 7

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean	Sig. (2_tailed)
pre_control	35	15.57	1.95968	.33125	0.016
post_control_1	35	15.28	.32169	1.90312	

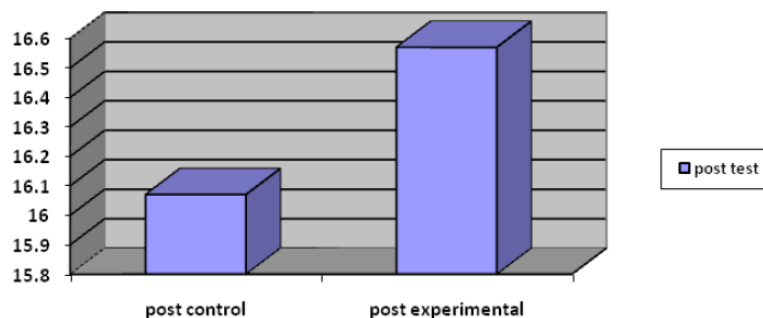


Paired Sample 8

Table 8 indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the post- control tests with the average mean of (16.07) and the post-experimental tests with the average mean of (16.57). It shows that words can be better learned while accompanying with soft music.

TABLE 8.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST 8

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
post_control 1.2.3.4	35	16.07	4.61287	.77972
post_experimental 1.2.3.4	35	16.57	1.32783	.22444

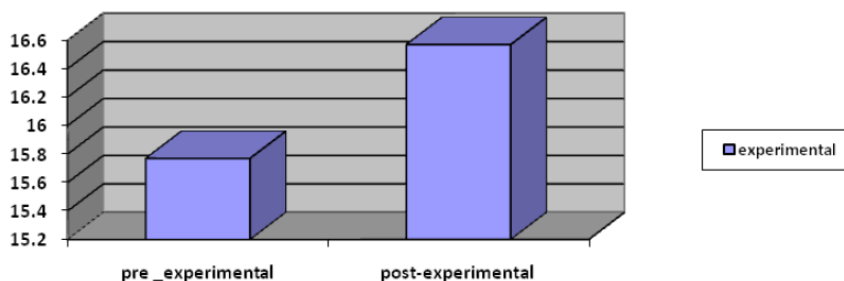


Paired Sample 9

Table 9. shows that there is a statistically significant difference between their pre-experimental test and post-experimental ones. As the result, soft music affects students' learning of English words.

TABLE 9.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST 9

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2_tailed)
pre_experimental	35	15.77	1.68184	.28428	0.000
post_experimental 1.2.3.4	35	16.57	1.32783	.22444	

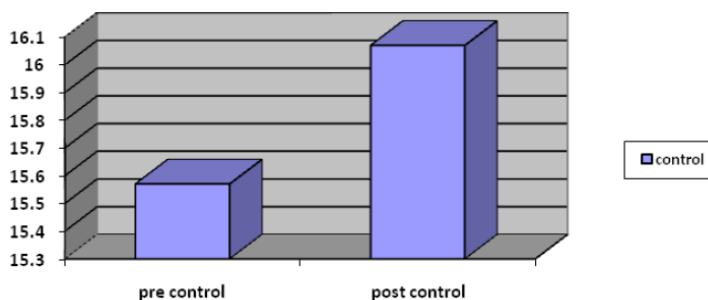


Paired Sample 10

Table10. indicates that there is no significant difference in the students' performances of pre-control test and post-control ones. Since they were given no treatment.

TABLE 10.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST 10

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean	Sig. (2_tailed)
pre_control	35	15.57	1.95968	.33125	.480
post_control 1.2.3.4	35	16.07	4.61287	.77972	



VIII. DISCUSSION

This section indicates the students' performances in different conditions namely, learning and memorizing words in contexts while soft music is played for post-experimental groups but it is absent for post-control ones. The study showed that there was no statistically significant difference between students' performances in pre-control and pre-experimental ones, since they were given no treatment, but it revealed that the difference was statistically significant in post-experimental tests than those of post control ones. Since the former tests were accompanied with soft music, but nothing was played for the latter ones. It should be mentioned that the repetition of the post-experimental tests was merely to add to their reliability and statistical significance. And it shows that students better learn and remember words while soft music is played than the condition in which no music sound is present.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

The researcher in this study tries to show that whether the use of soft music improves and influences the student's learning of English words. This study shows that integrating soft music into an education classroom have beneficial qualities and the data collected indicates that students had positive behavior, during learning and memorizing words while they were listening to soft music. It also showed that soft music with the intent of creating a positive experience for students, promoted attention, positive attitude, and created a pleasant learning atmosphere. In addition, it recommends a continued use of soft music during learning, memorizing, and even remembering words. Although music can distract the students' minds as well. Since learners may get to excited or sensational or get habitual with it. After all, Music, especially soft one can be a way of overcoming the difficulties in focusing on and attending in situations brimmed with noises and extra voices.

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A Cross-cultural Comparative Analysis of Views on Friendship in Chinese and English Idioms

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Abstract—Through the method of contrastive analysis, this thesis aims at presenting the differences as well as similarities between friendship view in China and that in English-speaking countries by examining Chinese and English idioms from the perspective of power distance, individualism versus collectivism and long-term versus short-term orientation. A further explanation of the characteristics of the two friendship views from the perspective of culture is also made.

Index Terms—friendship view, idiom, individualism versus collectivism, power distance, long-term versus short-term orientation

I. INTRODUCTION

Scholars from home and abroad have proposed plenty of theories about interpersonal relationship, which makes great contribution to cross-cultural communication and at the same time lays a solid foundation for the present study. The methods they adopt to formulate these theories mainly include questionnaire survey, collecting data in real life, doing follow-up survey, or case study, etc. Different from the previous research, this paper studies friendship, a main part of interpersonal relationship, by examining idioms that contain people's friendship views in English and Chinese languages.

Idiom is considered to be the treasure as well as carrier of national culture. Therefore, from Chinese and English idioms, we can get some knowledge of cultural discrepancy between China and the English-speaking countries. The culture of China and that of the English-speaking countries are different in geography, history, religious belief, custom of living, and so on. Therefore, the two cultures take on different views towards interpersonal relations. Based on this fact, this paper probes into the similarities and differences between the friendship views reflected in English and Chinese idioms. It is known that idioms are essences in a specific language, and cultural and historical traits are embedded in them. Therefore, through idioms about friendship in one language, we can get some knowledge of the friendship view in that culture. In this way, the author hopes to provide a better understanding of the two different friendship views from a perspective which has been rarely explored before.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Theoretical Framework

Power distance Hofstede defines power distance, the first of his cultural dimensions, as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.” (Hofstede, 2001, 98)

According to Hofstede, the dimension of power distance deals with the need for dependence versus independence in society. High Power Distance cultures tend to be hierarchical, emphasizing dependence and conformity. Inequality is seen as the basis of social order. Seniors take a top down approach and tell juniors what to do. In cultures with high power distance, the less powerful accept power relations that are autocratic or paternalistic. Subordinates acknowledge the power of others based on their formal, hierarchical positions. Low Power Distance cultures tend to be egalitarian. People value independence and believe that distance between the powerful and the powerless should be minimized. In cultures with low power distance, people expect and accept power relations that are more consultative or democratic. People relate to one another more as equals regardless of formal positions. Subordinates possess the right to contribute to and criticize the decisions of those in power. Thus, Power Distance does not measure or attempt to measure a culture's objective power distribution, but rather the way people perceive power differences.

Individualism versus collectivism “Individualism-collectivism is the major dimension of cultural variability used to explain cross-cultural differences and similarities in communication across cultures” (Gudykunst, 1997, 56). Hofstede (2001) defines individualism as “the emotional independence of individual persons from groups, organizations, or other collectivities”. Generally, it refers to the doctrine that each individual is unique, special, and completely different from

all other individuals and “the basic unit of nature” (Stewart & Bennert, 1991, 133). As Goleman points out, in individualist cultures, people’s personal goals take priority over their allegiance to groups. The loyalty of individualists to a given group is very weak; they feel they belong to many groups and are apt to change their membership as it suits them.

Collectivism is characterized by a social framework that distinguishes between in-groups and out-groups. In collectivist cultures, “people count on their in-groups (relatives, clans, organizations) to look after them, and in exchange for that they believe they owe absolute loyalty to the group.” (Samovar et al, 2000, 68) In individualistic cultures, people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only, while in collectivistic cultures, people belong to in-groups or collectivities that are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty. “The attitudes to in-groups and out-groups are two important standards to decide whether this country or community belongs to individualistic culture or collectivistic culture.” (Hofstede and Bond, 1984, 419) In individualist cultures, people are expected to develop and display their individual personalities and to choose their own affiliations. In collectivist cultures, people are defined and act mostly as a member of a long-term group, such as the family, a religious group and many others.

Long-term versus short-term orientation Hofstede’s fifth dimension, long-term versus short-term orientation, is based on the study of Michael Bond which had noted that Hofstede’s previous four cultural dimensions did not adequately reflect Asian perspectives of culture. As Hofstede notes, “Long Term Orientation (LTO) stands for the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular perseverance and thrift. It’s opposite pole, Short Term Orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present, in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of ‘face’ and fulfilling social obligations.” (Hofstede, 2001, 359)

According to Hofstede, long-term orientation, with its roots in the ethical imperatives of Confucianism, can be interpreted as dealing with a society’s search for virtue. Long-term oriented cultures teach virtues directed at the future, such as education, frugality and persistence. Short-term oriented cultures teach virtues directed at the past and present, such as expectation for quick results, respect for traditions, social spending, and maintaining face.

B. Methodology

In order to systematically study friendship view embedded in Chinese and English idioms, the author uses contrastive analysis. Firstly, idioms about friendship in English and Chinese are collected from three dictionaries about Chinese idioms and three dictionaries about English idioms. Secondly, the collected idioms are classified according to three of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, and long-term versus short-term orientation. The third step is contrastive analysis. Under each cultural dimension, there are three parts, namely the English idioms about this dimension followed by analysis, the Chinese idioms about this dimension followed by analysis, and a contrast and comparison of the two analyses.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Power Distance

Generally speaking, power distance measures the degree to which wealth, prestige and power are equally distributed in a culture, as well as how much equality versus inequality and dependence versus independence are desired.

Analysis of Samples from English Idioms

The following-listed idioms are the English idioms about power distance collected by the author:

1. A friend in court is better than a penny in purse
2. Friend at/in court
3. Have friends in high places
4. He that hath a full purse never wanted a friend. A rich person always has plenty of friends.
5. My honorable friend
6. My learned friend
7. Girl/Boy friend
8. Next friend
9. Man’s best friend
10. Feathered friend
11. A friend of God
12. Big friend

From the English idioms listed above, it may be concluded that the friendship view embodied in English idioms has the following features:

a) People want to have friends that are powerful and influential so that they are able to depend on those friends to help them when it is needed. Besides, when expressing the idea that they have or want to have some influential friends, they express it with pride or even boast. This feature can be seen from such idioms as 1, 2, 3, and 4.

b) It is common for people from similar background to make friends with one another. From 5 and 6, it can be seen

that in Britain, the congressmen in house of commons call each other friends and show respect by using “honorable”. The same is true for lawyers in court by using “learned”. Thus, it is proper to conclude that people with the same status or position can make friends with each other. Moreover, people of different sexes or statuses can be friends, such as boy/girl friend which has a special connotation that the two people have a romantic relationship. A next friend refers to the guardian of a minor. Thus, a minor is a friend of his guardian.

c) Man can make friends not only with man, but also with other creatures, God, or even objects. To dig it further, man are equal to all other things so that man can be friends with all of them. This feature is reflected in such idioms as 9, 10, 11, and 12. From 9, it can be seen that man can make friends with dogs. Idiom 10, feathered friend expresses the idea that man can make friends with birds and other flocks. Idiom 11, a friend of God refers to the person who is very pious to God. So man can be friend of God. Idiom 12, big friends is an American slang which refers to bombers of our side.

Analysis of Samples from Chinese Idioms

The Chinese idioms about power distance collected by the author are listed as the follow:

1. gǒu zhàng rén shì
dog depend-on man power
be a bully under the protection of a powerful person
2. pān lóng fù fēng
climb dragon attach phoenix
to play up to or attach to people of power and influence
3. shì lì zhī jiāo, gǔ rén xiū zhī
power of relationship, ancient man shame that
Since ancient time, people have been ashamed of the friendship based on power.
4. fǔ shǒu tiē ěr
bow head droop ear
be docile and obedient
5. wá m ěng sh ì c óng
only order is obey
be absolutely obedient
6. lǐ xián xià shì
rite sage lower knowledgeable-person
to lower oneself to enlist the services of the talented and the learned
7. xū zuǒ yǐ dài
vacant honored-post to wait
to reserve the honored post for somebody competent
8. quǎn mǎ zhī lǎo
dog horse of work
to serve like a dog or a horse
9. fù tǎng dǎo huǒ zài suǒ bù cí
go boiling-water tread fire in all not refuse
will never refuse, even one has to go through thick and thin
10. jūgōng jìn cuì sǐ ér hòu yǐ
bow exhauste overworked die then stop
to devote oneself entirely to something until one's dying day
11. wàng nián zhī jiāo
forget age of relationship
friendship between young and old people or friendship between generations

From the above-listed idioms, several features of friendship view that is reflected in Chinese idioms are summarized as follow:

a) People should not be eager to make friends with influential and powerful people for interests or other material purposes. This idea is expressed in idioms like 13, 14 and 15. If people do make friends in high place and act flatteringly all the time, they will be looked down upon. For example, Chinese idioms 16 and 17 convey this notion.

b) It is advocated and praised if people with power and status are modest and respectful enough to make friends with lower-status people who are intelligent and wise. Such idioms as 18 and 19 show this point.

c) The author does not find any Chinese idiom that shows the friendship between people of different social statuses. More often than not, the relation between people of different status is a matter of boss and employees, host and servants, superior and subordinates. On the one hand, people of higher status should lower themselves so that they are able to treat lower-status people who are wise and intelligent respectfully, as the author has mentioned in II. On the other hand, the lower-status people should be loyal to their supervisor. They should also do their best to show their loyalty and repay their supervisor for his appreciation of their talent. This point is shown in idioms of 20, 21, and 22.

d) People of large age difference are not supposed to make friend with each other. However, the idiom 23 conveys the

opposite meaning: friendship between old and young people or friendship between generations. It is proper to assume that generally people do not forget their age difference and make friends with one another.

Contrastive Analysis

In English idioms, powerful and influential friends are desirable and it is natural that people want to be friends with them for the purpose of prosperity, whereas in Chinese idioms, people are despised if they are eager to make friends with people in high place just for material purposes. According to Huang Guangguo (2004), the relationship in western countries tends to be instrumental, whereas the relationship in China is likely to be expressive. Therefore, Chinese people look down upon the friendship based on instrumental purpose, whereas in English countries it is a common phenomenon.

The English idioms reflect a phenomenon that it is common for people from different background, including social status, age, gender, etc, to make friends with each other. However, in Chinese idioms, this phenomenon is uncommon or even wrong. And the ordinary relation between people of different power is usually a matter of superior and subordinates. Jia (1997) points out that the power in China is associated with age, education, social class, sex, and family relation and so on. Confucianism in China requires people to behave according to their status, while in western countries equality is highly valued.

English idioms show that people can be friends with not only human being, but also other creatures and objects, which is rare in Chinese idioms. So we can infer that the equality in the west not only exists among human beings, but also among everything in the world, so that humans are friends with non-humans.

B. Individualism versus Collectivism

"In the individualist society, relationships with others are not obvious and prearranged; they are voluntary and have to be carefully fostered. In the collectivist society, one's friends are predetermined by one's group membership. This group membership is maintained through filial piety and loyalty, and is associated with patriotism." (Hofstede, 2001, 353)

Analysis of Samples from English Idioms

The following are the English idioms about individualism and collectivism collected by the author.

1. A friend in need is a friend indeed.
2. False friends are worse than open enemies
3. With friends like that, who needs enemies? To express the disapproval of the way in which someone's friends have behaved towards that person.
4. Fair-weather friend.
5. A friend to all is a friend to none/a friend to everybody is a friend to nobody.
6. The falling out of friends is the renewal of love.
7. Between friends all is common.
8. A hedge between keeps friendship green. Your friendship will flourish if you and your friend respect each other's privacy.
9. Lend your money and lose your friend. You should not lend money to your friends; if you do, either you will have to bother your friend to repay the loan, which will make your friend resent you, or your friend will not repay the loan, which will make you resent your friend.
10. Short accounts make long friends. If you borrow something from a friend, pay it back as soon as possible so that the two of you remain friendly.
11. Bosom friends; sworn friends; fast friends.
12. nodding friend
13. Birds of a feather flock together.

Having examined the English idioms listed above, the following characteristics of friendship can be summarized:

a) It is important to make a true friend or choose a right friend. Hardship can testify whether a friend is a true one, as is shown in 24. Besides, idioms 25 and 26 express the significance of making a right friend. In contrast, a fair-weather friend refers to someone who is friendly with you when you are enjoying good times, but who abandons you when you need help, which is much undesirable.

b) It does not matter whether a person has a large number of friends or not, what matters is the actual relationship between them. A person may have many friends, of which none is a close friend, as is shown in idiom 28. In contrast, a person may have only a few friends, of which all are fast friends, as is shown in idiom 29.

c) Friends should share with each other. At the same time, they should also keep an arm's length with one another. This point is shown in idiom 30 and 31. However, one thing that friends should not share is money. Even if a person borrows money from his friends, he should return it quickly so as to maintain their friendship. This idea can be seen from idiom 32 and 33.

d) Friends can be divided into several types in terms of intimacy and closeness, such as idiom 34 and 35.

e) People tend to make friends with whoever is similar to them, as is shown in 36.

Analysis of Samples from Chinese Idioms

The Chinese idioms about individualism versus collectivism are listed as follow:

1. yīgè líbā sāngè zhuāng, yīgè hǎo hàn sāngè bāng.
one fence three stake one good man three help
Even a strong man needs the help of his friends.
2. wèi péngyǒu liǎng lèi chā dāo
for friend two rib stab knife
will do anything for friends
3. lǐ dài táo jiāng
plum substitute peach stiff
to sacrifice oneself for his friends
4. yǒu fú tóng xiǎng yǒu nán tóng dāng
have happiness together enjoy have difficulty together bear
to share joys and sorrows; stick together through thick and thin
5. huànnàn jiàn zhēn qíng
hardship see true feeling
A friend in need is a friend indeed.
6. jūnzǐ zhī jiāo dàn rú shuǐ, xiǎo rén zhī jiāo gān rú lǐ.
gentleman of relationship pure like water small man of relationship sweet like sweet wine
The friendship between gentlemen is pure like water, yet affectionate; the friendship between small men is sweet like wine, yet easily broken.
7. zhī tóng dào hé
ideal same way close
to have a common goal or like-minded
8. gān dǎn xiāng zhào
liver gallbladder mutual reflect
to treat each other with all sincerity
9. qiān lǐ sòng é máo, lǐ qīng qíng yì zhòng.
thousand li send goose feather gift light feeling heavy
The gift itself may be light as a goose feather, but sent afar, it conveys deep feeling.
10. xíng yǐng bù lí; qīnmì wú jiàn.
figure shadow not part intimate not crack
be very close and intimate with one another
11. jiāo rén jiāo xīn, jiāo huā jiāo gēn.
interact people interact heart water flower water root
Touch his heart when you make friends, and moisten roots when you water flowers.
12. hǎinèi cún zhījǐ, tiānyá ruò bì lín.
within-the-country exist bosom-friend long-distance seem compare neighbor
Bosom friends within the four seas are close neighbors though separated by great distance.
13. jìn zhū zhě chì, jìn mò zhě hēi.
close cinnabar people red close ink people black
One takes on the color of one's company; moral influence by contact of close association.
14. jǐ suǒ bù yù wù shī yú rén.
oneself the not want do-not apply to people
Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you.
15. tuī jǐ jí rén
push oneself to people
to put oneself in another's position; to be considerate
16. yìzhě sān yǒu, yǒu zhí yǒu liàng yǒu duōwén.
beneficial three friends make-friend-with upright make-friend-with honest make-friend-with knowledgeable
Three kinds of friends are beneficial, that is, upright friend, honest friend, and knowledgeable friend.
17. yǔ péngyǒu jiāo, yán ér yǒu xìn.
with friend interact word then have credit
There should be trust and faithfulness between friends.
18. fānfān zhī jiāo
general of relationship
casual acquaintance
19. bù jī fù lǐ
not close not distant
be neither too familiar nor too distant
20. nèi shū wài qīn

inside distant outside intimate

be apparently intimate but actually indifferent

21. mò nì zhī jiāo

not against of relationship

friends with complete mutual understanding

22. wěn jǐng zhī jiāo

cut neck of relationship

a friendship that would lead persons to die for each other

23. qíng rú xiōngdì

feeling like brothers

be close like brothers

24. wù yǐ lèi jù rén yǐ qún fēn

thing by class gather people by group divide

Birds of a feather flock together.

From the Chinese idioms listed above, it is reasonable to summarize that friendship view reflected in Chinese idioms has the following features:

a) The most important thing between friends is loyalty and faithfulness. People should be loyal to their friends under whatever circumstances. Therefore, mutual help matters a lot between friends regardless whether the help is right or not. This point is conveyed in idiom 37, 38, and 39.

b) Friends are those who can company one another through thick and thin, as is expressed in idiom 40 and 41.

c) Friends should pay more attention to spiritual togetherness and emotional exchange rather than material things. This idea can be seen in idiom 42, 43, 44, and 45.

d) Friends may show their closeness by physical intimacy, such as 46, as well as by spiritual intimacy, such as 47. When two friends are spiritually intimate, physical distance means nothing, as is shown in idiom 48 and 45.

e) The influence of friends on a person is significant, which is expressed in idiom 49.

f) There are some idioms that tell people how to treat their friends, emphasizing empathy, integrity between friends, or telling people what kind of friends are beneficial. This idea can be seen from idiom 50, 51, 52, and 53.

g) There are several kinds of friends in terms of intimacy, which can be seen from idiom 18 to idiom 54.

h) People tend to make friends with whoever is similar to them, as is expressed in idiom 55.

Contrastive Analysis

English idioms express the notion that true friends are precious, and fair-weather friends are despised, but even true friends do not have to go through thick and thin with each other or help each other voluntarily. Besides, the quality instead of quantity of friends is emphasized. Friends always share with one another. In contrast, in Chinese idioms, loyalty and faithfulness between friends are very important. So, true friends are those who can company them through thick and thin without condition. Besides, friends should help each other regardless right or wrong, even sacrifice for one another. According to Jia Yuxin, people should show concern, sympathy, and empathy for or offer help to those who are in trouble. "In reality, the relationship in Chinese society is reciprocally obligatory, so everybody in the Chinese society is, to different degrees, indebted to other people, who are in turn also indebted." (Jia, Y, 1999, 505)

Chinese idioms show that friends attach much emphasis to emotional and spiritual closeness as well as physical intimacy. Huang, Y. makes a contrastive analysis of the different friendship view between the Chinese and the American, and notes that friends in China are more familiar with one another in terms of family background, educational background, interests, and even private life than the friends in America. This is true between friendships in Chinese and English cultures. Besides, Chinese people make friends based on common interests and emotional purpose while people in English culture make friends based on profit or instrumental purpose. Just as Jia (1999) notes, "Chinese people regard the maintenance of interactional closeness based on good feeling or expressive relationship between people as an end, while the westerners regard interactions as a means or instrument to another goal." (Jia, Y, 1999, 515)

Due to the intimacy between friends the influence of friends is emphasized. Concerning the importance of the influence of friends, Chinese idioms propose some suggestions for making friends. However, in English idioms, the author does not find any idioms expressing that idea.

Both English and Chinese idioms show that there is a tendency for people to make friends with whoever is similar to them. And friends are classified into different types according to the degree of intimacy. As it is noted, "human relationships are hierarchical". (Chen & Starosta, 2007, 113) Different levels of relationships include strangers, acquaintances, intimate friends, and each asks for different engagement in terms of inclusion, control and affection.

C. Long-term versus Short-term Orientation

Generally speaking, in long term oriented societies, people value actions and attitudes that affect the future, such as persistence, thrift, and a sense of shame. In short-term oriented societies, people value actions and attitudes that are affected by the past or the present, such as immediate stability, protecting one's own face, respect for tradition, and reciprocation of greetings, favors, and gifts.

Analysis of Samples from English Idioms

Here are the English idioms about long-term versus short-term orientation collected by the author:

1. Friendship cannot stand always on one side
2. If you scratch my back, I will scratch yours.
3. Claw me and I will claw thee.
4. Roll my log and I will roll yours.
5. Get on/along like a house on fire
6. Old friends and old wine are best
7. (Even) the best of friends must part.
8. Friends may meet but mountains never greet.
9. Friends are thieves of time

After the English idioms listed above, it is appropriate to conclude that the friendship view in English-speaking countries has the following characteristics:

a) Friendship is a matter of reciprocation, as is shown in idiom 61. People treat their friend in the same way as their friends treat them. If a friend of someone does him a favor, he will repay his friend with a favor, as can be seen from idiom 62, 63, and 64.

b) Good friendship may develop very fast. For example, as in idiom 65, if two people get on like a house on fire, they quickly become intimate friends.

c) Old friends are desired and regarded as the most precious, which can be seen from idiom 66.

d) It is natural and common for friends to part and meet. People accept this fact easily so they may part with a friend today and develop another friendship tomorrow, or expect to meet again with old friends in a few days. This point shows itself in idiom 67 and 68.

e) There is an idiom expressing the idea that making friends may take a lot of your time, as is shown in idiom 69.

Analysis of Samples from Chinese Idioms

With the above-mentioned idioms in mind, it is reasonable to summarize the features of friendship view reflected in Chinese idioms as follows:

1. yǒuyì cháng cún
friendship long exist
Friendship lasts forever.
2. bù wàng jiǔ yào
not forget long friend
Do not forget the old friends.
3. duō nián dē péngyǒu——lǎo jiāoqing
many year of friend---old relationship
friendship of a long time means deep relationship
4. zhāo qín mù chǔ
morning Qin-state dust Chu-state
to change one's loyalty constantly
5. lǒng jiǎo zhī jiāo
coil bun of relationship
Friends from childhood
6. liǎng xiǎo wú cǎi
two small no suspicion
(of a boy and a girl) be innocent playmates
7. lǐ shàng wǎnglái
courtesy call-for reciprocity
Courtesy demands reciprocity.
8. tóu táo bào lǐ
throw peach return plum
to return the compliment
9. sòng jūn qiān lǐ, zhōng xū yī bié.
send you thousand li finally must one departure
Friends must apart even if they do not want to.
10. yī jiàn rú gù
one meeting like old-friend
to feel like old friends at the first meeting

a) long-term friendship is desired. Idiom 70 expresses the notion that it is important to maintain friendship for as long as possible. People may make new friends, but should never forget the old ones, as is conveyed in idiom 71. Old friends usually have deep affection, thus are desirable, as can be seen in idiom 72. On the contrary, people are criticized if they change friends constantly or make friends with a person, later abandon that friends and make friends with another

person. Idiom 73 conveys this idea. In addition, friendship that begins from childhood usually means intimacy and closeness, thus it is desired. This point manifests itself in idiom 74 and 75.

b) Friendship is a matter of reciprocation. If a person receives gifts or favors from his friends, he should pay his friends back with something in accord with the received things, or even with more valuable things. Idiom 76 and 77 convey this idea.

c) When friends have to part, they express the feeling that they do not want to part and going to miss each other very much, as is seen from idiom 78

d) People may become friends quickly, which can be seen from idiom 79. On the other hand, people compare those quickly-made friends to old friends: they become in good terms quickly as if they were old friends. So it is fair to infer that quickly-made friends are usually not well-regarded except that they are like old friends.

Contrastive Analysis

English idioms reflect that old friends are good, but quickly-made friends are not necessarily bad. As a matter of fact, old and new friends can both be good or bad. It is naturally accepted that friends may part and meet again, so people just take that easily. According to Hu (1999), western people tend to move more frequently than Chinese people, therefore their friends also change more frequently than Chinese people. In contrast, old friends are valued in Chinese idioms under any circumstances and new friends are rarely regarded as good as old friends. Just as Hu (1999) notes, the longer time friends know each other, the deeper their relationship will be. Huang (2008) points out that the friendship in China is very stable, even last for a lifetime. Therefore, people are sentimental when they have to part with their friends.

The same idea that is expressed in both English and Chinese idioms is that people should treat their friends the way their friends treat them, or even better. This idea is also expressed as “human relationships are reciprocal”. (Chen & Starosta, 2007, 113). This reciprocation fosters ever-lasting good interpersonal relationship in China, and smooth and balanced short-term relationship in English countries. Only if each member of the relationship satisfies one another’s needs of inclusion, control and affection to a certain degree, can the relationship last long. Therefore, if a person received a favor or gift from his friend, he should repay his friend so that their friendship can last for a long time.

Generally speaking, long-term friendship dominates China, where people live in a certain area, which is less likely to change, and interact with a certain group of people. Long-term relationship fosters a complementary social reciprocity in which interpersonal relationship is viewed as asymmetrical and reciprocally obligatory, as is mentioned in the previous two sections. Therefore, Chinese people value stable and long-term relationship, and measure the depth of relationship with the length of time. They maintain the relationship by vertical social status and mutual obligation. While in the English culture, short-term relationship is more prevalent. People tend to move from one place to another, and interact with different people because of the movement as well as their membership of different groups. They consider commitments or obligations between friends as a threat to freedom. Thus short-term relationship is common and popular in English culture.

D. Cultural Origins of the Two Different Friendship Views

The differences of friendship views are the result of different cultural, social, psychological and natural geographical factors, of which the most important is cultural factor. Individualism, the dominant orientation in English countries and collectivism, the dominant orientation in China act as shapers of the patterns of interpersonal relationships. As the main cultural orientation in the English countries and China are different, the interpersonal relationships are also markedly different.

What is emphasized in English culture is individualism and as a result equal or horizontal relationship is highly valued. Broadly speaking, individualism refers to the doctrine that each individual is unique, special, and completely different from other individuals. Most westerners believe that each person has his own separate identity and personality, which should be recognized and reinforced. People in English culture emphasize individualism so much that they believe that there must be something wrong with people who fail to demonstrate individualism. As a result, they are independent and value privacy. The relationships are symmetrical in English culture in that the behavior which is appropriate to one person in each pair is identical with what is appropriate to the other person. This symmetry presupposes role equality rather than differentiation as is the case in China.

To Chinese people, the word “individualism” is related to the derogatory meaning of egoism, which represents selfishness in quality and looseness in discipline. In traditional Chinese beliefs, especially in Confucianism, collectivism is appreciated. It emphasizes cooperation among group members and individual success is due to the collective effort of the staff in a unit, an organization or a community. So people are generally dependent on each other and have less privacy than the westerners. The sacrifice of individual interest for that of the collective is a noble quality highly praised by Chinese people.

June Ock Yum studied interpersonal relationships through analyzing cultural orientations in the East and West. Yum also agrees that collectivism, especially Confucianism, and individualism are the cardinal principles of their respective interpersonal relationships. Through analyzing the cultural orientations of the East and the West, Yum got his own conclusions:

a) Interpersonal relationship in the East is particularistic while in the West it is universalistic.

b) The eastern interpersonal relationship is long-term and asymmetrical, while the western is short-term and

symmetrical or contractual.

c) In the East, there is clear distinction between in-group and out-group, while in the West there is not.

IV. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper is to make a contrastive analysis of the friendship views in Chinese and English idioms. First, there are some differences in friendship views reflected in English and Chinese idioms. Influenced by Confucianism, Chinese people pay much attention to the harmonious relationship based on vertical social status, collectivist reciprocal obligation and emotional feeling, as a result of which long-term and stable relationship is desired. The English idioms show that people are influenced by the doctrine of individualism deeply. As a result, the "autonomous self" based on equality, freedom and instrumentality is emphasized in interpersonal relationship. So the relationship is usually unstable and changing between people. Second, some ideas are common to people in China and English-speaking countries. People from both China and English-speaking countries think they should treat their friends the way their friends treat them. Both English and Chinese idioms show that there is a tendency for people to make friends with whoever is similar to them. And friends are classified into different types according to the degree of intimacy.

By doing this research, the author hopes to contribute a little in both theoretical and practical ways. Theoretically, this paper provides people with friendship views in China and the English-speaking countries from the perspective of idiom, which can enrich the theories proposed by domestic and foreign scholars. Practically, the paper can offer a guideline for interpersonal interactions in China or the English-speaking countries. With a better understanding of the similarities and differences of friendship views in two cultures, people can behave and communicate more properly in intercultural communication.

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The Effect of Picture Story in Creating Textual Coherence in Narrative Genre

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Abstract—Writing skill develops slowly and lags some way behind other skills EFL learners of English have difficulty organizing their ideas at clause and text level to produce a coherent text. Given this, the study was an attempt to examine the effect of picture story on the organization of ideas in the narrative text. Participants (n= 60) were divided into two experimental and control groups. Then the Experimental and control groups were invited to produce a narrative text with and without pictures respectively. When the texts were analyzed, it was revealed that in the texts produced with pictures, the number of NPs to begin an episode outnumbered those produced without pictures. It is more common in English to begin a new episode with an NP and then in the next mentions use a pronoun to create a more smooth text to reduce the cognitive load on readers and/or listeners. Also a close examination of the data revealed that pictures contributed to focus the subjects' attention on the text organization of narrative genre in terms of relating events in the text by employing temporal/causal relations to create semantic relations in the text. The statistical analysis of a Matched t-test, by applying SPSS version 13, was performed and it was revealed that the mean differences between the performances in the two tasks were meaningful, rejecting the null hypothesis and confirming the hypothesis that picture story helps to create coherence in the narrative text in terms of organization.

Index Terms—picture story, narrative text, NP, cognitive load, coherence

I. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the teaching of writing was at the service of language practice; writing was viewed essentially as secondary and in some cases inferior to the spoken language. Then this model-based approach transformed to the more recent rhetorical movement with a focus on organization of rhetorical acts and manipulation of cohesive features. So following this tradition, this study intends to examine the effect of picture story on different discourse factors.

Nunan (2001) believes that in terms of skills, producing a coherent, fluent, and extended piece of writing is probably the most difficult thing there is to do in language (p. 271). It is something most native speakers never master. For second language learners, the challenges are far more enormous. Although Iranian writers of EFL at the intermediate or even advanced levels are able to write with accuracy, they often fail to write with fluency. They are able to compose an error-free piece of writing but they often fail to organize ideas logically and often mention the topic late in the text so it causes confusion to readers. So L2 writers are often preoccupied with mechanics and neglect the organization. Thus this research attempts to examine the effect of picture story on improving coherence in narrative text because pictures, according to Kang (2003), are assumed to reduce the burden on the working memory and help writers organize complex ideas conceptually (p.60).

