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# Student Satisfaction with Using Independent Study Logs as Part of English Classes

Mary Frances Litzler

Department of Modern Philology, University of Alcalá, Alcalá de Henares, Spain

**Abstract**—Journals and diaries have been used in many different kinds of courses in a variety of disciplines so that students can reflect on their learning experience and make it more personal. This paper involves a modified version of diaries in which students briefly record the work they have done using English as a foreign language or coming into contact with the language along with their reactions to the experience, so that the teacher can give them individual feedback with a view towards helping them to become more autonomous in their learning. It describes the results of a questionnaire given to students upon completion of their English courses to determine their impressions about doing study logs in two different class settings, both at the university level. The results for one of the groups reveal that the learners were highly satisfied with the experience, while the other group had mixed reactions. The nature of the two groups and the procedure followed in the two cases suggest that varying approaches to different kinds of groups might improve the experience for the students involved.

**Index Terms**—diary studies, learner autonomy, EFL, tertiary studies, motivation, learning strategies, feedback

## I. INTRODUCTION

Journals and diaries have been used in a variety of disciplines for several decades. They are often used as a place for students to write up what they have learned from assigned readings along with their own reflections on the content in an effort to have learners process more deeply the course contents by integrating them into their personal experience. In the foreign language classroom they are used so that students can comment on their learning process and any difficulties encountered in acquiring the new language. This study involves a version of diaries in which students briefly record in a log what they have done to use and/or practice English outside their English classes along with reactions, as opposed to writing up longer reflections. The instructor or professor can then provide feedback to help them to become more efficient and autonomous in their independent study time. In this sense, the logs are not used to provide students with a way of integrating the course contents into their personal experience, but rather they are used to encourage them to make the use and practice of English as a foreign language a more frequent part of their daily lives and to provide a vehicle for individualized dialogue between the student and the professor.

Two groups who used logs as part of their English courses were given a short questionnaire to complete with their opinions about doing logs at the end of the semester. The main objective of the questions was to determine whether the students felt that doing the logs had been worthwhile and whether the activity should be modified in future courses and how to adjust it. This study provides some background information on diaries and students' responses to them as reported in the literature, a description of the groups that used logs in their English classes for this particular study, and their reactions to the activity as revealed through their responses to the questionnaire.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Diary Studies

Diaries and journals have been used in a variety of disciplines of study for several decades now. In writing them as part of a university course students are typically asked to record information on what they have learned in class or through readings along with additional information, such as their personal reactions to the material (Pavlovich, Collins & Jones, 2007), applications of the theoretical concepts to events around them (Connor-Greene, 2000), or reflections on their learning process and changes in their thinking and learning (Blaschke & Brindley, 2010). In the context of foreign language learning, Bailey & Ochsner (1983) recommend that diarists regularly write down descriptions of their experiences learning the language including "events, details, and feelings" (p. 189). Diaries and journals used in foreign language courses at the university level tend to follow this example but add their own focus. For example, Halbach (2000) had students record activities they had done to practice English, problems they had encountered, and the solutions they proposed to remedy the situation in the future (p. 86). Huang (2005) had students write a journal with their understanding of the foreign language reading process and any other ideas on learning the different aspects of English such as listening, speaking, writing, grammar and vocabulary (p. 611).

There are a number of benefits to using diaries in the classroom. According to Moon (2010), diaries and journals are "helpful in personalizing and deepening the quality of learning" (p. 3). For second language learning, Nunan (1992)

lists seven advantages of diary research in teacher education programs, several of which can be extended to the language classroom and learning situation. These particular ones are the possibility for students to mention problems they are having with the course, increased autonomy in learning, more interaction between the individual students and the teacher leading to greater confidence on the part of the former, and, finally, better classroom discussions (p. 120).

Diaries and journals used in university level courses often involve the students' writing entries throughout a semester-long course (for example, Absalom & de Saint L  ger, 2011, Huang, 2005). However, occasionally the requirement is reduced to a smaller number of times such as five over the course of fifteen weeks (Connor-Greene, 2000) in order to reduce the student workload. Many reports on diaries and journals in the literature involve the traditional paper and pen method of writing, but there is increasing use of such new technologies as wikis and blogs for doing them (for example, Absalom & de Saint L  ger, 2011).

### *B. Student Reactions to Learning Diaries and Journals*

Student reactions to using diaries and journals in class are mentioned in passing in many papers but few studies appear to have focused on this aspect of reflective writing. Absalom & De Saint L  ger (2011) is one which does focus on learners' perceptions of using diaries and blogs to learn foreign languages at the university level. In their study, they examine student perceptions of the aims of using diaries and reflective blogs along with their satisfaction in writing them as part of their courses. The authors found that all of the students doing a blog felt that the activity was useful for their learning, while 87% of the students doing a traditional paper and pen diary felt this way. The most common explanations provided by the first group were related to being able to practice writing, becoming better organized through regular work, deepening their understanding of texts, increasing their confidence, receiving feedback from the professor and developing research skill. The reasons mentioned by the diary group coincided to some extent; the explanations included the chance to practice writing on a regular basis and the ability to become better organized by working on a regular basis, both of which were mentioned by the blog students, along with the opportunity to express feelings and reflections, the possibility to communicate with the professor, awareness of how they study, and development of linguistic skills (p. 201). Only 13% of the diary students claimed the activity was "a waste of time," the reasons being that it did not help them develop their skills, the feedback was "poor" because the mistakes were not corrected by the professor and, most commonly (four students), it was "tedious and repetitive" (p. 204).

Mills (2008) picks up on this notion of negative attitudes on the part of students to journal writing in an article which proposes ideas to make diary and journal writing more amenable to the different temperaments in Keirse's Temperament Model (1998, in Mills 2008). She refers to comments from four other papers which mention the downside of student attitudes towards this kind of activities. For example, Komara (2006) and Hearn (2005) are reported to have indicated that students "generally felt that journaling was not necessary for them to think critically or reflectively" (Mills, 2008, no page).<sup>1</sup> Cisero (2006) is said to have "suggested" that "a strong negative attitude by students toward reflective journaling may often be present at the college level" (Mills, 2008, no page). In fact, the start to the title of Mills' paper is based on a student comment about the journal activity reported by this same author: "It's just a nuisance." Another two comments reported at the same time in Cisero and mentioned in Mills were that journaling was "busy work," and "tedious and unnecessary" (Cisero, 2006, p. 233). Finally, Mills reports that Connor-Greene (2000) claims that "A core group of students always seem to resist keeping reflective journals because they perceive it as simply busy work and, therefore, of no value" (Mills, 2008, no page).<sup>2</sup> While these negative perceptions should not be ignored, it must be stressed that they benefit the interesting and valuable case made by Mills for variation in types of diary and journal exercises to bring them in line with Keirse's different temperaments.

At the same time, it must be highlighted that both Cisero and Connor-Greene take a more positive albeit realistic view of journaling than Mills would like readers to believe. While Cisero (2006) points out possible shortcomings to journal activities and journals in general, such as their possible limitations for helping above average or below average students, she remains optimistic about their use and students' attitudes towards them: "many of the teacher education students in my recent classes liked the journal assignment so much that they planned to use it in teaching their respective students" (p. 234). Although this finding is anecdotal, it provides an indication that the negative viewpoints mentioned by Mills are not representative of the entire student population. At the same time, Cisero only mentions the three students' negative comments reported above. In contrast to them she cites another two very positive student reactions (p. 233) and other general anecdotal responses from students over the years. Connor-Greene (2000) is also more positive about journaling than Mills would lead readers to believe. She too notes limitations in her study in that it is only quasi-experimental and some unknown variables may have affected the results (p. 46), but a mean of 2.02 and standard deviation of .96 are reported for students' recommending continuation of the journal activity in her course on personality theories, and the comments made by the students on the questionnaire revealed that the "journals were a successful stimulus to active learning" (p. 45). A table of representative responses includes such aspects as being "pushed" to do class readings, having to "spend more time on each theory," becoming more creative, and having the chance to apply what is learned (p. 45).

<sup>1</sup> I have been unable to access Komara (2006) and Hearn (2005).

<sup>2</sup> Neither of Mills' allegations appears in the body of Cisero (2006) or Connor-Greene (2000).

As noted above, most studies on diaries and journals do not focus specifically on student perceptions. Instead, brief comments of some students' appreciation for doing them can be mentioned in passing, if at all (for example, Halbach, 2000, p. 87). The results of the study by Absalom & De Saint L'éger (2011) mentioned above are encouraging but more work needs to be done to confirm that students are, in fact, receptive to writing them as a part of their learning process and to determine more clearly any reasons for student dissatisfaction. The present study seeks to provide additional findings about student attitudes towards a similar activity with a view towards making adjustments with future groups of students involved in learning English as a foreign language. Although the nature of the log activity discussed here differs from the studies on longer diaries and journals reported above, some student responses seem to show similar trends as will be discussed in more detail below.

### III. PARTICIPANTS AND METHOD

This study concerns two different groups of learners who used independent study logs in their classes. The first group (henceforth Group 1) were teacher trainees in their second year of a primary education degree at a local university. Their long-term need for English is mainly due to the fact that teachers in Spain are finding jobs more easily if they have a certain level of English. Their short-term interest relates to their need to demonstrate a B1 level of English on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Language Policy Unit) before starting the following year of their university degree program if they want to be accepted into a track involving more English courses over the final two years of study. At the start of the semester-long course in which they were asked to complete the study logs, their levels ranged from A2 to B2 on the CEFR. There were 30 students in the group.

The second group of learners (henceforth Group 2) were translation students in their second semester of the first year of the university degree program in modern languages and translation at the same university. Their long-term need for English is crucial as they are planning to work directly with the language as translators or interpreters. Their short-term need for the language was immediate as they were expected to pass an internal exam in the department offering the degree at the end of the semester to prove that they had a B2 level of the language and, hence, qualify to take the final exam for two of their English language courses. At the start of the semester their levels ranged from A2 to C1 on the CFR, meaning that some of them would have difficulty reaching the level requirement for the May exam, while others would have few problems to do so. There were 26 students in this group.

The log activity was explained to the two groups in the same way on the first day of class when the course requirements were introduced. The students were asked to record on paper the date and time that they studied English, any activities they did to work with the language, and their reaction (see Appendix B for student samples). During that same class, the professor explained some general notions related to learning English outside the class, stressing the need for actual use of the language including practice with the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, along with traditional study of the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of the language. The logs were collected every two weeks over the course of 8 weeks in order to provide feedback. In the case of Group 1, completion of the log was included as part of the homework mark in the course, which came to 5% of the final result. The small percentage assigned to the log did, nevertheless, favor some of the students who had had some difficulty in completing some exercises successfully. Students' work on the logs in Group 2 was considered as half of the participation mark for their course, also 5% of the final result, but it had little impact on the students' overall grade.

Upon completion of the courses, the students in each of the groups were asked to fill out a short questionnaire on the last day of class. Group 1 did it in Spanish, their native language, but Group 2 answered the same questions in English as their level in the language overall was higher. Both groups filled it out in the same week. The questionnaires for the groups had one closed question and another open question (see Appendix A). Because the opinions were obtained during the last day of class, the students who were absent that day were not able to participate. Still, the number of students present to fill in the questionnaires was high and probably higher than might have been the case had the students been asked to do it in their own time. In addition, the students answered the questions individually in class and, in this way, did not consult with anyone else in doing so. In this regard, the results can be expected to be more valid.

During the initial analysis of the responses for Groups 1 and 2 it was soon observed that the closed question was too general and therefore misleading. The second question, which asked the students to explain their response to the first one, is what brought to light the inappropriate wording of the closed question; nevertheless, the comments provided reveal numerous student reactions to the independent study log activity which are valuable for considering in this article. The comments were analyzed following a suggestion of McDonough & McDonough (1997) for the study of diary information, another form of open writing; it involves "reading and re-reading the text to allow significant themes to become gradually foregrounded" (p. 125). In this case, the criteria were ideas that were repeated but always ignoring the students' original labels for the log activity. For example, if a student wrote, "I think that it was interesting because it made me work more on English at home more often and more than in the past,"<sup>3</sup> then the word "interesting" was ignored. This comment was then assigned to the category of "external motivation/obligation." When the student comments revealed more than one idea, they were divided into several categories. The student comment "thanks to the log, I worked more and I saw the aspects that I have to improve" was separated into two different parts corresponding to

<sup>3</sup>The comments for Group 1 have all been translated into English from Spanish by the author.

the categories of “external motivation/obligation” for the first part and “self-awareness” for the second part. For this reason, the total numbers of comments and students in each group do not coincide.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As indicated in Section III, the questionnaires were completed by the students on the last day of class, meaning that those people who were absent were not represented in the final results. Twenty-eight of the 30 students enrolled in Group 1 responded to the questions, while 24 of the 26 students in Group 2 did so. Table 1 below shows the results for the closed question for Group 1. Because the students could choose more than one option, the total number of responses (66) is larger than the number of students answering the question.

TABLE 1  
RESULTS FOR QUESTION 1, GROUP 1

Label	Number of responses
Interesting	23
Motivating	12
Innovative	20
Boring	2
A waste of time	1
Other ideas	8

The comments listed under the vague term “interesting” included a variety of different things, some of which were actually covered under the other labels. The students’ affirmations highlighted such aspects as the innovative nature of the log, the fact that it served to make them work more on their English outside class, their ability to see that they were improving in the language, increased awareness of what they do, and the possibility of seeing their progress, etc. Under “motivation” they listed similar things so the question was determined to be too vague. The “other ideas” mentioned by the students were “necessary,” “useful” (2 people), “helpful for organizing and distributing study time” (2 people), and “helpful for knowing if activities are productive or not.” The specific explanations for these other comments, however, relate to the above labels. Again, for this reason, it was decided that the question was too general and that the responses should not be taken at face value. Instead, the answers to the second question are more revealing. Table 2 below shows the categories determined upon analyzing the statements listed for question 2 and the number of responses obtained for each of them (total of 70).

TABLE 2  
NEW CATEGORIES AND RESPONSES, GROUP 1

Category	Number of responses
Innovative	15
Motivating (internal)	15
Motivating (external)	12
Self-awareness	15
Teacher feedback	6
A way to improve specific aspects of English	2
Constraining (negative)	2
Miscellaneous unrelated comments	3

Two of the original categories from the first question, innovative and motivating, can still be seen in the results here. The rest of the responses relate to self-awareness, a way of obtaining teacher feedback, and a way to improve specific aspects of the English language. The two negative comments reflected in the first table above and three comments not related to the log activity itself were also obtained. The differing numbers for the labels “innovative” and “motivating” in the two tables can be explained by the fact that the students sometimes answered question one but did not always provide an explanation for their response in the second question. In other cases, they discussed other, sometimes unrelated aspects of the course, such as the fact that they had had to read a short novel adapted for students and that they had found the task innovative and stimulating. Finally, some students described the exercise as being motivating but used the label “interesting.”

The fifteen explanations provided for stating that the logs had been an innovative exercise mainly mentioned that they had never had to do something similar, but six of the students specified that they had never been asked to do a log or diary for their English classes. The fifteen responses represent just over half the group, a result that suggests that the activity was not, in fact, so new to them. Nevertheless, like other groups, they did seem to require several weeks to adjust to the requirement of including a reaction to the activities done each day (Litzler, 2014, in press). In fact, one student commented on this aspect of the exercise: “I have never had to do a diary where I put my opinion.” Positive student reactions to adding their opinions and having freedom in doing diaries and journals have been mentioned by Pavlovich, Collins & Jones (2007, p. 17). This is an area that would be worth investigating in more detail in future work.

The 27 responses related to motivation can be divided into internal motivation and external motivation. The fifteen comments assigned to the former relate to intrinsic motivation in that they relate to studying “for the pleasure of learning, for the satisfaction of achievement, or to experience stimulation” (Benson, 2011, p. 84). Eight of these

responses can be directly linked to the notion of satisfaction over achievement, as in “at the end of the week, you receive the big surprise of all the activities that you have done over the week.” Two more comments are more general indications of improved levels of English and can, thus, be interpreted in a looser sense to relate to satisfaction over progress made, as in “it has helped me in learning the English language.” Another four comments focus directly on the idea of stimulation, for example, “it was more pleasant for me to have a diary with a lot of activities than one that was empty,” or “You can encourage yourself to do better than the week before.” A final comment relates to the aspect of pleasure of learning in that the student highlights that she was able to select the activities done outside class. Data are not available for these students, but in future studies it would be interesting to examine the possibility of whether completing this type of logs for an English class does, in fact, lead to higher levels of proficiency thanks to the feelings of satisfaction and stimulation that they seem to encourage in some students. At this point it can be affirmed that 23 of the 29 students enrolled in the course received a passing grade or higher. At the same time, a number of students personally expressed their appreciation to the professor for the log activity at the end of the semester.

The twelve responses grouped under the label “external motivation” relate to extrinsic motivation in that they reflect reasons other than those mentioned above including rewards or pressure (Benson, 2011, p. 84). In fact, eight of the responses make specific mention of the “obligation” to study English while doing the log activity for class. Another three responses refer to studying more but in a way that appears to be more externally motivated than internally, as in “it made me work more on English at home.” Four of these twelve comments specifically refer to daily work with English thanks to the log, for example, “it is a good methodology for the professor as well as the student as it requires you to look at the subject on a daily basis, not just the last day.” Finally, a last comment relates to doing the log in order to improve a student’s mark: “it isn’t a waste of time as long as the log is counted in the final mark, in other words, it helps us on the final mark.” While it would be preferable for these students to feel more motivated from within, it may still be beneficial for them to feel an obligation to work more with English for the course. Again, further, more extensive research could shed light on whether this feeling related to the logs activity is actually productive and whether it is linked to increased proficiency. Logs could also be used to determine whether motivation changes over time, a line of future work in this area, as indicated by Dörnyei & Ushioda (2012, p. 406). In any case, it is worthy of note that so many responses related to motivation were obtained. More work on logs and motivation needs to be done.

The next category of comments is “self-awareness,” which obtained fifteen responses. Nine of these student statements relate to increased understanding of what they do to learn English and the areas in which they need to work more. A major theme that stands out is “improvement,” including “what I need to improve,” “what I do to improve,” and “seeing improvement.” The difference compared to the category of internal motivation above is that these students mention the idea of “realizing” what they do, while the above comments relate more to an emotional level of satisfaction and feeling stimulated. For example, one student whose comment was assigned to the category of self-awareness stated: “when I reread it [the log], I realized if I had worked enough and if I needed to work more on certain aspects, etc.” Another theme that arises among these comments is “time” devoted to studying different aspects of English. Three students mention comments related to the possibility of needing more time after reviewing their logs, as for example, “in my opinion, it is a way to see if you are devoting enough time to English.” A last student of these nine mentioned that the log helped her to realize what her mistakes in written English were. The other six affirmations in this category of self-awareness relate to increased ability to organize study time and activities for the course. Generally, they are generic comments about the log’s helping them to organize themselves, but in one case the student indicates that by “reading a book, watching a film, or doing an activity that you like you can learn more than studying grammar rules alone.” It is highly worthwhile for students to become aware of how they learn and what they need to do more in order to improve in English. It is also of interest for them to better organize their time. In this sense, the log activity appears to be a valuable activity because of these unexpected benefits that go beyond the original goal of learner training for language learning. More studies focusing on students’ increased self-awareness through using study logs could determine if this sort of activity is more beneficial at certain levels of proficiency.

The last category of comments relates to the students’ opportunity to receive teacher feedback, which was related to the professor’s original intention of assigning the logs in class. Only six of the 29 students pointed out this aspect of the logs, a very low number. Five of these six comments mention the idea of the professor’s “guiding,” “advising” or providing “feedback” to the student. These few students managed to capture the essence of the activity. In fact, they were some of the most enthusiastic responses to the logs, as seen in the student comment: “I would say that it is the feedback that really helps; the log is a magnificent idea to be able to give all the students on-going and specific feedback.” The sixth statement focuses on the idea that the professor can obtain information from the students and, based on the findings, modify the course itself, something which did, in fact, occur on a number of occasions throughout the semester. It is surprising to see that so few students mentioned the aspect of teacher feedback in doing the log. Nevertheless, the other positive results and reactions mentioned above also make work with logs worth pursuing more.

Finally, two short general comments were about the log’s having helped the students to do activities in English and its having helped them to write in English. Another two comments were negative about doing the log activity. They referred to the “tedious” task of having to pay attention to how long it took to do homework, not being sure of what to include in the log, and having to think back to what had been done if the log was not filled in right away. This small

number of negative responses is highly encouraging, especially considering the negative reactions reported elsewhere and described in section II.b. above.

Overall, this group can be said to have been highly receptive to the log activity. These results differ, however, from those obtained for Group 2. Table 3 below shows the results for question one, the closed question, for this second group.

TABLE 3  
RESULTS FOR QUESTION 1, GROUP 2

Label	Number of responses
Interesting	13
Motivating	6
Unusual	12
Boring	9
A waste of time	1
Other ideas	2

Once again, the explanations provided by this group of students for question two for the labels “interesting” and “motivating” included a variety of different ideas that overlap, as was the case for Group 1. For this reason, the comments were sorted into categories, as with the first group, without considering the original labels in order to determine any patterns. The other ideas listed as “a good idea” and “not useful” were also included in the new categories. Nevertheless, it is already clear from the above table that Group 2 was less positive about the log activity. Table 4 shows the results for this group for the second question after analyzing 60 student comments.

TABLE 4  
NEW CATEGORIES AND RESPONSES, GROUP 2

Category	Number of responses
Unusual/Innovative	8
Motivating (internal)	8
Motivating (external)	7
Self-awareness	11
Teacher feedback	3
General comments (positive)	4
A way to improve specific aspects of English	3
Constraining (negative)	16

As in Group 1, the two original categories of unusual and motivating from question 1 have been retained during the analysis of the student comments. Most of the other labels coincide with those determined in examining the information for Group 1. The only new category is for general comments of a positive nature. Overall, all of the positive labels for this group obtained lower numbers than in the first group. In contrast, there is a substantially higher number of negative comments for this group. In fact, the increase in negative comments compared to the answers for question 1 is related to the fact that some of the explanations for the label “unusual” involved complaints, rather than praise for the activity.

As can be expected, the comments that were kept for the category of “unusual” involved mentions of the students’ never having done this type of exercise before. One student affirmed “when I see it, I think ‘I’ve listened to music, I’ve done something related with English.’” Like Group 1, they needed some time to adjust to doing the exercise, suggesting that it was, in fact, something new for them, so more responses indicating that the activity had been unusual would have been expected. The word “unusual” in the questionnaire was probably misleading and possibly a factor responsible for the low number of responses here.

In terms of motivation, the fifteen comments found were far less enthusiastic than those for Group 1. Few students have the positive emotional response to the log in this case. Instead blander comments such as “I think it is a good idea to see your progress” are observed. This is one of eight internal motivation comments related to *seeing* achievement -as opposed to *feeling satisfaction* over their achievement. The fact that the comments indicate that the students saw their achievement but did not indicate satisfaction over it suggests once again that these students were less enthusiastic about their logs. It must be recalled, nevertheless, that this group of students answered the questions in English and, despite their relatively higher level of the language compared to Group 1, may still have had some difficulty or discomfort in expressing themselves in the foreign language. It might be interesting to do future questionnaires of this sort in their native language to eliminate this possible variable. The two other comments assigned to the category of internal motivation are linked to stimulation to work and again are less enthusiastic than those found for Group 1, as in “it makes me study more English.” In fact, a few times it was difficult to determine whether the comments were really internal as opposed to external motivation. The aspect of external motivation mentioned or implied by practically all of the students in this category was the obligation to work more on English outside class (6 students). It is interesting to note, however, that two of the comments involved negative connotations, as in “had to” and “I have forced myself.” Again, some of these comments may have been influenced by the fact that the students answered the questions in the foreign language. Finally, the last student mentioned having to be motivated because of the need to pass the level test mentioned in Section III above. The level test, which was to be taken at the end of the semester, is generally a source of considerable stress for students in this course.



The comments under the category “self-awareness,” like the comments in Group 1, mainly mention the notion of the students’ becoming aware of what they need to “improve.” One student differentiates between “learning” and “a waste of time” indicating that by reviewing the log he was able to have the chance to see what works best. Another affirms that the log helps to see “what we deserve in the final mark of the subject” in addition to becoming aware of what is done on a daily basis. As in the above categories, the comments are less enthusiastic, again possibly due to the language of the questionnaire. The lower number of comments under this label compared to the number for Group 1 may be related to the fact that some students in this group felt they knew how to learn English already and did not need help, as will be seen below.

The three comments about teacher feedback through the log activity were fairly general as in the other categories. While two students stress the importance of the professor’s feedback, the other indicates that the information obtained through the logs can serve to help the professor to modify the day-to-day functioning of the class “and if he/she has to do more exercises about any of the skills.” Once again, as in Group 1, it appears that the group overall missed the original idea for assigning the logs. They did not seem to be aware that the activity was designed to help provide them with suggestions for how to improve their level.

The four general comments included such ideas as “a good idea” or “it’s very useful,” so they merely reflect students’ receptiveness to the exercise. The comments about the log as a way of improving specific aspects of English refer to the skills of listening and writing in one case and vocabulary and grammar in two others. The connection between the skills and the log is not clear due to the short and vague comments of the students, as in “it helps you to learn vocabulary and grammar.” Further questioning of the students might have revealed that this was actually a case of self-awareness or motivation through observation that the student needed more work in these areas.

Finally, the comments that stress constraints can be divided into several categories. Three students mention their being busy and not having time to do the log. In the semester that they did the log, they have an especially heavy workload in all of their courses and students in this semester tend to feel quite stressed. Seven students seem to show resistance to the idea of writing what they do down on paper, as reflected in a comment by a student who said that it “is like returning to primary school.” Others simply mention that they are not used to writing everything done, an idea reflected in Group 1 too. One person points out that the information can be invented, again mentioned by one of the students in the other group. Four students indicate that they already know how to study a foreign language or that it is part of their routine already. In fact, one of them affirms that “we don’t need a paper to know that.” Some of the students in this group had a B2 or C1 level in the language, so it is natural that they are used to studying the language and have probably established their own routines for learning. This would explain some if not all of their reticence at having to report what they do to practice the language. Another student completely missed the idea of the log as revealed through the comment “I think not just with writing down what we have done, we can get a better level.” This person clearly did not realize that the idea was to obtain suggestions from the professor on how to improve in the foreign language. Nevertheless, despite the larger number of negative reactions to the log activity compared to Group 1, it should be noted that four of the students who responded with negative comments qualified them with other indications that they understood the benefit or reason for doing them, as in “I think that the idea is good but write every day what you had done is boring.”

The two groups clearly show differing overall perceptions to doing the log activity as part of their English classes. As seen above, Group 1 was enthusiastic about the experience, while Group 2 is less receptive overall to it and had more negative responses. The differences in the two groups appear to be related to various factors. The language used for the questionnaire may have had a partial impact on the expression of the Group 2 students, at least in some of the cases. Nevertheless, a number of them did, in fact, have a B2 or C1 level in English so they could be expected to express themselves with a fair degree of precision in the language. A second factor to explain the variation between the two groups is their level in the target language. Group 1 generally had a lower level compared to Group 2. For this reason, they may have been more open to the logs. Generally, students in this course tend to have the feeling that they have never succeeded in English and they feel lost as to how to proceed.

It is clear that more time must be spent on the first day of class to discuss the reasons for doing the log activity. The students in both groups clearly missed the point of the exercise as revealed by the low number of responses reflecting the opportunity to obtain teacher feedback. At the same time, it would also be worthwhile to consider making the log activity voluntary. This would enable students who feel comfortable already with their language learning ability to opt out of doing it. More work is needed to determine whether this log activity might be more useful for lower level students or to see if it needs to be modified for higher level learners.

## V. CONCLUSION

This article has explained the reactions of two groups of students to using independent study logs as part of their English courses at the university level based on a questionnaire. The first group, teacher trainees with a level of English around A2-B2, was overwhelmingly positive about the experience, expressing comments related to the innovative nature of the logs and to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation along with self-awareness as a result of doing them. A small number of these students mentioned the possibility of obtaining teacher feedback on how to study, meaning that the majority of the group missed the original point. The second group, translator trainees with levels ranging from A2-C1,

were less receptive to the activity and more neutral in their comments even when they were positive about the experience. Nevertheless, the comments were found to be related to the same areas as in the first group: the unusualness of the logs, motivation, self-awareness, and teacher feedback, among others.

Additional work with logs and students' perceptions about them is needed to confirm these results. The questions and language of the questionnaire should be adapted in future studies. At the same time, the high number of responses related to motivation and self-awareness suggest that more work should be done in these areas. Both concepts are beneficial to learners and it would be valuable to determine if these characteristics can be developed more through the use of logs.

#### APPENDIX A. SURVEY FOR GROUPS 1 AND 2

Group 1 was issued the questionnaire in Spanish. Group 2 did it in English.

Answer the following questions

1. I found doing the log (you can select more than one answer):
  - a. Motivating
  - b. Interesting
  - c. Unusual (Innovative – Group 1)
  - d. Boring
  - e. A waste of time
  - f. Another idea (write the word)
2. Explain all of your ideas in as much detail as possible.

#### APPENDIX B. SAMPLE LOG ENTRIES

##### Student 1

February 6, 2013	Page 136 and 137 (4A) Grammar	15 min.	Entertaining activity
February 12, 2013	Read book "Strangers on a Train"	2 hours	Boring activity because I had to look at the translator. I didn't understand the words often.
February 12, 2013	Photocopies and phonetics and pronunciation	15 min	Fun activity because I like this theme, although I can [it can be?] complicated. I helped the page <a href="http://www.wordreference.com/es/">www.wordreference.com/es/</a> .

##### Student 2

5/3/2013	I watched The Client List Serie. It was the last chapter of the first season, and I'm really intrigued for know what will happened. ( $\pm$ 1 hour)
6/3/2013	At the University, in English Subject, we studied the present perfect simple and continuous and at finished these class I was very confused, and for to do easier to learn that, first, the teacher explained the present perfect and past simple grammar. (1 hour and 30 minutes).
6/3/2013	That day I went to my English academy and we studied the vocabulary, nouns and verbs and -ed and -ing adjectives, then we practiced speaking in one hand in group and in the other hand in pairs and realiced [did] listening and discriminated [distinguished] the /r/ and /j/ sounds. (1 hour and 15 minutes).
7/3/2013	I readed my novel, Love Actually, two chapters (30-45 minutes), and realiced my university homework of English ( $\pm$ 45 minutes). It's a little time but I had made a part of that exercises.

##### Student 3 (translated from Spanish)

7/3/2013	Viewing of the first part of the NBA match Indiana Pacers-Boston Celtics. Since starting with sports broadcasts I have noticed a big improvement in my listening, even though I think that I have hit a rut or the process is much slower than before. I need a lot of vocabulary to understand it all. Time: 1 hour. Did the homework, not too many problems doing it with the theory from the book. Time: 25 min. Total time today: 1 hour 25 min.
8/3/2013	I went to the website for the textbook and did the exercises there for vocabulary and grammar for unit 4. I made some mistakes but in general pretty good. Time: 45 min.
12/3/2013	I saw the first part of the Philadelphia 76ers and Brooklyn Nets match without anything new. I can say the same as on 7/3/2013. I also listened to music in English but I do this almost every day, but today I realized that I understood a lot of parts of the songs. I don't know if it is because the singers were German that I understood so much. Time: 1 hour 10 min.

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**Mary Frances Litzler** holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain) since 2011 and an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Southern California since 1987. In recent years she has been teaching English at the British Council Foundation and English language, linguistics and translation at the University of Alcalá in central Spain. Her research interests and publications relate to learner autonomy, student attitudes towards classroom methods, testing, new technologies and teacher training.

# Effect of Transdisciplinary Approach in Group Therapy to Develop Social Skills for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Rajeev Ranjan

Rehabilitation Services, Society for the Physically Disabled, 2 Peng Nguan Street, SPD Ability Center, Singapore

Kajal Ray Pradhan

Rehabilitation Services, Society for the Physically Disabled, 2 Peng Nguan Street, SPD Ability Center, Singapore

Joyce Wong

Rehabilitation Services, Society for the Physically Disabled, 2 Peng Nguan Street, SPD Ability Center, Singapore

**Abstract**—The social impairments in individuals with Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are diverse and involve speech, linguistic conventions and interpersonal interaction. 5 male children with ASD in the age range of 8 to 10 years were selected randomly. All the children were attending mainstream schools, receiving individual speech therapy and occupational therapy (45-minute session every fortnight) and were having difficulty in social interaction. The children were placed in a 3-hour group therapy program for 6 sessions, which were facilitated by two professionals, a speech-language therapist and an occupational therapist at our center (Society for the Physically Disabled). The rating score was rated by parent and therapist. The comparative pre and post therapy score among the two groups, that is by parents and therapist shows that the objectives for the group therapy were rated higher after the completion of the group therapy. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test shows there is significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) observed between pre and post group therapy rating scale by parents and therapist.

**Index Terms**—social skills, ASD, group therapy, children, parents, therapist

## I. INTRODUCTION

Autism spectrum disorder is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, including deficits in social reciprocity, nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction and skills in developing, maintaining and understanding relationships, DSM (2013). As per Carter A S, Davis N O, and Volkmar F R. (2005), socialization deficits are a major source of impairment regardless of cognitive or language ability for individuals with ASD. The social impairments in individuals with ASD are diverse and involve speech, linguistic conventions and interpersonal interaction.

McConnell S R. (2002) states social skills training are a type of child specific intervention. The researchers, Cooper M J, Griffith K G and Filer J (1999) reported that the specific intervention involves teaching specific skills (e.g., maintaining eye contact, initiating conversation) through behavioral and social learning techniques. Social skill training has been reported to be an effective component of treatment regimens for many childhood disorders including childhood social phobia, Spence S. H, Donovan C and Brechman-Toussaint M. (2000) and specific learning disabilities, Forness S and Kavale K (1999). Barry T D, Klinger L G, Lee J M, Palardy N, Gilmore T and Bodin S D (2003) states that group based social skills training is an interesting intervention approach for use with children with ASD because it provides the opportunity to practice newly learned skills in a relatively naturalistic format that may promote interaction with other children.

With the increasing knowledge of autism since it's broadening of definition in 1995, there have also been increases in the number of interventions introduced to the field. One of which is DIR®, also referred to as Floortime, a developmental approach designed by Greenspan and Wieder (1998), increases independently initiated social interactions and social reciprocity.

Greenspan S and Wieder S (1999) defines DIR® is a developmental form of psychotherapy, which works by assisting the child through various stages of socialization leading to higher levels of communication. DIR® is used to build social connections and reciprocity between the teacher and student. By building social reciprocity the teacher is able to engage the child at their motivation level to interact in the instructional process. The six stages of DIR® are as follows: The first stage of social-emotional development has been termed Attention and Regulation. The second stage of social-emotional development is Engagement. The third stage is two way communications. The fourth stage is Complex Problem-Solving and Communication. The fifth and sixth stages are called Forming Emotional Ideas and Building logical bridges between ideas (Logical Reasoning) respectively.

Following which there are other interventions such as Sensory Integration and Group therapy. Sensory Integration is the neurological process that organizes sensation from one's own body and from the environment and makes it possible to use the body effectively within the environment. The spatial (space) and temporal (time) aspects of the inputs, from different sensory modalities are interpreted, associated, and unified, Ayres A J (1989). Dr. Ayres an Occupational Therapist in the USA is a pioneer in the treatment of children with specific learning and motor organization problems. She found that directing and controlling the inputs of different senses (i.e. sensory input through touch, body movement, vision, hearing, etc.) through Sensory Integration Therapy, children were able to learn and organize behavior more effectively at home and school, Ayres A J (1972).

At our pediatric rehabilitation services some of the children attending mainstream school have difficulties in social skills such as socializing with their peers, making friends, etc. So to overcome the challenges, they attend our center's individual Occupational and Speech Therapy services.

As, individual therapy focusses on child's pre-linguistic skills (eye to eye contact, focusing), linguistic skills (comprehension, expression), fine and gross motor skills. This helps the child to develop his/her functional communication in day to day routine. Therefore, there are no opportunities to practice their social interaction skills.

Group therapy is a therapeutic strategy in which a group of children of similar challenges or of homogeneous features meets for several sessions under the guidance and direction of a therapist (called a conductor, leader or facilitator). Davis RG (1948) described group therapy to help children gain social acceptance in the first grade. During a typical group therapy session, children are facilitated to socialize with their peers, initiate and/ or participate in the group play or express their potential. Bandura A (1989) suggested that most social learning takes place by observing others (Others means Persons in the child's immediate social environment, i.e. Parents, Siblings, Teachers and Peers). Group therapy may be practiced in a variety of settings such as therapist's clinic, special school, children's developmental center etc. In the group therapy session children get opportunities to practice their social interaction skills with other children of their age group in a safe environment. These social skill "practices" will build up their confidence level to initiate and interact with their peers. The children will also get the opportunities to practice appropriate social behavior within the group.