Givon (1984) proposed that text organization may vary from one genre to another and from one text to another (p. 8). Discourse organization of narrative has been investigated in the area of oral production and reading comprehension in native speakers by researchers such as Givon (1984). However, this study probes the ability of learners of English as a foreign language to produce a narrative genre. The choice of narrative as one of the methods of developing ideas is due to its wide usage in educational settings in which English is taught as a foreign language. Narrative is a good asset for learners to express, by practicing language, their personal feelings and build a world of imagination.

When we begin writing a paragraph we are thinking of the actual act of writing. However, in most Iranian classes, writing is at the service of language to teach or manipulate grammatical structure. We witness that Iranian language writers are often plunged into writing without preparing any drafts of their writings. So this study attempts to examine the way pictures can affect the writing behavior of Iranian learners of English as a foreign language in narrative genre.

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. Does picture story affect the type of grammatical structures used to mark off the clause boundary?
2. Does picture story affect voice in narrative genre?

3. Does picture story help to produce greater transitions in narrative genre to make it more coherent?

The above research questions are stated in the form of the following null hypothesis:

Picture story does not affect the organization of narrative genre.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Writers do not simply encode ideational meaning; they also create textual meaning as well as interpersonal meaning (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Although the ability to write presupposes some level of morphological, lexical, and syntactic as well as idiomatic knowledge, such knowledge alone does not guarantee the ability to write well because writing involves much more than constructing grammatical sentences. Halliday and Hasan (1976) suggest that sentences need to be connected by cohesive ties in ways that can be followed by the reader (15). The whole text also needs to be coherent, that is, various parts of the text have to work together conceptually in a particular rhetorical context. Although cohesion and coherence are related concepts, cohesive text is not necessarily coherent (Witte & Faigley, 1981:189).

In text organization, schematic structure or discourse organization refers to the staged, goal-oriented organization of the genre or text. For example, when we hear, or see "once upon a time" we know that we are about to hear or read a narrative of mythical events; when we hear or see "can I help you?" We expect a transactional genre (e.g. buying and selling genre); "A funny thing happened to me on the way to home" has us expecting of a narrative of personal experience.

A genre is often made up of constituent stages. In most general terms, the constituent stages of a genre are a Beginning, a Middle, and an Ending. Van Dijk (1981) and Van Dijk and Kinstch (1983) articulate how utterances in discourse influence each other in systemic ways through the relations of discourse semantic coherence. Local coherence connotes linear relations between propositions at the semantic level. The propositions connected locally at the micro-structural level lead to higher level hierarchical relations and ultimately form larger macro-structures or global semantic structures that organize the local microstructures of discourse and are fundamental to complex information processing and discourse organization.

There are relations in discourse that are seemingly signaled by an explicit way. Relations can be signaled by cue phrases (discourse markers), mood, tense, and aspect or structural characteristics such as adjacency pairs in conversation. Rhetorical relations, however, can be signaled either through lexical/phrasal units or through syntactic relations (e.g. embedding). Cue phrases have been the main object of study in the area of discourse relations. They have received different names: coherence markers, cue phrases, discourse connectives or discourse markers.

Carrel (1987) argues that teaching ESL writers about the top level structure of texts and teaching them how to signal a text's organizational plan through linguistic devices would all serve to make their writing more effective (p.55). Rothery (1986) used functional grammar as well as discourse and register theory develop in the framework of systemic approach to identify qualities of children's writings. They claim that good student writing exhibits essential features of particular genres.

Coherence in written text is a complex process, involving a multitude of reader and text-based features. In text-based model, coherence is defined as a feature internal to the text. Hodges and Whitten (1972) divide coherence into two constructs: cohesion [i.e., the linking of sentences] and unity [i.e., sticking to the point] (p.150). Halliday and Hasan (1976) speak of a coherent text as having two features: cohesion (i.e., ties between sentences) and register (i.e., within text) (p.23). They focused almost exclusively on cohesion as a text feature that is achieved through reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions, etc. Halliday (1985) believed that in English, as in many other languages, clause is organized as a message by having a special status assigned to one part of it (p.38).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Participants in the study were 60 female and male intermediate learners of EFL at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, faculty of Letters and Humanities. For choosing the participants in the study, one hundred students who had received a score above 70% percent on their writing tasks both during academic year and final examinations at the Faculty of and Humanities of Ahvaz were randomly selected and then, through the Michigan test 60 students were chosen as the final population for the study. The test comprised 30 items on vocabulary, and 20 items on grammar.

B. Materials

In this study, the data were collected from participants through assigning a writing task to the participants. Participants were given a picture story (see Appendix) to perform the writing task. The pictures were linear in organization consisting of a sequence of events related together by causal and/or temporal connectors. The participants were required to produce texts of about 250 words of length because the length of the texts produced may affect the internal validity of the results.

C. Procedure

To perform the task, participants were divided into two control and experimental groups of thirty and then invited to perform the task. The experimental group performed the task with and the control group without pictures. The two tasks were carried out in similar physical settings to reduce the threats to the internal validity or reliability of the study. After collecting data, the texts produced were analyzed for the type of grammatical constructions such as active versus passive, the type and the number of logical connectors marking causal/temporal relations between propositions, phrases, or paragraphs in the texts created by the participants. During the tasks, participants were provided with any possible needed information because the emphasis was not on the micro-level of the text instead the focus is on the macro-structure or hierarchical organization of the text. Then the collected data were analyzed for their discourse relations in creating coherence in the texts.

D. Data Analysis

After writing the task, the data obtained from the participants were analyzed and compared by employing some quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The analysis began with counting the number of causal/temporal relations, passive/active constructions, and the number of full NPs at the episode boundary. In addition, through a qualitative analysis, the distribution of evaluative device in the texts was analyzed. The mean and standard deviation of all these categories were calculated. Then to examine the hypothesis that picture story improves coherence in the text, the statistical procedure of Matched t-test, by applying SPSS version 13, was applied to see whether the differences observed are meaningful or not. In the task with pictures, participants tended to generate greater number of temporal/causal relations (N=139). On the other hand, in the task without pictures subjects produced less number of causal and temporal relations (N= 82). This provides evidence for the rejection of the null hypothesis that picture story does not contribute to promote coherence in the text. The mean for both causal and temporal relations in the texts with pictures (M= 4.36) is higher than those produced without pictures (M= 2.73). The results indicate a main effect of picture on improving textual organization in text. It seems that, based on the results, picture story functions as road signs that tell writers what direction they are moving. It makes it possible for the writers to move smoothly from one piece of writing to the next and establish relationships between ideas in a paragraph to create a logical progression of ideas in a paragraph. Without transitions, your paragraph will not be coherent and well developed.

TABLE 1.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	St. Error Mean
With Picture & Without Picture	4.6333	30	1.84733	0.33728
	2.7333	30	1.14269	0.20863

Sample text 1. produced with picture:

One day Bill was playing football in the street. He shooted the ball hard and broke the ball. So he went to a repairman and asked him to fix the window of their home. He accepted and repaired the broken window. After that, Bill returned his ball back and run away and left the owner of the home pay the charge...

Sample text 2. produced without picture:

Ali went out of the house and wanted to play football. A window was broken. Then the boy went to a repairman to get him to repair the broken window and he accepted and fixed it. The owner of the house thinks the repairman is the father of the son so she gave the boy his ball back. When the repairman asked for the price they realized that the boy had tricked both of them. I think the boy did a wrong thing ...

A close examination of the texts partially confirmed Tomlin's (1985) claim that writers usually use full NPs to designate clause boundaries. Findings from this study show that although participants often use NPs at the beginnings of episodes, in some other cases writers choose pronominals to show the clause boundaries. However, The number of noun phrases produced at the paragraph boundary in the task with picture (N=104) outnumbered those generated without picture (N= 63). This fact is indicated in Table 2. Below.

TABLE 2.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	St. Error Mean
With Picture & Without Picture	3.4667	30	0.50742	0.9264
	2.10	30	0.60743	0.11090

The mean for texts produced with and without picture, as Table 2. Shows, was set at M =3.46 and M= 2.10 respectively. As the results indicate, the mean number of nominals at the paragraph boundary i.e. at the thematic position, in the texts produced with picture is higher compared with those produced without pictures. Some extracts from the texts in the two tasks are illustrated below to show the use of anaphora at the episode boundaries. Episode boundaries are shown by three dots.

Text 3. produced with picture:

One day under the sunshine a boy was playing football individually. At once he shot the ball powerfully... Then the boy who was playing in the street went and brings a repairman to repair the window...

Text 4. produced without picture:

Once upon a time there was a boy who was playing with a ball in the street. He threw the ball toward the window of a house and broke it ... He went to find a repairman for fixing it ...

It is common in English to use a noun phrase to start an episode and then use a pronoun in the next mentions in the internal structure of the text. The results from a matched t-test, by applying SPSS version 13, suggest that the difference in using a noun phrase at the thematic position in texts with and without picture is meaningful. This is illustrated in Tables 3. Below.

TABLE 3.
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

PAIRED SAMPLES TEST							t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
With- Without Picture	Paired Differences								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the difference					
				Lower	Upper				
	1.36	0.71	0.131	1.09	1.63	10.420	29	0	

It seems that choosing the type of anaphoric relations may be related to the number of characters in narrative genre; using specific full NPs may contribute to the resolution of ambiguity in discourse. So one way of getting students to focus on the agent and use a noun phrase at the beginning of an episode can be picture story. So it is recommended that teachers of EFL choose the type of narratives for their students that have lesser number of characters because it seems that these types of texts may cause readers to lose track of events and focus more on the participants in the text than to trace events in the text.

To analyze story grammar categories, Mandler and Johnson's (1989) model of story grammar was adopted for the interpretation of the data. Of narrative stories some story constituents are recalled better than others, in particular, beginnings, attempts, and outcomes are recalled better. The number of story grammar categories in the task performed with the help of picture was slightly higher compared to those produced without pictures. In the task with pictures, participants tended to mark the beginning, ending, attempts, and outcomes more than in the task without pictures. This is in line with Mandler and Johnson's (1989) model of story grammar category. A significant finding, contrary to the above mentioned model, is that the proportion use of the constituent 'ending' is higher than outcomes and goals in both texts produced in the two tasks.

Also the number of passive verbs in the texts produced with pictures was less than those produced without pictures. The mean for the two tasks are illustrated in Table 4.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	St. Error Mean
With Picture	0.46	30	0.57	0.10
Without Picture	1.63	30	1.2	0.22

To show that the difference in the production of passive and active structures in the task with and without pictures is meaningful, the statistical procedure of a Matched t-test was applied and the results indicate that the difference is meaningful ($t = -5$, $df = 29$ and $p < 0.005$). Table 5. Below, show the scores obtained from the Matched t-test by applying SPSS version 13.

TABLE 5.
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

PAIRED SAMPLES TEST								
	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
WiWithout Pictures	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the difference				
				Lower				Upper
		-1.1	1.26	0.23	-1.6	-0.69	5.06	29	0

The analysis revealed a main effect of pictures on the use of passive or active voice. The general assumption is that the difference between active and passive is largely a difference in theme or emphasis. The passive occurs when the patient is more important than agent. The use of passive voice relates to the impersonal character of science or technology. By using passive structures, writers deemphasize the actor and direct attention the act.

Research (Bates and Devescovi, (1989) affirms that perceptual and psychological discourse factors affect the production of active and passive clauses. If this claims that there is a rule which links voice and syntactic subject to thematic information then we can conclude that the competence underlying the child's knowledge of English is tied to cognitive processing of information management. The results from this study show that perceptual, and discourse factors conspire in the production and comprehension of active and passive clauses. Tomlin (1985) presented a cognitive model of sentence production in which subject assignment in English is tied directly to the location of one's focal attention at the moment an utterance is formulated. When showing, for example, subjects animation of one fish eating a second one, while directing the attention of the subjects to the agent fish results always in an active sentence, directing attention to the patient fish results always in passives in this model, the traditional notion of theme or topic is replaced by the cognitive notion of focal attention. The hypothesis is that the English active-passive

alternation that is tied to the assignment of a locally attended referent to syntactic subject might be explained as an English cognitive strategy that places important elements first in linear arrays.

The analysis so far has revealed structural differences between the texts produced during the two tasks. Another way to mark narrative genre differences is through the use of evaluative or highlighting markers. Labov & Waletzky (1967) revealed the literature on both children's and adolescents' narratives which indicated that speaker or writer may evaluate narrative events through the use of linguistic forms such as phonological stress, adverbial intensifiers, and inferential commentary on events (p.157). The narrative framework used to analyze the evaluating system is that developed by Mandler and Johnson's (1989). In this study, a substantial difference between the mean of evaluation devices in the texts produced with ($M=11.5$, $SD=24\%$) and without picture ($M=11$, $SD=23.5\%$) was not observed.

However, a close examination of the texts for the distribution of evaluation devices in the texts showed that the texts written with and without pictures do not follow the framework proposed by Mandler and Johnson's (1989) for different stages of narrative genre. Generally speaking, all the texts more or less contained a wealth of evaluation devices. The significant difference, contrary to the above mentioned model, was that the distribution of evaluation devices in texts is not ad hoc but rather appears in multiple clusters, as opposed to a clearly identifiable manner. It was observed that evaluations are distributed within the whole text and might be found near the outset, closure or any point between the two. It seems that Iranian writers of English as a foreign language break away from the Mandler and Johnson's (1989) framework for evaluation devices and put them at the beginning, middle and everywhere in the text. Here are some extracts from the study that shows this fact.

Text 5: Evaluation at the beginning of the text

Once upon a day there was a rascal and talented boy who was playing in the street. He hit the ball hard and broke a window of a house...

Text 6: Evaluation at the end of the text

One day a boy went out of house to play. When he was playing he broke the window of a lady. He went to a repairman to get him fix the window. The lady thought that the man was the boy's father so gave the boy back his ball and the boy escaped and the lady have to pay the charge. I think the boy did a wrong thing...

As you notice, evaluation clusters occur when a speaker or writer breaks away from narrating the main events in the story and provides some kind of commentary or opinion. It appears that in the texts produced with pictures, participants attempt to create more solidarity. This indicates the fact that producing any pieces of discourse is part of the social world where the relationships between people are of great importance. Writers use language for interpersonal purpose, particularly evaluative devices. So evaluation refers to a speaker or writer attitude or values or Martin's (2001) appraisal system. Evaluation serves as a system of organizing discourse and a means by which writers express their value systems typical of their discourse communities. So it seems that Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Mandler and Johnson's (1989) model have ignored the regional conventions which writers employ during the writing task.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to examine the effect of picture story on organizing ideas in the text both at clause and paragraph level. Close analysis of texts revealed the effect of pictures on structuring clauses within paragraphs. Also texts were analyzed to examine the effect of pictures on text organization such as such as causal/temporal relations, story grammar categories, passive/active constructions.

In the task with pictures, participants produced more transitions to relate ideas in a logical way. For story grammar categories, picture story helped participants to come up with a text that better conformed to Mandler and Johnson's (1989) model of story grammar. The texts produced accompanying pictures, the beginning, attempt, and ending were better marked off. In any pieces of writing, narrative is no exception, there is a Beginning, a Middle and an Ending. The story pictures contributed to creating a schematic structure that was smoother and coherent for the readers.

Another part of the study addressed the type of anaphora participants used to designate the beginning of an episode. The study confirmed Tomlin's (1985) model that writers usually use full noun phrases to begin a new episode. The number of noun phrases used to begin a paragraph was greater in the texts produced with pictures. This provides evidence for the fact that picture story contributes to produce a more coherent text because it is common in English to start a paragraph or episode with a noun phrase and then in the internal structure of a paragraph use a pronoun in the next mentions to create coherence in the text and reduce the cognitive load on the listeners or readers. This is especially critical in narrative genre because using a pronoun at the beginning of a paragraph that includes a great number of characters can confuse the readers in terms of who refers to whom in the text.

The last but not the least part of the study dealt with the number of passive structures produced in the texts. A close examination of the corpora revealed that in the task with pictures the number of active constructions was greatly higher than passive ones. Active structures are more vivid and clear so they give the text a more conversational tone. Since active voice is more direct, it is more effective than passive voice especially in settings where English language is used for everyday conversation.

The first implication of the study is the need to provide students with opportunities to engage in top-down analysis which complements bottom-up analysis. The potential of such an approach is exemplified in Swales (1990) analysis of the introduction of articles (1990). To produce a text with a logical organization and gain control over particular genres,

by definition, an awareness of the top down or macro-structure level and content schemata for structuring discourse is necessary. They provide an outline and section heading for a text. During performing the task, the author interviewed the participants to find out the degree of their familiarity with narrative genre and their papers were marked for the purpose of interpretation. During analyzing texts, it was recognized that those participants who claimed to be familiar with narrative through extensive reading generated texts which were more coherent in terms of organization.

It seems that the provision of rhetorical understanding of texts or different genres undermines the deficit view that misrepresent writing as a universal way of participating in communities. Thus, learning to write involves acquiring an ability to employ appropriate linguistic choices both within and beyond the sentence and teachers can assist this by providing students with an explicit functionally-oriented grammar and models of effective texts. Therefore, teachers are recommended not to rush students into the act of writing before gearing up the situation for the writing task. Pictures and other strategies such as brain storming, making an outline or branching can help writers come up with a text with better organization and overcome the writers' block in expressing their opinions. Sometimes writers feel blocked and are unable to begin writing task or assignment. To overcome this mental problem, we can use different techniques mentioned above. It was observed that pictures made a substantial contribution in resolving this problem because it took participants less time to perform the tasks.

In summary, visual aids are indispensable part of any language learning and teaching process. Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words and this is particularly true for teaching English as a second or foreign language. Visual aids can be used to teach everything from vocabulary to propositions. In addition to instructional advantages, they keep lessons interesting for learner and reduce the load exerted on the working memory. Another potential area of research is to explore the impact of picture story on the organization of another genre (e.g. exposition or cause-effect, etc.) or explore the impact of picture story on the peaking ability of learners of EFL or ESL.

APPENDIX



Sample text produced by one of the participants:

Ali went out of the house and wanted to play football. A window was broken. Then the boy went to a repairman to get him to repair the broken window and he accepted and fixed it. The owner of the house thinks the repairman is the father of the son so she gave the boy his ball back. When the repairman asked for the price they realized that the boy had tricked both of them. I think the boy did a wrong thing...

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The Effects of Test Formats on the Performances of Iranian EFL Students

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Abstract—This study was an attempt to investigate whether different test formats had any significant effect on the performances of Iranian language students. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 160 male and female language students within the age range of 20 to 34 years studying at three branches of Islamic Azad university- Ahvaz, Dezful, Andimeshk at three different levels of upper-intermediate, intermediate and low were selected based on their performance on Nelson Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) and assigned to three groups in terms of their proficiency level. Each group of each level of language abilities was given a test consisting of four different formats-MC, T/F, Cloze-Test and C-Test. The results were analyzed based on descriptive statistics and deductive statistics of ANOVA and Scheffe Test. The results proved that the testees of upper-intermediate level had a poorer performance in MC items than they had in other test formats, while the testees of intermediate and low level performed much better in MC items; of course they had a poor performance in Cloze-Test. Due to their limited knowledge of language and limited mental abilities and strategies, testees of intermediate and low level performed very poorly in integrative tests as these test formats take high mental activities. The results proved the use of multi-method theory in testing language abilities, as it will be assumed a suitable measure in order to make judgments about the test construct validity and the testees' performance.

Index Terms—test formats, testees' performances, integrative test items, discrete test items

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and testing have an interdependent relationship, because teaching process needs to test different taught materials such as acquired knowledge during teaching process, to examine test administration methods, to evaluate to some extent the success and the failure of teaching goals. Also, testing depends on teaching, in as much as there are some to teach, there are some to test, in order to receive feedback and to make sound decisions to achieve a good teaching and learning process in future (Farhady, Ja'farpur & Birjandi, 2004; Hughes, 2003). According to Brown (1995), language evaluation is a pre-determined procedure to gather information to consider them to make better and effective teaching-learning process. Also, it is needed to measure the learners' competence. Language testing as a means to measure the learners' competence and their language knowledge plays an important function in learning process.

According to Cronbach and Meehle (1955), construct is referred to the assumed characteristics of individuals, supposed to be returned to the test performance. In validating a test, the qualities upon which we give some statements in test interpretation are of utmost importance. Also, Brown (2000) claimed that construct is "an attribute, proficiency, ability, or skill that happens in the human brain and is defined by established theories, e.g. overall English language proficiency" (p. 9). Downing (2003) claims that validity is the fair, unbiased, and systematic method in data gathering from various sources and He adds that "assessments are not valid or invalid; the scores or outcomes of assessments have more or less evidence to support or to refute a specific interpretation(p. 830). In another view, Clapham (2000) mentions that validity is referred to test scores, not the test itself. He adds that the test validation is an observational measurement of test scores, test results, and test interpretations. Cohen (2001) believes that, validity is "whether the test actually measures what is a purport to measure" (p. 525). So, Cohen (2001) suggests a definition of construct validity as such, "this form of validity refers to the degree to which scores on a measure permit inferences about underlying traits, and it examines whether the test is a true reflection of the theory of the trait being measured"(p. 526). Also, Cronbach and Meehle (1955) suggested that whenever the correlation between two tests is high, it can be claimed that the construct validity in the case of the test has been met, but when the correlation between two tests is low, the construct validity is also low.

Evaluation through various methods gives a comprehensive and thorough view of what the learners have achieved during the course of study. The use of multi-methods in test presentation may be rationale to measure and to investigate

the construct validity of the tests. Different perspectives of test facets and validity in general, and construct validity particularly highlighted by many different scholars during the history of language teaching and testing. Baghaei (2009) believed that when a testee receives two test formats from the same tested content, s/he should have the same test results and performance. According to Bachman and Palmer (2010), the method used to elicit testees' language competence imposes some effects on the testees' performances, and the test results. They claimed that "the characteristics of the tasks used are always likely to affect assessment results to some degree, so that there is no assessment that yields only information about the ability want to assess" (p. 64).

Several studies have supported the role of test facets on the construct validity of the tests. Khodadady (2009) also performed a study on 38 senior students of English language teaching at Kurdistan University. The participants were selected both male and female, and their age ranged between 22-35 years. The researcher applied two tests in the study: 1) a traditional multiple-choice item test (MCIT), 2) a schema-based cloze-test. The first test content was selected from the passages which the students had covered during their course of study, and it consisted of sixty items. The deficiency of MCIT in the second test, according to Khodadady, was removed. By schema, the researcher, referred to meaning and semantic. The researcher designed a forty-item cloze with four schemata. He selected two passages from one of the students' books randomly. The designed items included four syntactic schemata: six adjectives, fourteen nouns, one adverb, and fifteen verbs. The two tests were administered in two sessions. At the end of the study, the researcher concluded that the reliability and internal validity of cloze-test was less than multiple-choice test, as the students were not familiar with the cloze passage and items opportunities. The students had to recall the answers of multiple-choice items to fill in the missing parts, but, in the cloze-test, the participants were able to respond the items as the test designer intended. In fact, the purpose was to find out how well the students comprehend the context to which the test designer intended. And, the results showed that answering multiple-choice test requires remembrance of what student have learnt from the given passage, however, schema-based cloze multiple-choice requires reading and understanding the given passage so that the participant select the target schema which was deleted from the text.

Rouhani (2008) conducted a study on 144 EFL students in two universities – Azad University of Khorasgan and Esfahan University- to investigate the validity and discrimination power of C-test on different language proficiency levels. He administrated two tests for two groups of one hundred and forty four EFL students. The first group consisted of 101 students whom received both a C-test and the Michigan test of English Language Proficiency from the same content, and the second group which was consisting of 43 students only received the C-test. The researcher concluded that C-test can be considered as an acceptable and suitable test in the case of construct validity. But, C-test did not appear to distinguish successfully between the participants of the two levels of lower and upper intermediate levels. It, also, failed to categorize the subjects according to their appropriate level of proficiency. However, the researcher found a high reliability in relation to C-test.

A. Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

There were several studies in the case of effects of test facets on the construct validity of the tests. But most of these studies allocated a small part of their researches to examine the effects of test facets on construct validity comprehensively. Most of the pertinent studies lacked the completeness and the wide range of consideration of the effects of test methods on the construct validity of the tests. Another compelling issue is that most teachers prefer discrete-point items in testing because of ease of preparation, and ease of scoring; also most students prefer this type of testing because they are easy to be answered. So, designing and administering discrete-point tests, such as Multiple-choice and True/False will cause the students not to be able to answer the integrative-point tests such as Cloze-test and C-test skillfully from the same content. Although students have the similar competence from a passage, but if the content would be presented to students in different test facets, they may have difficulties in answering different forms of test items.

Taylor (2009) believes that "the familiarity or lack of familiarity with the content and the format of a test is acknowledged to impact on a test taker's performance, potentially leading to an over- or underestimation of the ability of interests" (p. 30). Moreover, integrative-point tests have minute share in the Iranian context. This form of evaluation should be thoroughly used in language testing in order to achieve precise information about students' competence. The main goal of the present study is to investigate the effects of test facets - Multiple-choice, True/False, Cloze-test and C-test- on the testees' performance. Besides, this study seeks to investigate the effects of four test forms on the construct validity of the tests, and to consider the testees' performance in relation to the way of test administration.

B. Research Question

The present study seeks to answer the following question:

- 1) Can test facets have impacts on Iranian EFL test takers' performances in terms of their proficiency level?

C. Research Hypothesis

The aim of the present study is to reveal the effects of test facets-integrative and discrete-point items- on the construct validity of the tests in Iranian EFL students. The results will, therefore, shed lights on the following hypothesis:

- 1) Test facets have impacts on Iranian EFL test takers' performances in terms of their proficiency level.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The subjects of the study were students of three branches of Islamic Azad University in Khouzestan Province, - Dezful, Ahvaz, and Andimeshk. Totally, there were 160 students of 4 classes; one class was third year students at B.A. program of English Translation, another class was in the second year (last term) of A.A. program, and two classes in the first year of A.A to B.A. programs of English Language Teaching courses in the academic years of 2011-2012. The participants' age, both male and female, ranged from 20 to 34. Due to the unequally distributed pattern of students in terms of gender across the universities in the sixth region of the Islamic Azad University, the subjects were 114 female and 46 male English language learners.

To select a homogeneous sample, the researchers administered a proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) to 160 English language students studying at three branches of the university selected based on their availability. After taking the proficiency test, 160 students were categorized into three groups in terms of their proficiency level –upper-intermediate, intermediate, and low. The number of students in upper-intermediate, intermediate, and low levels were: 33, 100, and 27.

B. Instruments

Two main instruments used in the study were: 1) Nelson Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976), 2) three multi-faceted tests to test the three groups of proficiency levels. The researchers used the Nelson proficiency test to decide on homogenizing the selected sample and to specify the proficiency levels of the target sample in three levels. This test included 50 multiple-choice items, and each item was valued 1 point in scoring. 60 minute time span was allocated to test-takers to respond the test under controlled conditions so that participants make their real performance according to their English proficiency level. Those students whose scores fell within the range of +1 SD above and -1 SD below the mean were considered 'the intermediate level'. The scores which ranged below and above intermediate level were regarded as low and upper-intermediate proficiency level respectively. The numbers of participants in the low, intermediate, and upper-intermediate levels of proficiency were: 27, 100, and 33 respectively. The test included different items in English language so that they could cover all the English language elements including structural, lexical, and communicative aspects to show an appropriate image of participants' competence of English language. Also, to trust the reliability and appropriateness of this test to test the proficiency levels of selected samples, the researcher administered the test to 25 students of the selected sample as a pilot study beforehand. After taking the test, the researcher estimated the reliability of the gained data based on KR-21 formula to be 0.85.

After determining the English language proficiency levels of the participants –upper-intermediate, intermediate, and low, the researcher designed a multi-faceted test for each group of proficiency level. The questions were designed from a text extracted from "Exploring New Reading Strategies", volumes 1, 2, and 3 (Birjandi & Mosallanejad, 2010). Low level students were given the designed items from volume 1, intermediate level students took the designed items from volume 2 and finally the designed items from volume 3 were given to upper-intermediate students. So, each student received his/her special multi-faceted test based on the determined proficiency level – three multi-faceted tests for the three determined language proficiency levels.

C. Procedure

At the beginning of the study, Nelson Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was administered to twenty five students from the selected sample to measure the reliability of the provided test items. The reliability of the test was 0.85. Afterwards, the sample took the test to check the difficulty level of the designed multi-faceted tests for each group of proficiency level. The provided time of taking the test was sixty minutes in which the testees were asked to answer 50 multiple-choice items of Nelson proficiency test. Having collecting the exam sheet of the proficiency test the researcher rated the answer sheets. Each item was valued one point. When the tests were scored, three proficiency levels were determined. Those testees whose scores were through the range of +1 SD above and -1 SD below the mean were considered the intermediate level. The scores which ranged below and above intermediate level were considered as low and upper-intermediate proficiency level, respectively. So, the number of participants in upper-intermediate, intermediate, and low level were 33, 100, and 27 respectively.

Then, the researchers administered the multi-faceted tests which were designed by the researchers themselves. First, the pilot study was conducted by the researchers to check the difficulty level of the designed multi-faceted tests for each group of proficiency level. So, the researcher selected 10 students- 5 male and 5 female. After collecting the test sheets, the difficulty level of the tests were calculated for each proficiency level. The goal of calculating such analysis was to see if the designed tests had appropriate difficulty level or not. According to Farhady, Ja'farpur, and Birjandi (2004), "items with facility indexes beyond 0.63 are too easy, and items with facility indexes below 0.37 are too difficult" (p. 101). So, the item difficulty level of each pilot group calculated by 1 minus item facility. The results showed that the designed multi-faceted tests for all three proficiency levels had acceptable difficulty, and there was no need to change or redesign the tests in order to be administered among testees. The item difficulty for low, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels were: 0.44, 0.41, and 0.40 respectively.

In the next step, the researchers implemented the multi-faceted tests for all the three proficiency levels. The testees of each proficiency level received the provided test of each level. Each testee was provided with a paper sheet which included a reading comprehension passage extracted from a text chosen from "Exploring New Reading Strategies", volumes 1, 2, and 3 (Birjandi & Mosallanejad 2010). The test items were designed from the volume 1 for low level, 2 for intermediate, and 3 for upper-intermediate level of proficiency. The test items included 5 multiple-choice items with three or four options, 5 true/false items, 5 items in matching cloze-test, and 5 items in c-test items facet. Participants had 30 minute time to respond to the test items. Also, attempts had been made that the administration procedure meets the requirements of a standard examination situation.

III. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Table 1 displays the mean, standard deviation and variance of participants' scores in Nelson proficiency test before the study and grouping. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the Nelson proficiency test of 25 participants as a pilot study. Also it shows the statistics of this test for the whole samples under study-one hundred and sixty-.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PROFICIENCY TEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Sample	25	29.52	8.76	76.76
Population	160	30.98	9.33	87.23

Upper-intermediate level testees: Test form has an impact on the test takers' performance at upper-intermediate level. In other words, there are significant differences in the performances of language learners of upper-intermediate level as test-takers in different language tests forms. That is at Upper-intermediate level courses different language test forms lead to different performances on the learners' part. According to the obtained data presented in Table 4.3, the mean of C-Test (4.09) is higher than the means of other test forms which are as follows/F (3.91), Cloze-Test (3) and MC (2.88). The descriptive statistics of the learners' performance of upper-intermediate level are presented in table 2.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR 33 STUDENTS IN THE UPPER-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL OF THE PROFICIENCY

Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
M.C	33	2.88	1.083	.188
True/False	33	3.91	.879	.230
Cloze-test	33	3	1.323	.230
C-test	33	4.09	.947	.165

For the comparison of the upper-intermediate level testees and the obtained data (achieved Means of the tests forms) to be drawn, an ANOVA analysis was used. The relevant result is 11.005 which at the level of $P < 0.001$ can be considered significantly meaningful. As a result, it can be inferred that the observed F value is statistically significant.

TABLE 3.
THE ONE-WAY ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	37.909	3	12.636	11.005	0.001
Within Groups	146.970	128			
Total	184.879	131			

The obtained results confirm the difference among Upper-intermediate learners' performances in different language test forms. Finally, following the confirmation of existing the difference, Scheffe Test used in order to determine in which test forms the exact difference in performance exists. The results of Scheffe test are illustrated in table 4. The results of the Scheffe Test, as illustrated in table 4, show that there is a significant difference among the Upper-intermediate learners' obtained scores in test forms of MC, T/F and C-test items. Accordingly, it can be stated that Upper-intermediate learners did better at C-test items than those of the other test forms.

TABLE4.
SCHEFFE TEST: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
M.C tests	True/False	-1.03*	.264	.002
	Cloze-Test	-.12	.264	.976
	C-Test	-1.21*	.264	.000
True/False	M.C Test Cloze-Test	1.03*	.264	.002
	Test	.91*	.264	.010
	C-Test	-.18	.264	.924
Cloze-Test	M.C Test	.12	.264	.976
	True/False	-.91*	.264	.010
	C-Test	-1.09*	.264	.001
C-test	M.C Test	1.21*	.264	.000
	True/False	.18	.264	.924
	Cloze-Test	1.09*	.264	.001

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Intermediate level testees: Test form has an impact on the language learners' performances at intermediate level. In other words, there are significant differences in the performances of language learners of intermediate level in different language test forms. That is, at intermediate level courses different language test forms lead to different performances on the learners' part. Descriptive statistics of the intermediate level testees are shown in table5. According to the data illustrated in this table, it can be observed that T/F (4.22) has the highest Mean among other test forms which are C-Test (3.93), MC (3.06) and Cloze-Test (2.56), respectively.

TABLE5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR 100 STUDENTS IN THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL OF THE PROFICIENCY

Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
M.C	100	3.06	1.229	.123
True/False	100	4.22	.811	.081
Cloze-test	100	2.56	1.653	.165
C-test	100	3.93	.891	.089

Table 6 shows that the observed F value equals 41.36 ($P < 0.001$) which can be considered statistically significant. Based on the obtained data, it can be inferred that there is a significant difference among the intermediate-level learners' scores in different language test forms. To shed light on the issue, it can be stated that learners of intermediate level have achieved different scores on different test forms.

TABLE 6.
THE ONE-WAY ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	176.727	3	58.909	41.365	0.001
Within Groups	563.950	396	1.424		
Total	740.678	399			

As a result, following the confirmation of existing the difference in intermediate level testees' performance, Scheffe Test was used in order to determine where the exact difference lies. The results of Scheffe Test are illustrated in table 7. The results of Scheffe test, concerning the intermediate level testees' performance, show that there is a statistically significant difference between MC test forms scores and that of other test forms scores. In other words, the learners of intermediate level have scored differently in MC test form in contrast to other test forms (T/F, Cloze- Test). Also, there is a significant difference between the scores of T/F and Cloze-Test, and again between Cloze-Test and C-Test. The results show that the learners of intermediate level have performed better on T/F test forms except for C-test.