Groups usually meet weekly, and the duration of therapy may vary. For some cases, group therapy can last for a few months, whereas others may attend group therapy for a few years. Rhodes SL (1973) worked on behavioral modification by using a short term work which is six to eight sessions. The frequency and duration of group therapy often depend on many factors, including the severity of the clients' conditions and/or problems as well as the results sought by the therapist.

With all these intervention approaches in combination, SPD's pediatric rehabilitation department piloted the first single session group therapy program on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010 followed by the 6 sessions of group therapy series from September 2010 to Feb 2011.

Both the Occupational Therapist (OT) and Speech Therapist (ST) facilitated the group together and each complementing their professional strategies while running the group as in a transdisciplinary approach. The transdisciplinary approach is a framework for allowing members of an educational team to contribute knowledge and skills, collaborate with other members, and collectively determine the services that would most benefit a child. According to Bruder (1994) "This approach integrates a child's developmental needs across the major developmental domains" and "involves a greater degree of collaboration than other service delivery models".

The group therapy program was a platform for the children to develop their social interaction as well as to monitor their progress.

*Aim of the study was,*

1. To see the impact of Transdisciplinary approach in group therapy to develop social interaction skills for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)
2. To see the effect of incorporating the Occupational therapy and Speech & language therapy approaches in group therapy sessions.
3. To see the impact of standardized treatments such as DIR/Floor Time and Sensory Integration in group therapy to improve Social interaction skills for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders(ASD)

## II. METHOD

*Participants:* 5 male children diagnosed with ASD in the age range of 8 to 10 years, The Parent (either Father or Mother) of each child was selected for the study. The children were in lower primary i.e. Primary 1-4. All the children were attending mainstream school and receiving individual speech therapy and occupational therapy (45 minute session every fortnight) and having difficulty in social interaction.

*Tools of the study:* A four point rating scale was developed to monitor the child's progress in the group therapy, The Rating criteria and points are as follows

- 1- The child who needs maximum prompt, i.e. visual, verbal and physical guidance from the therapist,
- 2- The child who needs moderate prompt, i.e. visual, and verbal cues from the therapist,
- 3- The child who needs minimal prompt, i.e. verbal cues from the therapist and
- 4- The child who does not need any prompt and is independent.

The objectives of the rating scale for the group therapy program are as follows:

1. Listen and follow the instructions
2. Interact with other children in the group
3. Initiate in the activity
4. Initiate and maintain interaction
5. Initiate and complete activities

**Procedure:** The children were engaged in a 3 hour group therapy program for 6 sessions. The sessions were planned once in a month, which was facilitated by the speech therapist and occupational therapist. A total of 5 activities were planned to meet the objectives of the group therapy. Strategies from standardized treatments such as DIR/Floor Time and Sensory Integration were adopted in the group therapy. The rating scale was scored both by the parent (of each child) and the therapist before and after the group therapy session. Each objective was scored on a four point rating scale.

The scores from the pre and post therapy were compared to monitor the overall performance of the child on each objective.

**Statistics Involved:** Mean and standard deviation was obtained using SPSS version 16. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to find if any significant difference exist among the pre and post therapy rating score.

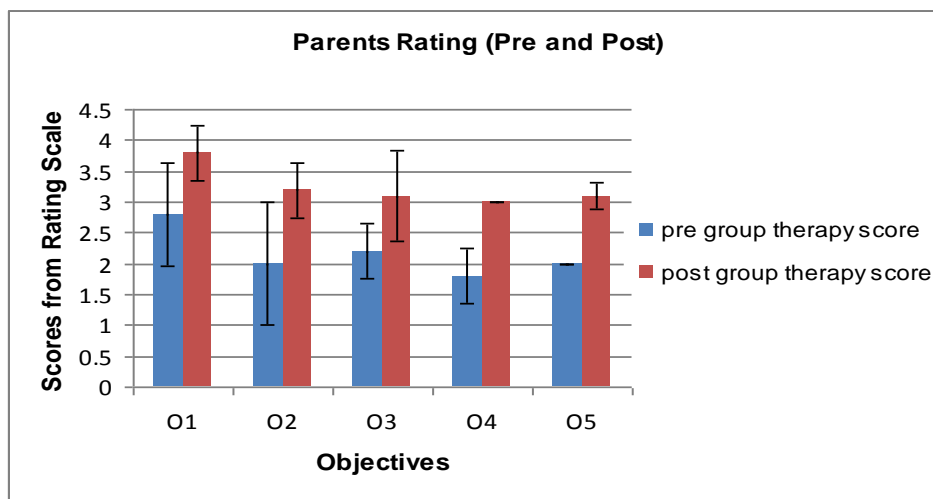
### III. RESULTS

The study aimed to see the impact of Transdisciplinary approach in group therapy to develop social interaction skills for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The rating scale was scored by both the parent and the therapist. The result of the post therapy rating score was higher than the pre therapy score.

The results of the pre and post therapy rating scores are shown below.

TABLE 1  
SHOWS THE PRE AND POST RATING SCORE BY PARENT FOR ALL THE CHILDREN AND THE P VALUE OF THE SCORES.

Objectives	Parent Scores										P Value
	Pre Therapy					Post Therapy					
	Ch A	Ch B	Ch C	Ch D	Ch E	Ch A	Ch B	Ch C	Ch D	Ch E	
Listen and Follow instructions	2	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	.059
Interact with other children in the group	2	1	3	1	3	3	3	4	3	3	.063
Initiate in the activity	2	2	3	2	2	3.5	3	4	2	3	.059
Initiate and maintain interaction	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	.034
Initiate and complete activities	2	2	2	2	2	3	3.5	3	3	3	.034

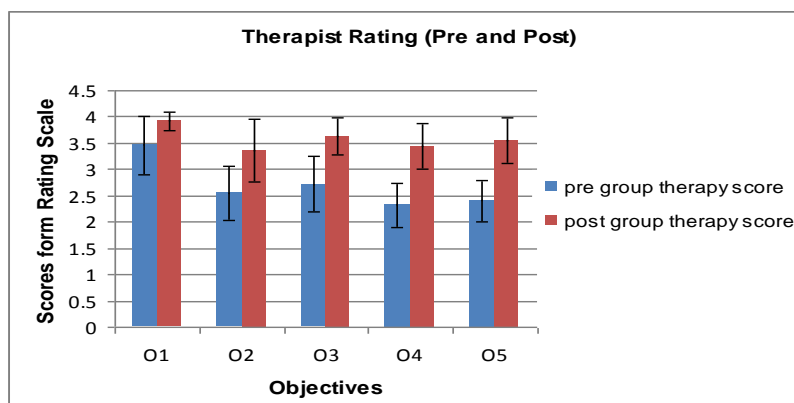


Graph 1: shows pre and post Parent rating scale for different Objectives

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test showed, that there was a significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) observed between pre and post group therapy rating scale by the parent in the objective numbered 4 and 5. However, there was no significant difference observed in pre and post rating scale by the parent for the objectives numbered 1, 2 and 3. The objectives numbered 1, 2 and 3 although had no significant difference; it was nearly at the significance level.

TABLE 2  
SHOWS THE PRE AND POST RATING SCORE BY THERAPIST FOR ALL THE CHILDREN AND THE P VALUE OF THE SCORES.

Objectives	Therapist Scores										P Value
	Pre Therapy					Post Therapy					
	Ch A	Ch B	Ch C	Ch D	Ch E	Ch A	Ch B	Ch C	Ch D	Ch E	
Listen and Follow instructions	2.8	3.5	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.6	4	.109
Interact with other children in the group	2	2	3	2.75	3	3	3	4	2.8	4	.034
Initiate in the activity	2.4	2.2	3.5	2.5	3	3.4	3.6	4	3.2	4	.042
Initiate and maintain interaction	2	2.2	3	2	2.4	3.2	3.2	3.8	3	4	.042
Initiate and complete activities	2	2.2	3	2.25	2.6	3.4	3.4	4	3	4	.042



Graph 2: shows pre and post rating scale by therapist for different Objectives

The above graph indicates the pre and post therapy score which has been scored by parents. The post group therapy scores are higher in each objective, which shows there was improvement. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test showed, that there was a significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) observed between pre and post group therapy rating scale by the therapist in the objectives numbered 2, 3, 4 and 5. However, there was no significant difference observed in pre and post rating scale by the therapist for the 1<sup>st</sup> objective.

The result shows there was an impact of Transdisciplinary approach in group therapy to develop social skills in children with ASD. The children in the group showed improvement after the six sessions of the group therapy.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

This study mainly shows the overall performance of the child in a group where transdisciplinary approach was used to facilitate the social interaction (objectives), and the rating was done by both parent and therapist before and after the group session.

The comparison of pre and post rating scores are discussed below.

**Objective one:** Up to 30 % improvement recorded by the therapist and 50% improvement observed by the Parent for child A. There was 25% improvement observed by Parents and almost 15 % improvement recorded by the therapist for the child B. Only 25% improvement observed by the Parent and no improvement were recorded by the therapist in child C. Both the parent and therapist observed 25% improvement for the child D and there were no improvement was observed by both parents and the therapist in child E. These improvements noted for each child indicate up to 15% to 30% improvement in the objective one of the study-Listen and Follow instructions.

**Objective two:** Both the parents and the therapist observed improvement by 25% in child A. There was 50% improvement observed by parent and 25% improvement recorded by therapist for child B. Both the parent and the therapist recorded improvement by 25% in the child C. There were 50% improvement observed by the parent and minimal improvement (up to 5% only) was recorded by the therapist for child D. Up to 25% improvement was recorded by the therapist and no improvement was observed by the parent in child E. These improvements noted for each child indicate up to 5% to 50% improvement in the objective two of the study-Interact with other children in the group.

**Objective three:** 37.5 % improvement was observed by the parent and up to 15 % improvement was recorded by the therapist for child A. There was 50% improvement observed by the parent and up to 35% improvement was recorded by the therapist for child B. Up to 25 % improvement was observed by the parent and up to 15% improvement was recorded by the therapist in child C. A Minimal improvement of 12% was observed by the therapist. However, the parent reported no specific improvement for child D. Both groups observed similar improvement (25%) in child E. These improvements noted for each child indicate up to 12% to 50% improvement in the objective three of the study-Initiate in the activity.

**Objective four:** Both groups reported improvement for child A, i.e. 30% from the therapist and up to 25% from the parent. Up to 50 % improvement was observed by the parent and 25% improvement was recorded by the therapist for child B. Both the groups observed improvement up to 25-30% for child C. There was 25% improvement observed by

both groups for the child D. Up to 40% improvement was recorded by the therapist and up to 25% improvement was observed by the parent in the child E. These improvements noted for each child indicate up to 25% to 50% improvement in the objective four of the study-Initiate and maintain interaction.

*Objective five:* Up to 35% improvements were recorded by the therapist and up to 25% improvement was observed by the parent for the child A. Both groups observed similar improvement (up to 35 to 40%) in child B and similar improvement (up to 25 to 30%) for the child C & D. Up to 35% improvement was recorded by the therapist and 25% improvement was observed by the parent in child E. These improvements noted for each child indicate up to 25% to 35% improvement in the objective five of the study-Initiate and complete activities.

This study involved 5 children in a group for 6 sessions. Since this study has very limited participants and fewer sessions, the results cannot be generalized to the general population of children of the same age group and diagnosis in Singapore. Further studies involving a larger sample may be required. The limitation of this study is inter-child, inter-parent and inter-therapist rating scores of the objectives. White S W, Keonig K and Scahill L (2007) mentioned in their study for children with ASD that, the necessity of an outcome measurement should be socially valid and sensitive to change. They also added that the outcome measurement should have the strength to measure the child's learnt new specific skills in context to both treatment and in real environment.

Overall, the children in the group showed improvement in social-communication with their peers, showed interest to participate, initiated and took turns in storytelling, various art and craft activities. This study signifies that transdisciplinary approach in group therapy is a useful treatment strategy to facilitate children to initiate and interact with their peers.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

From the study it is concluded that the individual therapy may have limitation on socialization, where as a group therapy facilitates a conducive social environment for children with ASD. In the group therapy session children have opportunities to practice their social interaction skills with other children of their age group in a safe environment. This enhances their confidence levels to initiate and interact with their peers. Hence, transdisciplinary approach in group therapy plays a significant role to develop social interaction skills for children with autism. It also provided a platform for the children to be exposed to different professionals with various treatment strategies.

### APPENDIX A. RATING CRITERIA FOR THE OBJECTIVES OF CHILD'S PERFORMANCE IN THE GROUP THERAPY

#### Rating Scales for the objectives of child's performance in the group therapy

Child Name:

Date:

SN	Objectives	Performance of the child in the Activities																			
		Activity-1				Activity-2				Activity-3				Activity-4				Activity-5			
	Ratings				1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
1	Listen and Follow instructions																				
2	Interact with other children in the group																				
3	Initiate in the activity																				
4	Initiate and maintain interaction																				
5	Initiate and complete activities																				
	Total																				

Explanatory notes for the Rating scale:

- Rating scale 1 is equivalent to 25%- The child who needs maximum prompt, i.e. visual, verbal and physical guidance from the therapist.
- Rating scale 2 is equivalent to 50%- The child who needs moderate prompt, i.e. visual, and verbal cues from the therapist.
- Rating scale 3 is equivalent to 75%- The child who needs minimal prompt, i.e. verbal cues from the therapist.
- Rating scale 4 is equivalent to 100%- The child who don't need any prompt and able to perform him/herself.

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Note: conflict of interest

The First author has attended the training on DIR®/ Floor time, so the strategies from DIR/ floor time were incorporated during the activity session for the group therapy, and also the author is pursuing Part time PhD in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nasik, India. The statistician was hired and remunerated by the author for doing statistical analysis, in which SPSS version 16 was used for data analysis.

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**Rajeev Ranjan** was born in Bihar, India on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979. He has his B.Sc. (Speech & Hearing) from University of Mysore in 2001 and Master of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology from Mangalore University, Karnataka, India in 2006. Currently he is doing a part time PhD in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Mumbai, India. His major certification includes AEPS, Hanen Program and PROMPT.

He has been practicing as a speech Therapist in Pediatric Rehabilitation Services at the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD) since July 2007. Before joining SPD he had worked as an Audiologist and speech-language pathologist in Hospital, Rehabilitation center as well as in teaching institution in India for 5 Years. He has also teaching experience in teaching undergraduate student in the institution.

Mr. Ranjan is a registered therapist from Allied Health Professions Council, Singapore, Rehabilitation Council of India and also holds membership in Speech language and hearing Association Singapore, Cochlear implant group of India & Indian speech and hearing Association.



**Kajal Ray Pradhan** qualified as an occupational therapist in 2000 and holds a Bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy. He has completed his Masters of Clinical Rehabilitation from the Flinders University, South Australia. He is certified in Neuro Developmental Therapy from NDT Association, USA and is trained in Sensory Integration.

He has varied experience working in Singapore and abroad both in acute care hospital, special education school, early intervention programs, and private clinics. Kajal has wide experience as a pediatric occupational therapist treating various disabilities such as ASD, Global Developmental Delays, ADHD, Developmental Coordination Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Down's syndrome, and Handwriting Difficulties.

Besides practice, Kajal is actively engaged in various parents/caregivers training programs and public talks. He also supervise trainee Occupational Therapist from the NYP school of health sciences, and from overseas.

**Joyce Wong** is a trained social worker. In addition Bachelor in Arts (Social Worker), she has a graduate diploma in business administration. Started as a Social Worker after graduating from National University of Singapore in 1994, she was involved in direct social work with people with disabilities. She brings with her 20 years of experience in direct social work as well as policy and service planning in various sectors including disability, eldercare and rehabilitation of ex-drug abusers. Currently the Acting Director for Services at the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD), she plays an instrumental role in setting the direction and drives the development of programmes including adult rehabilitation centers, pediatric rehabilitation centers, early intervention services, therapy hub, and integration support for students with physical disabilities in mainstream schools, social work support services.

# Name Calling and Vulgarities as Threats to National Peace and Security: The Case of Language of Virtual Community

Godwin Oko Ushie

Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Juliet Ude Ifeakor

Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

**Abstract**—This paper analyzes comments by readers of an online article in *The Punch Newspaper* entitled “CAN crisis deepens”, the crises that threaten to rock the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN. It aims to show how name calling and vulgarities as a trademark of language use in the virtual community can pose a threat to national peace and security. Some of the comments that trailed the article deviate from civility, break the conversational and politeness maxims, extend the frontiers of the discourse at hand and inundate it with name calling and vitriolic language. The method used in this paper consists of highlighting the comments and analyzing this discourse using Grice’s Cooperative Principles and Politeness Principles of conversation. The paper concludes that public discourse among the netizens (members of virtual community) has the tendency of degenerating into expletives, discourtesies and disparagement because the public space is a faceless one; hence the comments which have deviated from the norms of civilized discourse pose a threat to religious peace and harmony among Christians in Nigeria and by extension to national peace and security.

**Index Terms**—name calling and vulgar language, virtual community, public discourse, conversational maxims, peace and security

## I. INTRODUCTION

The article to which responses by netizen readers form the basis of this paper is about the recent crisis faced by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in relation to administrative issues in the association. The article contains a verbal response in an interview granted by the Public Relations Officer of CAN, Mr. Samuel Oibe, on the threat by the Catholic group to pull out its membership from the association. It was published in a daily online Nigerian newspaper, *The Punch*, on January 24, 2013 and it was entitled “CAN crisis deepens” and written by Friday Olorok. It is a short article, written for a well-informed virtual community to read and possibly comment on. It is evident that the reporter had been aware of the crises that CAN had been going through previously before this new development. For he starts the article with the statement, “The crisis rocking the Christian Association of Nigeria worsened on Wednesday as the association told the Catholic Church to go ahead with its decision to pull out of the association.” The reporter gives the readers the comment made by the Catholic arm of the group through The Administrator of the Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta, Monsignor Christopher Ajala, alleging that “CAN had become an arm of government”. The reporter reports that CAN attributes the Catholic’s action to her loss of the Presidency of CAN to Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, who doubles as the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria’s President presently.

The medium of communication affects discourse in the sense that it determines how liberal one can be when using different types of medium. Johnstone (2002) believes that the fact that the internet is more interactive is as a result of how the technology facilitates interactivity and there are beliefs of how the internet should be used. The virtual community users often cross the line of freedom of speech to libelous attacks on other users in their language use. Some of the comments presented here are cited as examples of such use of language.

The main purpose of this article like most online articles is to enlighten people about the problems in CAN and elicit comments from the public on their opinions on the issue at hand. Our interest in this article is aroused by the fact that name calling and vulgarities has become a major problem in the virtual communication media as evidenced in some comments on this article. Our thesis is that these vituperative comments can pose a threat to national peace and security by the nature of the language used by the commentators for words are a powerful weapon that can generate bad blood and incense the characters involved. Benjamin Disraeli, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Prime Minister quoted in Harris (1976) asserts that “What words mean few can say, but with words we govern men” (p.53). Bad words can rule a reader’s head, incense him and instigate a bad reaction. The multi-linguistic, multi-cultural and multi-religious nature of Nigeria calls for caution in the use of language in discussion bordering on national or religious issues especially in the virtual world where many people can read the comments as they come into a webpage. Nigeria has been under siege from a terrorist Muslim sect called Boko Haram that claims it is fighting Government but attacks Christian Churches and areas of high

Christian concentration, banks and even burns schools in addition to Police Barracks. This has posed very serious security challenges to lives, property, churches and government since 2009. From the report in the article it is evident that the argument is between the Pentecostals and the Catholics and the mode of the utterances in the report has opened a can of name calling and vulgarity from the commentators. We have analyzed some of the comments to show the threat they pose to our national peace and security after summarizing the main topic of the article.

## II. PUBLIC DISCOURSE IN NIGERIAN VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

Tollefsen (2009) defines public discourse as

a space in which the sort of public conversation necessary for a reflective opinion on public matters can develop. This common space was made possible in the eighteenth century by the developing print media, in the form of books, pamphlets and newspapers. At the heart of this common space, in turn, was a form of impersonal communication of ideas and arguments. But such a public space is at risk in an era of instantaneous communication and reaction, and competition to be heard above the din. *Public Discourse* has, as I understand it, been an attempt in part to recreate part of that public space, to recreate the context in which the impersonal communication of ideas and arguments can be carried out. It is not, of course, the entirety of that space, nor could it ever be: the essays of *Public Discourse*, while manifesting various internal disagreements amongst its contributors, nevertheless share to a generally high degree a common set of values, presuppositions, and standpoints.

Virtual community is the latest range in personal interaction and public discourse. It is an attempt to alleviate some of the alienation caused by modern society. People realize that there is some value in banding together through personal interactions: a way of people meeting other people and airing their views on topic of mutual interests. The nature of the discourse might have a negative or positive effect on the society. If it addresses adequately the topic at hand with the intent of finding solution to the problem or issue at hand through positive suggestions, it becomes beneficial to the community but if the contributions are not relevant to the discourse and turns into an attack with name calling and vulgarity as its weapons of warfare, then it is detrimental to the virtual community and even to the nation as a whole.

Ligaga (2012) asserts that the virtual space provides a forum for “a vast majority of people to articulate their opinions and desires, perform their identities, present the unsaid, circulate informal information, and to generally negotiate the meanings of political and cultural issues in their lives (p.2). In a recent interview with *Thisday* style magazine, the Finance Minister, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, encourages the electronic media users to use it for good “to pass information that is true and needed for people to educate themselves, but [not to] use it to peddle false stories that may be damaging to people” (Sunday March 10 2013).

Kiesler & Siegel, & MacGuire (1984) found out that computer based medium of interpersonal relations are more difficult to work with because the group members often treat one another more rudely than the face to face medium of interaction and they were more likely to swear, insult other group members, make hostile comments, and engage in name-calling. This is a constant feature of the virtual community and it has adverse effects on the community.

Comments and reactions to news reports are of great interest to the public and topics relating to religion and politics are sensitive issues that a lot of people will like to contribute to. One of such topics is the issue of the crises in CAN and it is interesting to see the thread of comments that has been generated as a result. The antecedents in the crises and comments made by Oibe in which he said, “There are some certain elements in the leadership of CAN led by Cardinal John Onaiyekan because he lost CAN Presidency to Oritsejafor who has a lot of achievements” and “They have been agitating that the Presidency of CAN must come from the South. They are an appendage of PDP and PDP themselves. They are known for double standards. A man of God should not be double speaking”, sparked a line of comments and responses, some of which were not even relevant to the threat of pulling out of CAN by Catholics but to the contextual issues associated with the corruption, decadence and flamboyance of either of the Catholic or Pentecostal denominations. The first comment (see Appendix below) sets off the firestorm of name calling and vulgar language that characterizes many of the other comments trailing the article.

These comments raise really important questions about free speech in the virtual community, and the way public discourse is engaged in as it relates to the larger communities. These comments are symptomatic of a larger problem, and this is the persistent presence of such name calling and vulgarity in language use of many Nigerians. Even in casual conversation, even when used in discourse with friends or relations we not only allow, but encourage the use of such language without knowing the consequences of such language use. In the same way that the use of derogatory terms based on differences is dangerous to the society as it can incite unrest and even war. The use of this type of vulgar language as seen in the appendix below is harmful to any and all efforts for national peace and security.

These commentators are well within their rights to freedom of speech just as much as anyone else. But having the right to say a word does not invite or encourage one to use that word. Name calling and vulgar language are part of offensive and inflammatory language at the expense of an entire community. This kind of language could incite a denominational or religious war in the country. The first comment, 1.0, starts with name calling, and comment 2.0 reacts violently to the first comment in a vulgar language. Name calling often does not open the door for dialogue in issues like this. Rather, such language that is offensive often slams the door for dialogue and logical reasoning when such divisive issues come to light on a national stage. If one is interested in having a reasoned, engaging and honest debate, one should probably do what one can to keep the other person engaged, reasonably and politely. Calling a

person “an idiot” as in comment 6.0, for example, is almost certain to be deleterious to the conversation with many people, whether they are right to take offence or not. Therefore, if the motive is to have a reasoned, engaging and honest debate it is in the best interest not to make such predictably insulting assessments of either people or their ideas.

It must however be admitted that corruption in Nigeria, especially in government circles, still remains a cause for justified outrage, more so when it is being linked to religion. Corruption is a very serious problem and the solutions more fundamental than we most times would like to think it is. It is only through true discourse that public anger will be properly channelled towards finding positive solutions to this type of crises in CAN. That public anger, unfortunately, has been dissipated by people like the spokespersons of the two religious denominations involved in this crisis, in name calling and blaming the persons at the helm of affairs. On virtual social media where the limit on the number of interlocutors seems to be equivalent to a limit on the depth of reflection, public discourse has descended into the gutter barefacedly. The adverse effect of this is that after all the heated offensive language used no one proposes solutions as no one properly gets to understand the problem as the right questions are not asked resulting in a stagnant discourse with no way forward.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: COOPERATIVE AND POLITENESS PRINCIPLES IN DISCOURSE

It seems important, in the light of the flavour of this public discourse at hand in Nigeria to call to mind some qualities of mature and civilized public discourse which is also related to Grice's conversational maxims and Leech's Politeness maxims. H. P. Grice (1975), having studied conversational behaviour of interactants, discovered a pattern of cooperation between and among them. The pattern he christened “Cooperative Principle (CP)”. The CP states that, “Make your conversation contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p. 45). From the CP itself he derived four conversational maxims that not only help in analysis of discourse, but also in explicating implicated meaning, because speakers tend to imply more covertly than what is overtly stated. And when a speaker breaks a maxim, he creates room for implicature.

Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle (PP) is a necessary compliment to Grice's cooperative principle. He identifies politeness as concerning a “relationship between two participants whom we may call self and other” (p.131) in which a speaker the (self) employs all forms of tact and diplomacy so as not to pose a Face Threatening Act to the other who may be an addressee or even a third person. The function is “to maintain social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place” (p.80).

Koester (2006) notes that “Brown and Levinson (1978/1987) distinguish between positive and negative politeness. Both types of politeness involve maintaining--or redressing threats to--positive and negative face, where positive face is defined as the addressee's 'perennial desire that his wants . . . should be thought of as desirable' (p. 101), and negative face as the addressee's 'want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded' (p. 129).” Although Leech derives from the politeness principles six maxims, only the following maxims will be used in the analysis of these deleterious comments: Tact Maxim, Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim. He categorizes “the maxims of PP which tend to go in pairs as follows:”

1. Tact Maxim in impositives and commissives
  - a. Minimize cost to the other.
  - b. Maximize benefit to the other.
2. Approbation Maxim (in expressives and assertives)
  - a. Minimize dispraise of others.
  - b. Maximize dispraise of self.
3. Modesty praise Maxim (in expressives and assertives)
  - a. Minimize praise of self.
  - b. Maximize praise of others (p.132).

Grice's first Maxim is that of quality and it states that you “make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)” and secondly, “do not make your contribution more informative than is required.” The minimal requirement is that the discourse should be informative. We can understand this minimal requirement using inference. The main idea is that an utterance must contain something new to be informative. And for it to contain something new logically, the content of the utterance must not be implied by the preceding discourse anyway. We know that if it is implied, the implication with the preceding discourse as antecedent and the (not so) new utterance as a consequence will be valid.

So, to find out whether comments 1.0 and 2.0 are informative, for example, we check whether the 1.0 is informative based on the article it is meant to react to.

“PRIVATE JETS PARADE. AM GLAD FED GOVT HAVE BANNED THEM.CATHOLIC CHURCH ISNT THE PROBLEM. ITS [sic] A FACT THAT THE ASSOCIATION IS FAST LOSING FOCUS AND MORAL TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIANITY”

This statement is valid because it gives new information that is not contained in the article about the “private jets”, “loss of focus” and “moral teachings of Christianity” is a statement that is also verifiable so we can take it to be informative so it does not violate the principle of quantity. But it flouts the maxim of Relation in that the issue of ownership of private jets is extraneous. It is not part of the reason that the Catholic Church is adducing for pulling out of

CAN. Rather its inclusion is part of the mischief making and generation of bad blood. It also flouts Leech's Tact Maxim, which states that: "Minimize cost to the other". This information about private jet ownership is in bad faith and is intended to cost the CAN President who had just acquired a private jet a "praise"; in fact it is a ridicule, especially with the allusion to the CAN's "loss of focus and moral teaching...[and a hint on the President becoming a] PASTORPRENEUR". The coinage "PASTORPRENEUR" is a blend of two words, "pastor" and "entrepreneur", meaning one who makes merchandise of his pastoral vocation, which is part of loss of focus. Nigerians are noted for casting aspersions on their leaders; hence Oritsejafor is suffering same here. Grice's point is not that utterances violating any of the conversational maxims are ill-formed in the sense of ungrammatical strings. Rather, a speaker may violate a maxim on purpose, allowing the hearer to infer "backwards" to the speaker's intention. This is the case for the comment 2.0 which is filled with vulgarity. There is no new information given in relation to the topic of the article both endophorically and exophorically.

The second Maxim which is that of Quality, is often called Super maxim. It is also important to this discourse. It states that we should "try to make our contribution one that is true". It is paraphrased in the statements below: (a) "Do not say what you believe to be false. (b.) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." This presupposes that Speakers should aim to put forth the truth. The realization that an opponent's view, no matter how mistaken, has a little bit of truth in it, is an important quality of a reasoned discourse. Thomas Aquinas, the great philosopher and theologian, when refuting erroneous ideas, always states the 'objections' first. He would always explain the other point of view even better than its advocates could before he goes ahead to systematically refute them. It is usual in public debate these days for both sides to totally disregard any opposing viewpoint, sometimes fill their views with name calling, invectives and vulgarity that have adverse effect on the society, examples of which are the comments in 10.0, 11.0 and 12.0 below:

10.0 Kk January 24, 2013 at 11:45 am

U will remain a fool forever

11.0 Awelu January 24, 2013 at 2:24 pm

CAN IS CAN FULL OF WORMS, THAT WILL BE REJECTED BY TIN CAN ISLAND. WE NEED SOMEBODY WITH A CAN OPENER TO LIFT THE LID OF THE CAN AND WE SEE WHAT TYPE OF WORMS AND CANKER WORMS ARE IN THE CAN. THE CANSOCK MEN APPOINTED TO LOOK AFTER CAN HAVE NOW STEEL THEMSELVES AND FORM A CANNABIES PARTY TO CANNIBALISE THE CANGREGATIONS. WE NEED MEN WITH TEARGAS CANNISTER TO CANSTRATE THESE MEN WHO ARE CANAL MINDED. THE PENTECANSTERS ARE CANNING THE CRUMBS FROM THE LOOTERS

12.0 ed January 24, 2013 at 3:06 pm

Na your papa and your whole families and Your generation, Generation that will pull out or Resign, yeye man, shut-up if you no knwo wetin you go talk.

These are not qualitative assertions from Grice's point of view and they can be referred to as an *ad Hominem*. For instance KK, Respondent 10.0 responding to Oare Ughekpe's (Respondent 9.0's) call for proof to an assertion, resorts to calling him "a fool forever". An *ad Hominem* attack is not an argument; rather it is an attack on the personality of a participant in a discussion by the use of abusive language. It is important to note that the mark of a civilized discourse is that emphasis is placed on the topic of discourse brought forward and not on the person who makes them. Leech's Maxim of Approbation states, "Minimize dispraise of others." But here, we see KK Maximize dispraise of Ughekpe, calling him a perpetual fool. And Awelu (Respondent 11) joining the fray, goes haywire in creative lexical coinage, and rolls out a derivational paradigm of CAN: 'CAN...of worms', can opener, cankerworm, 'cansock men', 'cannabies party to cannibalise the cangregations', teargas cannister to canstrate', 'canal minded', 'the pentecansters' and 'canning'. It is very likely that this contributor is a non-pentecostal, ie if he is a Christian at all. To go to the extent of casting this kind of aspersions on the umbrella Christian association that aggregates the views of Christians in Nigeria, liaises with government and Muslims and cooperates in interreligious fora in a religiously volatile ambience like Nigeria is dangerous, counterproductive and capable of inciting different Christian organizations among themselves or even against Muslims if there is any hint that Awelu is a Muslim. What is commonly found in the Nigerian virtual discourse is a tendency to easily resort to attacks on the person whose view differs from theirs by resorting to name calling and vulgarity. There are comments like "PAY AS U GO PASTORPRENUERS" or "ignorant and hypocrite of the highest order". Rather than focus on the issue of the article, people tend to descend to abusive language and inveigh the person's personality. Most times contributors get caught up in name calling, expletives, disparagement and vulgarity that they do not even remember what the main issue of the argument is in the first place. Personal grouses should be kept out of the public square and issues have to be dealt with squarely.

Grice's Maxim of Relation states that you should be relevant. Grice (1975, p. 47) defines it as follows: "I expect a partner's contribution to be appropriate to immediate needs at each stage of the transaction". The flouting of this principle often happens when the comment is irrelevant to the topic, there is an entire change of topic or failure to address the goal of the question asked some of which have been observed in the comments above. Leech (1983, p. 94) provides the following definition of the notion of relevance: "An utterance U is relevant to a speech situation if U can be interpreted as contributing to the conversational goal(s) of speaker or hearer". Leech states that the speaker strives for a certain goal by stating his question and that the hearer adopts this goal when giving an answer. For example, all the comments listed above; do not have any relevance to the issue of the Catholic Church pulling out of CAN. The

comments do not abide by the principle of relevance, since a direct and appropriate answer to the question is not given. See for example, comments 4.0, 5.0, 6.0 and 7.0.

Again, some of these comments flout this Maxim by making statements that are not relevant to the article's message. Take comments 2.0 and 3.0 for example, the vulgar attack on the comment made by 1.0 is absolutely, unnecessarily making the comments a charade of personal insults on the personality of the first commentator and having little or no comments on the actual topic of discussion. For this reason it floats the Maxim of Relation.

The cooperative Maxim of manner makes the following requirements: 'Be perspicuous'. It proposes that the participants should:

(a) Avoid obscurity of expression. (b) Avoid ambiguity. (c) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity). (d) Be orderly.

This cooperative Maxim relates not to what is said but how it is said. Leech (1983, p.100) distinguishes two kinds of clarity: "One kind consists in making unambiguous use of syntax and phonology of the language in order to construct a clear text. Another type consists in framing a clear message, i.e. a message which is perspicuous or intelligible in the sense of conveying the intended illocutionary goal to the addressee." The illocutionary goal in these comments is its efficient cause, that is, the force which the speaker intends to apply to his or her environment.

In this case the cause that can come out of name calling and vulgar language in the virtual community is chaos and national insecurity since the country is a multi-religious nation. It can rightfully be said that the perlocutionary goal will be nothing different from the act itself, changing the environment into a chaotic and insecure state. Respondents 7 and 11 comments are not only disorderly, they are also prolix. **"I knew him when he was a young boy in Sapele, very rascal, and he did smoke indian hemp then (what we in Warri and Sapele) call goof." Why don't you and all the members of your family including your lineage from generation to generation. (emphasis ours).** By reeling out series of unprintable and unverifiable things about the person Ayo Oritsejafor instead of CAN, the contributor of Comment 7 has flouted the Maxims of manner, Approbation and Modesty. Of Modesty because presenting in that light is tantamount to saying he is more righteous than the other. Hence, he has maximized dispraise of the other and maximized praise of self by implication.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It seems that intelligent virtual discourse in Nigeria, especially when it comes to religious matters, has been replaced with name calling, vulgarity, insults, childish hyperbole and a game of vicious slander that accomplishes absolutely nothing except to cause chaos that threatens the nation's security. Examples of name calling and vulgarity in the virtual community have been examined above in an attempt to show how offensive people's choice of language use can be and the adverse effects it may have on the society.

One of the distinctive marks of the ancient Greek civilization according to a blog entitled, 'What happens to today's discourse', was its openness to reasoned discourse in the continuous search for truth symbolized by the Aeropause: a place where ideas no matter how novel or esoteric could be entertained, analysed and critiqued; whether it be from Socrates or St. Paul. This openness to discourse remains a mark of societies who pride themselves as enlightened. The virtual community should be a community of enlightened people who should be ready to contribute positively to the unity and peace of the country.

Judging from the manner in which the aggrieved parties in CAN have presented their crises to the public by unwarranted accusations and rivalry between the two predominant factions of CAN, they have opened the door for the public to follow in airing their views and comments which mostly have deviated from the real issue to name calling and vulgarity. These comments are detrimental to national peace and security and all virtual community members should be aware of this and avoid such language use that extends to name calling and vulgarity the electronic media. Reclaiming the meaning of true discourse in the Nigerian public square is a matter of urgency. The issues will not go away. Answers must be given and we cannot afford to waste our energies on irrelevant personal feuds that can be a threat to national peace and security. Being a part of an enlightened minority who shape public debate demands a sense responsibility and maturity. The anonymity of contributors which the public space discourse in the cyberspace allows, without any fear of censorship or threat of litigation, is responsible for the deleterious and vituperative contributions that throw caution, civility and politeness to the winds. The uncouth language in the comments is indicative of street and drinking joints controversies that often degenerate into brawls. The commentator's language shows a diametric oppositeness to all the Maxims of politeness principles.