TABLE7.
SCHEFFE TEST: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
M.C tests	True/False	-1.16*	.169	.000
	Cloze-Test	.50*	.169	.034
	C-Test	-.87*	.169	.000
True/False	M.C Test Cloze-Test	1.16*	.169	.000
	Test	1.66*	.169	.000
	C-Test	.29	.169	.400
Cloze-Test	M.C Test	-.50*	.169	.34
	True/False	-1.66*	.169	.000
	C-Test	-1.37*	.169	.000
C-test	M.C Test	.87*	.169	.000
	True/False	-.29	.169	.400
	Cloze-Test	1.37*	.169	.000

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Low level testees. Test form has an impact on the language learners' performance at low level in a language test. In other words, there is a significant difference among the low-level learners' performances in different test forms. That is, at low level courses, different language test forms lead to different performances on the learners' part. It can be inferred from the data illustrated in table 8 that the mean of the T/F (4.26) is higher than that of other test forms which are as follows: C-Test (4.22), MC (3.85) and Cloze-test: (3.22).

TABLE 8.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR 27 STUDENTS IN THE LOW LEVEL OF THE PROFICIENCY

Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
M.C	27	3.85	.949	.900
True/False	27	4.26	.944	.892
Cloze-test	27	3.22	1.155	1.333
C-test	27	4.22	.974	.949

Following that, a statistical analysis of the obtained Means and the obtained results of low level testees' performance are represented in table 9. As shown in table 9, the observed F value equals 6.133 ($P < 0.001$) which is considered statistically significant. As a result, it can be inferred from the preceding data that there is a statistically significant difference among the low-level learners' performances in terms of different language test forms.

TABLE 9.
THE ONE-WAY ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.741	3	6.247	6.133	0.001
Within Groups	105.926	104	1.019		
Total	124.667	107			

Moreover, Scheffe test was applied in order to determine where the exact difference lies between the means. The results of the Scheffe test are presented in table 10. The results of the Scheffe test concerning the low level testees' performance show that there is a more significant difference among the low-level learners' performances in Cloze-test and C-test than that of other test forms. That is, they had poor performance in integrative tests. However, low-level learners performed meaningfully better at discrete-point tests among which they had the best performance in T/F test form.

TABLE 10.
SCHEFFE TEST: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
M.C tests	True/False	-.41	.275	.534
	Cloze-Test	.63	.275	.161
	C-Test	-.37	.275	.613
True/False	M.C Test Cloze-Test	.41	.275	.534
	Test	1.04*	.275	.004
	C-Test	.04	.275	.999
Cloze-Test	M.C Test	-.63	.275	.161
	True/False	-1.04*	.275	.004
	C-Test	-1.00*	.275	.006
C-test	M.C Test	.37	.275	.613
	True/False	-.04	.275	.999
	Cloze-Test	1.00*	.275	.006

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the obtained data from the present study the researcher concluded that different test formats had impacts on the learners' performance variously at the three levels of language learning-intermediate to advance, intermediate and low. As the tables and the findings obtained suggest the students of intermediate level and upper-intermediate level had the poorest performance in MC test format, while they had done much better in C-Test, T/F, and Cloze-Test. A logical explanation for such phenomenon might be: Due to their vast knowledge of grammar and vocabulary the students of intermediate and advance level may suffer from some sort of misgiving as they find it somehow confusing to choose the correct option in MC test format. Moreover, there are some inevitable exceptions, for instance, a word with different meanings in different contexts, different word category, and different grammatical points, in any language which might be more of a burden on the students' part to distinguish the most suitable option and that results in hesitancy. As the time passes, intermediate and advance level students' knowledge and competence will develop to the point that they will make use of mental strategies in order to process the data and to respond the provided items in each test. Accordingly, as tests will be presented by some integrative test items in as much as they don't have any clue of the possible options, they will read the context, analyze it, and with the processes happening in their mind simultaneously they can find the answer without hesitation. But as mentioned before, students of intermediate and

advance level in discrete- point item tests had low performance because of their hesitation. Indeed, their high level of knowledge ability will drive them to make mistakes as they have to choose the most correct option among the correct options.

The testees' performance with different levels of language abilities and different background knowledge had been affected to some extent that they had different performances in different test formats. For instance, the intermediate and low level testees due to their unfamiliarity with Cloze-Test had poor performance in comparison to other test formats such as MC, T/F, and C-Test. They also had poor performance in comparison to upper-intermediate level testees in Cloze-Test. As mentioned before, the intermediate and low level testees' best performance was in MC, T/F, and C-Test where they were presented with some clues in the context of the test formats such as options or the first half of the stem, thus as they read the context or the options, they recall and choose the correct response. As mentioned before the poorest performance of the intermediate and low level testees was in Cloze-Test, as they had to process some mental abilities and strategies simultaneously in order to answer Cloze-Test items. These mental abilities and strategies which are reading, understanding, activating background knowledge-vocabulary, grammar, knowledge of world- and the ability of contextualization can be considered more of a burden on the testees' part due to their language abilities and their level of language learning as they had to process these mental abilities and strategies simultaneously.

That the upper-intermediate level testees have high performance in integrative tests such as C-Test and Cloze-Test is due to their high mental abilities and strategies that they process simultaneously. But their poor performance in MC tests can be sought in the nature of the MC test format itself, as it presents the testees with two, three, four or more alternatives to choose the correct response, thus it does not take the testees to go through the burden of processing and engaging mental strategies in order to find the correct response, it is just of a little of recalling and sometimes guessing. Moreover, the upper-intermediate level testees' poor performance in MC test format is, on one hand, due to their lack of attention to the clues provided in the stems and/or the other hand due to their over-attention to the provided clues which lead them to make mistakes and/or errors.

The most important outcome of the present study worth considering as it suggest measuring learners' language abilities based on different test formats, resulting in better judgments and decision making concerning the learners' performances. As it should be mentioned that one or two different test formats cannot be assumed reliable measures of the learners' language knowledge, basically, the reliability and validity of a test will be enhanced when the learners' language knowledge be measured based on different test formats, thus a fine judgment of their language abilities can be made.

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Discussions on the University English Teaching Influenced by Traditional Education Mode and the Multimedia Education Mode

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Abstract—The purpose of this paper is to analyze the merits and shortcoming of the traditional education mode and the multimedia education mode. How to supplement the two patterns is the priority which we should think over and explore during teaching. The suggestion that we should improve university English education mode based on making up for one's deficiency by learning from others' strong points for promoting the present university English teaching to adapt our foreign language teaching movement will be figured out in the paper.

Index Terms—traditional education mode, multimedia education mode, leading role

I. INTRODUCTION

The college English has been popularized as a compulsory subject in all universities completely in our country for decades. Our historical culture has play an important role in the world and the international arena proves more demands for English application as a communicative medium, thus the public's expectations for English education will increase with them. Yet it is not hard for us to figure out the traditional English teaching mode has been weak in current environment. How to get rid of the drawbacks of traditional English teaching for adapting to the development of the times, which has become the breaking point for reforming current college English teaching mode. Simultaneously, the rapid moving of computer network provides a new platform for English expansion education and a great chance for reforming the teaching mode as well as some new methods. So how to remove the weakness and absorb the spirit from the traditional teaching mode, and how to explore the new English teaching mode which is connected with international development with the computer network---the front scientific tool, thus the whole application on English of college students will be improved, which is the serious problem.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Traditional Teaching Mode

Teaching mode refers to a stable structure which performs the teaching activity in some environment under the guidance of certain teaching ideas, teaching theory and learning conception. The factors composing teaching activities include teachers, students, text books and media, but in the traditional teaching mode, the phenomenon that emphasized the influence of teachers and ignored the need of students is common. The standard for judging teaching process is focus on whether the teachers prepared their teaching plan seriously and detailed, whether the classes are vivid and rich, whether the teaching procedure is ordered and obviously. The standard for judging teaching results is focus on quantitative assessment. The traditional college English teaching method based on the previous points refers to the speaking of teachers and listening of students, that is, teachers who stand on the podium with a box of chalks and a blackboard are the main-body in class, students who sit at their desks with a pen and a notebook are the sub-body. Therefore, the features of traditional teaching methods can be divided into five parts, one is rigid in the teaching environment and study environment as well as in the teaching procedure; the second is circling the teachers in the classes, less chances left for students to practicing listening and speaking, the third is emphasizing the grammatical knowledge and reading comprehension and ignoring listening and speaking; the forth is teacher-centered flaw, that is teachers are good at teaching in categories that forms by splitting the grammar and vocabulary into fragments, which deviated from the essence of language application and overlooked the practicality; the last, it is lack of disciplines in assigning the independent learning outside the classroom. All of above resulted in the losing interests in studying. In 2007 July, the Ministry of Education promulgated the "Requirements for College English Curriculum", which pointed out obviously that university should improve the single teaching mode which centered the teachers only based on the fully application of modern information techniques to adapt to a new English teaching mode based on the computers and students-centered class, so the education could make its way to personalizing and independence direction.

But the traditional teaching methods are not meaningless, in the natural learning environment that is poor in providing a broad space for students; teachers-centered classroom is the vital trace for our English learning. With the

teaching experience gathered in the years, teachers could grasp the actual level of students's learning generally in the classes, and they could motorize individuals respectively in some scale, adjust the exact contents during the teaching process flexibly without being limited in the teaching plan fixedly, also the teachers can regulate the class atmosphere and the teaching methods at any time in the communication, as well as they can have their free space to display the knowledge and explain the text with their experienced skills and knowledge. When necessary, when the classes are tedious or boring, they can change the teaching procedure and teaching content by adapting to a relative flexible manner to get to the positive class effect, generally they could adjust the practice period for helping students master the knowledge learned just now, we all know that the diligent practice is the vital and only way to learning English well. Additionally, teachers can not only organize the various and colorful activities in the classes in a rather free learning plan, but also create the atmosphere of group learning well. "Requirements for College English Curriculum" made the following demands for the teaching mode focusing on the characteristics of traditional teaching mode: Diversify the teaching modes; informationize the teaching methods; autonomization and personalization are necessary for students learning; create a new pattern which is teacher-guide and student-center; inherit the excellent part from the traditional teaching mode. Thus, we can see the adopting of multimedia teaching mode does not aim to abandon all the contents of traditional teaching mode but to integrate for reaching an optimum result in teaching.

B. Multimedia Teaching Mode

Multimedia teaching refers to the special teaching procedure which applies the multimedia and computer to the process and need aids from multimedia software made previously to carry out teaching activities in the class, also named after CAI, computer assisted instruction. Multimedia computer widens the teaching space instructed by computers, enriches the resource of college English teaching, stimulates the activity and initiative of students and bring us good learning consequences with its vivid expressing manner and abundant language environment. "Requirements for College English Curriculum" pointed out: "every university should explore and built up listening-speaking teaching mode under the network environment based on the self conditions and the English level of students; do the teaching and training practice on line directly, whether on local area line or school line. Extensive reading and literacy translation teaching can perform in both the common classroom and the internet environmental classroom." The vital feature of the multimedia technology is characterized by the rich resource in teaching and the diversity of vision, multimedia can combine the words and images with the sound to show the result in three dimensions on the screen. Multimedia courseware is complex in species, integrate in fusing the graphic and audio-visual, easy to operate and large in performing. When students do the college English practice with multimedia courseware in learning, they could immerse themselves into a free studying space vividly which is mixing sound transmission, text understanding and video displaying, so the sensory stimulation will promote to improve a better learning outcome. Additionally, multimedia has an incomparable nature in imitating language environment. The integration of desired sound, vivid images, flash animation in the process of producing the courseware production can approach the reality on a large scale, which could bring an immersive feeling to the students. The sharing of network resources makes possible for students to study with multimedia computer because it expands the time and geographically endlessly and break out the barrier made by time and distance. Interactivity of resource application stimulates students' activity, initiative and innovation constantly, so it satisfies the students with curiosity for knowledge and extends the students'sensible space and exploration field. All in all, the merits of multimedia computer concern on the abundance of information, the rich materials and the diverse forms, which would offer us the possibility of autonomous studying and would serve a good way relatively for exploring their own proper learning method comparing with the static method teachers performed.

Compared with the traditional teaching mode, the multimedia computer has unparalleled advantages, but it also has its limitations as following: first, multimedia teaching ignored the teachers as a guide in the class, multimedia courseware became the core of learning and led the students' learning dynamics. Under this situation, the students lack the necessary emotional communication in the class, and the class changed into the single knowledge flow from machine to people. Second, ignoring the role of teachers is to exaggerate the students' initiative in the class actually, which makes college English learning turn into the experimental class cut down the interest of students. Third, when the teachers control the mouse only, just demonstrate the courseware content in the class, they just change their identity from teacher into a computer operator, or even a dispensable participant, it is ridiculous; and it is hard for students to stir the imagination because the multimedia courseware, teaching procedure and learning contents were all pre-designed by teachers. If the network class becomes a simple mechanical operation and a tedious man-machine talking, the students only have a scanty understanding when the class finishes. The results deviate from the application of high technology in our plan. We can summarize easily that the advantages of multimedia computer technology are imitating a realistic language environment with the mixed stimulating from the use of auditory, visual and other sensory, but we cannot avoid the negative influences such as the learning effects should give way to the learning feeling, the contains of learning would be weakened, the attention to knowledge would be distracted. We must admit that multimedia technology is only aided teaching tool in presentation. If students put too much attention on the simple presentation of new things and the displaying of knowledge, if students put too much absorbance into the obvious color, pictures and animations, if students are only attracted by those comprehensive stimulus, they would waste their attention on the presentation and be misled by the displaying of kinds of multimedia skills and techniques, so the ignoring of learning contains is not inevitable.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Exploration on multimedia teaching mode in CUST---reading comprehension teaching as example

In Changchun University of Science and Technology, the English teachers tried to immerse multimedia computer teaching mode into college English reading in order to improve the reading skills and level of students under the new situation and to deal with the problems brought by large-class teaching, and build up an integral and reasonable assessment system simultaneously for inspiring the studying interest buried in the deep soul of students, then the widening the horizon is the subsequence result maybe. So we took the multimedia computer teaching mode as a sample from two aspects as following:

Grading teaching in our university has been implemented for many years, "rule of three levels" is the usual way in teaching. The rule of three levels refers to a dividing measure based on the marks students were graded in a test, three levels together, a level represents the students who have the high marks, C level represents the students who have the low marks, the rest parts belong to C level. Accordingly, B level has a large portion in the three, sixty percentage nearly. The two extremes occupy twenty percentages respectively. We combine the grading teaching with multimedia teaching mode, the grading teaching could satisfy the individual need in a large scale and the multimedia teaching mode could reach the individualized teaching actually. So how to improve the teaching effect in the large-class of grading teaching under multimedia teaching mode is the point and the problem need to be resolved.

One is the combining of teaching in large-class and counseling in small-group. Our university finished building up many multimedia computer classrooms in east campus and west campus by the end of 2010, and the teaching in large-class and counseling in small-group mode is gradual ripen. As to the extensive reading lessons, the multimedia teaching CD-ROM matching with the English text books are adopted in our school, and we take the large-class teaching with computer screen (undoubtedly, there are still many teachers standing in front of blackboard for imputing language to students). And for some lessons that need communicating among teacher and students, for example, oral English, discussion class and audio-visual lessons, are took the small-group learning.

The other is the combining of classroom teaching and self-learning. Teachers are in charge of organizing the classroom teaching. During the face to face communication of teachers and students, the duty of teacher is to create a flexible teaching plan, to highlight the reading methods and learning skills under the guidance of the syllabus focusing on the reading needs of students. Teacher also should help and monitor students with their task by explaining, supervising and checking. The self-learning method featured by non-regular and multi-form could help students stretch their weekly English classroom learning time into non-regular, multi-directions learning space to accommodate students who are in different levels in different way with different reading demands and aims to show the personalized teaching principle.

In the half year empirical study around one hundred ninety three freshmen who are in B levels in our university by investing the situation under the multimedia computer teaching mode with questionnaire. The finding is that one hundred seventy six students prefer to the multimedia teaching mode than the traditional mode. New reading mode is circling around the multimedia teaching, which require the students to be accustomed of self-learning. The consequence confirmed that this requirement did not trouble the experimenters, on the contrary, improved them to perform the effective learning plan designed carefully beforehand and arranged the studying time by them. We got a satisfied result that the experimenter agreed in getting aid from this teaching mode. And one hundred fifty one students were sure of enhancing on the reading skills and reading range. Reading ability was strengthened in the process. Integrate learning ability was improved as well as the understanding about the western culture and language history was enriched in the learning procedure.

But nothing could reach the acme of perfection at once. The multimedia teaching mode brought some problems to the teachers and students in the experimental period yet. Network multimedia teaching mode should be constrained by network and computers. Self-learning ability is a weak part for students who suffered exam-oriented education so many years. Small-group counseling class and small internetwork audiovisual class overlook the role of teachers. The current evaluation system conflicted with the teaching strategy. In addition to the previous points, the financial problem occurred with researching online for information is a burden for some students. So we should continue researching on the project and point out some key to our teaching mode.

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Integration of traditional teaching mode and multimedia teaching mode

Based on analysis, multimedia computer teaching has superior advantages as a new type teaching mode accordingly, simultaneously some shortcomings are unavoidably. As to the traditional teaching mode, although there are many undesirable aspects, it is not good for nothing at all. In the reforming of teaching mode process, we must apply the reasonable sections to the teaching practice appropriately. Traditional mode and multimedia mode are not completely opposed to each other; a great complementary exists between them. We should combine them into integrity in order to cultivate the talented students who hold steady essential language skills and have the ability to communicate with language frequently.

Firstly, the emotional communication of traditional teaching mode should be immersed into multimedia computer

teaching mode. Teachers should demonstrate the teaching activity with the courseware flexibly in the class; they should dig out the emotional content of curriculum effectively at the same time. Teachers could be sensible to strengthen the emotional communication at right timing, enhance the emotional joint between teachers and students, and change the method and contains with the changing of class atmosphere. Thus students can not only play their initiative role but also absorb the knowledge effectively. Secondly, the tasks that students must fulfill during the multimedia teaching process should be refined. Cultivating the self-learning ability is the key to new multimedia computer teaching mode though, the students who were taught by knowledge-filled teaching mode for many years cannot reach for the self-management level at all, and they are not habitual of doing decision-making by themselves as soon as they go to the college. They rely on the guidance from teachers usually; they are good at obeying and being controlled so they dare not to study on major subjects freely and initiatively. So teachers must design the task delicately with a planned, phrased method to distribute step by step according to the actual needs of teaching. In this process, students always are in the active state of learning knowledge and exploring the unknown world before they complete the missions. In details, the tasks can be divided into "previewing assignment" "class target" "reviewing homework", teachers should support different requirement and learning progress focusing on different students generally according to kinds of tasks and different English level, which could be called as individualized learning. So the students could realize the personality and initiative by accomplishing their own studying target under guidance of teachers. Thirdly, the assessment measures should be perfected in the multimedia computer teaching mode. Teaching assessment plays an important role in teaching management, judging the progress and quality of students, ensuring the teaching quality and so on. What's more, the fairness of the assessment and the results of evaluation could influence students in many ways, even including the forming and reforming of their worldview and values. The duality of teaching assessment in teaching mode reforming could not be ignored. In addition to the midterm and final examinations that value the proficiency of students, it is necessary to have routine assessment for learning. Moreover, the assessment between students, the assessment between teachers and students, and the self-assessment are all vital too. In order to improve students to study hard and effectively, we can use many ways in the flexible teaching mode, for example, recording classroom activities and the extracurricular activities, interviewing, and discussing, forming the study recorder, evaluating and supervising the learning process etc. Last, the requirements for the teachers are the essential factors for performing the multimedia teaching mode smoothly. Teachers should hold a profound knowledge and professional theory level; teachers should enjoy the greater hardships in preparing the teaching information assembling and in classifying the teaching materials. Teachers should grasp the developed multimedia application techniques, and they should have higher ability to control the classes and experienced skills to explain the extensive English knowledge. Only in this way can the teachers enlighten and inspire the students with colorful artistic teaching methods and superb lectures by the advanced multimedia teaching facilities. Thus the learning motivation could be improved to get the consequence that college English teaching level and learning efficiency could be enhanced ultimately. Multimedia is not the reducer for English teaching, but the engine. It would not only lead the teaching speed of teachers, but also promote the English learning pace of students.

"Requirements for College English Curriculum"(revised edition) published by Ministry of Education points out that "all universities should make use of modern information technology entirely and take new teaching mode based on computer media teaching and traditional class teaching for reforming the single teaching mode based on teacher-center teaching mode. The new teaching mode should serve students the free space not to be limited by time and place with the support of modern information technology, so as to developing to personality and initiative." We all know that personality and initiative are the educational goal for the public, "education should aims at mastering how to learn, and when mastering, students could learn by themselves, then they could absorb the new knowledge, new techniques positively and accept the new challenge, new task bravely."(Wen Qiufang,2002, P.11) The multimedia teaching mode based on studying themselves are worthy of encouraging, but the traditional guidance of teachers in the learning process is not be ignored easily. Multimedia is a tool only, whether it could get a better effect or not is still a problem in teaching, the result depends on how teachers apply it to the teaching process. Appropriate arrangement could expand and stretch the class; conversely, it would affect the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers need to deal with the language input and output relationship for the learners in the teaching process when organizing the class activities, as well as they need to combine the traditional teaching method and multimedia teaching mode together in order to promote the students to digest and absorb the knowledge they learned and turned the knowledge into practicing after they finish guiding and explaining the knowledge to students in the class.

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A Comparative Study of Iran's TEFL and English Translation UEEs: Do High-stakes Tests Assess Critical Thinking?

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Abstract—Tests that require intellectual work and critical thinking increase students' achievement as well as motivation. The University Entrance Exams (UEEs) in Iran which are multiple-choice high-stakes tests and are primarily designed to screen the candidates for postgraduate studies are no exception. This paper aims at comparatively investigating Iran's MA (Master's of Art) UEEs of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and English translation through the use of Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) taxonomy of the cognitive domain. With this aim, the (2007-2011) TEFL and English translation UEE test items of the technical knowledge sections were content analyzed in terms of the taxonomy of educational objectives using a detailed checklist developed based on the respective classification of cognitive objectives. The findings showed slight differences between TEFL and English translation UEEs in terms of critical thinking skills. The English translation test items pertained to critical cognitive skills in general and evaluation in particular to a larger extent. On the whole, the degree of critical thinking skills in the TEFL and English translation UEEs were not so desirable and the majority of the test items revealed lower-order thinking skills. Therefore, it is necessary to both reconsider teaching process and to promote critical thinking skills in constructing test items.

Index Terms—taxonomy of the cognitive domain, critical thinking, higher-order thinking skills, high-stakes tests

I. INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking is generally used as an umbrella term for variously defined discourse of higher-order thinking; the definitional literature base is broad (Pithers, 2000). Interchangeably used with terms such as problem solving, decision-making, informal logic or reasoning, and creative thinking, critical thinking is commonly referenced with context-dependent understanding (Facione, 1990; Gibson, 1995). Based upon expert consensus statements that arose from a paneled discussion of philosophers, educators, and scientists, Facione (1990) stated that critical thinking integrates cognitive skills and affective dispositions. The cognitive skills that are required for critical thinking are evaluation, analysis, interpretation, inference, explanation and self-regulation. Among the thinking skills, analysis, evaluation and inference are considered core skills and with increased proficiency of these skills, one is considered adept at critical thinking.

Critical thinking is not a body of knowledge itself; though having domain-specific knowledge allows a person to make reasonable judgments in specific contexts successfully. Reasonably, it is a purposeful application of thinking strategies within a body of knowledge or experience to arrive at a conclusion (Facione, 1990). In addition to being proficient in a specific skill, one must have the ability to use the skill even if it is not needed at the moment as well; this is termed *affective disposition*. These attitudes and habits of mind work together with cognitive skills to form a critical thinker. Instances of affective dispositions include being habitually disposed to engage in critical judgment, being able to make that judgment in multiple contexts for a variety of purposes, contributing to fair-minded analysis and decision-making, and promoting intellectual freedom in order to advance carefully reasoned investigations into any matter of social concern (Facione, 1990. p. 24).

The most general and recent of approaches to critical thinking is Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) division of learning including learning for *recall* and learning for *transfer*. Teaching for transfer, enables students not only to remember and understand but also to use knowledge in more complex ways (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). According to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), a taxonomy can provide a wide range of important learning objectives and cognitive skills that students need to attain. For any content domain, students should know some concepts and facts and in some way be able to think and reason with these facts and concepts as well. Every time students solve new problems with their knowledge, they are transferring and transforming what they learned, and their understanding increases (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

Studies have revealed that holding students accountable for higher-order thinking by using assessments that entail critical thinking and intellectual work increases students' achievement as well as motivation. Such increases have been revealed on various achievement outcomes, comprising classroom grades, standardized test scores, and research instruments, as the following studies illustrate.

Meece and Miller (1999) studied elementary students' goal orientations, strategy use and perceived competence in reading and writing. Throughout the research project, some of the 3rd grade teachers stated that their students did well in their skills and strategies on reading and writing tests but could not transfer those skills to actual reading and writing beyond the tests. After evaluating the 3rd grade assignments they found that most of the students focused on skills like recall, and teacher control.

In a study conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessments were given to a range of students. These assessments were derived from samples of students in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades throughout the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). In the study of these test scores, Wenglinsky found that teaching critical thinking is associated with higher test scores (Wenglinsky, 2000, 2002, 2003). Wenglinsky stated that, "instruction emphasizing advanced reasoning skills promotes high student performance" (Wenglinsky, 2004).

A study by Athari, Sharif, Nematbakhsh and Babamohammadi (2009) was conducted to evaluate critical thinking skills and its connection with the achieved rank in university entrance exam in the students of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. In the academic year of 2006-2007, 89 students who entered Isfahan University of Medical Sciences were randomly selected, and their critical thinking skills were evaluated. The data was gathered using California standard test of critical thinking skills. The scores obtained were regarded as criteria for students' critical thinking skills and were investigated considering their relationship with the students' ranks in university entrance exam. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between the rank in university entrance exam and the overall score of critical thinking. Concerning the categories of critical thinking, there was a significant relationship between the category of inference and student's rank in the entrance exam, with a relatively low correlation. Except for the study mentioned, most studies conducted in Iran were focused on evaluating English textbooks using Bloom's cognitive taxonomy. For example, Riazi and Mosallanejad (2010), using Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives, studied the types of learning objectives in high school and pre-university English textbooks in Iran. The researchers concluded that the most prevalent learning objectives in the textbooks were lower-order cognitive skills. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the evaluation of higher-order thinking skills in high-stakes tests using Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) cognitive taxonomy has been left largely untouched in Iran. Therefore, this paper is arguably a pioneering work which aims to probe into critical thinking skills in UEEs in terms of Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) taxonomy of educational objectives.

Cognitive Taxonomies

Cognitive taxonomies are used for categorizing learning targets into different levels of complexity. Various taxonomies have been developed for classifying learning targets. Despite its age, the *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain* (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) is still used in many curricula and teaching materials. Anderson and Krathwohl published a revision of the Bloom *handbook* in 2001. The main difference between the original and the revised taxonomy is that the revised version has two dimensions—Knowledge and Cognitive Process dimension. The *Knowledge* dimension categorizes the kind of knowledge students deal with: facts, concepts, procedures, or metacognition. The Cognitive Process dimension is very similar to Bloom's original taxonomy except that the nouns in the taxonomy are changed to verbs including *Remember*, *Understand*, *Apply*, *Analyze*, *Evaluate* and *Create* and the order of the last two levels is reversed.

Recently, Marzano and Kendall (2007), similar to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), have distinguished knowledge from types of thinking. They identified three domains of knowledge: Information, Mental Procedures, and Psychomotor Procedures. Their thinking processes form a hierarchy of levels including: Retrieval, Comprehension, Analysis, Knowledge Utilization, Metacognition, and Self-System Thinking. Furthermore, the cognitive demands of many accountability tests are analyzed with Webb's (2002) Depth of Knowledge levels. Webb introduced four levels to categorize the cognitive processes required to do various cognitive activities: Recall and Reproduction, Skill and Concept, Strategic Thinking, and Extended Thinking.

What all these cognitive taxonomies obviously have in common is that as the cognitive levels get more complex, students must progressively deal with more pieces of information and more intricate relationships among them. Since Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) cognitive taxonomy has been designed for analyzing and developing assessments, standards, and teaching, this paper seeks to examine UEE test items in terms of the *Analyze*, *Evaluate*, and *Create* levels (critical thinking skills) of the cognitive taxonomy.

II. THE PRESENT STUDY

The present paper attempts to compare the M.A. UEEs of TEFL and English translation of the academic years 2007-2011 in terms of critical thinking skills, i.e. *Analysis*, *Evaluation* and *Creation*. The evaluation took place with regard to the cognitive levels of Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) cognitive taxonomy. To be more specific, the following research questions were raised:

- a) Which of the cognitive skills are more prevalent in TEFL and English translation M.A.UEEs?

- b) How are critical thinking skills represented in TEFL and English translation M.A.UEEs?
- c) How could the critical thinking skills in TEFL and English translation UEEs be compared?

III. METHOD

This study utilized qualitative content analysis, "a research method used for the subjective interpretation of the content of texts through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p: 278). This process involved condensing raw data into categories based on valid inference and interpretation. Using a detailed checklist developed by the researchers based on Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) cognitive taxonomy, the test items belonging to the specialized courses of TEFL and English translation M.A. UEEs of the years 2007-2011, were content analyzed and coded in terms of the cognitive processes. The frequency and percentage of the cognitive process in general and critical thinking skills in particular were then calculated. Since the nouns describe types of knowledge and the verbs the intended cognitive process, we examined the nouns and verbs in each question or exercise in relation to the cognitive process categories. Intra-rater reliability was measured by reanalyzing the standards three weeks after the initial analysis to ensure that they were placed in the correct cells in the taxonomy. The Kappa coefficient statistic proposed by Cohen (1960) was used to calculate intra-rater agreement. The values of Kappa Measure of Agreement for the TEFL and English translation standards were 0.80 and 0.85 respectively with a significance of $p < .0005$. The results were finally compared in order to determine if critical thinking skills differed in each field.

IV. INSTRUMENT

An in-depth checklist was developed based on the respective classification of educational objectives by the researchers (see Appendix). This checklist comprises two sections: one section consists of the types of knowledge introduced by Anderson and Krathwohl which includes: *Factual knowledge*, *Conceptual knowledge*, *Procedural knowledge*, and *Metacognitive knowledge*. The other section is composed of the learning objectives; the six cognitive processes including: *Remember*, *Understand*, *Apply*, *Analyze*, *Evaluate*, and *Create* along with their sub-categories. The underlying continuum in the cognitive process dimension is cognitive complexity, ranging from low cognitive complexity in *Remember* to the highest cognitive complexity in *Create*. The dimensions form a two-dimensional Taxonomy Table with 24 cells. The six rows in the taxonomy table represent the main categories in the cognitive process dimension and the four columns depict the main categories in the knowledge dimension. The sub-categories in each dimension define the categories and were not used separately.

M.A. TEFL and English translation UEEs

Loschert (2000) describes high-stakes tests as assessments in which "students, teachers, administrators, and entire school systems must account for student performance" (p. 1). Tests that are used to make high-stakes decisions are normally standardized assessments, such as the university entrance examinations. The M.A. TEFL and English translation entrance exams which are held annually are both multiple choice tests composed of two sections. The first section which measures students' language proficiency includes grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The second part which is concerned with the purpose of this study is the technical knowledge test. Five sets of Iran's M.A. university entrance examination technical knowledge tests germane to the fields of TEFL and English translation from 2007 to 2011 were examined. Overall, the TEFL M.A. knowledge tests address three broad domains: (1) Teaching methodology, (2) Language testing, and (3) Linguistics. The technical part of the English translation M.A. tests contains items that measure five subject matters as: (1) Linguistics, (2) Lexicology, (3) Theories and principles of translation, (4) Contrastive analysis, and (5) Practice of translation. A description of the TEFL and English translation technical knowledge tests along with their codes is provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTION OF 2007- 2011 TEFL AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION UEE KNOWLEDGE TESTS

TEFL knowledge test Domains	Number of tests	Codes
Methodology	180	M (1-170)
Language Testing	90	T (1-85)
Linguistics	90	L (1-85)
Total	360	
English Translation Knowledge test domains		
Theories and principles of translation	115	TT (1-115)
Linguistics	60	L (1-60)
Contrastive analysis	55	CA (1-55)
Lexicology	55	Le (1-55)
Practice of translation	35	PT (1-35)
Total	320	

V. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The TEFL and English translation UEEs yielded mixed results concerning critical thinking skills. It seems that some tests contain questions asking students to think at a higher level, whereas others mostly assess lower-level knowledge material. After the analysis and classification of the test items of both fields in the taxonomy checklist, the following results were obtained.

M.A. TEFL UEEs

Table 2 presents the cognitive demand and content in the technical knowledge tests of the 2007 – 2011 entrance examinations including teaching methodology, language testing and linguistics. The majority of the test items assessed lower-order thinking skills at levels 1 and 2 (*Remember* and *Understand*) with the frequency of 51.2% and 29.7% respectively; in addition, test items focused on conceptual knowledge (59.4%) to the largest extent.

TABLE 2
EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN TEFL 2007-2011 ENTRANCE EXAMS

Cognitive processes			Types of knowledge	
Remember	51.2%	83.7%	Factual Knowledge	36.4%
Understand	29.7%		Conceptual knowledge	59.4%
Apply	2.8%		Procedural knowledge	4.2%
Analyze	11.6%	16.3%	Metacognitive knowledge	0
Evaluate	4.7%			
Create	0			

Table 3 presents the percentage of the cognitive processes that were targeted in each technical knowledge test domain.

TABLE 3
COGNITIVE PROCESSES IN TEFL TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE TEST DOMAINS

Domains	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Methodology	58.3%	32.3%	0	7.7%	1.7%	0
Testing	46.2%	18.7%	10.9%	12.1%	12.1%	0
Linguistics	41.6%	35.9%	0	19.1%	3.4%	0

According to the Table, language testing was the only course which focused on the cognitive process *Apply* (10.9%) and critical thinking skills (24.2%) to the largest extent. This is due to the fact that some test items in the language testing course required mathematical computations. In addition, higher-order thinking skills were of concern by allocating 16.3% of the test items to these skills. For example, the following is a question selected from the language testing section:

Among the following, the most satisfactory reading test item is characterized by-----.