Administrators of online news sites can do well to edit such outrageous and uncivil comments and spare the reading public the bad blood generated by the comments.

#### APPENDIX

1.0 ozaluoku January 24, 2013 at 1:17 am

WHICH VALUES IF I MAY ASK?...PRIVATE JETS PARADE. AM GLAD FED GOVT HAVE BANNED THEM..CATHOLIC CHURCH ISNT THE PROBLEM. ITS A FACT THAT THE ASSOCIATION IS FAST LOSING FOCUS AND MORAL TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIANITY...LETS TRY KUMUYI RATHER THAN PAY AS U GO PASTORPRENUERS

2.0 *Israel* January 24, 2013 at 2:32 pm

Why don't you and all the members of your family including your lineage from generation to generation EMBRACE POVERTY IN ALL it's ramifications by requesting God to place it heavily on you if you hate Christendom prospering legitimately, so that your generations yet unborn can remain servant to Almajiris? This is because you hate prosperity; ignorant and hypocrite of the highest order.

Other related comments of such vulgarity and abuse are:

3.0 *Desire* January 24, 2013 at 4:03 am

There is no dirty clothes anywhere. Most of these CAN people are CAN OF WORMS. They are mostly CULTS and the leadership has slaughtered its mandate in the market square of Politics.

4.0 *Abidemi* January 24, 2013 at 5:36 am

You cannot put thieves to safe-guard your properties and still expect all your properties to be intact. Am not a Catholic and neither do i need Catholic to tell me that CAN president is a political thief. One day his own karma will fall badly on him and his generations to come.

5.0 *John* January 24, 2013 at 7:31 am

Catholics are bunch of hypocrites, they should be ashamed of themselves, child molesters bishops all over the world. I dey laugh oohhhhhj.

6.0 *iiwuaba* January 24, 2013 at 7:57 am

you are an idiot for saying that, i know you must be a member of all these mushroom fraudstars called churches

7.0 *Onetosan Amorighoye* January 24, 2013 at 8:35 am

Ayo Oritsejafor is a dubious fellow. I knew him when he was a young boy in Sapele, very rascal, and he did smoke indian hemp then (what we in Warri and Sapele) call goof. This is real. I knew Ayo when his late wife was still alive. Then, he was dating one of the lady in the choir. That is the same lady Ayo Oritsejafor is married to now, after his wife's death. I knew Ayo when he called influential members of his congregation for a spiritual journey to the West, and there was a mysterious ghastly motor accident, which claimed the lives of some of the congregation in that journey – including Ziregbe the owner of TOMAB. I have seen Ayo Oritsejafor one night entering that Ogboni building at Ginuwa Road in Warri. At that time of 9.30pm, what was a so called man of God going to do in that place? Made me wonder if Ayo had joined Emmanuel Uduaghan and most of the PDP crooks into the Ogboni Confraternity. Nigerians, all that glitters is not gold! Most of the people calling themselves Pastors in Nigeria today are nothing but crooks and fraud, including Ayo Oritsejafor. Almighty God will disgrace them all, in the name of Jesus Christ.

8.0 *Elvis Taboh* January 24, 2013 at 8:50 am

Mr. Sunny Oibe or whatever your name is, you are very stupid, your so call apostolic churches are fraudsters, Ayo Oritsejafor has become a politics, he is no more CAN president, Catholic should go ahead and pull out, today Ayo Oritsejafor will be in Aso rock tomorrow he will come back, what is her doing there, is he a politician of a pastor, 419 pastors.

9.0 *Oare Ugbekpe* January 24, 2013 at 11:15 am

You have not provided proof to show he is shady. People like you are the perverts in society who cry wolf where there is none!

10.0 *Kk* January 24, 2013 at 11:45 am: U will remain a fool forever

11.0 *Awelu* January 24, 2013 at 2:24 pm

CAN IS CAN FULL OF WORMS, THAT WILL BE REJECTED BY TIN CAN ISLAND. WE NEED SOMEBODY WITH A CAN OPENER TO LIFT THE LID OF THE CAN AND WE SEE WHAT TYPE OF WORMS AND CANKER WORMS ARE IN THE CAN. THE CANSOCK MEN APPOINTED TO LOOK AFTER CAN HAVE NOW STEEL THEMSELVES AND FORM A CANNABIES PARTY TO CANNIBALISE THE CANGREGATIONS. WE NEED MEN WITH TEARGAS CANNISTER TO CANSTRATE THESE MEN WHO ARE CANAL MINDED. THE PENTECANSTERS ARE CANNING THE CRUMBS FROM THE LOOTERS

12.0 *ed* January 24, 2013 at 3:06 pm

Na your papa and your whole families and Your generation, Generation that will pull out or Resign, yeye man, shut-up if you no knwo wetin you go talk.

13.0 *genosco* January 24, 2013 at 4:49 pm

I dont even know when these Penti of people leave their PENTECOSTAL association of Nigeria to join CAN. This people work against a known man of God TB JOSHUA. I Think this Penti people are becoming a very big problem to this nation. In their Churches no standard, no formular, behave as you like provided you pay your tithe, sow seed and donate money, you can wear pant, brassiere or come to church naked, no wahala. Now they are in the leadership of can wahala again. I advised both the ANGLICAN CHURCH and METHODIST to leave CAN for this money mongers.

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**Godwin Oko Ushie** was born on April 21, 1966 in NyanyaUlim, Bekwarra, Cross River State. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Education) English, a Master of Arts (morphology) and a Doctor of Philosophy (stylistics), obtained from the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. He has been teaching English courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels such as Discourse Analysis, Textlinguistics, Stylistics, Morphology, etc at the University of Calabar for sixteen years now.

He is currently on a Sabbatical Leave at the Federal University, Lafia, Nasarawa State. He has at least thirteen (13) research articles in reputable local and international journals such as "Dialectical relexicalization in Festus Iyayi's literary idiolect: Componential analysis approach." *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, June 2011 pp.92–100; Descriptive focus as a semiotic marker in Festus Iyayi's *Violence*. *Studies in Literature and Language* Vol. 5, No. 3, 2012, pp. 36-39. "The peculiar English pronoun "I" in *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol.3, No.6, 2013 pp.71–75; "The nexus between social concerns and style: A study of selected poems in UnimnaAngrey's *Drought (Ubuang)*." in *World Journal of English Language* Vol. 3, No. 2; 2013, pp.45–51, etc.

Dr. Ushie's research interests include Stylistics, Semiotics and Applied English Linguistics. He is a member of the Reading Association of Nigeria (RAN) and Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA).



**Juliet Ude Ifeakor** is from Ogwashi-Ukwu, Delta State in Nigeria. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in English and Literature from the University of Benin, Benin City Edo State, Nigeria (2000) and a Master's Degree in English and Literary Studies, University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria (2010). Her major field of study is English language. She's enrolled for a Ph.D programme in English at the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

She currently works as an Administrative Officer in Johnchris Communications Limited in Port-Harcourt, Rivers State. She has research interest in Discourse Analysis.

# Non-standard Idioms in Cameroon English Literature and Their Impact on English Language Learning and Intelligibility

Lozzi Martial Meutem Kamtchueng

Department of Bilingual Letters, University of Maroua, Cameroon

**Abstract**—Drawing data from fifteen works of seven Cameroonian writers of English expression, this paper examines non-standard idioms in this area of English language use laying emphasis not only on the various processes via such idioms are created but also on their impact on English language learning as well as on intelligibility. The findings of the study reveal that these non-standard idioms are obtained via the translation of home languages expressions, coining and modification of Standard British English expressions. Besides, it is argued in the paper that given that in the Cameroonian educational system, English language learners are tested on the basis of native English models, these non-standard idioms can be counterproductive to the learning of English language as well as on the intelligibility of the writers with their readership. The paper intends to contribute to the ongoing debate about the problematic concerning the consumption of non-native English literary works.

**Index Terms**—non-standard idioms, language learning, intelligibility, native English model, non-native English literary works

## I. INTRODUCTION

A certain number of features called non-standard features in Cameroonian literary productions which could be counterproductive to the learning of English language by the readers of these literary productions have been explored in Ayafor (2011). They include the following: tense inconsistencies (e.g. “people said she *will* become a big woman”), dangling modifiers (e.g.: “*Being brilliant in her school* her father had worked hard on his farms), omission of coordinating conjunctions (e.g. “Sanitation was divided into two main groups: cleaning around the compounds and repairing *latrines, cleaning* the paths...”), use of infinitive instead of modal auxiliary (e.g.: “For now, she should be counted out of the selection and the first *to stand*”), unnecessary insertion of “to be” (e.g.: “It is the Lord God that made us *to be* what we are today”), incorrect past participle of verbs (e.g.: “The hospital had *ran* smoothly”), use of verb + adjective instead of verb + noun (e.g.: Children brought up in righteousness can only *breed good*”), comma splice (e.g.: “Ngwe was *restless, she* could imagine the joy and happiness...”), wrong use of apostrophe (e.g.: Now I am able to help my junior *one’s* in primary school”), problem of phrasal verbs (e.g.: “[...] she would leave the house and never *arrive* the center”), wrong use of preposition (e.g. “[...] she dreamt that she was admitted *in* a university”), vocative not separated (e.g.: “That is a very progressive way of looking *at life my daughter*”), run-on sentence (e.g.: “But there is something you must *realize a woman* without man is like a house without a roof or a tree without branches”), just to name these few. (Ayafor, 2011, pp. 53-60).

This study is a follow-up of the one carried out by Ayafor (2011) in the sense that it still dwells on non-standard features in Anglophone Cameroonian literary works. However it differs from Ayafor (2011) in the sense that it focuses on idiomatic expressions, an area where these non-standard features abound and which has not been treated in the previous study. It is posited in this study that readers of novels practice consciously or unconsciously what is known as extensive reading and through the reading of these novels, they learn not only from the issues handled therein (corruption, nepotism, apartheid, moral depravity, etc.) but also the linguistic constructions (syntactic, grammatical, lexico-semantic) used by the authors. This concurs Scrivener (2005, p. 188) when he says:

*There is a great deal of evidence that extensive reading has a powerful impact on language learning. The more someone reads, the more they pick up items of vocabulary and grammar from the texts, often without realizing it, and this widening knowledge seems to increase their overall linguistic confidence, which then influences and improves their skills in other language areas*

Given that these Cameroonian writers are educated speakers of English who are in many cases English language teachers and whose novels are used in Cameroonian secondary and high schools, the tendency for the readers is to consider the linguistic constructions used by these writers as models to be emulated both in formal and non-formal situations. A scrutiny of the linguistic texture of many Cameroonian literary productions reveals that their writings embody a lot of non-standard idiomatic expressions. The questions to be answered in the study are the following: What are the various processes via which these non-standard idioms are created? Given that in the Cameroonian context, learners of English language are assessed on Standard British English, can the exposure of learners to these non-

standard idioms be counterproductive to their learning of English? Can the exposure of English language learners to these expressions hamper the intelligibility of the writer with his readership? If that is the case, what measures should be taken by writers and English language teachers in order to cope with this situation?

## II. METHODOLOGY

The data for the study was gathered after a complete reading of the novels. While reading the novels, attention was paid to the expressions which either sound local, or modified by language users. The expressions were identified and gathered. Each expression was scrutinized in order to find out the process through which it has been created (translated, coined or modified). The following dictionaries were used in order to check whether or not the expressions identified are attested either in Standard British English or in Standard Cameroon English.

- 1) *ADOCEU: A Dictionary of Cameroon English Usage*, 2007.
- 2) *CALD: Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2005.
- 3) *CEED: Chambers Encyclopedic English Dictionary*, 1994.
- 4) *CALDT: Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus*, 2011.
- 5) *HS: Harrap's Shorter*, 2000.

As regards translated expressions, it was deemed necessary to get their donor home language expressions not only from the writers who has used the expression but also from the natives who belong to the same home language community with the writers so as to cross-check the uniformity of the donor language expressions. The expressions were classified under the following headings: idioms obtained from the translation home language expressions, coined expressions and the expressions obtained from the modification of Standard British English expressions. As concerns the choice of the literary works, it was judged impartial to include only the novels written both by male and female English-speaking Cameroonians of the two English-speaking regions of the country (Northwest and Southwest) of various linguistic and educational backgrounds. This implies that no literary work written by French-speaking Cameroonians and translated into English was included among the novels from which data was drawn. The novels from which the data was drawn are identified as follows: *SNS: Son of the Native Soil* (Ambanasom, 1999), *FID: Flowers in the Desert* (Afuh, 2005), *TDH: The Deadly Honey* (Kongnyuy, 2002), *Nyuysham* (Tardzenyuy, 2002), *TWM: The Widow's Might* (Nkemngong Nkengasong, 2006), *NFM: A Nose for Money* (Nyamnjoh, 2006), *NWTD: No Way to Die* (Asong, 1991), *ALOTD: A Legend of the Dead* (Asong, 1994a), *SIH: A Stranger in his Homeland* (Asong, 1994 b), *COT: The Crown of Thorns* (Asong, 1995), *SC: Salvation Colony* (Asong, 1996 a), *TAF: The Akroma File* (Asong, 1996 b), *Chopchair* (Asong, 1998), *COB: The Craps of Bangui* (Asong, 2005) and *DFN: Doctor Frederick Ngenito* (Asong, 2006). For the sake of clarity, the expressions will be presented in tables. The method of data presentation is descriptive and/or comparative. In other words, the expressions are first presented and clues about their meaning(s), donor language expressions (where applicable), their donor languages (where applicable) as well as the source of the expressions (i.e. the novel from which the expressions are drawn) are provided. As regards modified idioms, their Standard British English expressions are compared with the modified expressions so as to identify the elements which have either been added, substituted or deleted in the modified expressions. Also, the processes which govern the modification are provided (addition, substitution, deletion, etc.).

## III. DEFINITIONS OF IDIOMS AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Idioms are “fixed phrases, consisting of more than one word, with meanings that cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words” (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988, p. 236). An idiom is “a phrase which has a distinct meaning [...] which cannot be explained from the separate meanings of the different words in the phrase” (Platt et al, 1984, p. 107). Idiomatic expressions can be “a catch phrase for opaque idioms, well-worn clichés, dead metaphors, proverbial sayings, [...]” (Kouega, 2000, p. 231). In effect, what is common to idiomatic expressions is that their meanings “cannot be accounted for as a compositional function of the meanings their parts have when they are not parts of the sequences” (Cruse, 1986: 37). As a whole, an idiom “is a group of words whose meaning cannot be explained in terms of the habitual meanings of the words that make up the piece of language (Todd, 1987, p. 87). He goes further to categorize idioms as follows: **alternative comparisons** (e.g.: dead as a dodo, good as gold), **noun phrases** (e.g.: a blind alley: route that leads nowhere, a red letter day: a day that will never be forgotten), **prepositional phrases** (e.g.: by hook or by crook: by whatever methods prove necessary), **verb + noun** (e.g.: kick the bucket: die), **verb + prepositional phrase** (e.g.: be in the doghouse: be in disgrace) and **verb + adverb** e.g.: (put down: kill) (Todd, 1987, pp. 86-87).

Idioms are lexico-semantic constructions which are very prolific in non-native English contexts. They are attested in many non-native varieties of English. Platt et al (1984, pp. 107-110) provides some examples of idioms in Papa New Guinean English (e.g., to be two-minded: to be in two minds, to be open-minded; to pass the hard times: to have a hard time, to pass a hard time, etc.), in Sri Lankan English (to put a clout: to give someone a clout; to put a telephone call: to make a telephone call; to put a feed: to have a good meal, etc.) in Singaporean and Malaysian English (to shake legs: to be idle), in Nigerian English (to declare surplus: to host a party), in East African English (to be on the tarmac: to be in the process of finding a new job). Cameroon English is also rich in terms of idiomatic usage as the following examples

listed in Kouega (2000, pp. 233-235) indicate: sons and daughters / all elements of (of a tribe): member of a tribe; come good: greeting addressed to a guest; catch you: leave taking utterance equivalent to “good bye”; I’m coming: I am going out now; excuse me: utterance made by an affected person in response to the utterance “sorry”; to throw water: to offer drinks; to be on seat: to be present in one’s office; to chase a file: to speed up the processing of one’s document; to put to bed: to have a baby; to give someone a snake beating: to beat somebody to. The sources of idiomatic variations in non-native contexts are many. In Nigerian English for instance, Adegbija (2003, pp. 48-49) has identified six sources, namely analogical creation (e.g. public dog), native source translation equivalents (e.g. to wet the ground), personality related (e.g. sidon look attitude), media instigated source (e.g. hidden agenda), slang origin (e.g. to flashy).

#### IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The write-up on many Cameroon English literary works embodies a lot of non-standard idiomatic expressions. A scrutiny of these expressions reveals that they are created via several processes. Three major processes which govern the creation of these idioms have been identified and the expressions grouped as follows: idioms obtained via the translation of home language expressions, coined idioms and the idioms obtained via the modification of Standard British English expressions. As concerns the idioms obtained via the modification of Standard British expressions, it has been observed that the modification are obtained via substitution, addition and deletion. Also, it is worth indicating that more than one process is also involved in the creation these modified idioms (e.g. substitution and addition, addition and deletion, just to name these few). For the purpose of clarity, these expressions will be presented in tables. Table 1 includes the expressions which are obtained via the translation of home language expressions, Table 2 comprises the expressions which are locally coined while Table 3 is the presentation of the expressions which are obtained via the modification of Standard British English expressions.

TABLE 1:  
IDIOMS OBTAINED FROM THE TRANSLATION OF HOME LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS

N°	Idioms	Donor language expressions	Meanings	Donor languages	Sources
1	To vomit one’s heart to somebody	Lə (inf. marker) trɔ̃h (throw)nti (heart) ghi (poss. Marker) cəm(all) abɔ̃ (onto) ɲwɔ̃ (somebody)	to tell somebody all what one knows about an affair	Nweh <sup>1</sup>	TAF, p. 121
2	To spit in somebody’s face	Lə (inf. marker) trɔ̃h (throw) bətei (spit) asə (face) ɲwɔ̃ (somebody)	to disgrace somebody	Nweh	COT, 32
3	To have heads	lə (inf. Marker) bɔ̃ɲ (have) atú (head)	to be reasonable	Nweh	COT, p. 47
4	To throw excrement into the face of something /somebody	lə (inf.marker) mɛ’ (throw) mbit (excrement) asə (face) ɲwɔ̃ (somebody)	to disgrace somebody	Nweh	ALOTD p. 45
5	To have eyes and ears	lə (inf.marker) ɲa’tə (open) m í(eyes) ma (and) betunji (ears) mɔ̃ (somebody)	to be alert, vigilant, reasonable	Nweh	COT, p. 134
6	To grind pepper on somebody’s head	ɲwɔ̃ (grind) só(pepper) t ó(head) wa (somebody)	To beat somebody	Ngie <sup>2</sup>	SNS, p. 67
7	To open one’s mouth and talk	lə (inf.marker) co’ (open) neù (mouth) ɲsonj(talk) ei (him/her)	to say nonsensical things	Nweh	ALOTD, p. 202
8	To drill books into a child’s head	lə (inf.marker) yihi (put) akatei (books) at ú (head) ɲwa (somebody)	To impart knowledge to a child	Nweh	DFN, p. 60
9	To be sick in one’s Head	ləghua (illness) atú(head)	not being reasonable	Nweh	DFN, p. 93
10	To rub somebody with excrement	Lə (inf.marker)lɔ̃ (take) mbit (excrement) njɔ̃ (rub) ɲwɔ̃ (somebody)	to disgrace, disturb somebody	Nweh	SIH, p. 23
11	To wash the genitals of the chief	lə (inf.marker) soh (wash) acena (sex/buttocks) fua (chief)	to have sexual intercourse with the chief	Nweh	COT, p. 64
12	To remove the chair from under somebody	lə (inf.marker) cɔ̃’ (remove) alanɲa (chair) acèn (sex/buttocks) ɲwɔ̃ (somebody)	to snatch the throne	Nweh	COT, p. 98
13	To have four eyes	ke (to have) si (eyes) kwe (four)	to be a member of an “evil society”	Lamnso <sup>3</sup> and other Grassfield languages	TDH, p.138
14	To be four-eyed	ke (to have) si (eyes) kwe (four)	to be a member of an “evil society”	Lamnso and other Grassfield <sup>4</sup> languages	TDH, p. 60

TABLE 1:  
IDIOMS OBTAINED FROM THE TRANSLATION HOME LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS (CONTINUATION)

N°	idioms	Donour language expressions	Meanings	Donour languages	Sources
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15	To see one's flower	nə yɪ (inf. Marker) fə la wə (flower) tsjə (personal pronoun)	to menstruate	Ghomala <sup>7</sup> 5 and other Grassfield languages	COT, p. 145
16	To know a lot of books	Lə b ó (inf. marker + very) (know) akatei (books) nzə`	to be highly educated	Nweh and other Grassfield languages	COT, p. 64
17	To have bad mouth	Lə (inf.marker) bɪ`ɪ (have) (mouth) tɪbɪ`ɪ (bad) ncù	to say unpleasant things about people	Nweh, Grassfield languages	SC, p. 89
18	To cry for somebody	Lə (inf. marker) lɛ (cry) (somebody) ɲwɪ	to organize a ceremony in memory of a dead person	Nweh, Grassfield languages	COT, p. 82
19	To give people one mouth	ina' (to give) co (mouth) fɛ (one)	to make them unanimous, united, for a common cause	Ngie	SNS, p. 177
20	Someone with two hearts	wa (man) ne (with) fiɲi (heart) bje' (two)	someone who is not unanimous with other people of the group, a traitor	Ngie	SNS, p. 177
21	To buy one's head	Lə (inf. marker) ʒwə (buy) tũ (head)	to bribe or give money to somebody in order to avoid or prevent a situation	Nweh, other Grassfield languages	TAF, p. 132
22	To expose one's anus in the market	Lə (inf. marker) cu (show) (sex/buttocks) ɲwɪ (somebody) ac əna (market) asã	to expose one's private problems, life; not to take precautions	Nweh	Chopch air, p.106
23	To eat pepper from somebody's hands	Ikod (inf. marker + eat) abuge (hand) úso (pepper)	to be beaten severely by somebody	Ngie	SNS, p. 19
24	To look at water on cocoyam leaves	in ê (inf. marker + look) (leaves) nàɲ (cocoyam) bɪɪɲ	to have hopes which will not be fulfilled	Ngie	SNS, p.48
25	To receive one's pay in a hat	Inumo (inf. marker + take) (money) akɛ (in) daɲ (hat) ɲkap	to have a good salary	Ngie	SNS, p. 140
26	To sit on the stool	Lə (inf.marker) ɲaɲ (sit) (chair) lə fuɪ (chief) alaɲa	to be crowned as the chief	Nweh, Grassfield languages	COT, p. 60
27	To sleep a woman	lə (inf.marker) noɲ (sleep) mə ɲwi (woman)	to have sex with a woman	Nweh, Grassfield languages	SIH, p. 279

TABLE 2:  
COINED IDIOMS

N°	Coined expressions	Meanings	Sources
28	To have the mouth and ear of somebody	to be the emissary or representative of somebody	COT, p. 175
29	To run before one can walk	not to do things with a lot of anticipations, to be very anxious	NFM, p. 82
30	To clean somebody's eyes	to flatter somebody	ALOTD, p.304
31	To oil somebody's hands	to bribe somebody	ALOTD, p.304
32	To rub somebody's mouth	to bribe somebody	SNS, p.143
33	To be born at the right moment	to be lucky, fortunate	TDH, p.143
34	To know each other as man and woman	To have got the opportunity to see each other's nakedness or nudity	Nyusham, p. 53
35	To burn one's (woman) womb	to become sterile	FID, p. 66
36	To post a girl to somebody (man)	to send her to live with a man as his wife without his approval	NWTD, p.214
37	To put wings on something	to make it go fast	NWTD, p.95
38	To speak with so much vinegar on one's tongue	to speak violently	ALOTD, p.150
39	To wash the male side of one's womb	to give birth to male babies	COT, p.206
40	To be the only cock to crow	to be the only person to give orders, the only person whose voice can be heard	TAF, p.84
41	To be somebody's sperm	to be somebody's offspring	COB, p.145
42	To be on somebody's neck	to request something from somebody persistently	TWM, p. 60
43	To be somebody's first piss	to be somebody's first child	DFN, p.131
44	To sing a different song	to say different things	DFN, p. 132
45	To walk on one's head	to be proud	SIH, p.70
46	To speak grammar	to speak an educated variety of English	SIH, p.92
47	To dig a woman	to have sex with a woman	SIH, p.63
48	To eat plantains every day	to have sex with the same partner every day	NFM, p. 20
49	To have traffic jam in one's head	to be thoughtful	FID, p. 132
50	To drag the crown into the gutters	to alter the prestige of the crown	ALOTD, p. 222

TABLE 3:  
IDIOMS OBTAINED FROM THE MODIFICATION OF BRITISH ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS

N°	Modified expressions	Donour expressions	Lexes/morphemes affected	Processes involved	Sources
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51	To bite the <i>finger</i> that fed somebody	to bite the <i>hand</i> that fed somebody	finger < hand	substitution	SNS, p. 69
52	Without <i>mixing</i> words	without <i>mincing</i> words	mincing < mixing	substitution	NWTD, p. 186
53	To put a <i>full stop</i> to something	to put an <i>end</i> to /a <i>stop</i> to something	full stop < end/stop	substitution	NWTD, p. 216
54	To put a <i>final full stop</i> to something	to put an <i>end</i> to /a <i>stop</i> to something	final full stop < end/stop	substitution	NWTD, p. 218
55	To fall cats and <i>hens</i>	to rain cats and <i>dogs</i>	hens < dogs	substitution	ALOTD, p.256
56	To cut one's <i>goat</i> according to one's size	to cut one's <i>coat</i> according to one's size	goat < coat	substitution	COB, 131
57	As sure as <i>morning follows night</i>	as sure as <i>hell</i> / as sure as <i>eggs is eggs</i>	morning follows night < hell / egg is eggs	substitution	DFN, p. 43
58	As you make <i>ya</i> bed, so shall you <i>die</i> on it	as you make your bed, so shall you <i>lie</i> on it	ya < your / die < lie	substitution	SIH, p.215
59	to sing someone's <i>song</i>	to sing someone's <i>praises</i>	song < praises	substitution	FID, p. 29
60	to leave somebody <i>to himself</i>	to leave somebody <i>alone</i>	himself < alone	substitution	COT, p. 64
61	To put one's shoulder to the <i>plough</i>	to put one's shoulder to the <i>wheel</i> or to put one's hand to the plough	either shoulder < hand or plough < wheel	substitution	COT, p. 85
62	To be on night	to be on night <i>call</i>	"call" is deleted in the modified expression	deletion	SIH, p.85
63	To make a <i>big</i> name for oneself	to make a name for oneself	"big" is inserted in the modified expression	addition	NWTD, p. 47
64	To take the law in one's own <i>wicket</i> hand	to take the law into one's own hand	"wicket" is inserted in the modified expression	addition	ALOTD, p. 39
65	To poke one's <i>noxious</i> nose into something	to poke one's nose into something	"noxious" is inserted in the modified expression	addition	Nyusham, p. 133
66	Where there is a will, there is always a way	where there is a will, there is a way	"always" is inserted in the modified English proverb	addition	COT, p. 182

67	To shout <i>over</i> somebody's <i>head</i>	to shout <i>at</i> somebody	"at" is replaced with "over" and "head" is inserted in the modified expression	substitution, addition	NWTD, p. 46
68	To put one's <i>feet</i> into hot water	to be in hot water or to get into hot water	"to be" or "to get" is (are) replaced with "to put" and "one's feet" is inserted in the modified expression	substitution, addition	Chopchair, p.55
69	To have one's <i>feet</i> in water	to be in <i>hot</i> water	"to be" is replaced with "to have", "one's feet" is inserted into the modified expression and "hot" is deleted in the resulting expression	substitution, addition, deletion	COT, p.121
70	To have a <i>good</i> name	to make a name	"make" is replaced with "have" and "good" is inserted in the expression	substitution, addition	NFM, p. 82
71	To be <i>at</i> somebody's <i>very</i> nose	to be (right) <i>under</i> somebody's nose	"under" is replaced with "at" and "very" is inserted in the modified expression	substitution, addition	SNS, p.148
72	one good turn <i>always</i> deserves another	one good turn deserves another	"always" is inserted in the expression	addition	Nyusham, p. 153

It is important to note that what is common with the expressions presented in Tables 1 and 2 is that they are drawn in the Cameroonian sociocultural context. As stated earlier, they are either obtained via the translation of home language expressions (n=27) or via coining (n=23). The reasons which might have motivated this lexical creativity can be linked to the need-filling motive (Hockett, 1958, p. 405) and the relexification of home languages or simply in the insufficient exposure of speakers to exonormative models. What is equally worth noting about these expressions is that almost all of them have not yet gained national currency. In effect, they are not yet integrated the dictionary of Cameroon English usage (Cf. Kouega's (2007) *A Dictionary of Cameroon English Usage*). With regard to modified idioms (n=22), it can be observed from Table 3 that modification can be obtained via substitution (n=11) (e.g. to bite the *finger* that fed somebody < to bite the *hand* that fed somebody, without *mixing* words < without *mincing* words), addition (n=5) (e.g. to make a *big* name for oneself < to make a name for oneself, to take the law in one's own *wicket* hand < to take the law into one's own hand), deletion (n=1) (e.g. to be on night < to be on night *call*), substitution and addition (n=4) (e.g. to shout *over* somebody's *head* < to shout *at* somebody) and finally substitution, addition and deletion (n=1) (e.g. to have one's *feet* in water < to *be* in *hot* water). The modification of these idioms can be linked to the insufficient exposure of speakers to English exonormative models (Kachru, 1986:21). As concerns the domains under which these expressions fall, it can be said that they can be classified under the following lexical registers: sex, love and marriage; effrontery,

cheek and unpleasant situations; appearance and description; administration, education and communication; money, finance and bribery as well as customs, traditions and magic.

At the present state of research these expressions can only be considered as non-standard features given that they are neither attested in Standard British English nor in the dictionary of Cameroon English usage. However, as usage constantly evolves, it is possible that these expressions gain national currency and gradually find their way in Standard Cameroon English usage.

## V. DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

As mentioned earlier, the exposure of readers to these non-standard idioms can constitute a hindrance to their learning of English language. These idioms are either indigenized lexico-semantic constructions (idioms in Tables 1 and 2) which are either proper to the home language communities of the authors who use them or which have not yet gained national currency. The idioms presented in Table 3 (i.e. modified idioms) can simply be considered as errors in English language use which are due to the fact that the speakers are not sufficiently exposed to the native English norms. It is worth pointing out that as regards the use of Standard British English idioms in non-native contexts, language users, due to their insufficient exposure the native norms modify native English idioms through several means. The study carried out by Ishaq Akbarian (2003, p. 49) on the problems that Iranian learners of English as a foreign language face in the learning of English idioms is instructive in this respect. The researcher has grouped the problems faced by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language in the use of native English idioms under semantics, structural features (word order, syntactic, grammatical errors) and lexical errors (omission, addition and substitution of lexemes) (Ishaq Akbarian (2003, pp. 55-56) and drawing from the works of Henzl (1973) and Kellerman (1977) he has attributed these errors to the unpredictability of the figurative meaning of idioms, the use on non-interactive situations in the teaching of idioms to learners, the insufficient teaching of English idioms in non-native contexts, the variance in formality, colloquialisms, situational appropriateness of English idioms (Ishaq Akbarian, 2003, pp. 52-53).

It is important to indicate that as concerns the official languages to be taught in Cameroon, although the constitutions of 1972 and 1996 simply talk of English and French as being the official languages of Cameroon, there is, however, a common belief and practice among language teachers, planners, policy makers and students of English that the standard to be pursued is the Standard British standard because of the country's colonial and historical past (Ubanako, 2011, p. 230). Therefore, no room is given to indigenized constructions in formal situations, even Standard Cameroon English which is a documented variety of Cameroon English is not yet accepted by English language teachers in formal situations. This concurs Simo Bobda (2002, p. vi) when he points out that "while acknowledging the legitimate emergence of an autonomous variety of English in Cameroon, I believe that we are still, in many ways, dependent upon British and American norms. Our educational and professional successes are still determined by these norms". On the basis of the above clues, it is obvious that these non-standard idioms are considered as instances of wrong English usage by the English language teachers. Therefore, when they are spotted out in students scripts, English language teachers simply cancel them since they are instances of wrong usage. Students, to their greater dismay, are confused because these expressions which they use and for which they are penalised in their written examinations are used in the novels which they are constantly exposed to and these literary works are written by people who are either English language teachers or English-speaking Cameroonians who are universities postgraduates. For instance, Linus Asong, the author of *The Crown of Thorns*, Shadrack Ambanasom, the author of *Son of the Native Soil*, Nkemgong Nkengasong, author of *The Widow's Might*, Francis Nyamnjoh, the author of *A Nose for Money*, author of *The Deadly Honey*, Margaret Afuh, the authoress of *Flowers in the Desert*, just to name these, few are postgraduates. To be more precise, the first four authors are Doctorate Degree holders and University Professors. The novels of the first two authors are being used in the Cameroonian Secondary and High school of the Anglophone sub-system of education. The first three authors have taught English language in Cameroonian secondary schools for many years before starting teaching literature at the tertiary level of education (i.e. universities). The last novelist (i.e. Margaret Afuh) is an English language teacher. So, when Cameroonian English language learners read their works, they consider their English language use as the models to be emulated. They are confused when their English language teachers consider some of the idioms that they use and which are used in the novels of these writers as instances of errors. Why should English language learners be exposed to these non-standard idioms if these expressions are considered by English language teachers as errors in language use? In addition to the impact on English language learning, it can be asserted that these non-standard idioms can be the source of much unintelligibility between the writers and their readership. In effect, these expressions have not yet gained national currency in Cameroon. They can easily be understood by readers who belong to the same language community with the authors. This is true of the expressions which are translated from the novelists' home languages and those which are coined. This therefore implies that even Cameroonians who do not belong to the same home language community will find it difficult to understand the meaning of these expressions. Consequently, the message conveyed by the authors can easily be obstructed by these expressions. What can therefore be done in order to cope with this situation?

Given that the Cameroonian educational system still relies on native English norms as regards the teaching of English language, in order to draw students attention on them (especially idioms translated from home languages and coined ones), writers should either provide in their novels footnotes or a glossary which explain the meanings of these non-

standard expressions and they should indicate that the expressions are not native English expressions. Also, language specialists and educational authorities should design a dictionary of Cameroon English literary usage so as to put at the disposal of students a document which contains and explains the accepted Cameroon literary English lexis and expressions. By so doing, students will not be penalised any more for having used in their write-ups expressions which are used by Cameroonian writers in their literary works.

As regards modified idioms, it is important to indicate that these modifications more often than not are done unconsciously by the writers. They are therefore recommended to have their novels edited by professional editors before they publish them. In the course of editing them, the editors will spot out these modified idioms and will provide the Standard British equivalents. Given that some of these novels feature in the official list of novels to be used in Cameroonian secondary and high schools, while reading them in class with students, teachers should spot out the expressions and draw students' attention on the fact that these idioms are non-standard expressions and should therefore not be used in formal contexts (during official exams, test of English language proficiency (e.g.: TOEFL), formal letters, recruitment tests, just to name these few). Also, syllabus designers should make sufficient provision for the teaching of Standard British English idioms in the English language syllabus for secondary and high schools. This will urge teachers to prepare lessons on idiomatic expressions and design adequate materials for their teachings. This will facilitate the exposure of English language learners to Standard British English expressions.

## VI. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing study, it can be retained that various non-standard idioms abound in the write-up of Cameroonian writers of English expressions. Besides, it is found that several processes are put at work in the creation of these idioms. While some are obtained via the translation of home languages expressions, others are obtained via coinages and a sizeable proportion of them are obtained via the modification of Standard British English expressions. This lexico-semantic creativity has been attributed to factors such as the need-filling motive, the relexification of home languages and the insufficient exposure of speakers to exo-normative norms. Moreover, it has been demonstrated in the study that taking into consideration the fact that the Cameroonian educational system still depends on native norms, the exposure of English language learners to these non-standard expressions cannot only be counterproductive to their learning of English language but can also go a long way to hamper intelligibility between the writers and its readership. It is suggested in the study that writers should provide either footnotes or a glossary which explain non-standard expressions that they use in their literary works and draw readers' attention on the fact that they are non-standard English expressions. Also, they should have their works edited by professional editors before they have them published. English language teachers should attach a lot of importance to the teaching of Standard British idioms in their vocabulary lessons. This will make learners familiar with Standard British English expressions. Furthermore language researchers and educational authorities should work out a glossary or a dictionary of Cameroon literary English which will provide the entries of lexis and expressions accepted in Cameroon literary English so as to provide learners with a list of accepted lexis and idioms that they can use in their English language and literature tests.