1- D=0.50, FV=0.75, $r_{pb}=0.25$ 2- D=0.50, FV=0.85, $r_{pb}=0.60$
 3- D=0.65, FV=0.50, $r_{pb}=0.50$ 4- D=0.75, FV=0.45, $r_{pb}=0.80$

This question is assessing students at the evaluation level of thinking. They must make judgment based on criteria and standards. If students who take this test are not taught how to answer critical thinking questions, then they'll be hard-pressed to deal with questions of this ilk. The type of knowledge required is conceptual since students must know the principles and structure of the satisfactory item. At the other end of the spectrum are those test items with questions asked at a very low level of thinking. The tests in the teaching methodology section were mainly of this type by allocating 58.3% of its test items to lower-order cognitive skills and only 9.4% was dedicated to critical thinking processes. For instance, consider this question from the teaching methodology section:

-----is often cited as a factor leading to the insufficiency of error analysis.

1- Accuracy 2- Avoidance 3- Inter-language 4- Positive transfer

This particular question is asked at a very low level of *Recall*, that is, a student either knows it or doesn't. No amount of critical thinking is going to help with a question like this. A student needs to have a teacher instruct him or he has to read it in a book somewhere. Factual knowledge is needed to answer the question. That is to say, this item requires the knowledge of specific information. The critical thinking skill *Analysis* was mostly emphasized in the linguistics technical knowledge test section with the frequency of 19.1%. An example of this kind from linguistics can be:

In the sentence "the boy put the red brick on the wall", -----.

1- The subject of "put" is a source
 2- "the red brick" is the theme
 3- There is no phrase representing the goal
 4- There is a phrase representing the instrument

In this example, students need to break the statement into its constituent parts and determine how the parts are related to one another and to the overall structure. It involves differentiating and distinguishing the parts in terms of *theta roles*. This item involves conceptual knowledge. In other words, the student must know the interrelationships among the basic elements within the sentence.

On the whole, lower-order thinking skills (83.7%) were the hotbed of TEFL UEE test items and merely 16.3% of the test items constituted critical thinking skills. Moreover, level 6, *Create* was totally absent in the exams.

M.A. English translation UEEs

Table 4 presents the cognitive demand and content of the knowledge tests pertaining to the English translation 2007-2011 UEEs. Similar to the TEFL exams, as it is clear in Table 4, the weight of emphasis was on lower-order thinking skills (76.5%), whereas the English translation exams acknowledged the significance of critical cognitive skills (23.8%) slightly more than the TEFL field.

TABLE 4
EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION 2007-2011 ENTRANCE EXAMS

Cognitive processes		Types of knowledge	
Remember	53.7%	Factual Knowledge	37.5%
Understand	22.8%	Conceptual knowledge	61.9%
Apply	0	Procedural knowledge	0.6%
Analyze	10.6%	Metacognitive knowledge	0
Evaluate	12.9%		
Create	0		

The *Apply* and *Create* categories were completely ignored in the test items. Similar to TEFL conceptual knowledge, 61.9% constituted more than half of the test items. In addition, metacognitive knowledge was totally absent. The educational objectives in each technical knowledge test domain are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION KNOWLEDGE TEST DOMAINS

Domains	<i>Remember</i>	<i>Understand</i>	<i>Apply</i>	<i>Analyze</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>	<i>Create</i>
Lexicology	25.4%	36.4%	0	38.2%	0	0
Practice of Translation	11.4%	0	0	0	88.6%	0
Linguistics	65%	21.7%	0	8.3%	5%	0
Theories and Principles of Translation	77.4%	20.8%	0	0.9%	0.9%	0
Contrastive Analysis	47.3%	29.1%	0	12.7%	10.9%	0

As evident in Table 5, it is important to note the frequency of occurrence of *Evaluate* (88.6%) which is central to critical thinking, in the practice of translation domain, while it was totally ignored and notoriously absent in the lexicology and theories and principles of translation. Lower-order thinking skills were more prevalent in tests pertaining to theories and principles of translation (98.2%).

It is commonly believed that translation process is a complex thinking process (Neubert, 1991; Shreve & Koby, 2003; Dimitrova, 2005). If students are to translate proficiently, they should learn how to think efficiently when translating. The test items on the practice of translation section were all of the same type requiring students to choose the most appropriate English or Persian translation. In such questions students should make judgments based on specific criteria such as the quality of translated statements in terms of the vocabulary selected, structure, literary devices, etc. Thus, such test items fall into the fifth level of the taxonomy, which is *Evaluate*. The contrastive analysis part was also concerned with the higher-order thinking skills *Analysis* (12.7%) and *Evaluate* (10.9%). The following example was taken from this part:

The relationship between "John met Ted at school" and "they went to the movies together" is established through-----.

1- reference 2- conjunction 3- substitution 4- lexical cohesion

To answer this question a student needs to be able to analyze conceptual knowledge. The reader is to identify the elements of a situation and recognize how they relate to one another. Critical thinking skills would be beneficial for students taking tests of this nature. The Lexicology section included a large amount of analysis level test items (38.2%). A number of test items required the analysis of lexeme constituent parts (affixes), such as the item below:

Which word contains one derivational and one inflectional morpheme?

1- Director 2- Proposal 3- Reconsiders 4- Unusual

The student needs to analyze the items to see which possesses the required morphemes. Therefore, it is placed in the "Analyze conceptual knowledge" cell in the taxonomy.

Comparison of TEFL and English Translation UEEs in terms of Critical Thinking Skills

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of lower and higher-order thinking skills in TEFL and English translation UEEs.

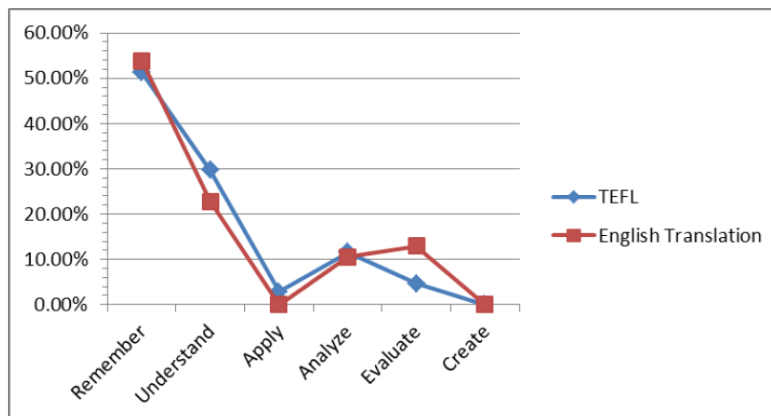


Figure 1 Percentage of cognitive skills in TEFL & English translation UEEs

Although critical thinking skills are of much concern, the mastery of the lower-order levels of thinking is necessary to move to some higher levels of thinking. For instance, to evaluate information, one needs to know and comprehend the information first. It is worth noting that the notion *cumulative hierarchy* has been removed from the taxonomy so that a student may use a higher-order thinking skill without a lower-order one (Anderson, 2005, p. 106). For instance, a student may apply a specific law or principle without necessarily understanding it. Cognitive complexity at a lower level may be much greater than at a higher level. The two lower-order thinking skills—*Remember* and *Understand*—were largely focused in both fields. Remember-level questions which constituted more than half of the test items generally assessed whether or not students can recall information that has been taught. The answers to these tests would be straightforward, with only the correct answer provided without explanation. The most frequent level of thinking known as *Understand* is when students demonstrate understanding and comprehension of what has been taught. This type of thinking includes inferring, comparing, classifying, exemplifying and explaining. *Apply* as the third lower-order thinking skill, the type of skill in which students demonstrate the ability to use knowledge that has been learned previously and apply that knowledge to new contexts and situations.

Each of the three lower-order thinking skills is a foundation for the critical, higher levels of thinking: *Analyze*, *Evaluate*, and *Create*. Sometimes skipping levels can cause one to stumble in using critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are not skills that can be studied or memorized. They are skills that must be learned and for students to succeed on such assessments, these skills must be learned in advance in the classroom and from teaching materials. As depicted in the figure, the critical skill *Evaluate* was mostly observed in the English translation field by having 12.9% of its items devoted to this skill. *Analysis* was more or less equally emphasized and the highest level *Create* was completely ignored in both fields.

VI. CONCLUSION

The finding to emerge from the present study is that the most frequent cognitive process emphasized in M.A. TEFL and English translation UEEs were lower-order cognitive skills. In terms of critical thinking skills, TEFL UEEs addressed the significance of these skills, i.e. evaluate and analyze to the largest extent. The highest thinking skills *Create* was totally absent in both fields.

One of the generally acknowledged weaknesses of Iran's education system is its over-reliance on teacher-centered instructional methodologies involving rote-memorization (Riazi & Mosalanejad, 2010). Since the development of critical thinking skills addresses this weakness and aims to supersede pedagogies that promote intellectual passivity with approaches that foster students' thinking skills, one may reasonably wonder why there have not been greater efforts or success in spreading critical thinking pedagogy across the curriculum or throughout the education system in Iran.

The result of this study may have useful implications for, test developers, teachers and researchers. First and foremost, professors are recommended to provide students with critical thinking instruction and activities and help them to achieve their goals. Secondly, this study provides tests developer with some useful information that can help revise the TEFL and English translation M.A. UEEs. And thirdly, the study indicates that test developers should change the content of the test by employing more critical thinking approaches.

APPENDIX. CHECKLIST INCORPORATING THE TAXONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Cognitive processes	Types of Knowledge			
	Factual knowledge	Conceptual knowledge	Procedural knowledge	Metacognitive knowledge
Remember				
1- Recognizing pieces of information				
2- Recalling previous information				
Understand				
1- Interpreting pieces of information				
2- Exemplifying, stating specific examples of a general concept				
3- Classifying information in to certain categories				
4- Summarizing an abstract or general theme				
5- Inferring and finding a pattern within a series of instances.				
6- Comparing and detecting the similarities and differences.				
7- Explaining and constructing a cause and effect model				
Apply				
1- Executing and carrying out procedures on a familiar task				
2- Implementing and selecting a procedure to perform an unfamiliar task				
Analyze				
1- Differentiating and discriminating information in terms of relevance and importance				
2- Organizing information and identifying how the elements fit together into a coherent structure				
3- Attributing, Knowing the intention underlying a message				
Evaluate				
1- Checking and testing the inconsistencies and fallacies of an operation or a product				
2- Critiquing and judging an operation based on external criteria				
Create				
1- Generating alternative solutions to a problem				
2- Planning or developing a plan to solve a problem				
3- Producing an carrying out a plan for solving a problem				

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The Effect of Teaching Paragraph Structure Rules on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Ability

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Abstract—"Reading is useful for language acquisition" (Harmer, 2007, p.99) and more or less it affects different aspects of the learner's life. Reading and writing are two literacy skills which are interconnected, therefore, to become a good reader an understanding of the writing styles is needed. The current research focused on the interrelationship between two literacy skills; reading and writing. According to Rosenblatt's (1988) "transactions theory" which concentrates on the similarities between reading and writing and also, the Harwood's (2002) "lexical approach" which concerns the significance of genre analysis on facilitating the teaching process, the researcher conducted the study on instructing different writing genre characteristics to the learners in reading classes at the paragraph level and its effectiveness on improving the reading comprehension ability of the Iranian intermediate EFL learners was investigated. In order to implement the current research, two groups of homogenized intermediate participants were selected, one as the experimental and the other as the control group and after exercising the treatment, the mean scores of the extracted data from both groups were compared by running independent sample t-test and finally, the study came to this conclusion that these two kinds of treatments had significant difference and the students who were taught reading strategies accompanied by paragraph writing structure rules outperformed the control group which just received common reading strategies.

Index Terms—reading comprehension ability, paragraph structure rules, writing genres

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension ability has been the focus of research among most language teaching scholars. Reading skill is considered to be the most critical and essential ability for students in both classroom settings and real life environments (Carrell, 1989, & Grabe and Stoller, 2002). Therefore, one of the many challenges in learning a new language is learning to comprehend the reading texts of that language. "Reading is useful for language acquisition" (Harmer, 2007, p.99) and more or less it affects different aspects of the learner's life.

There exist many strategies that can be utilized in the process of reading comprehension. Skillful readers do not employ just one reading strategy to comprehend the reading texts; they hold a choice of strategies and utilize distinct strategies at various places in a passage. They shift strategies while the reading text necessitates (e.g., Brown et al., 1983; Levin & Pressley, 1981). These reading comprehension strategies must be modeled, learned, repeated and reinforced for a reader to develop from a novice reader to a proficient one. The current research is an attempt to introduce a newly practiced reading strategy which made use of writing rules.

Since reading and writing are two literacy skills which are interconnected, having mastery over these skills is mastery on half of the language abilities. To become a good reader an understanding of the writing styles is needed. There is no doubt that reading and writing are the mutual interactive skills. There is a close relationship between reading and writing format. As cited in Moreillon (2007, p.101) "Reading and writing are the two sides of the literacy coin; one cannot and should not be separated from the other". According to Rosenblatt (1988, p.2), "The relationship between reading and writing signals that these two kinds of linguistic activities are closely connected". Therefore it seems that by teaching writing rules or genres, the process of comprehending reading texts will also be facilitated. Gee (2008, p.45) stated that "literacy practices are almost always fully integrated. The good readers are also good writers", as also Thaole (2011) believes, the more they read, the better their writing ability is, and the more skillful in using words in writing is. But is it true from the other side? In the current research, the researcher tried to examine if being aware of the paragraph writing structures or genres can affect the reading comprehension of the learners.

Every kind of text of reading is composed of paragraphs, in other words paragraphs are building blocks of a text. They begin the process of tying individual ideas together to explain a more complex thought. They mostly appear in a variety of patterns of organization or writing genres; descriptive, process, narrative, comparison and contrast,

classification, definition, and cause and effect. Therefore; in the current study, the effectiveness of having the knowledge of writing genres on reading comprehension ability was examined at paragraph level.

According to Nation (2009) using a framework based on principles of teaching and learning will guide teachers provide a wealth of suggestions for helping learners at all proficiency levels develop their reading and writing skills. Hence the current research tried to introduce a framework of teaching reading comprehension made by writing structure rules. In order to teach the rules of different paragraph writing structures to the participants, the graphic organizers of different paragraph genres were utilized and also these instructions were accompanied by teaching most commonly used reading strategies. In other words, the reading and writing syllabuses were integrated together in every session of instruction.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Since any research project and any teaching method rely on some assumption and theories, the author feels the need to scrutinize theories underlying the current practice.

A. Theoretical Background

Transactional theory

Some scholars stated that there is a mutual relationship between reading and writing skills, or in other words they believed that these two literacy skills are integrated. Recently diverse studies regarding the connection between the two literacy skills are in progress. Rosenblatt (1988) presented a coherent theoretical approach to interrelationship of the reading and writing processes.

Rosenblatt (1988) explained the term transactional theory. The transactional theory presents the interrelationship between reading and writing processes. Reading and writing are necessarily involved with texts. Therefore, both miss the nonverbal tending towards communication which exists in listening and speaking activities. He stated that reading and writing are clearly different in that the writer initiates with a blank page and tries to develop a text, when the reader initiates with the previously written or published paper and must fetch the meaning.

Again he believed that reading and writing processes are integrated together. Both reader and writer are involved in composing symbolic structures of meaning in a circular transaction with the text, whether the verbal signals are already presented or developed by another person, like the reader, or being created by the writer. They pursue the same models of thought, and employ the same linguistic habits. Both processes rely on the person's experiences with language in specific life positions. He also mentioned that both reader and writer are trying to create new linkages and new organic states by depicting previous linkage of signs, signifiers, and organic states. Both reader and writer originate a model, rule, or aim, however dim or explicit that leads the discriminating concern and the synthesizing, organizing activities which finally establish meaning. Furthermore every reading and writing work can be interpreted as a continuum.

Genre Approach

Genre-based approaches which focus on the realizing and development of favorite genres of texts have been as a major tendency in English language teaching in the new century. The writing genre is a formulaic structure made up of fixed patterns of word or ideas with a specific communicative purpose. Genre analysis has become significant in interpreting the discourse of the fields of study and the workplace, relatively structured borders of sociable interaction. According to Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) "Genres are the intellectual scaffolds on which community-based knowledge is constructing. Genres offer an important way of framing and categorizing texts which assists comprehension. Genres provide an important frame of reference which help both learners and readers to identify, understand and interpret texts" (p.24). Gledhill (1995) noted that genres may serve as a way of preventing a text from fading out into individuality and incomprehensibility. As stated in Rezvani, Aqdam, & Saeidi (2012), the recognition of a text as piece of a genre enables less proficient readers to determine whether it is probable to attract them.

According to Harwood (2002) there have newly been several corpus-based studies which prove that substantial differences are from genre to genre. These corpus data, which expose the variety of linguistic features and rhetorical structures among genre, have reinforced the introduction of the genre approach in writing. The genre approach assumes that readers have definite expectations about what a text is like, that is a part of a genre and writer should try to pursue these principles to help readers. Genre knowledge conducts genre readers towards appropriate beliefs, and feelings about a text which are crucial in making meaning. According to Hyland (2004) frames establish the scaffolding which guides language learners to pass through spoken to written language use. And also Livingstone (1994) stated that different genres define different frameworks which provide a negotiation between the text and the reader that prepares definite beliefs for each side of the communication.

B. Previous Studies

Various studies have concentrated on the interrelationship between the two literacy skills; reading and writing. This issue can be examined from two directions, one from the effectiveness of improving reading comprehension ability on writing ability and the other from the effectiveness of improving writing ability on reading comprehension ability. It is believed that one facilitates the other but here our center of attention is especially from writing ability to reading comprehension ability, although it is not a unidirectional theory and it also can be seen from the other side, but it is

skipped in this research. Similar researches to the current study are reviewed in the following paragraphs according to their relativeness to the point of view of the current research.

Goen and Tropp (2003) tried to integrate the reading and writing courses and looked at this issue from both directions, learning to write as readers and read as writers. They linked instruction in reading with instruction in writing because they believed that the process of reading and writing are closely linked. This integrated program was done for one year (two semesters) at the San Francisco State University (SFSU) campus in a context which its participants were native English speakers or the immigrants who had a reasonable knowledge of English. This research included two groups, the control group with 204 students and the integrated group with 136 students. In measuring the amount of development that student had based on the integrated program instruction, the researchers made use of standardized reading tests, scored portfolios of student writing, self-assessments of students. The students' self-assessments on the reading and portfolio writing showed that the integrated course is having a positive influence on students' literacy development and on their confidence and satisfaction as learners. Making use of the portfolios and self-assessments suggests that they are able to develop an authoritative and confident position in their writing. It makes internalized readers that can guide their own writing process. Finally they came to this conclusion that students in the integrated program scored higher than the control group.

Culp and Spann (1987) studied the influence of improving writing skill on reading comprehension ability. They performed their research on forty students of university of south Alabama, twenty one students in experimental group and nineteen in control group. They administered Nelson Denny Reading Test as pre-test and post-test. The students received a ten week instruction that was two periods in every week. Both groups had the same instructor and the same reading material and also they had extra readings such as selected articles, essays, short stories, and novels. Instruction varied only in the use of writing components for the experimental group. The experimental group wrote in the class at least once a week and the modes of writing practiced were dictation, paraphrase, *précis* - "abstract or summery which captures the essence of a selection within a required word limit" Hood(1967) as cited in (Culp & Spann, 1987, p.285)-, and expressive - "writing close to the self, having the characteristics of informal talk and revealing as much about the writer as about the topic" Britton, et al.(1977) as cited in(Culp & Spann, 1987, p.285)- for the material they read. Some of the assignments included one or two modes. At last the analysis of the covariance (ANCOVA) was used to compare the performance of the two groups on the post- test which indicated a significant difference between the two groups. The findings of this research revealed that writing has a positive effect on reading comprehension ability.

Graham & Hebert (2010) introduced evidences for how improvement in writing can affect reading. They concerned the basic literacy problems of American adolescents that cause financial and social costs for individuals and also for the country and for removing this problem they did this research on students in grade 1 to 12 studying at schools. They did this study to discover effective practical techniques for reading comprehension improvement. They made use of both norm-referenced published standardized tests and researcher designed tests in order to assess the reading comprehension. Their research had three phases which are related to the following questions:

1. Does writing about material students read enhance their reading comprehension?
2. Does teaching writing strengthen students' reading skills?
3. Does increasing how much students write improve how well they read?" (Graham & Hebert, 2010, p.4)

For answering the above questions the researchers examined these techniques through a quasi experimental design. The control condition in most of these studies was reading or reading instruction. Their first technique was to make students write about the texts they read. Therefore, the students' comprehension of science, social studies, and language texts is improved when they tried to write about the reading materials, particularly by responding to a text by writing (writing individual experiences related to the reading text or writing an analysis of the characters in a novel-extended writing), writing summaries of the text, writing notes about a text, and answering questions about a text in writing, or creating and answering written questions about a text. Examining each of these items separately on experimental groups showed the following results.

The evidence proved that having students write about the text they read enhanced their reading comprehension abilities. The review of the data showed that extended writing has a strong and consistently positive effect on reading comprehension. Moreover writing summaries about a text proved to be better than simply reading it, reading and rereading it, and receiving reading instruction. In addition, taking notes about text proved to be better than just reading. And also locating main ideas in a text, generating or responding to questions in writing, and then answering them in writing form had positive effect on improving the reading comprehension of students when compared to just reading simply or receiving reading instruction.

The second technique was to teach students the writing skills and processes that lead in creating text. This includes teaching the process of writing paragraph or sentence construction skills, teaching spelling and sentence construction skills, and teaching spelling skills. Examining each of them on experimental groups, proved the following results. Writing instruction did in fact show a positive effect on reading comprehension. The practice of putting smaller units of writing together in order to create more complex ones-from letters to words or words to sentences had a strong and consistent impact on improving students' reading fluency. Spelling instruction had a moderate and consistent impact on improving students' word reading skills.

The third technique was to increase how much student write; students' reading comprehension is improved by increasing the times that they create their own texts. The strategies for extending the amount of writing in the studies reviewed included : "writing about self-selected topics or topics chosen in collaboration with peers, setting aside fifteen extra minutes a day for sustained writing, using the Internet to write to pen pals, writing journal entries about daily experiences, interacting with others using a dialogue journal, and writing short passages using inference words "(p.20).The outcomes showed that increasing the amount of times that the students write, in reality makes their reading ability better.

Findings of Graham and Hebert's (2010) study showed that "having students write about texts they read, explicitly teaching writing skills and processes, and having students write more improve reading skills and comprehension."(p.9)

C. Statement of the Problem

In a world which is overwhelmed by information, and available information is increasing in every second, the ability to read and comprehend the written texts can be seen as a prominent issue. All people should be able to read simple forms, interpret advertisements, study newspapers, and employ primal reading skills in their job and everyday lives when necessary. Some portion of these people need to comprehend new conceptual information from texts at much higher levels, combining and interpreting new information from various texts, reviewing data critically in texts and utilizing their comprehension abilities to understand texts. According to Grabe (2009), general literacy is an ideal goal that is an ongoing priority among many organizations around the world, and attempts need to be made to reduce illiteracy levels. Therefore comprehending the texts is a challenging activity in daily life of everyone in the modern globe.

Most of the language teachers and curriculum developers are attempting to enhance the learners' reading comprehension ability. During these years there have been numerous endeavors to discover instructional practices that improve learner's literacy skills, particularly the reading skill. They are studying and examining the most practical research based principles to improve their students reading comprehension ability. So it is a difficult and problematic duty over the shoulders of the instructors and curriculum developers to discover the worthiest strategy in teaching reading which enhances the comprehension.

Language teaching researchers were trying to identify the most effective instructional practice for improving reading comprehension. According to Graham & Herbert, "One often-overlooked tool for improving students' reading, as well as their learning from text, is writing" (2010, p.4). Since writing and reading are two interconnected literacy skills, scholars often recommend writing as a device for improving reading comprehension. And because of the lack of research in this area, the current researcher felt the need to conduct a study based on teaching writing rules and investigating its effectiveness on reading comprehension ability.

D. Research Question

In order to understand the effectiveness of teaching paragraph structure rules on the reading comprehension ability of Iranian Intermediate EFL learners, the following question should be answered:

► Do teaching paragraph structure rules have any effect on the reading comprehension ability of Iranian Intermediate EFL learners?

E. Research Null Hypothesis

For answering the research question the current hypothesis is suggested by the researcher:

► Teaching paragraph structure rules has no effect on the reading comprehension ability of Iranian Intermediate EFL learners.

III. METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of the current study was to find another practical way for improving learners' reading comprehension ability in English language. This study set out to investigate the effect of teaching different paragraph structure rules on reading comprehension ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Therefore, reading comprehension is considered as independent variable. Moreover, the researcher selected seven different paragraph structure rules or writing genres at paragraph level based on their application in most English language texts as a reading strategy, which was the independent variable of the study, to strengthen the participants' knowledge of writing rules and applied this as a strategy for improving reading comprehension ability.

A. Participants

The participants of this study were sixty homogenous EFL learners who have been selected from 117 volunteers of participating in the study which were gathered by spreading out advertisement in some educational places such as libraries, high-schools, universities and language institutes in Sari. They all were given Nelson proficiency test A4 (Fowler & Coe, 1978) and the retrieved scores of the test were statistically analyzed and those volunteers whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected as the participants. They were at the range of 17 to 31 years old, the first language of all volunteers was Persian and both male and female genders participated in this study.

The population of this study consisted of male and female EFL learners with the age of 17 to 31 who were studying English at different institutes, high-schools, universities in different cities in Iran. The researcher carried out this research at Hoonam Language Academy in Sari city at Mazandaran province of Iran. Based on the way of gathering the participants, the sampling for this study is convenience sampling.

B. Instrumentations

In the current study, different instruments were used for collecting the needed data. They included a standardized general language test, Nelson proficiency test A4 (Fowler & Coe, 1978), a researcher made pre/post-test of reading. They are all described below.

Nelson Proficiency Test

Nelson proficiency test A4, contained 25 multiple choice items with four choices in each item was used as a standardized test of measuring the proficiency level of the learners. Before administering the Nelson proficiency test it was validated by the researcher and its reliability checked by piloting the test with thirty intermediate EFL learners and the Cronbach's Alpha measure of internal consistency showed an estimate of '.83', which indicated a high level of internal consistency for using in this (Iranian) context.

Pre/Post-test of Reading Comprehension

A multiple choice test, containing four passages with 36 items, was designed by the researcher as the pre/post-test of reading comprehension for intermediate level students. The researcher used this test to measure the participants' reading comprehension development before and after the treatment. Before using the test its validity was checked by the researcher and also it was piloted with thirty intermediate EFL learners and its reliability was measured by Cronbach's Alpha measure of internal consistency which provided an estimate of '.90', which indicated a high level of consistency. It should be noted that the same test of reading was used as pre/post-test of reading.

C. Procedure

This research study was carried out over a five-week period of time. The investigation began on April 21, 2013 and completed on May 26, 2013. It comprised fourteen sessions. It began with administering the Nelson proficiency test A4 (Fowler & Coe, 1978) and selecting sixty homogenous intermediate EFL learners as participants. Then these people were randomly assigned into two groups of thirty, one as control and the other as experimental group. Afterwards, the pre-test of reading were given to both group members and two sets of scores were collected.

After randomly assigning the sixty selected participants through their Nelson Proficiency scores, the researcher felt the need to assure the homogeneity of the participants and also to confirm that both groups do not have significant difference at the starting point. Therefore, their scores at pre-test of reading on both experimental and control groups were compared by Independent Sample T-test and the result is shown in "Table 1". It should also be mentioned that before running the Independent Sample T-test, the normality of these two sets of scores was checked by running 'Kolmogorov-Smirnov' test of normality.

TABLE 1:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR PRE-TEST SCORES TABLE

	Levene's Test	Mean Difference	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gain Score	.466	-.06667	-.058	.954

Since, the Sig of the Levene's test is '.466' and it is greater than '.05' which is the cut-off point, therefore, both experimental and control groups had equal variances at pre-test and also the sig of the T-test for equality of the mean is '.954' and greater than '.05' that shows the control and experimental groups did not have significant difference and it was concluded that the two groups were the same at the beginning.

Then the treatment process started, as explicitly stated in the following parts. The elapsed time for both groups was the same and the teacher of the both groups was the researcher herself.

The Treatment Process for Experimental Group

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the effect of teaching different writing genres at paragraph level on the reading comprehension ability of the EFL learners and this technique was implemented in the experimental group. For teaching different paragraph genres, the current researcher limited the treatment to some specific and more useable genres and also employed graphic organizers to clarify the position of every text element and to find a scaffold for each kind of genre.

As stated in Cochrane (2010), graphic organizers are extremely useful when modeling or introducing new concepts or text types as they allow the teacher to break the topic down into parts that can be taught and analyzed in greater detail to promote a deeper understanding. And also they are mostly used by writers to brainstorm ideas and manage them in an order and finally write a text, it allows writers to clarify their thinking in the process of constructing texts but here in the current study, they are used to extract the framework and main points and ideas of a written text.

The genres which were covered in the treatment sessions contained: descriptive, narrative, process, comparison and contrast, classification, definition, cause-effect paragraphs. These seven paragraph types are the most commonly used genres that are covered in most written texts. (Smalley & Ruetten & Kozyrev, 2000; Meyers, 2006; Ruetten & Pavlik, 2012).

The first half time of every session was dedicated to teaching a specific paragraph structure rule. Firstly, every kind of paragraph was presented to the learners with the commonly used graphic organizer of that type. The teacher introduced the signal words and phrases that identify each text structure and portrayed a graphic organizer for each pattern. It was modeled, explained, demonstrated, and thought aloud by the teacher. It means that, a printed sample of the paragraph genre was given to the learners and the graphic organizer of that sample was drawn by the teacher on the board as a model for the learners. The order of teaching each strategy and genre is presented in 'Table 2'.

The Second half time of the class devoted to teaching common reading strategies as what is being taught in the most traditional reading classes and similar to the content which was taught to the control group. This strategy was explained and practiced on the same printed sample which was a specific paragraph genre.

Afterwards, the teacher gave students opportunities to work on the text. Students practiced the strategies with coaching from the teacher. Another printed sample of that paragraph genre with comprehension questions were given to the learners and teacher asked them to use the newly taught strategies for answering the questions. At this stage, students learned the signal words and phrases in the text that identify each text pattern. They also used graphic organizers to illustrate these patterns. Likewise they tried to connect their knowledge of the paragraph genre with the recently learned reading strategy to answer the questions. It should be mentioned that two sessions were devoted to every writing genre.

It should be mentioned that the instruction for the control group was the reading strategies as what was being taught in the experimental group.

TABLE 2:
OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHING PROCESS FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Session No.	First half of the class time (teaching different paragraph structure rules)	Second half of the class time (Common reading strategies)
1 and 2	The Structure of Descriptive paragraph	Strategy One :Activating or Building Background Knowledge
3 and 4	The Structure of Narrative Paragraph	Strategy Two: Using Sensory Images
5 and 6	The Structure of the Process Paragraph	Strategy Three: Questioning
7 and 8	The Structure of Comparison and Contrast Paragraph	Strategy Four: Making Predictions and Inferences
9 and 10	The Structure of Classification Paragraph	Strategy Five: Determining Main Ideas
11 and 12	The Structure of Definition Paragraph	Strategy Six: Using Fix-Up Options
13 and 14	The Structure of Cause and Effect Paragraph	Strategy Seven: Synthesizing

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After finishing the treatment process, the post-test of reading were given to both group members and two other sets of scores were gathered. After that, the gain scores which were subtracting every participant's pre-test score from his/her post-test score were calculated, therefore; two sets of gain scores obtained.

Because of the nature of the current research question, the type of data and the number of variables and groups, T-test was chosen as a test of comparing means between these two groups (control and experimental group). And also the normality of the gain scores of both groups was checked and confirmed by running 'Kolmogorov-Smirnov' test of normality before running the T-test. After running the Independent Sample T-test for gain scores of the control and experimental groups the following Table (Table 3) was reported by SPSS software.

TABLE 3:
COMPARING GAIN SCORES OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS BY INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Groups	Number	Mean	Std	Mean Difference	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gain Score Control	30	4.3667	1.27261	-7.63333	-18.572	.000
Experimental	30	12.0000	1.85695			

Looking at the "Sig. (2-tailed)" column which is '.000' and less than ".05", it can be inferred that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores for the two groups and the null hypothesis is strongly rejected. Now the mean scores assist us to distinguish which group performed better at gain scores of reading comprehension test. Since the mean of the experimental group is greater than the mean of control group, therefore; we can deduce that the experimental group gained better scores than the control group in reading comprehension test.

Based on the findings related to the hypothesis, there were statistically significant difference between the gain score results of the experimental group and the gain score results of the control group. The findings indicated that the experimental group predominately benefited from receiving both paragraph structure rules and common reading comprehension strategies as a reading instruction. That is, "teaching paragraph structure rules" appears to be a practicable instructional device for enhancing reading comprehension.

These findings are supported by the outcomes reported by other studies. This finding is specifically in line with what Culp and Spann (1987) had found in their study in university of south Alabama which instructed the use of writing components for the experimental group and also assigned weekly writing tasks to them and finally the results of their

study indicated that writing has a positive influence on reading. As Flynn and Stainthorp (2006) noted in their study, reading and writing are two sides of a coin and developing reading is impossible without reference to writing.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

As the results of the present research revealed, students who received paragraph structure rules as a reading strategy during the treatment process achieved higher means in their reading gain scores than students of the control group who just received common reading strategies. Therefore, the identification and use of text arrangement are crucial procedures underlying reading comprehension. According to Meyer (1985), familiarity with the perception of the rhetorical relationship of the ideas such as main idea, major ideas, and supporting details can guide readers in comprehending expository texts.

Structural elements in various kinds of paragraphs differ; therefore, it is important to present students to the components of various paragraph structure rules throughout the language instruction. The ability to distinguish and analyze these text structures in different paragraph genres helps readers to comprehend the text more easily. According to Akhondi, Malayeri, & Samad (2011) "text features can help readers locate and organize information in the text. For example, headings help introduce students to specific bits of information" (Para 8). It is also a crucial strategy to teach and model the position of these components in reading classes. The structure or organization of the text is the arrangement of ideas and the relationships among them which provides a plan for readers. According to Meyer, Brandt, and Bluth (1980) readers who are unfamiliar with text organization are at a disadvantage because they do not have an approach in planning the reading texts.

This study concluded that comprehension as the main factor in reading is enhanced by mixing writing and reading sessions together. It will be practical to integrate reading and writing courses together in a way that every session of instruction should be devoted first to teaching a specific writing genre and then comprehending that text type by employing different reading strategies. Students feel comfort with the previously experienced paragraph genres and will master the comprehension of those paragraph types with more relief.

This study has several implications for materials developers and syllabus designers, teachers of English as a foreign language, and learners.

1. One of the most efficient reading strategies is teaching various paragraph structures or genres to the learner to ease their comprehension of different paragraph structure. Authors of different types of texts use genre structures to organize and link thoughts. Students who realize the theme of text structure and how to analyze it are probable to discover the ideas behind the texts more than students who miss this knowledge.