### Notes:

- 1-The Nweh language is a Bantu language spoken in the Southwest region of Cameroon.
- 2-The Ngie language is a Bantu language spoken in the Northwest region of Cameroon.
- 3-Lamnso' is a Bantu language spoken in the Northwest region of Cameroon
- 4-In Cameroon, Grassfield languages are the languages spoken in the West and North-west regions of Cameroon
- 5- Ghomala' is a Bantu language spoken in the West region of Cameroon

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**Lozzi Martial Meutem Kamtchueng** was born in 1983 in Bafoussam, Cameroon. He is a holder of two diplomas in English and French language teaching (DIPESI, 2004 and DIPES II, 2006) from the Higher Teachers' Training colleges of the University of Yaounde I, Cameroon as well as a BA (Bilingual Letters-English and French), a Maitrise (English Language Studies, 2006), a DEA/Master's Degree (English Language Studies, 2008) and a PhD (English Language Studies, 2013). He is interested in English language use in non-native contexts, language teaching and contrastive studies. Presently, he is a senior Lecturer in English Linguistics in the Department of Bilingual Letters of the University of Maroua, Cameroon.

# Teachers' Perspectives on Post Observation Conferences: A Study at a Saudi Arabian University

Adil Abdul Rehman  
King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Abdullah Al-Bargi  
King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—This article explores the perceptions of teachers regarding post observation conferences in a preparatory year English language program in a university in Saudi Arabia. Semi-standardized interviews were used to gather qualitative data from ten teachers. Five themes emerged from the interview data after qualitative analysis: (1) Concerns about the means-oriented view of some observers (2) Blurring of lines between developmental supervision and evaluation (3) Post observation conference as a formality (4) Concerns about the difference of opinion between teachers and observers (5) Concerns about supervisors' credentials, training and experience in supervision. These themes are discussed in detail with reference to current literature on supervision.

**Index Terms**—post-observation conferences, feedback sessions, teacher development, resistance, supervision

Many teachers view classroom visits from supervisors with dread because a supervisor usually has to perform unpleasant duties such as providing negative feedback (Bailey, 2006, pp. 5-6). Researchers in different contexts have commented on this (Aubusson, Steele, Dinham, & Brady, 2007; Borich, 1994; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Kilbourn, Keating, Murray, & Ross, 2005). Blumberg (1980, p. 5) called the ongoing supervisory relation a 'private cold war' (cited in Bailey, 2006).

Just as the classroom observer has expectations about how the post observation conference might proceed, teachers also arrive for the post observation conference with specific beliefs and expectations which are peculiar to them, and it is according to these that they react during the post observation conference. The importance of understanding the beliefs and expectations of teachers regarding the post observation conference could not be overstated because any modifications in the post observation conference by trainer/observer without bringing into consideration the beliefs and expectations of the teachers would be like taking action without evidence.

In the following pages, I will state the problem and review the literature. After that, I will outline the methodology of the study by discussing issues related to sampling, data collection and data analysis. This will be followed by the discussion section in which I will discuss the five themes that emerged from the data. After that is the conclusion, in which I will summarize the five themes and propose concrete suggestions on how to make changes in the supervision cycle to address teachers' concerns about post observation conferences.

## I. RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the beliefs and expectations of teachers of a preparatory year program in Saudi Arabia about the post-observation conference?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The subject of the current study is relatively under-researched (Copland, 2012). From the time when Goldhammer (1969) and Cogan's (1973) seminal works made 'clinical supervision' (of which post observation conferences are an integral part) an intellectual tradition (Garman, 1990), different aspects of teacher supervision have been looked at closely. Some researchers directed their focus on post observation conferences and different elements that affect the dynamics of supervisor/teacher relationship during post observation conferences. Looking closely at these elements allows us to develop an understanding of the beliefs and expectations of teachers regarding post observation conferences and their effect on professional development. The current study aims to look at dyadic post observation conferences (one trainer with one trainee) in an in-service context. Therefore, different research studies will have varying degrees of relevance for the current study, depending on the transferability of phenomena under investigation and the contexts and settings in which they were conducted, with some studies looking at conferences that were not dyadic or in-service, such as pre-service conferences, multi-party conferences and conferences during intensive TESOL certificate courses (Brandt, 2008; Copland, 2010, 2012). It must be noted that I did not find any published material on

teachers' perspectives about post observation conferences in a Saudi Arabian context and I will try to review studies that were conducted in different contexts that are relevant to the topic of the current study.

Chamberlin (2000) investigated the effect of supervisors' non-verbal behavior and communication style during post observation conferences on teachers' perception of trust. Trust leads to self-disclosure on the part of the teacher, which in turn leads to discussion and reflection. Therefore, if teachers are to discuss their teaching practices, they should be able to "trust supervisors enough to disclose opinions without thinking that their comments will be used against them in the future." (ibid.: p.658). Trust is not the only element connected with self-disclosure. Another element is that of teacher control of the conference. Supervisors' dominance of the post observation conferences could limit the opportunities of teachers to introduce topics of their concern, which could severely limit teacher reflection (Waite, 1992).

While teachers might not be aware of this consciously in all cases, there are patterns of supervisory behavior which help them decide how actively they should participate in post observation conferences. According to A. Blumberg and Jonas (1987), in institutions where teachers do not have the authority to prevent supervisors from observing their classes, they can still limit the supervisor's access to their 'teacherhood' by creating a façade of interest for the sake of civility and go through the motions of the post observation conference without the slightest intention of acting on any of the suggestions (pp.59-60). Teachers interviewed by Blumberg and Jonas (ibid.:p.61) spoke of supervisory behaviors/qualities that made the supervisory experience highly productive for them by persuading them to grant the supervisor access to their 'teacherhood', i.e., discussing their teaching philosophies and practices openly and honestly. Forty one descriptors were grouped under eleven themes and three categories. One of the categories was the supervisor's own competence as an educator. This appears to be logical, considering the fact that the assumption behind the concept of post observation conferences is for supervisors to help teachers bring some kind of improvement (Bailey, 2006, p. 141). Nevertheless, teachers expect to be treated with respect, even if the trainer has to provide negative feedback. Trainers are not unaware of this; according to the results of a study conducted by Wajnryb (as cited in Bailey, 2006), supervisors were concerned about the impact of their words on teachers' face and morale and mitigated their discourse to avoid committing face-threatening acts. Furthermore, teachers prefer informational language as opposed to controlling and directive language when recommendations for changes are made (E. Pajak & Glickman, 1989).

Zeichner and Tabachnick (as cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1985) discuss the contrast between the formally stated procedures and goals of an institution to the reality on the ground:

...teacher educators should not take it for granted that, because a practice or procedure is described in a particular way by program planners, its implementation takes the form and has the social meaning that its originators intended...the essential characteristics of teacher education programs are not to be found in public statements of intention, but through examinations of the experiences themselves. (p. 156)

Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) discuss this phenomenon in their qualitative study. Participants spoke at length about how their beliefs and perceptions of trainer-trainee interaction were affected by the seemingly irrational forms supervision had come to assume in their context, which certainly could not have been intended or envisaged by those who designed the program. Some of the quotes from the participants discuss quite candidly haunting realities that could resonate with teachers in different contexts. For some of the participants, supervision was a 'dog and pony show' (p.77), with the teachers required to produce two performances a year, one in spring and one in fall. Trying to deliver a real lesson during the observation was risky; it was far safer to jam all the required skills that were part of the checklist used as an observation instrument to demonstrate 'good' teaching. One teacher wrote how he received a very high score by employing this strategy, despite the fact that when he returned to the topics taught during the observation afterwards, students had not developed competence in the content. Some supervisors used evaluation visits as weapons to keep teachers humble and punish perceived disloyalty. These and other elements led the teachers to view some aspects of supervision to have limited value. Perhaps in all of these points, we have the answer to the question posed by Kilbourn et al. (2005) when they said:

Veteran teachers typically support the idea of feedback but seldom welcome the actual practice of it... Still, conventional wisdom and casual observation suggest that both novices and veterans could sometimes benefit from high-quality, constructive feedback. Why are teachers nervous about feedback while extolling its virtues ... for someone else? (pp. 298-299)

When the lines between developmental supervision and evaluation become blurred, it becomes hard to convince teachers of the developmental benefits of supervisory visits and trainer-trainee interaction. In Zepeda and Ponticell's study, the perspectives of teachers indicated that for them, supervision was synonymous with traditional teacher evaluation (p.84). This leads the teachers to approach supervisory conferences with a set mind, leaving little room for professional development. The field of supervision attempts to differentiate between developmental supervision and evaluation, but in the words of Hazi (as cited in Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998, p. 85), 'no amount of linguistic maneuvering will reconcile the two for teachers' as long as the reality on the ground does not change. Smyth (1988) touches on the topic by saying that the concept of clinical supervision, as conceived by Goldhammer and Cogan, has become 'twisted and tarnished' and that in practice, it has 'taken on many of the features of a sinister and sophisticated form of teacher surveillance and inspection.' (p. 136)

Cogan (1972) does not view the supervisory conference as either the culmination of supervision nor as the most important part of a clinical supervision program (as cited in Garman, 1990, p. 210). It is part of a cycle and is related to what happens before and after it. Garman further states her belief that the conference is 'vastly overrated' as an educative event in the literature on supervision. She does not advocate eliminating supervisory conferences, but merely states that too much educative stock is put in the conference because 'We assume that the conference is the place where we are going to help the teacher do different things in the classroom.' (ibid)

The approach where supervisors assume a directive stance during post observation conferences and try to evaluate and prescribe teaching has a lot in common with 'the factory-derived notions of scientific management from whence they emanate.' (Smyth, 1988, p. 137). To illustrate his point, Smyth produces a rather provocative quote from Frederick Taylor, who is credited with the development of "scientific management" as an idea:

One of the first requirements for a man who is fit to handle pig iron is that he shall be so stupid and so phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles the ox than any other type...He must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself. (ibid)

Smyth states that while people 'may not openly espouse such a degrading point of view, they are through their actions implicitly endorsing a way of working that is deeply embedded in Taylor's ideology.' (ibid). The abuse of post observation conferences by treating teachers like passive recipients of advice from an 'expert' supervisor might also foster a feeling of mistrust and dissatisfaction among teachers. It is not the accountability or advice that teachers resent or fear. 'They resent being an object rather than a partner in the process.' (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998, p. 77)

The current study aims to look at the effect of the 'other' member of the dyadic post observation conference on the proceedings of trainer trainee interaction: the teacher. This is quite distinct from the goals of studies which aimed to investigate the effect of supervisor behavior on post observation conferences, either in simulated conditions involving actors (Chamberlin, 2000; E. Pajak & Glickman, 1989) or in real conditions (Wajnryb, as cited in Bailey, 2006; A. Blumberg & Jonas, 1987; Vázquez, 2004; Waite, 1992).

In this section, I have reviewed research studies that are relevant to the current study because they discuss teachers' beliefs, perceptions and concerns about supervision and post observation conferences. In the following section, I will expand on the purpose and significance of the current study and its place in the literature.

### III. KNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTION

Waite (1993, p. 676) states that 'efforts aimed at understanding supervision and supervisory conferences have given little attention to the role *teachers* play in the process.' (Italics from the original). After analysing ten books on supervision published between 1985 and 1995, Reitzug (1997) asserts that the teacher's voice is lacking from the discussions about supervision. For Edward F Pajak (1986), a sincere attempt to understand the teacher's point of view as fully as possible is the 'initial step' toward establishing a productive supervisory relationship aimed at developing her/his professional identity. He further states that this is consistent with Goldhammer and Cogan's recommendations, who first outlined the steps of clinical supervision, in spite of the fact that those who try to assume a prescriptive approach of enforcing techniques and organizational policy find it 'unconscionably equivocal'. (p.129) Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) call for more research investigating teachers' perspectives about supervision, positing that there is a dearth of research on this topic. Referring to three studies on this topic, they state that those studies may have been influenced by the context in which they were conducted. In their words:

Given the breadth and length of discourse among scholars and policymakers regarding the supervision of teachers, the field of supervision should not be satisfied with just three studies representing the perspectives of teachers. Far more research is needed from many contexts examining teachers' perspectives on supervision. (p.71)

### IV. METHOD AND DESIGN

In this section, the methods and methodology of the study will be described, starting with a discussion about the sample followed by discussions about the data collection instrument and data analysis. It must be noted that the current study is located within the interpretive paradigm and all of the steps were influenced by an interpretive outlook. The aim was to conduct a fine-grained study about teachers' beliefs and perspectives, which could be explored best with an interpretive methodology.

#### A. Sampling

For the purpose of this study, ten male foundation year teachers in the men's section of a university in Saudi Arabia were chosen. The supervisory team of the English language program observes each teacher twice in an academic year. The first observation is developmental while the second is evaluative. Teachers are graded from one to five based on their performance during the observed lesson, one being unsatisfactory and five being outstanding. Below is a table with some basic information about the teachers:

Participant	Nationality	Teaching Qualifications (Degree - Training)	Country of Education	Teaching Experience
Teacher 1	Egyptian	MA Applied linguistics & TESOL- Diploma in TEFL	Egypt & England	13 years
Teacher 2	English	MA Applied linguistics & TESOL- CELTA	England	6 years
Teacher 3	Pakistani	MA Linguistics & literature - TEFL short courses	Pakistan	5 years
Teacher 4	Pakistani	MA Linguistics, MA English - CELTA	Pakistan	9 years
Teacher 5	Tunisian	Diploma in teaching	Tunisia	30 years
Teacher 6	South African	B Ed Honors - CELTA	South Africa	32 years
Teacher 7	English	MA Applied linguistics - PGCE	England	20 years
Teacher 8	South African	MA Economics - CELTA & TEFL short course	South Africa	12 years
Teacher 9	Pakistani	MA English, MA TEFL and MPhil English - CELTA	Pakistan & England	10 years
Teacher 10	American	BA - CELTA	America	9 years

The participants of the study were selected according to purposeful sampling strategy. The intention was to collect detailed data via interviews; therefore, information-rich cases that were expected to yield data of central importance for the purpose of the study were chosen (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Morse's criteria (as cited in Flick, 2009) of a 'good informant' were used as a guide to select information-rich cases (p.123). These criteria require that participants should (a) have the necessary knowledge and experience of the issue or object at their disposal for answering the questions in the interview (b) have the capability to reflect and articulate (c) be ready to participate in the study (d) have time to participate in the study.

#### *B. Data Collection Instrument*

Data were collected via interviews. An interview guide was developed for conducting semi-standardized interviews. This particular approach was adopted for this study because it allows the researcher sufficient freedom to pursue different lines of inquiry without straying off the topic. It was preferred over an informal conversational interview and a standardized open ended interview because the former might produce masses of data that are difficult to analyse (Patton, 2002, p. 343) and the latter because, not knowing the kind of data that the interviews would yield, the standard open ended interview could end up becoming a straitjacket that could make it difficult to explore important topics as they arise during the interview. As mentioned very cogently by Richards (2003), "...the interviewer must be responsive to nuance and opportunity as the interview progresses." (pp.64-65).

#### *C. Data Collection Instrument Design*

Interview guides can be developed in more or less detail, depending on the extent to which the interviewer is able to specify important issues in advance and the extent to which it is important to ask questions in the same order to all respondents. (Patton, 2002, p. 344)

The interview guide that was used for this study consisted of three broad categories. Each category had a list of topics that were to be investigated. The exact wording and sequence of questions and the degree to which each topic was to be probed varied depending on the responses of interviewees. The intention was not to cover each and every topic within the three categories with the same amount of detail; rather, the topics acted as starters to help the interviewer gather rich data. The approach was not to "[drag] an unwilling victim through every nook and cranny of an interrogatory masterplan but by listening to what they have to say and how they say it." (Richards, 2003, p. 65). The interview guide was piloted and some very minor amendments were made in terms of sequencing. Some areas were moved closer to the beginning as it was felt that the change would make the flow of conversation more logical.

#### *D. Data Analysis*

The interview data were analysed by adapting the steps mentioned in Creswell (2012, pp. 236-245). There were three steps:

1. An initial reading of the transcripts for preliminary exploratory analysis to obtain a general sense of the data.
2. A second, more thorough reading to code the transcripts; the recommendations of Tesch (1990) and Creswell (2007), (as cited in Creswell, 2011, pp.244-245) were used as guides during the coding process.
3. Broad themes were developed from the codes.

After analysing the interview data according to the above mentioned steps in QSR NVivo 10, the themes and the codes that they consist of were interpreted to make sense of the data. Below is a list of codes that had ten or more references in the interview data:

No.	Codes	Sources	References
1	elements that rendered POCs ineffective	9	32
2	disagreeing with the observer	10	28
3	duration of the feedback session	10	20
4	observer's personality	10	19
5	difference of opinion	10	18
6	observer's education, training and experience	10	18
7	focus of the feedback session	10	15
8	elements that made POCs successful	8	13
9	final grade vs verbal feedback	5	10
10	structure of the POC	7	10

These codes were collapsed under five themes which are enlarged upon in the discussion section.

## V. DISCUSSION

In this section, five major themes that emerged from the interview data will be discussed.

### A. Concerns about the Means-oriented Focus of Some Observers

One of the themes that emerged was the insistence on the part of the observers that the teachers exhibit prescribed techniques during the observed lessons. The concern was about the fact that the presence of prescribed actions and techniques was given more importance than the actual learning process. In the words of Teacher 4:

That's all they talk about: you. 'You did this.', 'You did that.', 'You should do it this way.', 'You should do it that way.', but without any ground realities; they have no reason for those activities; if they are recommending something, they don't give any reason for that. They just say 'You should have done that.', but why should I do that? When this thing works for me, why should I do something else? It was my class. I know how to handle them.

There are echoes here of the concerns voiced by teachers interviewed by Zepeda and Ponticell (1998), with their main concern being the need for targeting the desired steps or indicators on the observer's checklist (pp.77-78). One teacher interviewed by them said:

I decided it was time to show how I really conduct a class—cooperative groups, teacher facilitating student self-direction and evaluation, and all. My principal rated this lesson very low; she said a "perfect class" following the required indicators was much easier for her to evaluate. The next time she expected me to "join the family" and teach "the real lesson." I felt humiliated, but I learned to deliver the appropriate show. (ibid)

The participants of the current study viewed this prescriptive attitude of certain observers as unnatural and unnecessary. This is not dissimilar to situations alluded to by Kilbourn et al. (2005) when they state that in teacher supervision, 'categorical views of "good teaching" [are] imposed on teachers with little regard for the unique qualities of their particular situation' (p.299). What was required, the participants felt, was a holistic approach that prioritizes the goals of teaching instead of the means of achieving those goals. The following quote from Teacher 1 sums this up most appropriately:

...teaching is teaching. [It] is a ... process that takes place inside a classroom that has a target. So, as long as you had your point, reached your target at the end of the day, and you are an inventive person who can do this in a [certain] way... this is supposed not to affect the situation because...you can get back to books and references you will easily find out that there is no best way for things to happen...