2. Reading teachers may discover teaching different paragraph structure rules as an efficient method to progress the learners reading achievement. They can choose to divide a session into two parts and first teach the writing rules of a specific genre and then train learners how to comprehend this kind of text structure with more ease.

3. Materials Developers and syllabus designers should be aware that reading and writing are two interrelated skills and if they taught in a connected way they would have more effect on learners' reading improvement. They should design textbooks in a way that to embed both reading and writing instructions together in every teaching session.

4. Writers should consider that the readers have definite expectations about what a text is like, that is a part of a genre; therefore, writer should try to pursue these principles to help readers in conveying the message in their texts.

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A Case Study of Non-English Majors' Performance in Speak2Me Virtual Learning Environment

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Abstract—The paper discusses the application of the learning system of Speak2Me into the oral English teaching of non-English majors. The paper finds that the participants' oral English accuracy and fluency have been improved, which proves the potentials of the use of Speak2Me on the non-English majors' Oral English Teaching.

Index Terms—Speak2Me, oral English, attitude, performance, virtual environments

I. INTRODUCTION

Driven by educational pressure and demands of society, students are encouraged to practice the autonomous learning mode, particularly web-based oral English learning. The knowledge and skills to effectively incorporate technology in the classroom become particularly important and they are being raised in a society that is rapidly changing as a result of the influx of new technologies, specifically mobile technologies that provide pervasive and faster worldwide links to commerce, communication, and culture (Hardison, D. 2004). Besides, the rise in popularity of portable electronic devices such as laptop, digital cameras, mobile phones with decreasing physical sizes and increasing storage capacities is promoting a transition to a 'Mobile Age'. Web-based autonomous English learning mode, as a supportive form of educational platform, has gained great popularity on campus. Since "Speak2Me ESL model supports assertions that students integrate verbal and visual representations better using verbal and visual materials than when they receive verbal [or text] material only". (Deborah K. LaPointe, 2004). Among the popular learning systems, Speak2me may be regarded as the one of the biggest conversation-based English learning system in China.

In addition, based on the theory of constructivism, "people are always intellectually active - they do not learn passively, but go out of their way to try to make some meaning in what is taking place in their environment. Our constructions of life are conditioned and constrained by our experiences and this means that - since we all have different experiences - we are all likely to have different perceptions about ideas, actions, behaviors, incidents, situations, tasks, feelings, and so on" (Bentley & Watts, 1994). Learning activities had better be implemented within authentic contexts (Savery & Duffy, 1996). In the real-like learning environment, various interfaces are provided, such as, text, image, sound and video. Learners are greatly motivated and encouraged to explore their potential abilities to participate and cooperate with their peers during the study.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to find out if the students' oral English is improved with the help of Speak2Me two oral English tests are conducted before and after the use of Speak2Me on the non-English majors' Oral English Teaching. Specifically, the students' performances in the two tests are evaluated from two aspects: one is their English fluency, and the other is their English accuracy, which are the two key evaluation criteria for oral English proficiency. The relevant data related to the two aspects such as the vocabulary, the repetition rate, the delivery speed, the disfluency markers and the errors are collected and both qualitative and quantities analyses are conducted.

A. Participants

The experiment involved 20 sophomores from a medical college in East China. All of them major in clinical medicine. Besides their medical courses, these participants have an average of more than 5 hours of English classes, which includes listening, spoken class and intensive English.

In order to make sure they can generally represent the students at different levels. The participants are not selected randomly, but they are divided into three different groups, namely, excellent, average, and poor according to their test scores of a pre designed oral test. Hence there are 3 excellent students, 14 average students and 3 poor students in the study. More details are presented in Table 3.1.

TABLE 1.1
TEST SCORE RANGE OF PARTICIPANTS

Score Range (Max =100)	Participants (n = 20)	
	Number of participants	Score Average
90-100	3	92.46
80-89	14	84.59
60-79	3	76.58
Under 60*	0	0

Note. * Any score under 60 is regarded as a failure for the evaluation.

B. Tasks and Activities

The whole study is conducted almost two months, involving everyday half- hour online course study, group online discussion, one-one discussion, conversation records and offline presentations. With personal email account, participants can easily and freely register on Speak2Me.

At the very beginning of the program, all the participants are required to list their net-names and email addresses to the teacher. But they still communicate with each other in their net names, which makes participants feel safer and less anxious. In addition, all the participants also are required to choose their own courses based on individual learning goals, such as, interests, making friends, English Band Examination. Every week the online activities and assignments would be given out and posted on the teachers' website beforehand. What is worth mentioning, learners can practice oral English with the Chabot tutor—Lucy. After each course, participants are supposed to share their learning experience on their own blog in Speak2Me.

In order to study the effect of Speak2Me on non-English majors' Oral English learning, two tests are conducted on the 20 participants before and after the use of Speak2Me in the Oral English teaching, which are Test 1 on Apr. 9th, 2013 and Test 2 on Jun. 12th, 2013 respectively. The participants are given one topic and three minutes to prepare it and then three minutes to present it. The two tests are conducted in the same way with the same topic and test time. After each test, the participants' pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation and tone are firstly judged. In order to get complete first-hand materials, each participant's presentation is recorded and transcribed. Based on the transcript of the participants' oral English test, the relevant data about vocabulary, the repetition rate, the delivery speed, the disfluency markers and the errors are collected and both qualitative and quantities analyses are conducted to analyze the participants' oral English fluency and accuracy. At last, the results of the two tests are compared to find out the effect of the use of Speak2Me on non-English majors' Oral English learning. The following table 2.2 described the tasks and activities conducted in Speak2Me.

TABLE 1.2
THE SCHEDULE OF TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

Activity	Date	Content	Note
Activity 1	Apr.9 - 10	Pre Study Test & Questionnaire	On listening and speaking
Activity 2	Apr. 11 - 17	Speak2Me Sign Up	Register in the internet and get familiar with the online environment
Activity 3	Apr. 18- 29	Speak2Me Online activities	At least tow topics of study should be completed during this process.
Activity 4	Apr 30 - 31	Five minutes' Presentation	Conducted in language lab and recorded, transcribed and saved
Activity 5	May. 1 - 26	Speak2Me Online activities	At least four topics of study should be completed during this process.
Activity 6	May. 27 - 28	Five minutes' Presentation	Conducted in language lab and recorded, transcribed and saved
Activity 7	May. 29 - Jun.10	Speak2Me Online activities	At least two topics of study should be completed during this process.
Activity 8	Jun.11-12	Pre Study Test & Questionnaire	On listening and speaking

C. Pilot Study

Ahead of a real study, a pilot study was conducted for two days, which can help the researcher to understand the general steps and also exam the possible technical difficulties in the real study. The first pilot was conducted in Apr. for 2 days. The participants include the researcher and her net friend in America. The researcher stayed in her faulty dorm to exam the learning environment because it had the same Internet speed with the participants' dorms.

This pilot focuses on the effectiveness of the programs, which include user friendliness, audio-video quality, reliability and cost. Since all the users' can register Speak2Me freely and easily (only with personal email address), the pilot mostly concerned about audio-video quality, and reliability.

The results turned out that audio-video quality had much to do with the quality of microphones and the speed of Internet. In addition, to use headset could reduced much noise and echoes, but on the other hand, the speakers were not allowed to use too many gestures and movements. Besides, due to the slow net speed, the images usually were delayed for several seconds. Because of the insensitive speech recognition technology, speaker sometimes confronted difficulties when practiced conversations with Lucy. The speaker was asked to repeat what just said again and again by Lucy, which easily annoyed the speaker.

The second pilot was carried out in the following days. In this pilot, the researcher used a broadband cable with a speed of 7mbps in school library and computer lab respectively. Several times of interactions with the same graduate in America were conducted in the morning of 8:00-9:00 on weekdays, and 7:00-9:30 on weekends. The result turned out more satisfactory in terms of images and sound quality than the first pilot. Therefore, the researcher decided to require

all the participants study in school library or computer rather than in their dorms.

D. Data Collection and Analysis

The actual study was conducted for two months in an eastern medical college. The following described the procedures of data collection.

1. Introduced Speak2Me to the participants and arrange all of them to get familiar with the learning environment.
2. Ask participants to complete the pre study questionnaires.
3. Conduct the pre study test in one of the Language Labs.
4. Monitor participants' courses schedules and comment their performance.
5. Assign participants to make a speech based on the course topic and recorded, transcribed and saved to their own Space in Speak2Me every week.
6. Conduct post study test in a language lab.
7. Ask participants to complete the post study questionnaire
8. Analysis the data collections and then present the results.

III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In this study, the relevant data about vocabulary, the repetition rate, the delivery speed, the disfluency markers and the errors are collected with the help of AntConc 3.2.1 and both qualitative and quantities analyses are conducted to analyze the participants' oral English fluency and accuracy. At last, the results of the two tests are compared to find out the effect of the use of Speak2Me on non-English majors' Oral English learning.

A. Data on English Accuracy

Accuracy is a key evaluation criterion for oral English proficiency. It shows in different aspects, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, errors including lexical errors, grammatical errors, cohesive errors and pragmatic errors. In this part, the data on the above aspects will be collected and analyzed.

1. Pronunciation

After each test, the participants' pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation and tone are firstly judged. The total score is 10. Each of the four aspects, pronunciation, intonation, stress and rhythm takes 25% respectively. The students are sorted according to their final scores from the lowest one to the highest one and the order remains the same in other tables.

TABLE 2.1
SCORES OF THE PARTICIPANTS' PRONUNCIATION- TEST 1 & TEST 2

Student	Pronunciation		Intonation		Stress		Rhythm		Scores	
	Test1	Test2	Test1	Test2	Test1	Test2	Test1	Test2	Test1	Test2
1	1.8	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.7	1.9	1.6	1.7	6.4	7.6
2	1.5	1.7	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.0	1.4	1.5	6.5	7.4
3	1.6	1.9	1.7	2.1	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.9	6.8	7.8
4	1.6	1.8	1.8	2.2	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.9	7.1	7.9
5	1.7	1.9	1.7	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0	7.1	7.8
6	1.7	2.0	1.8	2.2	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0	7.2	8.1
7	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.2	1.6	1.6	7.2	7.9
8	1.9	2.2	1.8	2.2	2.1	2.3	1.6	1.7	7.4	8.4
9	1.9	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.2	1.6	1.4	7.5	7.5
10	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.2	2.1	2.2	1.7	1.6	7.5	8.0
11	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.7	7.6	7.6
12	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.4	1.7	1.7	7.7	8.6
13	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.2	1.6	1.6	7.7	8.3
14	1.9	2.2	2.1	2.5	2.1	2.3	1.7	1.9	7.8	8.9
15	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.4	1.7	1.8	7.9	8.7
16	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.5	2.0	2.1	1.7	1.7	7.9	8.6
17	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.1	8.1	8.8
18	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.1	8.3	9.0
19	2.0	2.3	1.9	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.1	2.2	8.3	9.4
20	2.1	2.3	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.1	2.2	8.5	9.2
Average Scores	1.84	2.04	1.89	2.24	2.05	2.18	1.76	1.82	7.53	8.28

Table 3.1 shows that among the 20 participants, 18 participants' (90%) general pronunciation has been improved with the greatest improvement of 1.2 and the lowest of 0.5. The other two participants keep the original level and the average improvement is of 0.75.

As for the four aspects: pronunciation, intonation, stress and rhythm, they have been improved to varying degrees. The average improvement of the pronunciation, intonation, stress and rhythm are 0.2, 0.35, 0.13 and 0.06 respectively. The greatest improvement is in intonation, followed by pronunciation, stress and rhythm.

Comparing the participants' performance in the two tests, it shows that the influence of the first language (L1) transfer on English pronunciation, especially the influence of dialect, in Test 2 is much less than that in Test 1. For

example, in Test 1, 6 of the 20 participants have problems in pronouncing /s/, /ʃ/ and /θ/, while in Test 2, only one participant has this problem. In test 1, almost all the participants tend to add “er” after some consonants, for example China, [tʃaɪnə] and America [əˈmerɪkə] are pronounced as [tʃaɪnər] and America [əˈmerɪkər]. While in Test 2, only three participants have such problems. In Test 1, 18 of the 20 participants did not distinguish the sound /v/ and /w/, while in Test 2 all the 20 participants distinguished the two sounds clearly.

Besides the improvement in the pronunciation of single sound, the participants’ English intonation and rhythm have also been greatly improved. The stress of words and sentences, eclipses, assimilation, links and rhythms are better performed in Test 2 than those in Test 1.

2. Errors

As for the terms of “errors”, there are many arguments on the definition of it from different standpoints, each defining error from different levels of the language. However, they have one point in common that errors are deviations from a “selected form” of language performance. Learner’s errors are inevitable byproducts of the process of learning a language and they provide the teacher with information about how much the learner has learnt, so through the collection and analysis of the errors the participants made in the two tests, we can see the effect of the use of Speak2Me on their oral English learning.

For the sake of convenience of discussion, in this paper the errors are grouped into two types: inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Inter-lingual errors refer to those errors caused by the learners’ native language influence. That is the negative transfer or interference of the learners’ first language in linguistic and pragmatic aspects. For example, in Chinese “because and so” and “though and but” are usually used in the same sentence. Influenced by this Chinese rule, EFL often make such sentences as “Because I get up late, so I’m late for the class.”, “Though I want to improve my English, but I don’t know what to do.” Intra-lingual errors refer to those errors caused by the faulty or partial learning of one item of the target language upon another. For instance, the noun “boy” has its plural form “boys”. Likewise the learners assume that “child” has its plural form as “childs”.

In the typescripts all the errors are marked and the actual numbers of errors collected from the typescripts are presented in Table 3.2 after classifying all the errors. In Test 1 the inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors are 160 and 74 respectively, while in Test 2 the inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors are 85 and 50 respectively. Comparing the total number of the two types of errors in the two tests, it is obvious to see that the errors made in Test 2 is much less than that in Test 1, of which the inter-lingual errors has decreased more than the intra-lingual error. The decreasing rate of the former is 47%, while the decreasing rate of the later is 32%.

$$\text{Decreasing Rate} = (\text{Errors in Test 1} - \text{Errors in Test 2}) / \text{Errors in Test 1}$$

This shows that Speak2Me is very effective in the correction of spoken errors, especially the inter-lingual errors made by the EFL learners. That is to say, since Speak2Me provides an authentic situation for the EFL to practice their oral English, it can help to weaken the negative transfer or interference of the learners’ first language in linguistic and pragmatic aspects.

TABLE2.2
ERRORS IN TEST 1 & TEST 2

Students	Inter-lingual Errors			Intra-lingual Errors		
	Test 1	Test 2	Decreasing Rate	Test 1	Test 2	Decreasing Rate
1	12	7	0.42	5	3	0.40
2	10	6	0.40	4	2	0.50
3	11	6	0.45	5	2	0.60
4	13	8	0.38	6	3	0.50
5	9	5	0.44	4	3	0.25
6	11	6	0.45	6	3	0.50
7	10	4	0.60	5	4	0.20
8	6	4	0.33	2	1	0.50
9	9	3	0.67	5	2	0.60
10	10	6	0.40	4	4	0
11	7	3	0.57	3	4	-0.33
12	8	4	0.50	4	2	0.50
13	12	6	0.50	6	5	0.17
14	7	5	0.29	2	2	0
15	3	1	0.67	1	2	-1
16	6	2	0.67	4	1	0.75
17	5	3	0.40	2	0	1
18	4	3	0.25	3	2	0.33
19	3	2	0.33	1	3	-2
20	4	1	0.75	2	2	0
Total	160	85	0.47	74	50	0.32

3. Vocabulary

Relevant studies have proved that vocabulary play an important role in the accuracy of oral expression. The simplification of vocabulary will influence the expression of ideas. The vocabularies used in the two oral English test by

each participant are calculated with the help of AntCont3.2.2. The results are listed in Table 4.5 .It shows that after the two-month-use of Speak2Me in their Oral English learning, 14 of the 20 participants' vocabulary has been increased with the greatest increase of 47 vocabularies and the least increase of 2. Before the experiment, the vocabulary of the 20 participants is 952, while after the experiment their vocabulary is 1079 with the increase of 127. Though it can not prove that the participants' vocabulary has been definitely enlarged, it is proved that the participants' productive vocabulary has increased, so they can vary their expressions. The vocabularies the participants used in the Test 1 are commonly used in daily life. It has a great difference between the vocabularies the participants have already learnt. If all the vocabularies the participants have learnt can be used in their oral expression, their oral English can be greatly improved. Speak2Me can, to some extent, solve this problem, because it focuses on the language in use.

TABLE 2.3
VOCABULARY- TEST 1 & TEST 2

Students	Vocabulary-Test 1	Vocabulary – Test 2	Improvement
1	99	97	-2
2	97	99	2
3	98	86	-12
4	83	89	6
5	117	102	-15
6	102	107	5
7	118	124	6
8	128	132	4
9	124	128	4
10	129	124	-5
11	129	137	8
12	138	133	-5
13	140	157	17
14	134	168	34
15	125	123	-2
16	160	190	30
17	144	158	14
18	150	180	30
19	130	172	42
20	149	196	47
Total	952	1079	127

Besides that through the calculation of the participants' vocabulary with AntCont3.2.2, it is found that the word repetition frequency in Test 1 is much higher than that in Test 2. Researches have proved that repetition frequency is one of the factors that may influence the effects of expression. Comparing the word repetition frequency in the two tests, it shows that the participants' oral expression in Test 2 is more effective than that in Test 1.

TABLE 2.4
WORD REPETITION FREQUENCY

Rank	Test 1	Test 2		
	Freq	Word	Freq	Word
1	288	I	211	the
2	244	the	159	To
3	196	and	114	And
4	162	to	108	A
5	114	we	100	Of
6	97	you	73	In
7	92	er	64	Is
8	90	in	55	You
9	87	my	53	We
10	86	a	45	For
11	83	is	43	Can
12	79	was	42	It
13	75	it	40	More
14	74	that	39	Are
15	58	time	38	Have
16	54	have	37	Be
17	51	very	37	Not
18	49	life	36	I
19	48	our	36	With
20	48	he	35	education

B. Data on English Fluency

Broadly speaking, fluency is a general term for spoken language level, “the ability to talk in coherent, reasoned, and semantically sensed sentence, the ability to have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts and the ability to be creative and imaginative in language use”.(Gregory,2001).For the purpose of the present study, oral fluency is defined as the ability to speak an acceptable variety of a second language (English in this case) with smooth continuity

and coherence of content that are also felt by the listener. The oral fluency can be evaluated by different variables, which can be classified into two categories: temporal indices, such as speaking rate, average length of pause, phonation ratio and mean length of speech run and performance indices, relevant to various disfluency markers such as repetitions, self-corrections, filled pauses, and the like. In this part, the data on the two aspects are collected and analyzed.

1. Speaking Rate

Speaking rate is one of the factors that influence the language fluency. It refers to the syllables spoken within a specific time frame. The speaking rate in Table 3.5 is calculated in the following way.

$$\text{Speaking Rate} = \text{Number of syllables} / \text{Total Time (2 Minutes)}$$

According to Levelt (1989), speech production consists of three main components: the Conceptualize, the Formulator and the Articulator. To produce a speech involves all of the three components. That is the speaker needs to conceptualize a message, formulate a speech plan, and articulate the syllables with appropriate pitch pattern. For L1, new messages are conceptualized and new speech plans are formulated simultaneously as syllables are articulated and the whole process is largely automatic. For L2, however, the process is non-automatic. Since their knowledge of L2 grammatical rules has not been proceduralized, all the three stages have to rely on the efficiency of working memory. When working memory is not able to process as quickly as to keep on conceptualizing new messages and formulating new speech plans at the same time the syllables are being articulated, the speaker has to stop articulating, and he/she can only start again when the new messages and new speech plans are ready for articulation. Those pauses in articulation will lower the speaking rate and thus influence the oral fluency. Table 3.5 shows the mean speaking rate of the participants in Test 2 is higher than that in Test 1. That is to say the participants' working memory has become more efficient with the help of Speak2Me for two months. The time difference between articulation and the conceptualization of new messages and the formulation of new speech plans has been lessened.

Sine Speak2Me provides an authentic situation for oral English practice, it can help to improve the participants' working memory efficiency, and thus increase their speaking rate and make their oral English more fluent.

TABLE 2.5
SPEAKING RATE

Students	Speaking Rate in Test 1	Speaking Rate in Test 2
1	78	97
2	93	122
3	74	148
4	82	89
5	92	142
6	86	137
7	120	146
8	89	153
9	114	163
10	89	151
11	102	163
12	118	139
13	123	157
14	136	140
15	90	142
16	148	149
17	158	138
18	164	156
19	166	188
20	203	184

2. Disfluency Markers

Temporal indices concern the rapidity of speech production, while performance indices concern the smoothness of speech production. It is relevant to various disfluency markers such as repetitions, self-corrections and hesitation like "um, ur, er, em". In this part, data about repetitions, self-corrections and hesitation are collected and analyzed.

Repetition refers to that the words, phrases or clauses are repeated with no modifications of syntax, morphology, or word order.

Self-correction refers to that the words, phrases or clauses are repeated with some modifications of syntax, morphology, or word order. It also refers to that the lexical items are immediately substituted for another.

Hesitation refers to that the initial phoneme or syllables are uttered one or more times before the complete word are spoken. It also refers to the filled hesitation like "um, ur, er, em".

Table 3.6 shows that the disfluency markers in Test 2 are obviously less than that in Test 1, especially repetition followed by hesitation. In Test 1 the average repetition times is 14.6 and the average hesitation time is 8.6, while in Test 2 they are 9.7 and 6.7 respectively. The numbers of self-correction are similar in Test 1 and Test 2. The decrease of the disfluency markers means that the participants' oral English fluency has been improved through the two-month oral English practice with the help of Speak2Me.

TABLE 2.6
DISFLUENCY MARKERS-TEST 1 & TEST 2 (TIMES)

Students	Repetition		Self-correction		Hesitation	
	Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2
1	27	21	5	4	15	13
2	25	20	0	1	13	10
3	21	19	4	4	15	11
4	24	21	7	6	10	7
5	23	16	3	4	12	8
6	19	12	4	3	9	9
7	15	9	5	6	6	7
8	18	11	3	2	11	9
9	17	10	1	1	10	6
10	13	5	5	4	8	7
11	16	9	3	3	6	7
12	11	7	0	2	7	4
13	9	6	4	1	10	7
14	10	9	2	0	6	3
15	6	3	3	5	4	5
16	9	3	1	1	8	5
17	10	4	5	4	6	2
18	6	1	3	4	9	8
19	8	6	4	3	3	2
20	5	2	2	2	4	3
Average	14.6	9.7	3.2	3	8.6	6.7

Therefore, the design of the research and the data collection and analysis are introduced to find out if the students' oral English is improved with the help of Speak2Me which has provided a simulated situation to talk with native speakers. In this part two oral English tests are conducted before and after the use of Speak2Me on the non-English majors' Oral English Teaching. The students' performances in the two tests are evaluated from two aspects: one is their English fluency, and the other is their English accuracy, which are the two key evaluation criteria for oral English proficiency. The relevant data related to the two aspects such as the vocabulary, the errors, the speaking rate and the disfluency markers and are collected and both qualitative and quantities analyses are conducted. After the data collection and analysis, it is found that the participants' oral English accuracy and fluency have been improved, which proves the effectiveness of the use of Speak2Me on the non-English majors' Oral English Teaching.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Through 2-month learning with the help of Speak2Me, above the results of the tow test, we may assume that the participants speak faster with fewer pauses. Besides that repetition, hesitation, and self-correction have decreased after that. This shows that Speak2Me is very effective in promoting the students' oral English fluency. In Speak2Me the learners are offered more authentic information of the language, thus they have more opportunities to construct new understandings of spoken English. Besides, the communication and interaction with the virtual tutor promote the users to construct and reconstruct continuously. In brief, Speak2Me could facilitate the oral English learner to do more mental exploration in their learning process, which will in turn promote their oral English fluency.

In addition, the participants also perform better in Test 2 than in Test 1 in terms of language accuracy. Their pronunciation is more standard. Their vocabulary has been enlarged. Both inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors have decreased in Test 2. This shows that Speak2Me may be very effective in promoting the students' oral English accuracy. Speak2Me applies distinct speech recognition technology and provides the users with an authentic situation to have interactive conversations with a virtual tutor called LUCY. What the users hear and practice is authentic English. This will help to promote the learners' English accuracy.

Above all, Speak2Me provides the learners with a comfortable and relaxing environment and various interesting and meaningful topics, which could relieve their psychological pressure and resisting feeling of learning. The users will feel less anxious and after learning they will feel more confident when they speak.

APPENDIX

Pre study Test

Task 1: Listening and retelling the passage.

Listen to the following passage very carefully, which will be read for twice. The first time is in a normal speed. Try to understand the general idea of the passage. For the second time, the passage will be read sentence by sentence with intervals of 10 seconds. And then you are supposed to retell the story based on your understanding. You are given 3 minutes before you began your recording and supposed to complete your presentation in 10minutes.

Scripts:

Studying more effectively is often times part one's own individual learning style and the amount of time that it takes you to learn new material, as well as some of what's going on in terms of your adjustment issues to a college

environment and the work that is required, the level of work. Students come to college many times with memories of what it was like in high school, to be able to cram for a test or to be able to study the night before and be able to get something together their presentation together.

Task 2: Express your opinions

There are following questions concerning the topic of “College life” on everyone’s computer screen. You are supposed to choose one of them to express your opinions and then record, transcribe and save it on your computer screen in 30 minutes.

1. Why is it a good idea to set yourself some goals?
2. What are your plans for academic success?

Post study Test

Task 1: Listening and retelling the passage.

Listen to the following passage very carefully, which will be read for twice. The first time is in a normal speed. Try to understand the general idea of the passage. For the second time, the passage will be read sentence by sentence with intervals of 10 seconds. And then you are supposed to retell the story based on your understanding. You are given 3 minutes before you began your recording and supposed to complete your presentation in 10minutes.

Scripts:

In college, it does not work that way. It’s very different. So it’s very important to learn how you study. Learn when the best time of day for you to study. Some people can study very well very late at night, and as long as you don’t have a morning class that might work for you. The other thing is that if you are having trouble. Don’t afraid to ask. Many times going to a faculty member in their office hours and explain to them that you noticed that you weren’t doing very well on a quiz, and do they have any input for you, do they have advice. Pretty much every college or university also has a learning center. This is an office where trained professionals can talk with you, can find out when you like to study, how you like to study, and they may even discover that there are some unique issues to the way that you learn or you study.

Task 2: Express your opinions

There are following questions concerning the topic of “College life” on everyone’s computer screen. You are supposed to choose one of them to express your opinions and then record, transcribe and save it on your computer screen in 30 minutes.

1. What are your comments on your college life?
2. What do you think your major? Do you want to change it?

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The Relationship between Logical, Naturalist Intelligences and Learning Grammar for EFL Learners at Elementary Level

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Abstract—The present study was an attempt to investigate the existence of any possible relationship among two types of multiple intelligences (logical and naturalist) and learning grammar on EFL males and females in elementary level. An initial number of thirty participants (ten males, twenty females), studying Interchange Intro book in Golestan language institute of Mashhad, took part in the study. The data was collected through 119-item multiple intelligences test and 40-item grammar test. In order to analyze the data, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used. It was found that there is a strong relationship among the scores of mentioned intelligences and learning grammar among male students whereas no relationship was observed among females

Index Terms—Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT), learning grammar, Foreign Language Learners (EFL learners)

I. INTRODUCTION

The system of teaching and learning foreign languages in Iran has been changed a lot in comparison with the period fifteen or twenty years ago.

Gone are the times when the way of teaching was based only on reading and doing grammar exercises in each lesson of the textbook. Since those times, there have really been very significant changes in the approach of teaching foreign languages.

There is also a great choice of teaching aids and various supplementary materials, so all teachers can choose what textbooks, methods or activities would be the most convenient for their learners. Nevertheless, it can sometimes be difficult to find an approach that would be suitable for all the pupils within one classroom.

Since the introduction of the multiple intelligences theory (MIT) in Gardner's book (1983), interest has been growing internationally in examining the role of multiple intelligences (MI) in learning, achievement, and knowledge acquisition.

Gardner (1983) suggests the existence of nine relatively autonomous, but interdependent intelligences rather than just a single construct of intelligence. He defines the concept of intelligence as the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community. (Gardner, 1993, p. 15)

This study will handle both theories about multiple intelligences and grammar. Moreover, it tries to understand whether there is a relationship between these two items or not.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Historical Overview of Intelligence Studies

"An intelligence is the ability to solve problems, or create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings". Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind* (1983).

The idea of intelligence was first put forward by Francis Galton in 1885, who used statistical tools and curves to show the relationship between heredity and being genius (Chaplin and Krawiec, 1974). However, he could not form a standardized intelligence test. It helped other researchers like Alfred Binet to create a method for distinguishing students with learning difficulties by the request of French ministry of education in 1904. After one year, by receiving assistance from Simon (another French psychologist), Binet formed the first intelligence test in 1905. Although the test had some shortcomings, it was welcomed by educationalist and gained publicity as the IQ test (Gardner, 1985).

During 1920, E.L Thorndike proposed a view that the brain is like a muscle which can be more and more powerful by exercise. He assumed that studying challenging subjects like mathematics and Latin can empower students learning ability. He designed a test to measure individuals linguistic and mathematical abilities that eventually became the foundation of modern intelligence tests.

Spearman (1923), formed a new idea about the general factor of intelligence which became known as the “g” factor. Thus, he designed some tests for measuring intelligence which were intended to be naturally scientific (Gardner, 1983).

In 1970 s, Piaget divided human intelligence into two parts; operative intelligence which explains how the world is understood, and figurative intelligence which is responsible for the representation of reality (see Gardner, 1985)

Regarding IQ tests, Sternberg (1982) declared that the validity of these tests varies across examinees. He states that intelligence is the ability for adapting ones behavior to the environment and situation. The same researcher, 1985, also proposed a triarchic theory of intelligence. Componential ability, experiential ability, and contextual ability. By the first one he means analytical thinking, by the second one he means creative thinking, and by the last one he means the ability to manipulate context and situation (Sternberg, 1985).

In 1983 Gardner criticized the traditional IQ tests as incompatible with his multiple intelligences (MI) theory. He proposed several intelligences to be at work simultaneously. And, thus, changed the perception through training and practice.

In Gardner’s (1983) point of view, intelligence is a combination of different abilities, he divides human intelligence into Linguistic, Logical- Mathematical, Spatial, Musical, Bodily- Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Naturalistic and Existential intelligences. Gardner believes that it is important to identify each individual as a collection of aptitudes (p. 27) rather than being identified by a single IQ measure.

B. Criteria for Determining an Intelligence

Gardner (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012) presented a series of eight separate criteria to determine an intelligence.

1. Isolation by brain damage

This factor means that one intelligence can be separate from others. People are believed to have multiple intelligences because they have multiple neural modules which have different ways of working and memory system (Ahmadian & Hosseini, 2012). When people suffer from brain damage, one intellectual skill may be sometimes spoiled while other skills remain. To illustrate, musicians who have brain injury may have impaired speech but they are able to play music (Hodges. 1996). That is to say, since an individual can lose ability in one area while others are spared, there is impossible to be existent a single intelligence. (Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

2. Evolutionary history

As cited in Ahmadian, & Hosseini, (2012) Each intelligence proves a significant part during the evolutionary history of human being as well as shows its ability to face with the environment. In this case, spatial ability was believed to be essential to the man survival, particularly on the way to find out different terrains. (Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

3. The presence of core operations

An intelligence is thought to have an identifiable core set of operations, for example, the core operations of musical intelligence are timbre, harmony, rhythm and pitch. (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

4. Susceptibility to encoding

An intelligence has to be susceptible to encode in a symbol system to exactly and systematically express information. Several instances of encoding are written and spoken language a distinctive developmental history. (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

5. A distinctive developmental history.

As cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012, different intelligences have different developmental history. This difference is clearly shown in its time of arising, its time of peaking, and its time of declining. It is said that, for example, musical intelligence peaks early while linguistic intelligence peaks very late. (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012)

6. The existence of exceptional individuals.

Some individuals like prodigies are regarded as accidents of nature. Another instance of extraordinary intelligence is the autistic person who excels at numerical calculation or musical performance. (Ahmadian & Hosseini, 2012).

7. Psychological tasks

Experimental psychology is supported to show the relation between two operations. Having a look at people demonstrating two activities at the same time can lead to identify if those activities depend on the same mental capacities or different ones. (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012)as an illustration, a person doing a crossword puzzle cannot effectively talk since both these are related to linguistic intelligence. Whereas, one can take a walk and carry on a conversation simultaneously because two different intelligences take part in these tasks. (Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

8. Psychometric findings

Many standardized tests support the multiple intelligences theory such as the Weschsler (1896) Intelligence Scale for Children- Revised test. (as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012). In other words, when introducing these criteria, Gardner desired to make a clear distinction between an intelligence and a talent or skill. These eight criteria were supported by biological sciences developmental psychology, logical analysis as well as traditional psychological research (Gardner, 1999 as cited in Ahmadian& Hosseini, 2012).

According to these criteria, Gardner suggests and identifies eight Intelligences in his MI theory:

C. The Description of Nine Intelligences

1. Verbal- linguistic intelligence.

People who have high linguistic intelligence are able to use words and language. They can also understand others. They can learn other languages as well. Students who have this intelligence love to read, write and use words in games and memorize things.

2. Math- logical intelligence

Logical/ mathematical intelligence refers to the ability to understand principles and rules, the way a scientist can manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations, or the way the mathematician does.

It is the capacity to use numbers effectively and reason well. (Pishghadam & Moafian, 2008). Students who have this intelligence are good problem- solvers. They learn best by putting new information into patterns or relationships, or by putting it into mathematical context. (Gardner, 1983)

3. Visual- spatial intelligence

The ability to perceive the visual- spatial world accurately and to think based on the images in mind. Spatially intelligence students are those who enjoy working with maps, diagrams and puzzles. They learn best if new information is presented in the form of a picture, either physical picture they can look at, or mental picture they can visualize and by drawing.

4. Musical – auditory intelligence

Musical intelligence refers to the capacity to think in music, to be able to hear patterns, recognize them, remember, and perhaps use them. People who have a strong musical intelligence remember the music easily and everything which has been presented by music.

5. Bodily- kinesthetic intelligence

Bodily- kinesthetic intelligence refers the capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body, your hand your fingers, your arms- to talk or make some kinds of production. These kinds of people can express themselves through body gestures.

6. Interpersonal Intelligence

Interpersonal intelligence refers to understanding of other people .the ability to perceive and make distinctions in the moods, intentions, motivations and feelings of other people.

7. Intrapersonal Intelligence

Intrapersonal intelligence refers to understanding of yourself, of knowing who you are what you can do. These kinds of people can perceive their weak and strong points and internal feelings.

8. Naturalist Intelligence

Naturalist intelligence refers to the human ability to discriminate among living things such as plants and animals as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world such as clouds, mountains and rock configuration.

9. Existential Intelligence

Refers to human desire to understand and pursue the ultimate question, meanings and mysteries of life. Students who are thinking broadly about existence, purpose of living etc.

D. Grammar

We want you to start thinking about what exactly we mean by a term like ‘grammar’.

What is grammar? According to Fromkin (1990) as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, ‘The sounds and sound patterns, the basic units of meaning such as words and the rules to combine them to form new sentences constitute the grammar of a language .these rules are internalized and subconsciously learned by native speakers’. Grammar includes many aspects of linguistic knowledge such as sound system (phonology), the system of meaning (semantics), the rules of word formation (morphology), the rules of sentence formation (syntax), and the vocabulary of words (lexicon).

1. Different views toward grammar

As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, there has been a great change in the way grammar is taught and viewed since there has been a movement from Audiolingualism toward communicative approach in teaching . Before, grammar was taught prescriptively; now teachers have tried to consider it in terms of its descriptive aspects as well as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997. As Garner (1989) stated in Nachiengmai, 1997, descriptive grammar is a systematic way of approaching the study of linguistic facts while prescriptive grammar is a means to maintain linguistic excellence. Similarly Fromkin (1990) contrasts descriptive and prescriptive grammars in the sense that while descriptive grammar the already existing rules which represent the unconscious linguistic knowledge or capacity of its speakers, prescriptive grammar tries to preserve what is assumed to be the standard language by telling people what rules they should know and how they should speak and write as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997. Therefore according to prescriptivists as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, grammar teaching is seen as establishing the correct way of speaking and writing. Secondly, with the communicative approach in which language is viewed as an instrument of communication, it has become clear in language teaching that grammar is viewed as a tool or resource to be used in conveying meaning and comprehending other peoples messages. Unlike the traditional repetitive grammar exercises the past- which tended to focus only on the structures, or as Celce- Murcia (1991) points out the focus of instruction rarely moved beyond the sentence level as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997. These days, more and more teachers try to pay attention to the spoken language although they are also aware of the significance of teaching grammar within context, using meaningful and purposeful communicative approaches.

As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, in the last decade, however, grammar instruction had been considered by many teachers as having little or no place in a communicative classroom and this idea was primarily initiated by Krashen (Krashen & Terrell, 1983); But nowadays, we see that grammar is again at state in which it is considered an essential element of language teaching and the focus of institutes on grammar can prove this.

2. Why is grammar taught?

As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, many linguists and researchers have given support to grammar instruction in ESL and EFL language teaching and learning. For example, the communicative competence model of Canale and Swain (1980) clearly illustrates the significance of grammar in this model that grammar is viewed as one component of communicative competence. Actually, without grammar learners maybe can communicate effectively only in a limited number of situations but it does not mean that they have learned the language perfectly. In addition, Hannan (1989), Lewis (1986) and Garner (1989) strongly support the teaching of grammar. According to Hannan (1989), grammar is highly valuable as an important part of the study of language of ideas, and of writing. Besides, he points to understand the diversity of human culture. (As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997).

As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, Garner (1989) believes that grammar gives us a means to analyze and describe our language.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Due to the fact that English language plays an important role as a second language in educational curriculum of Iran, and special attention is given to by people, the findings of the present study can be both theoretically and practically significant. Such a study provides information to be taken into consideration by teachers as well as learners and their parents. Hopefully the results of the study will be useful for both EFL and ESL learners and teachers. Finding any possible relationship among logical- linguistic, and naturalist intelligences and learning grammar provide us with opportunities to look differently at the curriculum, instruction and assessment. Thus, this study aims investigating the relationship among the two mentioned intelligences and learning grammar on EFL students in elementary level.

Based on the objective of the study, the following research questions were proposed;

1. Is there any relationship between learning grammar and logical intelligence?
2. Is there any relationship between learning grammar and naturalistic intelligence?

A. Research Hypothesis

1. There is no relationship between learning grammar and logical intelligence.
2. There is no relationship between learning grammar and naturalistic intelligence.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was answer the following questions:

1. Is there any relationship between learning grammar and logical intelligence?
2. Is there any relationship between learning grammar and naturalistic intelligence?

A. Participants

A total of thirty Iranian EFL learners (twenty girls, ten boys), studying the Interchange Intro book (Jack C. Richards, 2005) at Golestan Language Institute (Simin Tehran Central Branch, Mashhad, Iran), were selected and asked to participate in this study. The students were selected randomly so the age was not considered in this study.

B. Instruments

This study was aimed to find out the relationship among two types of multiple intelligences (logical and naturalistic) and learning grammar, thus two kinds of instruments were used to observe the result.

1. Multiple Intelligence Questionnaire

In order to measure the students' MI, Multiple Intelligence Developmental Assessment Scale (MIDAS) questionnaire (Shearer, 1996; cited in Hosseini, 2003) was used. Indeed, a 119- item questionnaire in native language, has been translated by Hosseini (2003) from English to Persian, measuring the nine types of intelligences given as the first instrument of the study. The total reliability of the questionnaire was 0.94. An estimated time for taking the test was 50-60 minutes.

2. Grammar Multiple – Choice Test

A forty- item grammar multiple- choice test based on the Interchange Intro book (Jack C. Richards, 2005), was planned for the students, and the time determined for this test was about thirty minutes. Moreover, this test was prepared by the researcher and based on the table of specification of the mentioned book (shown in Appendix). The tested reliability was 0.84.

C. Procedure

In this research thirty subjects were chosen including male and female. In fact, ten boys and twenty girls who were in elementary level in Golestan Language Institute in Mashhad, took part in this research. In order to find out the relationship among logical, linguistic, and naturalistic intelligences and learning grammar, two kinds of tests were given

to students (i.e.) a 119- item multiple intelligence test and a forty-item multiple – choice grammar test. The estimated time for completing the tests were 50-60 and 30 minutes respectively.

Finally, each student's test was graded separately and through the Pearson correlation the results were achieved as follows.

V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

A. Learning Grammar and Multiple Intelligence

The following table shows the mean, variance, low score, and the high score of both multiple-choice grammar and multiple intelligences test.

TABLE 1:
MEAN, VARIANCE, LOW SCORE, AND THE HIGH SCORE OF THE RELATED TESTS

Male's statistics		
	grammar	intelligence
Mean	26.30	46.7000
Variance	51.789	50.098
Low score	16	37.62
High score	38	56.88

Female's statistics		
	grammar	intelligence
Mean	25.85	46.4625
Variance	46.871	41.862
Low score	14	34.62
High score	36	56.62

Based on the above-mentioned table, The average level of boys' intelligence was found to be 46.7 while it was 46.4 in girls. The lowest intelligence scores were 37.62 and 34.4 in boys and girls respectively, in contrast to the highest intelligence scores which were 56.8 in boys and 56.6 in girls. The mean of grammar scores in boys and girls were 26.3 and 25.8 respectively. The variance of boys' intelligence was found to be 50.0 which shows more dispersion in the scores in comparison with that of girls that was 41.86.

TABLE 2:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING GRAMMAR AND THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Correlations				
			Grammar	intelligence
Males	intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	.659 [*]	1
		Significance level	.038	
		Numbers	10	10
	grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	.659 [*]
		Significance level		.038
		Numbers	10	10
Females	intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	-.093	1
		Significance level	.698	
		Numbers	20	20
	grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	-.093
		Significance level		.698
		Numbers	20	20

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

According to Pearson correlation coefficient, there is a significant relationship between boys' levels of intelligence and their grammar scores.

The correlation coefficient of 0.65 indicates a strong and positive relationship and the significance level of 0.03 confirms the validity of the test with a certainty level of 97 %. But no significant relationship was found between girls' intelligence and their grammar scores.

B. Learning Grammar And Logical And Naturalistic Intelligences

TABLE 1:
MATH-LOGICAL INTELLIGENCE

Correlations			Logical intelligence	grammar
Males	Grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	.636 [*]	1
		Significance level	.048	
		Numbers	10	10
	Logical intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	.636 [*]
		Significance level		.048
		Numbers	10	10
Females	grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	-.105	1
		Significance level	.661	
		Numbers	20	20
	Logical intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	-.105
		Significance level		.661
		Numbers	20	20

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

While a positive and significant relationship was found between boys' grammar and logical intelligence scores, no strong relationship was found between these two scores in girls.

The correlation coefficient in boys' logical intelligence scores was 0.63 at the significance level of 0.04. The negative correlation coefficient in girls shows there was no relationship between these two variables. But the significance level of 0.6 does not confirm this relationship statistically.

TABLE 2:
NATURALIST INTELLIGENCE

Correlations			Naturalist intelligence	grammar
Males	Grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	.820 ^{**}	1
		Significance level	.004	
		Numbers	10	10
	Naturalist intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	.820 ^{**}
		Significance level		.004
		Numbers	10	10
Females	grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient	-.192	1
		Significance level	.417	
		Numbers	20	20
	Naturalist intelligence	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	-.192
		Significance level		.417
		Numbers	20	20

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

There is meaningful, positive, and strong relationship between naturalist intelligence scores and grammar among male students. Thus we can say that the more students are naturalist, the more their grammar score is.

These two variables with a zero coefficient represent the converse and very weak relationship among female students. But the meaningful level which is 0.4, doesn't confirm this fact. So there is no confirmed relationship between the scores of two variables among females.

The main objectives of this study were to explore two types of multiple intelligences (logical and naturalistic) and the relationship between them and learning grammar. The subjects of this study were thirty EFL male and female elementary students of English, studying Interchange Intro book in Golestan language institute. The research was conducted through a 119- item multiple intelligence questionnaire and a forty item multiple choice grammar test. As you saw in the previous chapter, the results were shown according to Pearson analytical method. This chapter consists of a discussion regarding the results and pedagogical implications which shows the effect of conducting this study in education and teaching.

The study has answered the research question and arrived at the result that there is no significant relationship between the two types of multiple intelligences and learning grammar among girls, whereas a strong and positive relationship was found among boys, implying that the ability, understanding underlying principles (math-logical intelligence), and discriminating among living things such as plants and animals as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (naturalist intelligence), has a strong relationship with learning grammar. Of the two confirmed intelligences, naturalistic type was found to be the leading intelligence, and math-logical type was the least common one employed by the students who participated in this study.

VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Nowadays, one of the most hotly debated topics in EFL language teaching and learning is Grammar. As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, many linguists and researchers have given support to grammar instruction in ESL and EFL language teaching and learning. For example, the communicative competence model of Canale and Swain (1980) clearly illustrates the significance of grammar in this model. In this model, as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, grammar is viewed as one component of communicative competence. Without grammar learners can communicate effectively only in a limited number of situations. In addition Hannan (1989), Lewis (1986) and Garner (1989) strongly support the teaching of grammar but maybe they will fail to understand others. (As cited in Nachiengmai, 1997). According to Hannan (1989), as cited in Nachiengmai, 1997, grammar is highly valuable as an important part of the study of language of ideas, and of writing. Besides, he points out that through using of grammar, you are able to understand the diversity of human culture.

As the findings of the study suggest, gender has a significant role in learning grammar. Furthermore, a significant relationship was found between naturalist intelligence and learning grammar. So, it is a factor which needs to be considered in teaching grammar.

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A Study of Iranian High School English Textbooks Based on the Standard Criteria

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Abstract—This study was an attempt to evaluate Iranian high school English textbooks in terms of vocabulary, grammatical structures and compatibility between reading comprehension texts and grammar exercises. Readability formula and experts' judgment were used to ensure that high school textbooks, English American headway and English American file books were at the same level of difficulty. The findings revealed that, there were a significant lack of compatibility between the grammatical structures and reading comprehension passages in each lesson and also between high school textbooks and English American headway and English American file books in terms of the order of presentation and content.

Index Terms—high school textbooks, readability formula, material evaluation, expert's judgment

I. INTRODUCTION

Textbooks

Textbooks have a crucial role in both teaching and learning process. In other words, there are many opinions among teachers and learners in relation to the main role of textbooks. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) in their article asked the reason that why teachers and learners use textbooks. The result for the learner showed that a learner saw the textbooks as a guide that aids the learners to organize their learning in both outside and inside the classrooms. In other words textbooks help learners to find their way in a durable process.

The result for the teachers showed that the teachers consider textbooks as a classroom directorship instrument for communication that exists between teacher and students. Based on teacher perceptions, a textbook retains time give orientation to the teachers program. Not only it gives direction to the class but also gives confidence and security to the teachers.

In the EFL classroom, materials are an inseparable part of the curriculum. They are the most noticeable characteristic of a teacher's approach, and can aid greatly to a sequence's syllabus. O'Neill (1982) provides 4 rationalizations for the use of textbooks. Firstly, a large percentage of a textbooks material can be proper for students needs, even if not precisely planned for them. Secondly, textbooks let students think about future, or recharge themselves with past lessons. They eliminate the factor of disbelief in student's expectations. Thirdly, textbooks have the concrete feature of presenting material which is well-organized in reasonable form. Finally, and I consider most importantly, well organized textbooks permit for managing and alteration by the teacher, as well as enabling students to construct unstructured dealings in the classrooms.

According to O'Neill, "Since language is a device for creating what people need and want to say naturally, a great deal must rely on natural, inventive dealings in the classroom." O'Neill (1982, p, 111). Textbooks should be reachable to a series of students, irrespective of their learning ends, along with being flexible to the multiplicity of teachers and teaching approaches.

Textbooks are chief properties for teachers in supporting students to learn every matter including English. They are the underpinning of school training and the major spring of information for teachers. In Iran, in practice textbooks function as the root for much of the language input learners obtain and the language practice that occur in the classroom. For the EFL learners, the textbook becomes the main source of exchange they have with the language away from the input provided by the teacher. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) propose that the textbook is an almost worldwide constituent of English language teaching and no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is comprehensive until it has its appropriate textbook.

Bearing in mind the manifold roles of textbooks in ELT, Cunningsworth (1995) implied a textbook as a supply in donating the material successively a source for learners to practice and carry out the activities. Still do they offer the learners with a reference source on grammar as well as vocabulary and pronunciation. to keep abreast, textbooks function as a syllabus and a self-study source for learners. Therefore they employ a support for the amateur teachers

who have in confidence yet to achieve. Thus, it can be uttered that the fundamental role of textbooks is to be at the service of teachers and learners but not their boss.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Are Iranian textbooks in line with the standard text books in terms of the compatibility of passages and the structures taught in each unit as opposed to standards textbooks?
2. Are structures used in Iranian high school textbooks in line with the norms common in standard grammar textbooks?

III. METHOD

A. Instrument

Textbooks

The textbooks used in this study were of three types. The first group consisted of 4 textbooks corresponding to four levels of high school. The second group was American English File series and American English Headway series. As we know there are lots of textbooks available in the market such as: top notch series, interchange series and etc, but these two series serve as a compatible criterion for comparing the presentation pattern of the structure in high school books. The third group was Modern English used as a standard against which the two other groups were evaluated. To ensure that these textbooks are at the same level of difficulty as those of high school two measures were taken. In the first place, the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula was run on both high school textbooks passages and those of the target textbooks. In doing so reading three passages of each text book were chosen as the basis of the comparison. The scale through which readers and texts are graded is as below:

- 90-100: very easy
- 80-89: easy
- 70-79: fairly easy
- 60-69: standard
- 50-59: fairly difficult
- 30-49: difficult
- 0-29: very confusing

Table 3.2 below shows the details of the readability formula results.

TABLE 3.2.
THE RESULT OF READABILITY EASE FORMULA

Textbooks	American Headway 1	American File 1	High school 1
Texts			
Text 1(beginning)	65	70	68
Text2 (middle)	66	64	71
Text 3 (end)	68	63	69
	American Headway 2	American File 2	High school 2
Text 1(beginning)	67	62	69
Text2(middle)	65	69	63
Text 3(end)	66	66	65
	American Headway 3	American File 3	High school 3
Text 1(beginning)	59	57	61
Text2 (middle)	57	58	65
Text 3 (end)	55	58	59
	American Headway 4	American File 4	Pre-university
Text 1(beginning)	52	56	56
Text2 (middle)	49	53	55
Text 3 (end)	54	55	47

As it is clear from Table 3.2, the readability index of each level of high school passages matched those of American Headway and American File on average.

In the second place, 5 teachers with 5 years experience of teaching the mentioned textbooks were asked to judge the difficulty level of the chosen text and to check the match between the texts in terms of level of difficulty. They all agreed that more or less texts are of the same level of difficulty.

High school textbooks were compared in terms of the order in which the structures were presented and also the ways through which learners were exposed to the structures. This comparison was done by the researcher through a meticulous and planned procedure. There is also an intra comparison regarding the establishing a match between the structures presented in the passages in high school books and the structures presented in the grammar sections of the same books. Moreover the same comparison was done to check the match between the structures taught in each unit and the passage American Headway and American File.

B. The Procedure for the Main Study

Regarding the first question, the researcher tried to investigate the correspondence between the grammatical structures used in the passages and those in the grammar section of the same books. In so doing the number of the grammatical structures used in the text was used as a criterion for estimating the percentage of the correspondence.

The second question required the researcher to compare the order of the presentation of grammar in high school textbooks and that of American headway and American file series. For this purpose, each level of high school was matched with one level of the mentioned textbooks, and the whole presentation pattern of grammar was compared with that of Modern English. The comparison was based on the order of presentation in case of difficulty and the way grammar was presented. Table 2 shows the order and details of the correspondence of the textbooks.

TABLE 3.3.
ORDER AND DETAILS OF TEXTBOOKS

textbooks	Criterion for comparison
High school level 1	English American file 1, American headway 1
High school level 2	English American file 2, American headway 2
High school level 3	English American file 3, American headway 3
Pre-university	English American file 4, American headway 4
All book	Modern English

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. *Compatibility between Structures Taught and the Structures Used in the Passages*

For addressing this question all high school books, American Headway and American File were analyzed and the agreement between the structures taught in each unit and the structured used in the same unit was checked and reported through percentage. For the ease of reporting the result of each analysis is shown in different tables. Table 4.2 shows the results of the analysis of the first book corresponding to the first level.

TABLE 4.3.
ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HIGH SCHOOL

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	could, had to	10.7
Two	dummy subject, should	8%
Three	as+adj+as, comparison	5%
Four	comparison(irregular)	0%
Five	word order	46%
Six	tag questions	4%
Seven	that clause	5%
Eight	Passive	8%
Nine	present perfect	7%

Table 4.3 indicates that to what extent passages of the first book contain the structures taught in each unit. The highest level of agreement was observed in lesson five and the lowest levels of agreement were observed in lesson four. Generally the agreement between the structures and their application in the passages was really low. This indicates lack of contextualization of the grammar prior to students' being exposed to the structures. The text of unit four is presented in appendix as an example to show the complete mismatch between the texts and structure.

The same analysis was done to American Headway 1. Table 4.4 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.4.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN HEADWAY 1

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	Verb to be, possessive adj	59%
Two	Verb to be, negatives and short answers, possessive's	64%
Three	Present simple, questions and negatives	57%
Four	Present simple	74%
Five	There is/are How many... Prepositions of place Some and any This, that, these, those	43%
Six	Can/ can't Was/ were Could Was born	40%
Seven	Past simple regular verbs Irregular verbs Time expressions	52%
Eight	Past simple2 negative- ago Time expressions	63%
Nine	Count/ non count nouns I like...? I'd like....? A and some Much and many	53%
Ten	Present continuous Whose is it? Possessive pronouns	57%
Eleven	Going to Comparatives and superlatives	62%
Twelve	Present perfect Ever and never Yet and just Present perfect and past simple	43%

Table 4.4 indicates that to what extent passages of American Headway 1 contain the structures taught in each unit. The highest level of agreement was observed in lesson four and the lowest level of agreement was observed in lesson six. Generally the agreement between the structures and their application in the passages was reasonable.

The same analysis was done to American File 1. Table 4.5 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.5.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN FILE 1

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	Verb be +, pronouns: I, you, etc. Verb be – and? Possessive adj, my, your., etc. a/an, plurals, this/that/ these/ those	37%
Two	Simple present+ and _ Simple present? a/ an + jobs possessive s	34%
Three	Sdjectives Telling the time, simple present Adverbs of frequency Prepositions of time	54%
Four	Can/ can't Like+ (verb+ ing) Object pronouns: me, you, him, etc. Possessive pronouns: mine, yours, etc.	36%
Five	Simple past of be: was/ were Simple past regular verbs Simple past irregular verbs Simple past regular and irregular	67%
Six	There is/ there are There was/ the were Present continuous Simple present or present continuous?	49%
Seven	a/ an, some/ any how much/ how many? Quantifiers: a lot, not much, etc. Be going to(plans) Be going to (predictions)	58%
Eight	Comparative adjectives Superlative adjectives Would like to/ like Adverbs	56%
Nine	Present perfect Present perfect or simple past	62%

According to Table 4.5 the highest levels of agreement belonged to lesson five. On the other hand the lowest level of agreement belonged to lesson two.

The same analysis was done to the second book of high school. Table 4.6 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.6.
ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND BOOK OF HIGH SCHOOL

Lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	past perfect	3%
Two	possessive pronoun	4%
Three	relative clauses	14%
Four	verb+infinitive, noun as modifier	20%
Five	article, wh-questions	20%
Six	1 st conditional, reflexive	4.3%
Seven	2 nd conditional	0%

According to Table 4.6 the highest levels of agreement belonged to lesson four and five. On the other hand the lowest level of agreement belonged to lesson seven. It can be inferred that the second book is also suffering from lack of contextualization. The text of unit one is presented in appendix as an example to show the complete mismatch between the texts and structure.

The same analysis was done to American Headway 2. Table 4.7 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.7.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN HEADWAY 2

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	Tenses, present, past, future Questions, question words	52%
Two	Present tenses, Present simple Present continuous	44%
Three	Past tenses Past tenses Past continuous	56%
Four	Quantity Much and many Some and any A few, a little, a lot/ lots of Something, someone, somewhere Articles	64%
Five	Verb patterns Want/ hope to do Enjoy/ like doing Looking forward to doing 'd like to do Future intentions Going to, will, and present continuous for future	53%
Six	What... Like? Comparative and superlative adjectives As...as	46%
Seven	Present perfect and past simple For and since Tense review	62%
Eight	Have to Should, must	53%
Nine	Time clauses, first conditional	33%
Ten	Passives	57%
Eleven	Second conditional, might	62%
Twelve	Present perfect continuous, Present perfect simple versus continuous	48%

Table 4.7 indicates that the highest level of agreement belonged to lesson four and the lowest one belongs to lesson nine.

Table 4.8 shows the results of the analysis of the match between the structures and the passages of American file 2.

TABLE 4.8.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN FILE 2

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	Word order in question Present continuous Defining relative clauses	43%
Two	Simple past: regular and irregular verbs Questions with and without auxiliaries	35%
Three	Going to, past continuous (future arrangements) Review of tenses: present, past, and future	42%
Four	Present perfect Superlatives	36%
Five	Uses of infinitive Uses of the -ing form Have to, don't have to, must, must not, can't	39%
Six	If+ present; will+ base form If+ past; would+ base form (second conditional)	40%
Seven	Present perfect+ for and since Used to Passive	35%
Eight	Quantifiers, too, not enough	54%
Nine	Past perfect Reported speech	46%

According to Table 4.8 the highest levels of agreement belonged to lesson eight. On the other hand the lowest level of agreement belonged to lesson two and lesson seven.

Table 4.9 below indicates the results of the analysis of the third textbook of the high school.

TABLE 4.9.
ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD BOOK OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

Lessons	Structure	level of agreement
One	noun clauses, be going to	4%
Two	be+adjective+for+onject+infinitive gerund	0%
Three	Phrasalverb adjective/verb+preposition	7.2%
Four	Verb+object+infinitive Reported speech	21%
Five	Present and past participle Verb+adjective	2.2%
Six	Passive	4%

As it is clear from Table 4.9 the problem of decontextualization and mismatch between structure and reading passage is still present in the third textbook. The highest level of agreement can be seen in lesson three which is 7.2 percent and the lowest level of agreement belonged to lesson two which is 0%. The text of unit two is presented in appendix as an example to show the complete mismatch between the texts and structure.

The same analysis was done to American Headway 3. Table 4.10 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.10.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN HEADWAY 3

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	Naming tenses Present, past, present perfect Auxiliary verbs Questions and negatives Short answers	42%
Two	Present tenses Simple and continuous Passive	54%
Three	Past tenses Past perfect	46%
Four	Advice, obligation, Modal and related verbs	44%
Five	Future forms Will, going to, and present continuous	53%
Six	Information questions	46%
Seven	Present perfect, Simple and continuous	52%
Eight	Verb + -ing Verb + infinitive	43%
Nine	Third conditionals Might have done / could have done Should have done	53%
Ten	Noun phrases Articles Possessives Reflexive pronouns and each other	47%
Eleven	Modals of probability Present Past Looks like / looks Expressing disbelief	52%
Twelve	Reported speech Reported thoughts Reported questions	58%

Table 4.10 indicates that the highest level of agreement belongs to lesson twelve and the lowest one belongs to lesson one.

Table 4.11 shows the results of the analysis of the match between the structures and the passages of American file 3.

TABLE 4.11.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN FILE 3

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	A) Present tenses: simple and continuous, action and non-action verbs B) past tenses: simple, continuous, perfect C) future forms: going to, present continuous, will	33%
Two	A) present perfect and simple past B) present perfect continuous C) comparatives and superlatives	38%
Three	A) must, have to, should (obligation) B) must, may, might, can't (deduction) C) can, could, be able to (ability and possibility)	40%
Four	A) first conditional and future Time clause + when, until, etc.	32%
Five	A) quantifiers B) articles: a / an, the, no article C) gerunds and infinitives	40%
Six	A) Reported speech: statements, questions, and commands B) passive: be + past participle C) relative clauses: defining and non-defining	41%
Seven	A) third conditionals B) tag questions, indirect questions C) phrasal verbs	36%

According to Table 4.11 the highest levels of agreement belonged to lesson six. On the other hand the lowest level of agreement belonged to lesson four.

The results of the analysis of pre-university book are presented in Table 4.12 bellow.

TABLE 4.12.
ANALYSIS OF PRE-UNIVERSITY BOOK

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	conjunction of time	50%
Two	bare infinitive,	50%
Three	adjective phrase	2.5%
Four	modification of adjectives	2%
Five	expressing contrast(while, whereas)	8.8%
Six	expressing purpose	10%
Seven	expressing contrast(although)	6.2%
Eight	Modals(can, may, might, could)	2%

It can be inferred that in pre-university book the level of agreement seems higher, however the lack of match can still be observed. The first two units show a good deal of agreement which is 50 percent. Alternatively the lowest levels of agreement belong to lesson four and eight which is 2 percent.

Table 4.13 illustrates the analysis of the match between the reading passages and structures taught in American Headway 4.

TABLE 4.13.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN HEADWAY 4

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	The tense system Simple, continuous, perfect Active and passive Informal language	52%
Two	Present perfect Simple and continuous Being imprecise Fillers	34%
Three	Narrative tenses Past simple, past continuous, past perfect active and passive News and responses The use of like	44%
Four	Questions and negatives The question how come?	43%
Five	Future forms The word thing	55%
Six	Expressions of quantity Informal expressions of quantity	56%
Seven	Modals and related verbs 1 Declarative questions Questions expressing surprise	42%
Eight	Relative clauses Participles Adding a comment with which	55%
Nine	Expressing habit Be used to doing Intensifying compounds	56%
Ten	Modal auxiliary verbs 2 Expression with modal verbs	49%
Eleven	Hypothesizing Expressions with if	53%
Twelve	Articles a/an, the, one, zero article determiners demonstratives and determiners	57%

It can be said that according to Table 4.13 the highest level of agreement was observed in lesson twelve and the lowest level of agreement was observed in lesson two.

The same analysis was done to American File 4. Table 4.14 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 4.14.
ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN FILE 4

lessons	Structure	Level of agreement
One	A) review: question information B) auxiliary verbs; the ... the ... + comparatives	36%
Two	A) adjectives as nouns, adjective order B) narrative tenses, past perfect continuous; so/ such ... that	37%
Three	A) passive (all forms), it is said that ... , he is thought to ... , etc. B) future perfect and future continuous	42%
Four	A) unreal conditionals B) past modals;	49%
Five	A) gerunds and infinitives B) used to, be used to, get used to	47%
Six	A) articles B) uncountable, plural, and collective nouns; have something done C) Quantifiers: all / every, etc.	31%
Seven	A) structures after wish B) clauses of contrast and purpose; whatever, whenever, etc. C) relative clauses	36%

The highest level of agreement can be seen in lesson four which is 42 percent and the lowest level of agreement belonged to six which is 31%.

B. Compatibility of High School Textbooks with Standard Textbooks

This compatibility was checked through comparing high school textbooks, American headway series and American files series against Modern English book to determine the concordance of each series with a standard English grammar book.

TABLE 4.15.
RESULTS OF COMPARING HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS, AMERICAN FILES AND AMERICAN HEADWAYS WITH MODERN ENGLISH

Textbooks	Compatibility
High school text books	11.5%
American headway series	64.7%
English American file series	69.3%

Level of compatibility was defined as the degree to which the structures in each series are in line with those of Modern English in terms of order of presentation and inclusion of key grammatical points. As it can be seen American headway textbooks and English American files textbooks showed a higher level of compatibility than high school textbooks and this implies that American headway series and English American files are closer to standard English grammar books norms than high school textbooks.

In next step high school textbooks, American headway and English American files are compared in terms of order of presentation of structures and the way through which structures are presented.

This compatibility was checked through comparing high school textbooks and American Headway series as well as American File in terms of order of the presentation and the way through which structures are presented. Level of compatibility was defined as the degree to which the structures in each series are matched in terms of order of presentation and inclusion of key grammatical points.

1. Order of presentation

Regarding the above tables the grammatical volume of American file and American head way is more than high school books. In American files and American head way materials are supplied from simple to hard, but it is not true with high school books, furthermore all materials are unscrambled and do not follow a fair order.

2. Method of presentation

In American file and American head way all materials are presented in a contextualized way additionally there are formed focused exercises to practice grammatical points, however such materials are presented in a decontextualized way and there are no form focused exercises for follow up practices.

V. CONCLUSION

Referring to the first question of this study (see tables from 4.3 to 4.14), it can be detected that American Head way and American file series outstandingly introduced grammatical structures in passages providing adequate context to raise students' consciousness. Such presentation of target point is highly recommended in order to activate related schemata. On the contrary, none of the high school series applied such a procedure. In other words, high school books did not use the passages in order to raise students' consciousness. To keep abreast, it needs declaring that such problems indicate pitfalls in practical grammar teaching and thus leads students to receive limited input for target structures.

Referring to the second question of this study, there are two approaches as how to grade target points: The structuralism view and the functional notional approach. The former signifies that structures must be organized in accordance to the level of difficulty and the latter states that first a specific situation is presented and then a suitable structure to that situation be taught.

In a performed study showed that on high school books, American head way and American file series presented structure in accordance to structural view owing to the fact that grammar is presented in simple to complex, However none of the high school books applied neither of those approaches due to the fact that no order of presentation was observed and grammatical points were presented in a random order. Another point to state is the amount of grammatical points which are presented in American files and American head way books noticeably but such thing was not true with high school books. Presenting adequate grammatical contexts brings about curiosity for learners which is one of the most significant factors in motivating them to learn structures properly. Based on performed research, it was found that American head way and file series focus on the target points in all sections of each lessons such as Readings, Listening exercises, Conversations, Self-study exercises and Grammar spots are adequately related. By contrasts no adequate context for grammar presentation is given in high school books leading to teaching grammar decontextualized and coming up with major weakness ;i.e, lack of to activate schemata which is an indispensable part of teaching grammar, which nonexistence of such a factor leads to an awkward and imperfect grammatical knowledge, further down side for high school books is that they have got no reliance on variety of exercises in different situations enjoying a variety of practical grammars which the reverse is true with American head way and file series.

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- [59] Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences Volume 3, 2010, Pages 36–44 An analytical evaluation of Iranian high school ELT textbooks from 1970 to the present : Akbar Azizifar Mansour Koosha Ahmad R. Lotfi Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

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Dreiser's Life and Creation: High Perspicacity from Crudity

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Abstract—Theodore Dreiser is a brilliant writer. On the surface he tried to adopt a simple and crude language style and structure style, while under the cover of crudity, Theodore Dreiser presented a different world. It's too realistic and natural to accept by the readers of the age. Theodore Dreiser represented a new and true writing style to show the high perspicacity from crudity.

Index Terms—Theodore Dreiser, writing style, American literature

“... Recalling my past novels, I only can say, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, such is my description about life... You may not like my description, but the life I have witnessed and felt is just like this. Thus I can only give you such description.”

-----Dreiser

In the twentieth century, the nation's political and imaginative path would lie on city streets. The American scene would be urban. The city was embraced by reformers who interpreted the congestion and deprivations of urban life as curable anomalies. More fundamentally many progressives and socialist--- men and women who might be called the new urban ideologist--- believed that the city represented the future and offered democracy. However, Theodore Dreiser's first novel, *Sister Carrie* (1900) described a primitive and yet decisive account of the city's seductions and dangers. Though hid young title character, Theodore Dreiser expressed his dazzled reaction when he first came to Chicago. He wrote later of that first visit. The city was itself a strange illusion of hope and happiness with its cascade of immigrants, its daily changing skyline, its gargantuan appetites, its mingling of slaughter houses and counting houses. Chicago was perhaps the quintessential American city. This is Chicago which Caroline Meeber sought and dreamed.

As for a member of a publishing house, or his wife, *Sister Carrie* is “disgusting” Though the book is printed according to the contract, the publishing house doesn't publish it with enthusiasm. Only several are sold. In fact, Carrie Meeber's fate is quite similar with Maggie. But Theodore Dreiser's novel a rouses more trouble in the first ten years after its publishing. Though Maggie displays what Maggie has mistaken is a small one, but at last she still get the end of death. Carrie Meeber, in the last chapter has become famous in New York stage and her future is very good. This infuriate readers, who had been accustomed to mode that women's lives like Carrie Meeber even if there have really been, should not be written out, either. But Theodore Dreiser can't accept those moral and rules contradicting his actual observation.

Theodore Dreiser observes again and over again. Although he describes various details, he can't find the fact that families, friendship or other forms can act as the protection screen in the conflict between individual and environment. As for Theodore Dreiser, “asking him to observe with the usual means and get the result—such protection screen exists will make no difference with—asking him to observe a waste and but calling it a plant garden.”

Theodore Dreiser was the ill-educated son of impoverished son of impoverished parents, the ninth child of a tyrannically Catholic immigrant father and a more indulgent, illustrate mother to whom he gave such love he would ever feel. The family was mired in poverty and bad luck. The only notable success was that of Theodore Dreiser's older brother Paul did well in show business, Abetted and supported by a local school teacher, he managed to complete a year at Indiana University. There and later, his desultory reading and Nietzsche, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer filled his receptive mind with half-formed, contradictory notions of superman and determinism. Especially in *Sister Carrie* almost every chapter indicates his understanding of Spencer's thought. Though Spencer's thought influences him very deep in his novel, the thoughts he gets from Spencer has never resulted any interrupted result, never like Norris's naturalist's views makes figure in his writing become dull. Theodore Dreiser's figure comes out of his recollection of his emotion, but not the recollection of thought. In Norris's *Mactague* the main characters are depicted according to author's life philosophy. While action reflects author's pain in his life, only after narrating the facts, he followed them with some philosophical explanation.

Theodore Dreiser had nothing more in than a little when he jotted the words *Sister Carrie* at the top of a blank sheet of paper. He made up of her story as he went, appropriating pieces of it from the lives of friends and family, among them, his sister Emma, the dreamer who yearns with an articulate hunger for the glamour that might lift her out of the common place. She realized in a dim way how much the city—held—wealth, fashion, ease--every adornment for women, and she longed for dress and beauty with a whole heart. At the same time, Carrie Meeber is a creature in an allegory of destiny; the first chapter of story is prophetically titled. “The Magnet Attracting: A Waif amid Factory work she quickly finds will yield to only shabbiness and physical pain. She becomes the mistress of two men in turn, the first a flashy salesman, the second a saloon manager named Hurstwood. Caroline Meeber, a girl from countryside, comes to

Chicago to seek everything she dreamed. But factory work, she quickly finds, will yield only shabbiness and physical pain. She becomes the mistress of two men in turn, the first a glib traveling salesman, the second a saloon manager named Hustwood, who sacrifices his family and reputation to run off with her to New York. The consequence of Carrie's immorality is not punishment or death but a well-paid job on New York stage. It is Hustwood not Carrie, who slides into failure and despair and finally takes his own life by turning on the gas in a flophouse room. Hustwood's suicide is followed by Carrie's concluding meditation, a vague sigh of discontent that is untouched by remorse, though Theodore Dreiser at last tells us that Carrie will never be self-indulgent and satisfied.

Like all of Theodore Dreiser's characters, those in Carrie Meeber obey the dictates of reading rather than literary decorum. The consequence of Carrie's immorality is not punishment or death but a well-paid job on the New York stage. It is Hustwood, not Carrie, who slides into failure and despair and finally takes his own life by turning on the gas in a flophouse room. Doubleday, to the virtual suppression of a novel that he had initially accepted with enthusiasm. In the much re-arranged version of the novel that Doubleday published, Hustwood's suicide is followed by Carrie's concluding meditation, a vague sigh of discontent that is untouched by remorse, just as Theodore Dreiser (1992) described in *Sister Carrie*

"In your rocking chair, by your window, dreaming, shall you long, along. In your rocking-chair, by your window, shall you dream such happiness as you may never feel."(p382)

However, the author did not show any dissatisfaction about the end of the novel and Carrie. In fact, he was neither approval nor opposed of her. Theodore Dreiser only gave his sympathy to the lost lambs, because he believed: the world is a jungle; why we are here and what is our aim are unknown; we have no rights to choose the environment; it is environment which chooses us and changes us. In his novel this point of view is expressed widely. For example, Carrie Meeber goes here and there to find a job in order to make a living, works in a factory where the condition is lower, and then is seriously ill, thus again loses her job. We can imagine how much she has suffered. It is natural for her to become the mistress of Drute if she wants to live in the city and realizes her dream. The same to Hustwood, he just happens to find the money-locker unlocked. He gets the money. When he changes his mind and wants to put it back, the money-lock has been locked itself. This matter, he can not explain clearly to his boss. Whether willing or unwilling, he has been a thief. In the author's eyes, everyman is the victim of the fate. In order to live on the earth, human being can not be classified into the good and the bad, but only the strong and weak. Everyone is driven by desire. We must struggle and compete cruelly one another.

Carrie Meeber is the seeker, the dreamer, who yearns with an inarticulate hunger for the glamour that might lift her out of the commonplace: "she realized in a dim way how much the city held--- wealth, fashion, easy-every adornment for women, and she longed for dress and beauty with a whole heart." She acts out Theodore Dreiser deduced from his own. Part of Carrie came from his sister Emma, who had eloped with a bartender. Theodore Dreiser was the ninth son of poor parents. His father was a Catholic immigrant and his mother was illiterate but indulgent. He gave his mother all his love that he could feel. The whole family was poor and bad luck except his brother Paul, who made a little success in show business. He completed a year at Indiana University where he learned a lot about Nietzsche, Darwin and Herbert Spencer. When he was 23, Theodore Dreiser returned to Chicago and began another life as a journalist. He suffered a lot in city life. With the bitter experience of city life and earlier family life Theodore Dreiser saw through the society. Though his work he described the society of that time truthfully. So Carrie Meeber gives readers a true feeling. Such is life. No matter what attitude we held toward it, we cannot escape from it.

As for Hustwood, he actually reflects a kind of social function and a beautified saloonkeeper. He is smooth and well behaved. All of these seem to be his nature, however, it results from his characters. But characters result from his vocation. This result affects his degeneration with bitterness and tragedy. Chicago is a newly developing city and Hustwood belongs to this kind of place. A person like him went to New York is bound to face failure, because New York is a quite developed place. Famous and rich people are here and there. Therefore his desire for Carrie is not the one reason of his decline and his tragic degeneration, that is to say, in Chicago Hustwood is the strong; in New York he becomes the weak, and this is decided by environment but not himself. Human being can not escape himself and his own character. Once Hustwood abandons his own social part in Chicago, and then his tragedies happen one by one. That proves that environment decides man even his character. Man is puny when they face the whole society.

Theodore Dreiser wants to tell such a story. He doesn't need reason. Not any rites and rules can prevent him from telling what he knows. All of this is true, which is his only excuse. If God create these people, he has the right to write them.

How can such a rigid writer not be lonely?

One century ago, Theodore Dreiser trudged in Chicago and wrote the shocking Carrie Meeber, expressing his serious but slight simplified idea. The life and the world he described are credible, among which, various figures are full of the milk of human kindness, making readers' hearts beat together with the figures. Theodore Dreiser at an end smoothed away numerous difficulties and created a kind of estimable beauty

Although when the publisher's wife read the book, such a fate mode is full of surprises, in the years after 1900, the standard of most American readers has changed unconsciously. Theodore Dreiser's long novel helped him to build a potential reputation. In 1911, his second novel Jenny Gerhardt came out. Critics all thought of it as a success. This book was rather popular. Naturalist's writing style stood in a white sheet again. Theodore Dreiser found the new alliance

amongst the younger writers. During the 20 years after the publishing of *Carrie Meeber*, it is possible for Willa Cather to write out *The Song of Lark*, *Coming*, *Aphrodite*, and *A Lost Lady*, which didn't arouse the fury of public. However, people would remember or even should remember it is *Carrie Meeber* that makes *A Lost Lady* possible and paved the road for the public to accept any contemporary novels. All of these novels are full of immediate significance. These writers are all serious writers.

"Although he uses such incoherent and blindly-explored language, he enlightens us, and makes us come to realize that he is stronger and sharper, his mind is greater than the world in his writing..." (Alfred Kasin, 1942, p47)

In naturalist writing, characters' motivations are strongly influenced by their environment. Characters behave in a certain way because their environment has a direct effect on how they view the world, themselves, and other people. Naturalist writers try to present what is "real", or truly out there, and do so in terms of the most successful enterprise of the nineteenth century – science, and focus on the things of life as they really are.

As Theodore Dreiser expresses in his *Sister Carrie*, that he does not show any dissatisfaction about the end of the novel and *Carrie*. In fact, he is neither approval nor opposed of her. Naturalism was another turn-of-the-century literary movement. By the end of the civil war, northern industrialism had triumphed over southern agrarianism, and from that victory came out a society based on mass labor and mass consumption. Mechanization spread rapidly as steam engines, linked to machines, displaced hand work on farms and factories. The conditions of labor changed for the use new machines, which seemed more valuable and more useful than the workers who tended them. Yet increasing numbers of Americans left the farms to seek jobs in urban factories. However periodic economic depressions, bloody strikes, increasing slums in the cities day by day and various disorders of society made some Americans realized that they did need a new philosophy to explain all of these phenomena.

The local-color movement was a literary movement popular during the 1890s. Local-color writers focused on a particular region of the United States and tried to recreate its culture, dialect, and customs in minute detail. At this time, the United States was still very fragmented culturally, and local-colorists wanted to convey the "quaintness" of a minority culture to mainstream American society. Therefore social Darwinism was spread to America and filled the blank of American knowledge. Darwin disturbed the educated world with his book *The Origin of Species*. Darwin claimed that change was implicit in the biological world, which over the course of an immense period the competition among living creatures for survival had provided the impetus for change from simpler and more primitive to higher and more complex forms.

The world was not a finished entity created in one blinding flash but a product of evolution, of slow change over time, a process challenged simultaneously a flock of passionately held beliefs. It denied the Judeo-Christian story of the creation of the universe by God in six days, as expressed in *Genesis*, the first book of the Bible and the semi-divinity of humankind by connecting human beings to the animal world. Thus it made people suspicious of pre-theory and they began to consider how to put Darwinism into every scientific research field in order to discover law of evolution of other things. Therefore there were mechanical materialism and special Darwinism at the time. The famous phrase by Spencer is "the fittest survival" According to Darwinism, the so-called society in fact is also a jungle, where is processing the cruel survival competition. Man has no rights to choose his life, and his fate is decided by heredity and environment, physical derives and economic circumstances. Naturalism is based on social Darwinism. Darwin claims the world is a product of evolution. His theory denies the Judeo-Christian story of the creation of the universe by God in six days, as expressed in *Genesis*, the first book of the Bible and the semi-divinity of humankind by connecting human beings to the animal world.

In naturalist writing, characters' motivations are strongly influenced by their environment. Characters behave in a certain way because their environment has a direct effect on how they view the world, themselves, and other people. Naturalist writers try to present what is "real", or truly out there, and do so in terms of the most successful enterprise of the nineteenth century – science, and focus on the things of life as they really are.

Many writers imitate Stephen Crane of Jack London. Theodore Dreiser's writing skills have never been imitated, because there is really nothing to be worth imitating from Theodore Dreiser: confused grammar, sloppy using of word, illogical writing etc. All of these make his novel seem to that he is the unique exception among the writers. Although he has thousands of faults, he still is great. Theodore Dreiser lacks everything but not talents. He symbolized the originally rough nature of American life.

Like Robinson, holding that attitude of approving the value and concept of his cultural environment gradually grew up into a writer, but Theodore Dreiser's background is different from Robinson. His Roman Catholic father sent him to the missionary school to study. Thus although the words and sentences of the middle-western dialect have involved to coarseness, what he has learned is more confusedly mingled. The vocabulary he learned is not small, but whether his family or his education doesn't teacher him to pay more attention to these words. If the two words' meaning are similar any one will be O.K.. He piles the words in the sentences, and doesn't think about the better way of expressing the same things. Later when Theodore Dreiser began to write, he had to pour all his sprits into the materials he wanted to present. He depended on facts to express his intention or meaning but not on dictions. He doesn't use what is irony or the other succinct techniques. Whenever such techniques are needed, that is to say, he should adopt the artistic treatment for the details, Theodore Dreiser uses floods of details. His works always have the sluggish and dull dangers, but actually, they had never been

like this.

When he was twenty-three, Theodore Dreiser returned to Chicago to cover the Columbian Exposition or the Saint Louis Republic. His writing life for money totally wipes out his concern about quality, although he has no strength to resist the gust of vulgar tide. He was cleared by it. Thus when he writes such serious novel like *Carrie Meeber*, but this world is so true that anyone, who regards reality, cannot turn a blind eye on it from now on. In spite of various limitations in his skills, Theodore Dreiser makes the great achievement.

Theodore Dreiser is stronger and sharper and has the penetrating insight and foresight. *Carrie Meeber* is a social prophesy. Today in New York or Hollywood, we can find girls like Carrie here and there. She has become quite familiar figure to people. However, no one stops to make it clear that Theodore Dreiser has discovered the appearance of such kind of people 40 years ago, the motion and the social factors causing them to becoming mature.

As for the structure, this novel is built on the comparison between luxury and poverty. It also gives us a further description on focus of comparison between Carrie's arising and Hurstwood's falling. This novel consists of two person's comparative antecedents through the thorough balanced arrangement. *Sister Carrie* is typical Naturalist's works lies in that there are no twisted plots caused by ethics and moral. The novel's development doesn't depend on the central character's willingness, but on life rule—— of course, it is no wonder that this is shown by a clever selection of the novelist. Therefore the author doesn't make any suspense. What moves the readers are the life essence but not the emotion evoked by the figure's action? Here, Theodore Dreiser is influenced by Crane, and he plays the tone we hear later in Sherwood Anderson's novels. Theodore Dreiser doesn't let his novel adopt the traditional structure, but offer it with two persons' comparative antecedents. The two antecedents represent the rule of changes. Theodore Dreiser finds this is the tooted process both for life process and nature process.

Theodore Dreiser first of all is a novelist. He has never subordinated human beings' value to philosophical meaning. Readers are interested in *Sister Carrie*, only because she face the quite similar question with readers, and Hurstwood's degeneration is miserable. However, because of his temperament, readers can accept his failure calmly. Philosopher Theodore Dreiser made a concession to Novelist Theodore Dreiser. The things that happen in the novel must be possible. Thus by the careful arrangements of structure and plots' developments, the writer clearly demonstrates how Hurstwood and Carrie Meeber change. But he mainly wants to discover he vacillate, imprecise and vague nature of experience affected by external force. Such external force is beyond the comprehension of man's experience. In this way, Theodore Dreiser has a little inclination of fatalism, and this point proved that Theodore Dreiser is a Naturalist.

"I acknowledge there is a kind of power, which has nothing with individual's desire or impulse. It is the products of the struggles of various powers. We know nothing about it and certainly can not control it. On the contrary, we are in its grasp, just as the puny sand is swept here and there by storm, with the result that we can't know the aim of doing so." (Thomas King Whipples, 1928, p68)

From the respect of structure, this novel consists of two person's comparative antecedents. *Sister Carrie* is a typical Naturalism's works lies in there are no twisted plots caused by moral principles. The novel's development doesn't depend on the central character's willingness, but on the life's rule. Theodore Dreiser believed the environment can destroy or change people's moral view toward action, besides he still believed fate is unpredictable and human beings' action is without any meanings and aims. But between the two suffocating beliefs, his view and his belief for life's activity and importance still enlivened. Through *Sister Carrie*, Theodore Dreiser seemed to say, this is life that I have seen, while I cannot explain why life is in such state but not in the other state. Why blame those wretched people. They live like that just because such is life.

One century passed. People of the twenty-first century have accepted *Sister Carrie* with pleasure. Through the thick layers of the book, I gradually feel the heaviness. Theodore Dreiser's hoarse and exhausted shout rings in my ear still "such is life! Don't ask me why! Such is what I have witnessed!" Today's China—— China of the twenty-first century, is in a similar situation with America of one century ago. Theodore Dreiser had represented the picture of life, then how we, existing in the picture, adjust ourselves to walk into the picture? The writer has no good ideas, therefore you——people in the picture have to by yourselves to taste, to explore, to ponder...

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Interactional Metadiscourse in English and Persian News Articles about 9/11

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Abstract—This study aimed to illuminate the role of interactional metadiscourse markers in English and Persian news articles about 9/11 events. For this purpose, 30 English and Persian news reports (15 from each) were collected randomly. In order to explore the frequency of these types of metadiscourse and their supposedly significant differences in both sets of data, Hyland classification system was utilized. The findings from the research illustrated a significant difference in distribution of metadiscourse markers in the corpus due to the fact that American journalist employed interactional metadiscourse markers more frequently in their news articles. Moreover, Iranian journalists inclined not use self-mention and engagement markers due to their reader responsibility and their writing styles in formal contexts. The results of the present study might offer insights to pedagogical implication of this aspect of metadiscourse for journalism students.

Index Terms—pragmatics, interactional metadiscourse, Hyland, 9/11 news articles, English & Persian

I. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics as a branch of linguistics deals with intended speaker meaning. David Crystal (Crystal, 1987, p.120) believed that “pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others.” Regarding the cultural and contextual features in communication, it should be borne in mind that meaning could be more than just a simple interpretation of semantic or syntactic basis. Since 1970, researchers have become interested in investigating the meaning beyond the text in which they are occurring. Many researchers like Sassour, Moris, Carnap, Austin and Grice proposed useful theories that are still the basis of language researchers in this field. Finch (2000) claimed that “Pragmatists focus on what is not explicitly stated and on how we interpret utterances in situational contexts. They are concerned not so much with the sense of what is said as with its force, that is, with what is communicated by the manner and style of an utterance.” Therefore, the importance of examining the meaning in relation to its context made researchers to think of linguistic means that represent it.

One of these means is metadiscourse. Hyland (2005) defines this concept as “an umbrella cover which is used for self-reflective statements to exchange the meaning through text, help the writer to mention his/her inputs and stances and engage reader as a member of specific community” (p.46). He believes that metadiscourse markers are not only more than a simple information exchange, but also might include writer’s attitude, personality and regarding reader’s assumption as well. Hyland claimed that “all metadiscourses are interpersonal for indicating reader’s knowledge, textual experiences, and processing needs; and help writers with rhetorical appeals to achieve that.” (Hyland, 2005, p.41)

Mass media are recognized as a means of discourse exchange and communication. Therefore, it would be helpful to examine the role of metadiscourse in relation between writer, text and reader as a contributing factor. Thus, the focus of this study is on metadiscourse use in English and Persian newspaper articles. The reason for investigating the articles of newspaper is that most of the previous studies concerned with metadiscourse in educational fields like ESL and EFL teaching, and media, though being important, has not received much attention.

The objectives of the present study

As a matter of fact, this study aims in examining the following questions:

A) Is there any difference and similarities between interactional metadiscourse markers in English and Persian news articles?

B) What do these differences try to imply?

In the following, section 2 will present the concept of metadiscourse and will briefly review its theoretical and empirical backgrounds. Section 3 provides relevant information about the material, data collection and analysis procedures. Section 4 includes finding which consider the number and frequency of metadiscourse markers, followed by a discussion of results in section 5. Finally, section 6 will present conclusions, implication and limitations of the study and some suggestion for further research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

“metadiscourse” also known as “meta language”, “meta talk” and “meta communication”, introduced by Zellig Harris in 1959. He employed this concept to describe ways of communication by language usage. So far, many researchers proposed various definitions and categorizations for this term. Meyer (1975) used the term “signaling” to talk about the non-content aspect of writing which emphasize some information in the text. In 1980, Schiffrin used “meta talk” to regard the textual features that contribute in demonstrating informational and referential aspect of writing and indicates the writer’s stance toward text, as well. A year after, Williams indicated to “wordiness” as a key element which help the reader through the text. In the following years, Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1993) tried to reform the weakness and flaws of previous categorizations by proposing a better classification. Recently, Hyland suggested a new framework for metadiscourse markers which is derived from Thompson and Thetela model (1995). Before then, researchers speculated 2 levels of discourse. In the first level was the propositional aspect and the second level includes metadiscourse as non-propositional concept. Rejecting this assumption, Hyland claimed that these 2 levels depend on each other for creating a cohesive and coherent text; due to the fact that one level described external world, while the other regards the meaning in its relevant context. Together, they form reader’s perception and interpretation of the text. Dividing metadiscourse markers into 2 levels-interactive and interactional- Hyland attempted to work out the ambiguity and overlap of previous studies.

The concept of metadiscourse has generated a lot of research in recent years. These studies could be classified into 3 fields:

A) Educational subjects like academic writing and reading comprehension

Table 1 represents the summary of some of the previous researches carried out in this sub-field.

TABLE1.
METADISOURSE USE IN EDUCATIONAL SUBJECTS

Authors' name	year	Subjects/texts	purposes	results
Intaraprawat & Steffensen	1995	ESL university students persuasive writing	To explore the usage of metadiscourse markers in writing	Improvement of writing quality due to the usage of metadiscourse markers
Camiciottoli	2003	Using 2 economical texts with the same content for 55 Italian university students	To discover the influence of metadiscourse markers on reading comprehension	Simpler and better understanding of reading comprehension because of metadiscourse markers
Hyland & Tse	2004	University students' master thesis of applied linguistics, Commercial studies, computer science, electronic engineering, biology and public administration	To search the usage of metadiscourse markers in academic writing	1-Interactional metadiscourse as the most frequent markers(esp. hedges, transitions, and engagement markers) 2-The most usage of metadiscourse in applied linguistics 3- The least usage of metadiscourse in electronic engineering
Jallilifar & Alihosseini	2007	Using 3 texts with the same content for 3 groups of students with similar language proficiency level	To examine the effect of metadiscourse markers on reading comprehension	Positive effect of metadiscourse markers on reading comprehension development
VahidDastjerdi & Shirzad	2010	University EFL students writing:30 in the elementary level, 32 in intermediate level and 30 in advance level	To investigate the employment of explicit instruction in using metadiscourse markers in EFL writing	1-Direct impact of applying instruction in using metadiscourse on students' writing 2-The most enhancement in writing of intermediate students

B) Different genres

Table 2 illustrates the summary of carried out research in this sub-field.

TABLE2.
METADISOURSE USE IN DIFFERENT GENRES

Authors' name	year	Subjects/texts	purposes	results
Dafouz milne	2003	Opinion columns of two elite newspapers in Britain and Spain	To investigate the pragmatic use of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in order to achieve persuasion in newspaper discourse	1-The existing difference due to the usage of hedge employment 2-The frequent usage of textual metadiscourse in Spanish news articles 3-The frequent usage of interpersonal metadiscourse in British news articles
Gonzalez	2005	Commercial websites	To illuminate the role of textual metadiscourse	The positive effect of metadiscourse in persuading customer
Zarei & Mansouri	2011	Randomly selected research articles from 2004 to 2006	To examine the role of metadiscourse markers in humanities and non-humanities fields	1-The frequent usage of interactive metadiscourse markers in humanity fields 1-The influence of metadiscourse markers on text by engaging readers
Hashemi & Golparvar	2012	38 randomly selected Persian news articles in 2012	To search the role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse in Iranian newspaper discourse	1-Textual metadiscourse as the most frequent markers 2-Higer usage of text connectives, narratives and commentaries

C) Comparative cross-cultural studies

Table 3 shows some research conducted in this sub-field.

TABLE3.
METADISOURSE USE IN COMPARATIVE CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES

Authors' name	year	Subjects/texts	purposes	results
Rahimpour	2006	90 discussion section in English and Persian research articles in linguistics filed	To investigate the impact of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers on writing	Higher usage of textual metadiscourse markers in Persian research articles (esp. hedges and transitions)
Abdollahzade	2007	53 English and Persian newspaper Editorials in 2003	To examine the role of metadiscourse markers in realizing writer's presence	1-Higher application of hedges and code glosses in English newspapers 2- Higher application of emphatics in Persian newspapers
Burneikeite	2008	20 English as L1 and 20 Lithuanian as L2 master thesis in Linguistics	To expand the methodological framework in analyzing metadiscourse and to investigate the metadiscourse marker employment in linguistics fields	1-The most frequent usage of text connective in L2 2-The least frequent employment of endophoric markers in L2

The newspaper serves as an influential medium in keeping people informed world events and, thereby, in extending their knowledge and deepening their understanding. Despite the fact that newspaper still remain a powerful source of news; only few writers investigated the issue (Dafouz ,2003; Hashemi & Golparvar ,2012).

Dafouz (2003) examined the role of metadiscourse markers in persuading readers. He investigated 40 opinion columns of 2 leading newspapers: the British "The Times" and the Spanish "EL Pais". The aim of his study was to determine the types of metadiscourse which occur in newspaper discourse and what is their distribution due to their cultural and linguistic differences. The findings indicated that hedge was the most frequent metadiscourse. The result of this study showed that balanced usage of both textual and interpersonal metadiscourse will be vital in persuasive text.

Hashemi & Golparvar (2012) aimed at exploring the textual and interpersonal metadiscourse in Persian news articles. The corpus of their study included 38 news articles which were selected randomly. They utilized Kopple's classification to detect the frequency and types of metadiscourse. The findings marked text connective, narratives and commentary respectively as the most useful metadiscourse markers in newspaper discourse.

Generally speaking, newspaper as an important genre has not received much attention outside of European and US. (Crismore & Abdollahzade, 2010). Therefore, this study tries to present a comparative analysis interactional metadiscourse in news articles written by American and Iranian journalists.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Material

The data of the present study were collected from leading and most widely read newspapers in US. and Iran by means of random sampling. The English news articles were retrieved from an online newspaper archive, while Persian

were collected from Astan-e-Qods- Razavi library archive. The selected articles were matched for length and topic to ensure comparability. They were written by American (as native-English speaking writers) and Iranian (as native-Persian speaking writers). These writers all tried to cover 9/11 events in 2001.

TABLE4
SIZE OF CORPUS

Size of corpus	English	Persian
Number of articles	30	30
Number of words	1,815	1,780

The news does not consist of only facts about events and issues of the world; rather, news, in addition to the fact, is full of opinion, value judgment, bias, and distortion of reality. So far, 9/11 was one of the argumentative events which could not be covered neutrally by the journalist; hence, metadiscourse enables readers to find out the way journalists used to manipulate the news.

B. Data Collection Procedure

To investigate the role of metadiscourse markers, 30 English and Persian news articles (15 from each newspaper) were collected randomly. In fact, Random sampling is a contributing factor to overcome the diversity of writers' styles. All of these articles were published on 12 September in 2001. The reason why 9/11 news was chosen in this analysis is the importance of the event and its reflection and impacts on the world.

C. Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, Hyland (2005) classification of metadiscourse was utilized. (See table 5). This model has been chosen due to the fact that its categorization is more elaborated and frequently used in current studies. (For further study refers to Ken Hyland (2005) in "metadiscourse: exploring interaction I writing" (p.49)).

TABLE5.
HYLAND'S (2005) CLASSIFICATION OF INTERACTIONAL METADISCOURSE

Macro-category	Sub-category	Function	Example (in English)	Example (in Persian)
Interactional (engage reader in the text)	Hedge	Express writer's uncertainty	Might, perhaps ...	شاید، ممکن است...
	Booster	Express writer's certainty	In fact, definitely ...	در حقیقت، قطعاً...
	Attitude marker	Express writer's attitude	Unfortunately, surprisingly...	متأسفانه، جای تعجب است که...
	Self-mention	Explicit reference to author(s)	I, we...	من، ما...
	Engagement marker	Explicitly build relation with reader	Consider, note ...	در نظر بگیرید، توجه کنید...

In the following, some examples of interactional metadiscourse in English and Persian are underlined parts of the sentences:

- 1- About 50000 people work at the trade center.
- 2- In the wake of Pearl Harbor, we knew our enemies.
- 3- In American history, only one comparable event springs obviously to mind: Pearl Harbor
- 4- جبهه دموکرات برای آزادی فلسطین پذیرش مسئولیت انفجارها در آمریکا را به شدت رد کرد.
- 5- این بزرگ ترین عملیات تروریستی در تاریخ آمریکا بوده است.
- 6- یک گزارش تایید نشده حاکی است حدود دهها هزار نفر در تمام حملات سراسری در آمریکا کشته و زخمی شده اند.

All news articles were examined to determine and classify metadiscourse markers manually, and a quantitative analysis was conducted in order to identify the frequency of different types of metadiscourse and to answer the research questions. To normalize the present study to a common basis to compare the frequency of occurrence, this research employed 200 words approach.

Furthermore, to analyze the data statistically, SPSS software was applied.

To find out whether there is any difference between the metadiscourse distribution in both English and Persian news and to explore the meaning beyond this difference, the Chi-square test was employed.

IV. RESULTS

TABLE6
METADISOURSE NUMBERS AND FREQUENCIES IN CORPUS

Interactional metadiscourse markers	Frequency of metadiscourse markers		percentage of metadiscourse markers	
	English	Persian	English	Persian
Hedge	58	21	38%	32%
Booster	28	13	18%	20%
Attitude markers	40	31	26%	48%
Self-mention	18	0	12%	0
Engagement markers	9	0	6%	0

As it can be seen in table 6, the number of interactional metadiscourse markers employed by American journalists (70 %) is higher in comparison with Iranian journalists (29 %).

In the news articles written by American journalists, hedges were the highest metadiscourse marker (38%), followed by attitude markers (26%), booster (18%), self-mention (12%), and engagement marker (6%).

In Persian news articles, attitude markers were the most frequent interactional metadiscourse marker (48%), followed by hedge (32%), and booster (20%). Table 3 clearly shows that Iranian journalists did not employ self-mention and engagement marker.

Detecting the difference between English and Persian interactional metadiscourse, the chi-square test was applied.

In English news articles, the chi-square test disclosed the following results:

a) Between hedges and boosters, the asymptotic significance (0.001) is less than 0.05 which indicates the significant difference between these two markers; where hedges are employed more frequently.

b) Between hedges and self-mention, the asymptotic significance (0.000) is less than 0.05 and it shows the difference between these metadiscourse markers is significant; as hedges are used more than self-mention.

c) Between hedges and engagement markers, the asymptotic significance (0.000) has been less than 0.05 that reveals the difference; since the usage of hedges are higher.

d) Between boosters and engagement markers, the asymptotic significance (0.002) is less than 0.05. This displays the fact that these two markers differ significantly. In fact, boosters are used more frequently.

e) Between attitude markers and self-mention, the asymptotic significance (0.004) is less than 0.05, and the clear difference points out the application of attitude markers are higher.

f) Between attitude markers and engagement markers, the asymptotic significance (0.000) is less than 0.05. Furthermore, the existing difference is significant; for the fact that attitude markers are used more.

Nevertheless, there is no significant difference between hedges and attitude markers ($p=0.069 > 0.05$), boosters and attitude markers ($p=0.146 > 0.05$), boosters and self-mentions ($p=0.140 > 0.05$), and self-mention and engagement markers ($p=0.083 > 0.05$).

In Persian news articles, the chi-square result demonstrated no significant difference between hedges and boosters ($p=0.170 > 0.05$), and hedges and attitude markers ($p=0.166 > 0.05$). However, the difference between boosters and attitude markers was significant ($p=0.007 > 0.05$), due to the fact that application of attitude markers were higher.

Comparing English and Persian articles chi-square results revealed that the usage of boosters ($p=0.019 > 0.05$) and ($p=0.258 > 0.05$) include no significant difference, while hedge employment showed significant difference ($p=0.069 > 0.05$), for as much as hedges are the most numerous metadiscourse markers in English news articles.

V. DISCUSSION

Hyland (2005) believes that interactional resources help writers making their inputs clear and engaging their readers in the text. Hence, these types of metadiscourse express solidarity and point toward the relation writer tries to build with his/ her reader and text.

Similarities have been found in the corpus indicate that three interactional metadiscourse markers- hedges, boosters and attitude markers- are used more in English and Persian news articles; yet the statistical differences among these three markers are significant.

English and Persian news articles differ in the way they prioritize metadiscourse sub-categorizations. Therefore, the analysis of these presented data illustrates that in English news articles, the amount of interactional metadiscourse markers exerted by American journalist are higher. It is due to the fact that they are concerned with reader-writer responsibility. In spite of the fact that Iranian journalists prefer to act conservatively especially about political (such as 9/11) and religious matters, they inclined toward writer responsibility.

The findings also revealed that American journalists employed self-mention and engagement markers in their articles. The reason why there is no sign of these two metadiscourse markers in Persian news articles is because of their different writing styles in formal contexts. Iranian writers have trained to use a third person pronoun and passive structure in order to avoid self-mentioning in their text, while English writers feel free to a part of the text they are writing. The other motive is due to Iranian journalism conservatism and their writer responsibility approach toward text.

In comparison with Iranian (32%), American journalists applied hedges (38%) as the most frequent metadiscourse marker, while there was no significant difference in using boosters and attitude markers in their articles. Hyland (2005) claimed that American writers tend to be cautious and tentative. By exerting hedge, it seems that journalists are trying

not to show that they are knowledgeable about the proposition. Therefore, they express their uncertainty or their lack of commitment toward the truth conditions, particularly since 9/11 is a political subject and yet argumentative one. Intraprawat and steffenson's (1995) study pointed out that writers would achieve success by using hedge more frequently. Thus, it might be a good idea for Iranian journalists to go through training courses for expanding the usage of this type of metadiscourse marker.

The analysis of the data also revealed that there is no significant difference in employing boosters in English (18%) and Persian (20%). This indicates that Iranian and American journalists did not intend to represent a high degree of certainty and preferred to conduct their readers by leaving the alternative viewpoints open.

According to Hyland (2005), attitude markers refer to "writer's affective, rather the epistemic, attitude to proposition, as they convey concepts like surprise, anger, agreement and so on" (p.53). Comparing the application of attitude markers in corpus, it can be seen that Persian news articles involve a higher degree of this metadiscourse marker (48%) than the Americans (26%). Attitude markers are contributing factors in helping readers realize not only the necessary propositional contents, but also the writer's stance toward the subject. Iranian journalist tried to demonstrate their news articles devoid of being dull and impersonal by using this aspect of metadiscourse more frequently. They also tend to show their stance implicitly instead of free using of self-mention.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study tried to investigate the role of interactional metadiscourse markers about 9/11 news articles published in 2001 in US. and Iran. It also intended to illustrate the frequency of metadiscourse markers and to explore the difference between these two types of news articles. The result of the present study disclosed that interactional metadiscourse are more utilized by American journalists.

The findings also indicate that, among the interactional metadiscourse, the employment of hedge, booster and attitude marker are higher. In addition, hedges had the highest usage in English news articles, whereas attitude markers topped in Persian articles. However, there was no significant difference in booster application in the corpus. This is perceived from the results that besides linguistic difference between Iranian and American journalists, there are culturally different, as well. It can be exemplified through their writing styles in formal contexts and their responsibility toward the relations they are trying to build with readers, text.

This comparative study might provide pedagogical implication. It would be practical to train journalism students about using metadiscourse markers appropriately in order to achieve more success in reporting the world's events. Hence, journalists by exerting metadiscourse markers not only would be able to deepen their readers' understanding, but also might ensure to conduct them to grasp the content completely and ideally.

APPENDIX A

All of the English news articles used in this study were retrieved from:

<http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/archive.asp>

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/september11/la-11pages.0,862645.htmlstory#axzz2kQA197Ot>

http://voices.washingtonpost.com/blog-post/2010/09/911_on_newspapers_front_pages.html

It should bear in mind that since Iran is under strict sanction, the above internet websites were the only resources.

All of the Persian news reports were collected from Astan-e-Qods-e-Razavi library which is located in Imam Reza Holy Shrine in Mashhad, Iran.

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Classroom and Formative Assessment in Second/Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

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Abstract—Formative assessment was first used by Scriven (1967), but studies focused on formative assessment in ESL and EFL classes started in 2000. Formative assessment is integrated in learning and teaching, so a great part of classroom assessment is formative. However, classroom assessment has been not defined clearly, as most of the texts about this type of assessment define it in terms of its formative or summative potentials (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). This study is an attempt to define different types of assessment, compare formative and classroom assessment, and also identifies the areas which need more attention by researchers.

Index Terms—assessment, formative assessment, classroom assessment, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Second Language (ESL)

I. INTRODUCTION

Several researchers have shown that formative assessment is essential in ESL/EFL teaching and learning (Bachman, 1990; Gattullo, 2000; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000). As Cheng, Rogers, and Hu (2004, p. 361) stated: “every model of the teaching-learning process requires that teachers base their decisions—instructional, grading, and reporting—on some knowledge of students’ attainment of and progress towards desired learning outcomes”. Therefore, teachers should continuously assess their students in order to help teaching and learning progress (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). So, formative assessment is mainly conducted in the context of classroom. But what is done in the classroom (with the purpose of assessing the students) is not always in favor of forming students’ learning; in another word, assessment practices in the classroom are not formative all the time. For instance, as Brown (2004) categorized, classroom assessment can have diagnostic or achievement purposes, or even measure proficiency purposes. In order to discuss about different aspects of each kind of assessment, this article first presents definitions of assessment and then different types of assessment. At last, an overview of the effects of formative assessment on EFL/ESL teaching and learning will be presented.

II. DEFINITIONS OF ASSESSMENT

When students and some teachers think of assessment, they might remember the pressure of final exams. Unpleasant memories of several exams in a couple of days usually make students’ faces fall, and thinking about preparing and marking exams make teachers feel exhausted. But the fact is that, as Brown (2004) stated, testing and assessment are different.

Bachman (2004) defined assessment as “a process of collecting information about something that we are interested in, according to procedures that are systematic and substantially grounded” (pp. 6-7). The result of an assessment procedure can be a score or a verbal description. Ari Huhta (as cited in Spolsky & Hult, 2008) referred to assessment as “all kinds of procedures used to assess individuals (e.g., informal observations, self-assessments, quizzes, interviews, tests)” (p. 469). Teachers assess their students every session. However, testing is a way of conducting assessment which is technically associated with definite timing and settled procedures (Brown, 2004). As Huhta defined “tests denote a particular type of formal, often carefully designed instruments” (Spolsky & Hult, 2008, p. 469).

When teachers consider an assessment task, they usually have some questions in their mind such as: “*When and how often shall we assess the students?*”, or “*How should we conduct an assessment procedure?*” The question of “*What*” and “*Why*” rarely come to teachers’ mind (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). The reason of not asking *what*-question is quiet clear as teachers usually know what they want the learners to learn. However, it is somehow vague that why teachers do not ask *why*-questions; they either know the answer or seldom consider the reason of assessment (Ibid). *Why*-question is important since it will define the decision to be made about the outcomes of an assessment.

The very first use of language assessment is to make decisions for individuals (micro-evaluation), programs (macro-evaluation), and other stakeholders (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). It can be used to select individuals, place them into appropriate course of study, make changes in instruction, predict future performance of test-takers, make changes in educational programs (formative or summative decisions), to formulate new research questions, and modify the

understanding of a specific language phenomenon (Bachman, 2004). Therefore, the decision going to be made is so essential that it can define type of assessment.

In the following sections, classifications of assessment are presented based on the decisions which are going to be made according to their outcomes.

III. FORMAL VS. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Formal assessments are systematically planned and designed to get information about students' achievement in predetermined times. Brown (2004) described formal assessment as tournaments in tennis, and made a distinction between formal assessment and testing. He considered all kinds of tests as formal assessment, but this is not true vice versa; i.e. formal assessment is not necessarily performed as tests. He associated tests with time constraints which is not always the case in formal assessment. For example, systematic observation of students' oral performance in a kind of formal assessment, but it is hardly called a test which is limited to specific time and gathers limited pieces of information (Brown, 2004).

However, Harris and McCann (1994) used test as a synonym for formal assessment. Tests are taken in order to

- a) understand whether a student is ready to go to next level,
- b) know about problematic areas,
- c) figure out what the students have learnt, and
- d) compare the students. (Harris and McCann, 1994)

What is problematic about tests or formal assessment is that they are considered as enemies to students' competence for students are usually afraid that they will not perform successfully in tests (Cohen, 1996, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001). Students and teachers are suspicious of tests, and mostly they cannot see any relationship between formal tests and teaching and learning progress (Brown, 2004). But if it is justified to both teachers and learners that tests are employed as complements to other forms of assessment (e.g. informal assessment), they can be appropriate means to objectively assess students' knowledge (Harris and McCann, 1994). A fair and reliable decision of students' performance and learning cannot be made by using the results of testing or formal assessment, rather it can be obtained by the help of informal and self assessment (Ibid).

Informal assessment, based on Brown's definition (2004), includes occasional and unplanned comments and feedbacks. The teacher does not design informal assessment before the class. Results of this kind of assessment are not recorded and no judgment is made based on them. According to Brown, informal assessment consists of various types of feedback; from simply saying "*Nice job!*" to giving some detailed comments about students' performance (Brown, 2004). Informal assessment is merged with every second of teaching process as teachers are always giving feedback to students. So, informal assessment, according to Brown's definition, is more about giving feedback rather than deciding upon students' performance.

However, Harris and McCann (1994) presented a different definition for informal assessment:

Informal assessment is a way of collecting information about our students' performance in normal classroom conditions. This is done without establishing test conditions such as in the case of formal assessment. Informal assessment is sometimes referred to as continuous assessment. (p. 5)

Some phrases and words in this definition are of high importance. The first one is *collecting information*. The main aim of informal assessment is not collecting scores but rather gathering pieces of evidence about students' knowledge. Another important word is *performance*. Students actually perform the task and the teacher judge their performance by direct observation. This performance is not done under pressure; the students are not as anxious as they are at the time of formal tests. The third important phrase is *normal classroom condition*. Unlike formal assessment, informal assessment is done without establishing time limit and formal tests' rules. The last important word is *continuous*. Good teachers are always assessing their students. Formal tests are not the only reliable source for getting information, and additional data provided by day-to-day observation in a stress-free condition is needed to reach a reliable decision about students' performance.

It is essential to mention that, as Harris and McCann (1994) pointed out, unplanned and unsystematic informal assessment cannot be effective. Daily observation which is not systematic will result in a pile of useless information. Teachers should precisely define the abilities to be assessed, for it is impossible to assess students' performance every session. In addition, rough impressions are not enough to reach a trustworthy decision, and student should be assessed based on a criteria. Finally, the relationship between informal assessment and other kinds of assessment should be clearly defined (Harris and McCann, 1994).

IV. SUMMATIVE VS. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Summative assessment, as its name suggests, summarizes what the students learnt during a course and it is usually done at the end of the semester (Brown, 2004). This kind of assessment shows what objectives have been accomplished, but it lacks feedback or any suggestion to improve performance. Final exams or proficiency tests are examples of summative assessment (Ibid). Alderson (2005) associated summative assessment with long traditional tests which were so stressful to students. Any kinds of test which lacks further feedback and the only possible use of it is gathering scores

in the eyes of students can be summative even if teachers have primarily designed the test to facilitate learning and teaching.

On the other hand, formative assessment, as Lewy (1990) confirmed, does not have a precise definition. Formative assessment takes place during learning and is aimed to help learning and teaching by giving appropriate feedback (Lewy, 1990). Nitko (1993) named two purposes of formative assessment: (a) selecting or modifying learning procedures, and (b) choose the best remedies for improving weak points in learning and teaching. Gattullo (2000) characterized formative assessment as “(a) it is an ongoing multi-phase process that is carried out on a daily basis through teacher–pupil interaction, (b) it provides feedback for immediate action, and (c) it aims at modifying teaching activities in order to improve learning processes and results.” (p. 279). Most of classroom assessment is formative and students *form* their knowledge by analyzing and internalizing teachers’ comments (Brown, 2004).

It seems that formative assessment has not always been the focus of attention in ESL/EFL studies. Before 2000 a number of studies were done about classroom assessment in regular school programs (Rogers, 1991; Wilson, 2000), but very few studies were conducted about this topic in EFL/ESL context (Cheng, Rogers, & Hu; 2004). Rea-Dickins and Gardner (2000) pointed to this neglect too and said that in compare to other topics in language testing, formative assessment had received less attention. However, it should be said that Bachman (1990) was one of the first scholars who discussed about the complexities and difficulties of formative assessment. He stated that types of feedback received by the students could affect the results of future formal tests. Bachman put more emphasis on was formal tests, and the construct of formative assessment were not discussed by him. In his later book with Palmer (1996), he focused on feedback and the relation between “formative evaluation” (p. 98) and formal tests. Shohamy (1995) was another scholar to take an initiatory step in discussion of formative assessment. He named some methods such as portfolios and projects which teachers used to put less reliance than on formal tests and to capture different aspects of language competence. However, the construct and practices of formative assessment in EFL/ESL context were roughly discussed before 2000 in spite the fact that its usefulness and help had been long been recognized by both teachers and researchers.

Students should use the language in order to learn it, and if they are graded all the time, they do not have the opportunity to do so. They should receive feedback, analyze it, and have the chance to test their hypotheses based on the feedback received. This is the very basic requirement to learn a language (Brown, 2004; Harris and McCann, 1994). Summative formal assessment makes use of traditional paper-and-pencil tests and is just followed by scores without any further feedback. They are usually done at the end of a course which is so stressful for students and teachers. Lack of feedback results in lack of diagnostic information, and students do not clearly know about their weak points. But, students’ performance highly depends on appropriate feedback from the teacher which is the defining feature of formative assessment. Teachers can make use of formative assessment to prevent negative washback effect of formal testing; which is the separation of teaching and learning in the eyes of students.

V. EXPLICIT VS. IMPLICIT ASSESSMENT

As Bachman and Palmer (2010) mentioned, sometimes the distinction between teaching and assessing is not well-defined. In a classroom condition, a teacher teaches, conducts assessment, and decides based on the outcomes, and then s/he starts teaching based on the decisions made and assesses the students. Students are not aware that teacher is assessing them continuously, and the teacher may not call this procedure an assessment. Meanwhile, this kind of assessment can help learning and teaching. When the learners (and sometimes even the teacher!) are not aware of assessment, implicit assessment is taking place (Bachman and Palmer, 2010).

Explicit assessment, nonetheless, occurs when teacher clearly announce the assessment (Ibid). The students and teacher both know that the process which is going on is an assessment. Explicit assessment can be either formative (in which the teacher is concerned about giving feedback) or summative (whether the objectives of the course have been satisfied or not).

TABLE 1:
IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT ASSESSMENT

Mode	Characteristics	Purposes
Implicit	Continuous Instantaneous Cyclical Implicit: both teacher and students may be unaware that assessment is taking place	Formative decisions, e.g.: Correct or not correct student's response Change form of questioning Call on another student Produce a model utterance Request a group response
Explicit	Clearly distinct from teaching Explicit: both teacher and learners are aware that assessment is taking place	Summative decisions, e.g.: Decide who passes the course Certify level of ability Formative decisions, e.g.: Teacher: Move to the next level or review current lesson Teacher: focus more on a specific area of content Student: spend more time on particular area of language ability Student: use a different learning strategy

**Bachman & Palmer, 2010, p. 29*

VI. CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

Defining classroom assessment is difficult since all the aforementioned types of assessment can be done in the classroom. Teachers can conduct proficiency, placement, or even aptitude tests in the classrooms (Brown, 2004). Observation of students' performance in the classroom can be graded or not; their interaction with teacher and students can be judged to rank them or not. Defining classroom assessment based on the means and decisions of assessment tasks. Using Bachman and Palmer's (2010) terminology, one can say that classroom assessment can be either explicit (concerned about summative decisions) or implicit (focused on formative decisions). Figure 1 roughly presents the relationship between summative, formative, and classroom assessment.

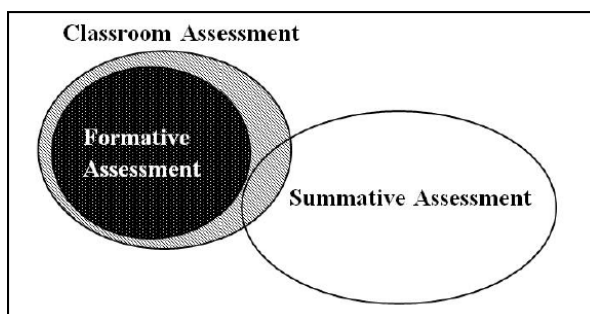


Figure 1: Summative, Formative, and Classroom Assessment

Summative assessment can be a part of classroom assessment if teachers consider gathering scores as the most important aim of assessment in the classroom and do not provide further feedback for the students. At times, when teachers are forced to collect scores for the administration center, or when the syllabus imposes final or midterm exams with the purpose of measuring attainment of achievement, summative assessment is conducted in the classroom. It might be assumed that even these tests are formative if providing feedback is focused, but stressful situation created by these exams hinders the students to perform as they want. This problem is mostly observed in crowded classes where teachers do not have enough time to observe all the students and provide feedback form them. In these classes the most feasible way to collect information on students' performance is supposed to be tests. Better understanding of classroom assessment is reached by the use of Black and William's (1998) terminology of classroom. They used *black box* to refer to classroom, since:

Certain *inputs* from the outside –pupils, teachers, other resources, management rules and requirements, parental anxieties, standards, tests with high stakes, and so on– are fed into the box. Some *outputs* are supposed to follow: pupils who are more knowledgeable and competent, better test results, teachers who are reasonably satisfied, and so on. (p. 1)

Therefore, different tasks are done in the classroom. The ideal condition is when all the assessment tasks in the classroom are formative and *for-learning*. As assessment is integrated with learning, most of classroom practices are formative. But there is some room for other kinds of assessment, too.

VII. EFFECTS OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Assessment is more apparent in the form of summative testing in educational world rather than informal formative tasks. Students look for ways to be the "top student" through assessment and they rarely try to see a connection between

assessment and learning. However, Black and William's extensive review of literature (1998) has changed the view towards assessment.

Black and William (1998) reviewed more than 250 articles and books to examine the effect of formative assessment on students' performance. They found that employing different methods to assess the student during the course would enhance students' success. The works on formative assessment suggest that new methods to increase effective feedback will change classroom practices and bring adjustment in learning and teaching. Motivation and self-assessment are also encouraged in formative assessment (Black & William, 1998).

Nevertheless, in spite of the clear benefits of formative assessment, techniques which enhance this type of assessment have usually been neglected because of practical problems in the classrooms. Marking problems (generous or unfocused), unrealistic practices, teacher-made tests which reflects standardized tests format, lack of negotiation among teachers about formative assessment, overemphasis on giving scores while useful feedback is neglected, norm-referenced assessment in which low-achieving students start to believe they cannot learn, and lack of care about students' performance in previous classes are just some problems mentioned in Black and William's review. Furthermore, if pressure of various external tests is added, there will be no room for actual formative assessment in classroom routine!

The problems mentioned in Black and William's study make scholars to examine formative for-learning assessment in all educational areas. Although scholars such as Bachman (1990) and Shohamy (1998) highlighted the role of feedback in teaching and feedback, studies which aimed at formative assessment in EFL/ESL classes have been started since 2000.

Rea-Dickins and Gardner (2000) are one of the first scholars who focused on features of formative assessment. They interviewed EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers and observed their classes and found that decisions made based on students' performance in classroom were important. These decisions, if made carelessly, could not show the true level of students' language (Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000). They also questioned the reliability and validity of classroom assessment and mentioned that different procedures should be employed to assess these elements. In fact, "the validity of the inferences about the way in which the children use language seems to be equally important, whether the aim is *assessment for learning*, i.e., formative assessment or *assessment for establishing levels of achievement*, i.e., summative and evaluative" (Rea-Dickins and Gardner, p. 238, italics in original). Therefore, the construct of formative assessment and the skills teachers need to know in order to conduct this kind of assessment were first opened up for discussion.

Gattullo (2000) conducted a case study in which he observed four teachers' performance in applying formative assessment in their classes. He focused on children classes and reported the methods used. His study was a kind of survey in which the focus was just on children's classes and the techniques used in other age groups were not considered.

Assessment Reform Group (2001) and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2001) set some principles for classroom assessment practices which also influenced ESL/EFL world. They emphasized on continual nature of formative assessment and its integration with learning. Considering these principles, Leung and Mohan (2004) conducted a case study in EAL schools. Through observation of different classes, they concluded that teachers and students could decide on (rather than guess) further stages of learning and weak and strong points by the use of discussion, peer assessment, and formative techniques of assessment rather than standardized testing (Leung & Mohan, 2004). However, they mentioned that more investigation was needed about classroom assessment.

Cheng, Rogers, and Hu (2004) conducted a study on classroom assessment in three language settings (Canada, Beijing, and Hong Kong). These researchers suggested that less is known about classroom assessment of EFL/ESL instructors. This issue would become more essential if large number of students, influence of formal testing, and central role of this kind of assessment in learning and teaching processes is considered (Cheng, Rogers, and Hu, 2004). In their survey, purposes, procedures, and methods of classroom assessment were investigated. Through purposive sampling, university teachers from three different language settings (English dominant, bilingual, and Mandarin-dominant) were chosen. Altogether 461 questionnaires were gathered, but 267 questionnaires were returned to the researchers. The findings showed some complexities of classroom assessment which vary within different settings. Factors such as nature of the courses, teaching experience of instructors, levels of students, and the role of external testing can also influence classroom assessment (Cheng *et al.*, 2004). For instance, instructors in Hong Kong identified to have fewer assessment purposes and used less objective methods of scoring. Cheng *et al.* suggested that it could be explained by the fact that teachers in Hong Kong are more experienced than teachers in Canada and Beijing.

In another study, Ke (2006) first identified language skills of 222 Chinese adult learners and proposed a model for formative task-based language assessment. This model is criterion-referenced, skill-integrated, and driven from classroom activities (Ke, 2006). Moreover, the researcher took into account curriculum objectives and task-based instruction in order to design the model.

Wei (2010) conducted an action research and showed that formative assessment was significantly effective in promoting learners' motivation and performance. He suggested some hints to improve the quality of formative assessment such as performing needs analysis and formulating assessment plan. In this research too, there was no indication of better techniques in performing formative assessment.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Formative assessment has long been recognized as one of the most influential methods to improve learning and teaching (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Shohamy, 1998; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000; Davison, 2002; Cheng *et al.*, 2004; Ke, 2006; Wei, 2011). Many tools of formative assessment have been introduced since then; such as journals, portfolios, surveys, oral interviews, and presentations. Classroom assessment, on the other hand, has potentials to be formative and for-learning. However, Black and William (1998) showed that practical problems in classrooms can hinder effective formative assessment to be conducted. Therefore, by considering the importance of formative assessment in ESL/EFL teaching and learning, the difficulties and complexities teachers face in applying formative assessment in their classes, and lack of studies on this area, scholars should also focus their attention to the problems of making classroom assessment as formative as possible and suggesting ways to improve classroom assessment.

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A Study on the Application of Schema Theory to English Newspaper Reading*

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Abstract—Reading is one of the essential skills for human beings in language learning and it plays a very important role in the work and life of human beings. Schema is the mental structures which store our knowledge, while the theory of comprehension based on schema is called schema theory. According to the Schema theories, reading comprehension is an interactive process between the reader and the text, which is mainly affected by the readers' background knowledge. The Schema theory indicates that the comprehension of a reader about a text is determined by the three schemas: language schema, content schema and formal schema. This case study with the guiding of the Schema theory applied in newspaper reading in the paper proves that without a proper schema, a reader cannot understand a text; even with the proper schemas, a reader might fail to understand the text for the author doesn't provide enough clues for readers to activate the schemas that the reader has.

Index Terms—bottom-up model, top-down model, schema theory, English newspaper reading

I. INTRODUCTION

English reading is one of the most important courses in not only middle schools but also in colleges and universities. Reading comprehension is one of the essential abilities required in English study and one important part in English teaching. So the improving of the students' reading comprehension is one of the main tasks in English teaching. In traditional English reading classes, the students are usually assigned to preview the new words in the passages to be studied and read the passage in the class and then answer the questions following each of the passage. While the teachers' task is to urge the students to finish the reading in time and check the answers with them. Thus the efficiency of reading is mainly on the answer-check and the comprehension purpose of reading has been totally forgotten.

The term schema was firstly found in the works of some ancient philosophers and psychologists. In 1800s, Immanuel Kant summarized the philosophy sense of schema as the bridge conjoining concepts and the perceived objects. Later, it is believed that the process of telling stories is an imaginative reconstruction of the existing schemas and is the linking of the preexisting schemas with the new knowledge. With the development of the study of many psychologists and linguists, many of the traditional ideas and psychological thoughts have been absorbed and integrated into the theory of schema in modern time and achievements in this field have been increasingly made.

According to the Schema theories, readers possess different conceptual frameworks which they bring to the reading of a text and which they use to make sense of what they read. Researchers argued that schemas are the general knowledge people use to make sense of what they need. There are a variety of schemas in one's mind. The motivation of the schemas in a reader's mind helps to improve his/her reading comprehension. Based on the researches of the application of the Schema theory to reading, the psychologists and linguists (Carrel & Eisterhold, 1983) found that the schema theory plays a guiding role in English reading comprehension.

II. THE THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT OF READING STUDIES

Reading is one of the essential skills for human beings in language learning and it plays a very important role in the work and life of human beings. Before 1970s, reading was considered to be a process of language encoding and a creation of meaning from words, phrases and sentences. (Zhao, 2001, p.189)

Goodman(1975, p.135) stated that "reading is a psycholinguistic process by which the reader, a language user, reconstructs as best as he/she can a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display". Later he presented another idea arguing that "reading is a receptive language process. It is a psycholinguistic process in that it starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning which the reader constructs. There is thus an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought."

According to Rumelhart (1977, p.88), reading is a "perceptual" and a "cognitive" process of understanding written language, and bridging and blurring these two traditional distinctions. Walker thinks that reading is an active process (not a product, like history) in which readers shift between sources of information (what they know and what the text

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says), elaborate meaning and strategies, check their interpretation (revising when necessary) and use the social context to focus their response. Nuttal (2000, p.3) later presented his view that reading is essentially concerned with meaning, specifically with the transfer of meaning from mind to mind: the transfer of a message from writer to reader.

Although the above scholars defined reading in different ways, they agree on the same point that reading comprehension has much more to do with the readers' background knowledge than it does with the printed words. It can be thus concluded that reading comprehension is an interactive process between the reader and the text, which is mainly affected by the readers' background knowledge. Thorndike (1971, p.8) summarized certain significant processes associated with comprehension "Understanding a paragraph is like solving a problem in mathematics. This process consists of selecting the right elements of the situation, putting them together in amount of weight or influence or force to each. The mind is assailed as it were, by every word in the paragraph. It must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate and organize, all under the influence of the right mental set of purpose or demand." Thus reading comprehension becomes a process of both getting meaning from a passage and bringing meaning from a passage. On the one hand, the authors deliver information to the outside world through the printed words. On the other hand, the readers get information from the material he/she reads, and then process the information of the material. Thus different readers might understand the same information differently, which will be greatly depending on the readers' comprehension ability, cultural level, related background knowledge and many other factors.

Over the study of reading comprehension process, three models have been put forward to interpret it: bottom-up model, top-down model and interactive model.

A. *Bottom-up Model*

Defining that reading is a hierarchically organized (letter→word→sentence→text level) process, the Bottom-up Model (Gough, 1972) emphasizes the knowledge of a language and thinks that reading is only a process of recognizing the low level structures and features of words and grammar in a text. The term "Bottom-up" is used because the reader begins from the bottom of the text in the reading process. According to this model, reading is a process of constructing symbol into words, words into sentences, and sentences into the whole meaning. The reader begins with the written text (the bottom), and constructs meaning from the letters, words, phrases, and sentences found within and then processes the text in a series of discrete states in a linear fashion (Barnett, 1989). Under the influence of the Bottom-up Model, it is believed in the traditional teaching that the main obstacle of reading for students is the language itself and thus the primary task for the teachers is to help the students get rid of the possible language problems. So in English reading classes, teachers applying Bottom-up Model tend to analyze the text word by word, sentence by sentence until small chunks of text become meaningful. But because too much of the focus is on the language points, the reading speed are unavoidably affected, which is the main deficiency of the Bottom-up Model. The Bottom-up Model makes reading a passive process of decoding a series of English written symbols into Chinese equivalents. It is thus believed that the core of the Bottom-up Model is that it emphasizes a single-direction, part-to-whole processing of a text and it gives little emphasis to the influences of the readers' world knowledge, contextual information, and other higher-order processing strategies.

B. *Top-down Model*

From the end of 1960s to the beginning of 1970s, combined with the psychology theories, K.S. Goodman, H.K. Smith et al. pointed out that non-language factors also play parts in improving one's reading abilities, based on which the Top-down Model was put forward. The Top-down Model claimed that reading is a process of the interaction between language and thought. According to this model, reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game (Goodman, 1967) in which "efficient readers minimize dependence on visual detail" by utilizing background knowledge to make predictions and checking these against the text (Goodman, 1975, p.12). This model is also called reader-driven model. According to Goodman (1967), readers predict and anticipate the incoming information on the basis of the syntactic and semantic information, sample from the print just enough to confirm or reject their guesses of what is coming. In another word, the more one knows the theme of a text, the better one can understand it. The readers use their knowledge of the world to make guesses about what might come next in the text. They form hypothesis about the text and then use the text data to confirm or deny their hypothesis. According to Anderson (2000), reading comprehension is an active process in which readers not only apply their knowledge of language, but also call upon their previous experience and general knowledge of the world.

However, such Top-down Model has unfortunately given the misleading message to teachers that ESL reading tuition is "mostly just a matter of providing [learners] with the right background knowledge... and encouraging them to make full use of that knowledge in decoding... texts" (Eskey, 1988, p.97). Once the text is unfamiliar to the readers or the language is too obscure, the comprehension of the text will be greatly affected.

C. *Interactive Model*

Based on the above discussion, we can find that both the Bottom-up Model and the Top-down Model have their own disadvantages. The Bottom-up Model has failed to recognize the role of higher order knowledge while the Top-down Model does not recognize the importance of lower level process. The Interactive Model emphasizes a two-way transmission of information. According to Rumelhart (1977), reading is a cognitive and perceptual process, which

bridges and blurs both two traditional approaches. A skilled reader is able to make use of semantic, syntactic, sensory and pragmatic information to comprehend the reading material. In this process, both lower-level and higher-level process work interactively and successful readers continue to make use of cues at all levels, from graphic to schematic.

D. Schema Theory and Schema

Overcoming the deficiencies of both the Bottom-up Model and the Top-down Model, the Schema theory combines these two models effectively and indicates that reading is a process of the double effects of the two models or the interaction between one's background knowledge and the text. Nunan (1999) argues that schema is the mental structures which store our knowledge, while the theory of comprehension based on schema is called schema theory.

The term "schema" was firstly proposed by Barnett (1989, p.77), who defines it as "an active organization of past reactions, or past experience". A schema is an organized, general knowledge about situations and individuals that has been abstracted from prior experiences and stored in long term memory. Schemas change, develop and interact and arise in response to new situation. Rumelhart (1977, p.96) summarized schema as "sets of interactive knowledge structure" or "the building of blocks of cognition". Carrell (1983, p.82) states that "the prior knowledge of the reader is organized as his/her schema, which is usually viewed as hierarchically arranged into various subsets of placeholders within more general or higher-order schema. In people's minds, there are different kinds of schemas, for instance, schema on restaurants, schema on music.

The Schema theory indicates that the comprehension of a reader about a text is determined by the three schemas: language schema, content schema and formal schema. Language schemas refer to the degree a reader possesses the language of the text emphasizing the effect of background knowledge in the macroscopic side and the linguistic factors in the microcosmic side; Content schemas involve the familiarity of a reader with the theme or the background knowledge of the text. Some researchers argue that: if people lack the content schemas or the capacity of allocating schemas, they will have difficulties in building hypothesis and reading although they have specified capacity of language; and the formal schemas are the degree of a reader's knowledge on the style of the text, i.e. the readers have to distinguish the different styles, pages and structures. Therefore, it is quite necessary for us to pay attention to the materials that have different styles, pages and structures. Among these three schemas, the language schema acts as the basis of the other two schemas and the three decide the comprehending ability of the readers by interacting with each other. Since schemas are formed on the basis of one's experiences, different readers might have different schemas and thus there might be different understanding of a text. In general, the more complete one's three schemas for information, the faster one will read and the better one may comprehend. On the contrary, the absence of proper schemas or the inadequate clues to activate the existing schemas or the inability to link to the existing schemas might result in misunderstanding of the text or bewilderment in reading. So do schemas have any influence on one's English reading comprehension? Here in the following is a case study to test it.

III. A CASE STUDY

1. The purpose: to test whether schemas influence one's reading comprehension of English newspaper.

2. Method

2.1 Subjects

36 sophomores majored in English from three classes, and their grades in TEM 4 (Test for English Majors Band 4) are similar and none of them have ever read any of the news given to them or have been trained with the knowledge of newspaper reading before. They were divided equally into two groups: Group A and Group B, among which A is the experimental group and B is the control group.

2.2 Materials

Three pieces of English news have been chosen and 15 multiple-choice questions were designed. The questions are not only about the theme of the articles and the ideas of the author, but the details of the articles. For example, questions about some words or sentences of the articles.

2.3 Procedure

The task and teaching method for these two groups are different. Before reading the three articles, Group A received some training courses of newspaper reading according to the contents of the reading materials and was introduced briefly about the style of English news writing and wording. The purpose of the training is to form and activate the students the schemas of English news knowledge. Group B was given no instruction before reading. The length of reading time for Group A and Group B was the same. After reading, the teachers checked the answers and interviewed the students about the reasons for their choice.

Activity 1: Getting to know the newspaper-----improving the formal schema

Give students in Group A a copy of newspaper, which serves as the introductory activity aimed at the dual purpose of familiarizing students with the outlay of the news via the exploitation of reading strategies and skills such as reading rate and scanning in particular. Before the reading, the teacher will tell the students about the structure arrangement of news. After scanning the news, the students are required to write down the theme.

Activity 2: Word building game---improving the language schema

In this part, students can work individually or in pairs to pick out as many new words as they can from it within a

certain time limit. Those/He/She who get(s) the largest number of new words are/is declared the winner. Then ask each of the students to underline any of the difficult word and encourage them to make a logical guess at the meaning based on the contextual clues. After that, they will be permitted to refer to the dictionary to see if their guess is right. For some of the other new words for students, the teacher provides the meaning of them used in a specific news item. Students skim the news and scan to locate the words that match the meanings provided. The games above will generate the excitement and a sense of competition of the students.

Activity 3: Working with headlines---improving the content schema

In this part, a number of activities are employed in the class for Group A students. Since the headline is often not very clear by the virtue of the telegraphic style, the teacher then explains the functions of headlines and set them tasks in different ways. Five kinds of tasks are set: 1) To form complete sentence(s) from the headlines on the newspaper; 2) To match the news with the headlines. In this part, the news and their headlines are put out of their original order. Half of the students are provided with the headlines and half with the news. After finishing their reading within a time limit, they move around for possible matches. During this process, they are not allowed to refer to any words or terms. But they are encouraged to hold discussions before they make the match. 3) To predict news report/headline. Give half of the students in Group A the headlines only to ask them to make up brief news reports to match the headlines. And another half of the students with the news clipping are asked to work out simple headlines. After that, they may check the actual versions found in the newspaper and see how close their interpretations are. This activity helps to improve the students' abilities of anticipation and prediction through logical thinking. 4) To rearrange cut-out words to form headlines. Two students in a pair are provided with an envelop containing cutup words, which they must rearrange to form headlines within a limited time. 5) To use headlines to express feelings and attitudes. Ask some of the students to bring to the class some clippings of headlines and read them out to the other students in the class. Then ask the students who listen to them to express their feelings upon hearing the headlines. The news item can be classified under "good news", "bad news". Then students are required to encode this feeling in a written or spoken way.

Having finished the above activities, the students in Group A are required to read the three pieces of news provided for both Group B and them. And then answer the questions within the limited time. At the same time, students in Group B are also working on the same reading. The teachers check the answers when both Group A and Group B hand in their answers.

2.4 The experiment result

Group A (18 students) accuracy: 80%

Group B (18 students) accuracy: 41%

In the interview, students in Group A provided adequate reasons for their choices and are found to be more easily to connect what they have learnt in the training with the contents of the texts. They could even discuss about the contents and choices with the teachers actively. While students in Group B were more likely to guess the answers and most of them said that the articles were too difficult for them and they knew so little about English news structure and features. Some even said that they were of no interest in this type of articles.

The experiment result shows that the teaching method of schema activation played a great role in promoting the students' reading comprehension, which is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

(1) The schema method can help the students form or activate the schemas about the reading texts in a short time and improve their reading comprehension and thus arouse the interest of the students in the texts, which, before the formation of the schemas or activation of the schemas, might be the fields the students know nothing about or have no interest in.

(2) By comparing the experiment results of the two groups, it can be found that the main reason for the difference of the experiment results is the lack of schemas of the text, or in another word, the lack of the background information of the text. Besides, vocabulary is another obstacle for the students. If the students do not have the background knowledge of the text or the clues to understand the text is not clear enough to activate the schemas needed, they would not guess the meanings of the words correctly. This exactly proves the first two possibilities of not understanding a text (Rumelhart, 1977), that is, without a proper schema, a reader cannot understand a text; even with the proper schemas, a reader might fail to understand the text for the author doesn't provide enough clues for readers to activate the schemas that the reader has.

The above experiment gives us the following instructions in English reading teaching:

(1) Since the reader's reading comprehension can be influenced by the content schemas, the reading materials the teachers choose should not be so rare for the students in case the students should fail to understand the text due to lack of the corresponding schemas. And the contents of the text, on the other side, should not be so familiar to the students, for this is of no significance in promoting the students' reading comprehension. This instruction also works in designing the reading paper in English examination.

(2) Teachers should provide some pre-reading questions about the background etc. of the texts to help to activate the corresponding schemas in the mind of the students. What's more, teachers should give students suggestion on the implied sense of the text to help them to link to their existing schemas; and after finishing reading, teachers may organize the students to discuss about the answers and the text to strengthen their newly-built schemas, which might be utilized in their future reading.

(3) The students should wide their knowledge to build up more schemas to help them deal with the texts with different contents and increase their reading fluency.

IV. CONCLUSION

Although the study has proved the guiding function of the schemas, there are still deficiencies in the experiment. For example, the design of the questions and the arrangement of the class teaching are only on the superficial level; further study about the influence of the formal schemas on reading needs to be done. However, this teaching method utilizing schema theory has broken through the traditional teacher-centered approach with which the teachers explain the words and grammar while the students are in a negative position only listening to the teachers and has placed the teachers in an auxiliary guiding position.

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