If supervisors limit their attention only to predetermined techniques, it impedes their ability to look at the teaching process itself. Garman (1986) states that such a model provides security for incompetent supervisors who are incapable of understanding the essence of teaching and calls the stringent adherence to such a model coupled with the refusal of intellectual inquiry 'the most insidious form of pretense and quackery in supervision.' (p.154).

### B. Blurring of Lines between Developmental Supervision and Evaluation

The effect of the evaluative aspect and fears for job security on the post observation conference is best summed up by this quote from Teacher 9:

Here the observation itself and the feedback, it's all basically linked with the job and job security, so in that situation, of course people are always offended when they are observed and when they are given feedback... **When somebody is**

**already defensive and not ready to listen, [or if he is] not listening to understand, [but] just listening to react,** in that situation you need not to embarrass that person...

It is hard to imagine a teacher listening intently and impartially to constructive criticism during the post observation conference and thinking about working collaboratively with the observer to come up with a developmental plan when he has the sword of Damocles hanging over his head. More likely, as evidenced by the quote above, teachers' beliefs about the way the observation report might affect their job will have a significant impact on how they would approach the post observation conference. As mentioned earlier, in the institution where the current study was undertaken, teachers are observed twice a year, with the first observation being developmental and the second one both developmental and evaluative. Although the espoused goal of the supervision team is to work collaboratively with the teachers to improve teaching practice, the evaluative aspect looms large on the minds of teachers. One reason for this is the changing role of the observation report on decisions regarding contract renewal. When observations first started in the institution under study, the evaluation report played the most important role in determining whether a teacher was to be retained, terminated or transferred to a rural campus. At that time, observations were purely evaluative and many decisions were made about termination of contracts and transfers to rural campuses based on those observations. Over time, more factors have become part of annual instructor evaluation. At the time of this study, the observation report is one of five factors, the others being professionalism, development, service to the institute and student evaluation. It must be noted that of the two annual observations, only the second one has a bearing on the evaluation process; the first is purely developmental and has no bearing on the evaluation process whatsoever. However, the spectre of the observer bearing down on a teacher somewhat like the headless horseman with the aim of determining his fate still haunts the supervisory conference. This is not to imply that teachers refused to view the post observation conference as a platform for development. The following quote from Teacher 7 captures the essence of what most teachers said they expect from the post observation conference:

...the feedback session should start with the positives, because the positives are what every individual, every teacher builds on. Once the positives are covered, it relaxes the person, and then the feedback should move on to areas of development; and, that's the meaty bit of the feedback [session], because feedback which just relies on positives, does not help anybody, necessarily; and feedback that concentrates on the negatives all the time, does not help the person either, because it [makes them] lose their confidence...

However, it is the blurring of lines between development and evaluation which makes the situation complicated. This is what Teacher 5 had to say:

...if [the] observation is an informal one, it doesn't have to do with my career, my contract here, there is no problem. I can listen to him (the observer), and it's ok. But if it's a formal observation and he will grade me, so in this case, I can't imagine that I would accept [his inaccurate estimations] because it is something that has to do with my, job, my life, my contract.

This quote is interesting because it shows that while the teacher is open to receiving constructive criticism with the aim of discussion in a formative setting, the evaluative aspect makes him assume what Waite (1993) called an adversarial role; in a previous research study, Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) called it the social strategy of unsuccessful strategic redefinition, whereby the teacher and the supervisor bring strong agendas and the teacher refuses to capitulate (cited in Waite, 1993).

Garman (1986) calls for a clear distinction between developmental supervision and evaluation. If in-class supervision is indeed for developmental purposes, then the challenge of this 'awesome mission' should be accepted. However, if it is evaluative, then this fact should be communicated clearly and the supervisors who claim to know about effective teaching should be held accountable for their expertise. In her words, 'Educational careers are too precious, and people can be seriously hurt.' (p.115). It is a sad reality of the field of supervision that those in supervisory roles who always expound its virtues in front of teachers and pontificate at length about the need for trainer-trainee conferences do not always call for *themselves* to be supervised. Referring to this paradox, Goldhammer (1969) said:

If what's good for the goose is inadequate for the gander, in this field, then something is the matter, for it is all but impossible to imagine a rational double standard that could free supervisors from the necessity of being supervised themselves. (cited in Smyth, 1988, p. 141)

### C. Post Observation Conference as a Formality

Clinical supervision is not a concept invented at a particular moment in time; it is a name given to a set of procedures aimed at supervision and teacher development that were first described in methodological form by Morris Cogan and Robert Goldhammer who used a grounded theory approach to compartmentalize the basic events of supervisory practice, which were labeled *phases* by Cogan and *stages* by Goldhammer (Garman, 1990). However, it appears that in some cases there is a proclivity among supervisors and administrators to construe clinical supervision as merely a set of phases or stages to be enacted as ends in themselves. In the current study, the theme of the post observation conference as a formality kept recurring. Teacher 4 said:

I never have any disagreement with my [observer during the post observation conference]. The reason is that so many things are decided already, like, you can't change them, they have already decided, they have done it, they have written that. So in that case I personally feel that it's a...futile activity.

Teacher 10 stated:

I think...there's an idea that somehow it's more fair to sit and discuss with the person so that they can have an opportunity to defend themselves; but I don't necessarily think I need to defend myself, and I also don't think that's the best format for it either. I think, if you're going to defend yourself about something, literally, you should do it with textual evidence, and research and support for your position, and I think that you are much better disposed to do that on your own on a computer, typing it out, thinking the thought through and sharing it, having that kind of a discourse than this, sort of, combative, off the cuff type of reality. So, I don't see any point in the post observation conference being of any real benefit towards me and my teaching practice; I think it's a formality that is just there.

Some teachers approached the post observation conference with a fatalistic view, as can be seen from the following quote from Teacher 6: 'I know it [discussion with the supervisor] is not going to change anything, save, it's going to hurt me, in every possible manner. So, actually, I've learned to go with the flow.' Reading the comments above, one does not get the feeling that teachers are approaching the post observation conference in eager anticipation of an intellectual feast. Instead, it seems they just want to go through the motions because, as one of the teachers said, it is just there and has to be dealt with.

Teacher 3 commented that his observer 'didn't talk about anything; he simply came to the areas for development, and explained those to me, got my signature and finished his feedback. And that feedback didn't last for more than seven minutes.' It is hard to comprehend what purpose a post observation conference such as this could fulfill except compliance with organizational requirements. In fact, it looks like a classic example of adherence to 'the age-old rituals of visitation, judgment, and prescription' (Garman, 1986 p.148). The supervisors have to try and change the situation so that teachers drop the façade of docile acquiescence and see the benefit of becoming actively involved in the post observation conference. For this to happen we have to 'go beyond the procedural nature of events themselves.' (Garman, 1990, p. 204). Smyth (1988) also makes a similar call when he states that instead of focusing on the procedural events, we should be more concerned with important issues such as assisting 'teachers to achieve forms of teaching that contribute to ways of learning that are more realistic, practical, and just for our students.' (p.145). To further strengthen his point, he cites Sergiovanni (1974): 'The intellectual capital inherent in clinical supervision is ... more important than its workflow as articulated into steps, strategies, and procedures' (ibid).

#### *D. Concerns about the Difference of Opinion between Teachers & Observers*

This was a significant theme that emerged from the data. The university where this study was conducted is one of the biggest in the Middle East, and strives to hire highly qualified ELT professionals with many years of experience of teaching at the highest level. In most cases, there is not a lot of difference in terms of credentials and experience between the teachers and the members of the supervision team. Some teachers have also worked as observers/supervisors previously, both at the current university and at other institutions. Therefore, the gap in knowledge and experience that one would normally expect between the supervisor and the teacher is mostly non-existent. As a result, there was concern about the issue of difference of opinion with the supervisor. According to Teacher 2:

Sometimes I don't agree with him because he's looking at the observation from one angle and I'm looking at it from another angle, and being the part and parcel of that class, and being the teacher of that class, I know my students well, and if I plan something, I know the level...of my students, so I base all my lesson and my activities on that. Perhaps he is not aware of that and he gives me [a grade] which I don't agree with. I [would] humbly give him my suggestion; if he agrees, fine, but, you know, the truth is that his decision will be final.

This teacher is drawing on a tenet of teacher culture: The teacher knows the students best (Waite, 1993). Discussing the topic, Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986, p.517) write: 'Some teachers resent the fact that the person responsible for judging their competence observes them infrequently and knows less than they do about what is going on in their room.' (cited in Waite, 1993, p. 694). Teacher 1 said that 'For the observer to work as a professional, he should support what he says scientifically, practically inside classroom... If he cannot support this, I think that it's better not to tell.'

This issue is not limited to the fact that teachers call for observers to substantiate their recommendations. There was a feeling that in the case of difference of opinion, the teacher would usually come out as the loser. Teacher 4 commented: 'If you follow his rules, if you follow his belief, if you are from the same school of thought, that's well and good. If you are not, obviously you are going to suffer.' It is hard enough to come up with generalizations and 'one size fits all' blanket theories about anything, but in teaching, it is even more challenging, given the difference in students across cultures, religions, countries, institutions, and classes within a single institution. The following quote from Teacher 8 sums this point up:

No one can maybe prove that your way or my way is the best. You see that's the thing. There is no... secret, there's no one way of doing things. There are many possible ways to do it, to get the job done; so, yeah, it can definitely be an issue. That's why, you know, observations can be a tricky thing... If there's just one correct way then it will be so easy, right? Then it will be a completely different business, teaching English.

Another point was that of transparency; if the observation criteria are clear and they are shared with the teachers before the observation, the post observation conference would not be so much about arguing for and against a particular educational viewpoint. Teacher 10 commented:

If the institution is allowing people to be assessed by certain criteria, then it's upon the institution to inform the assessor and the assessed what those principles or criteria are so that we can refer to them...if the assessor has a



perspective about something and demotes the amounts of points that I receive...he should ideally be doing that within a framework sanctioned by the institute that I am aware of. If he, on the other hand, has a perspective of disagreement that is outside the scope of policy... then we are free to be able to discuss that. But it is not fair, to either party, that the assessor is given the right to determine what policy should or should not be implemented based upon his personal perspective about best teaching practice; that should be defined by the institute...

Another quote from Teacher 10 is relevant to the same issue:

...when [we] agree to take a post at an institute, if that institute has a particular way of teaching and we've agreed to follow that particular way of teaching, so at that point we [can't] say we disagree; if we do we should work for a policy change, not use the post observation conference as a platform for that.

#### *E. Concerns about Supervisors' Credentials, Training and Experience in Supervision*

This theme is directly related with the previous one and emerged under the specific line of questioning about the reasons for concerns regarding difference of opinion between the teacher and the supervisor. It was a major factor in helping teachers decide to what extent they would become active members of the post observation conference and, as A. Blumberg and Jonas (1987) would say, give the supervisor access to their teacherhood. If the supervisor was not trained and did not have experience of observing teachers, there was a feeling of unease on the part of the teachers and there was not a lot of expectation of the post observation conference being very productive. This is what Teacher 9 said about this area:

This is the first thing... an observer must be a qualified person who has better knowledge of the field, who must have training in that particular area, and he must have been observed while observing...that is very important, the way a person is observing...I don't think...a very good teacher can [necessarily] be a good observer; these are 2 different jobs.

He further gave a colorful example of how he views the situation of a teacher being debriefed by an observer who is less qualified than him: 'It's like a lawyer who is arguing a case in front of a judge who has no knowledge of the law'. In the institution where this study was conducted, observation reports were a part of the evaluation process. Therefore, the concerns about the supervisors' training were not limited to the fact that being observed by an incompetent supervisor would not lead to any learning; they were also related to issues of job security, as Teacher 8 mentioned: 'You do need a little bit of specific observation training...maybe they can use it to fire people...so you should know what you're doing.'

This theme is by no means peculiar to the context of the current study. Bailey (2006) mentions that in her first supervisory job in Korea in the summer of 1973 teachers complained about her lack of skills or training as a supervisor. She also states:

Teacher supervision [is] a profession that many teachers enter almost by accident. Teachers can be promoted into supervisory positions for many reasons: they are excellent teachers, they have experience, they have "people skills," they are seen as loyal to the administration, they have seniority, and so on. Seldom are teachers made supervisors because they have had specific professional preparation for the role.

She further states that 'It is often assumed that teachers who are promoted to supervisory positions will automatically know how to supervise' (p.3). With no formal professional training, supervisors might work 'at an instinctive level ... or at the level of folk models about what supervisors do' (Wajnryb, 1995 p.8).

### VI. CONCLUSION

There was some optimism among the teachers because of the efforts of the supervision team to bring improvements in the observation program. However, unpleasant memories of the past linger on, and it would take a lot of perseverance and sincere effort over a period of time on the part of the supervision team to persuade the teachers that the entire supervision cycle is not about making prescriptions after finding deficiencies in the teachers' practice; rather, it is about working together with the teacher to come up with possible ways of dealing with issues that the teacher feels are most important for him. The following suggestions could help achieve this aspiration:

#### *A. There Should Be a Clear Distinction between Development and Evaluation*

Until just a few months ago, teachers were only observed twice a year without any training activities, workshops or support being provided to teachers to work on areas they were supposed to improve. Therefore, the developmental observation was just viewed as a precursor for the 'real thing'. This should be remedied by providing more training opportunities before and after the developmental observation by

- i. Conducting workshops on topics identified by teachers
- ii. Organizing discussion groups on some issues that are generally regarded to be problematic
- iii. Compiling a separate list of resources on each of the areas that observers are required to look at and make them available to teachers.

Only after these steps are taken will the post observation conference become an educative encounter in which the trainer and the teacher could refer to the points raised in the aforementioned activities and resources instead of engaging in a debate about what was right or wrong in a lesson based on the trainer's judgment. A post observation conference of

a developmental observation without developmental activities before and after it is like a story without a beginning and an end: it does not make sense to anybody.

*B. Teachers Should Be Given the Opportunity to Provide Input in How the Evaluation Rubric Is Designed and Interpreted*

The supervision team uses a sixteen item observation instrument and rates each area from a scale of one (unsatisfactory) to five (outstanding). Supervisors have to refer to the detailed evaluation rubric which has the guidelines in the form of three to six bullet points for rating each item. This evaluation rubric was implemented without any input from teachers. In fact, for about two years, only the supervisors had access to and it was not made available to the teachers. Teachers would only see their evaluation report without any knowledge of the criteria that were used to score the sixteen items on the form. As part of the recent changes in the supervisory procedures, the detailed evaluation rubric is made available to the teachers prior to the observation so that they know exactly what the observers are required to look at. However, there is still considerable disagreement on how the evaluation rubric is designed and interpreted because it usually calls on the observer to make subjective opinions or judgments about the lesson. The following examples of the differences between a four (above average) and a five (outstanding) in the area of 'Building rapport with learners' accentuate this problem:

5. Outstanding	4. Above Average
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher is <b>very</b> pleasant &amp; friendly</li> <li>Teacher is <b>very</b> sensitive to the learners' culture, needs &amp; level</li> <li>Teacher is <b>very</b> patient with the learners</li> <li>Teacher <b>almost always</b> calls learners by name and makes them feel comfortable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher is pleasant &amp; friendly</li> <li>Teacher is sensitive to the learners' culture, needs &amp; level</li> <li>Teacher is patient with the learners</li> <li>Teacher often calls learners by name</li> </ul>

Discussions between the trainer and trainee during post observation conferences on topics such as how the observer decides if a teacher is *sensitive* or *very sensitive* to learners' culture, needs and level have the tendency to descend into futile arguments. Therefore, teachers' input should be sought to make certain changes and design an evaluation rubric which places more importance on the actual learning process instead of the subjective opinions of observers. This could be achieved by a five step process:

- A committee comprising of teachers with experience and training in observations should be organized.
- Under the auspices of the supervision team, the committee should hold discussion groups with teachers who are willing to propose changes to the rubric.
- Taking on board the ideas from the teachers, the supervision team and the committee should make changes in the rubric and circulate it among the faculty.
- The new rubric should be piloted with two or more observers observing each class and comparing notes afterwards.
- If required in the light of pilot observations, final changes should be made in the rubric.

*C. Supervisors Should Have a Continuous Trainer Development Program*

As part of the recent changes in the supervision program, only people who have at least a master's degree in an ELT related field (TEFL, TESL, TESOL, applied linguistics etc) are selected as trainers. This is an improvement on previous arbitrary induction criteria which allowed people with backgrounds in fields such as engineering to observe language teachers. However, this change in itself could not be sufficient because becoming a trainer without specific training is like becoming a teacher without training. The supervision team regularly alerts teachers about training courses and workshops and attending these counts towards the annual instructor evaluation. Similarly, the supervision team should also attend courses aimed at trainer development and this should be considered in their annual faculty evaluation.

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**Adil Abdul Rehman** has two MA degrees. He completed his first MA in English in 2006 and the second MA in applied linguistics in 2009, both from Karachi University, Pakistan. He completed a six-month TEFL course from the Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers, Karachi, Pakistan in 2005. Regarding professional development and teacher training, he attended a course in Norwich, England in 2012 which focused on training and developing teachers, classroom observations and feedback sessions among other topics. Currently, he is a doctoral student at Exeter University, England. The focus of his research is professional development with special emphasis on issues related to feedback sessions.

He currently works as a Lecturer in King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He has been working there for the last three years. His responsibilities have included teaching, classroom observation, evaluation and academic coordination. He has taught English in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for ten years in language institutes, schools and universities.

**Abdullah Al-Bargi** has a doctorate in English (Linguistics/Rhetoric and Composition) and his M.A. is in TESL, both awarded by Arizona State University.

He is the Vice-Dean for Development at the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He has held this position for the last four years, supervising curriculum development, accreditation, strategic planning, faculty recruitment, and professional development. He has been at KAU continuously in various supervisory and executive capacities since 2007. He has extensive teaching experience in Saudi Arabia and the U.S. and has also worked as a journalist, opinion writer, and editorial board supervisor for a Saudi English language daily. He has participated professionally at a wide range of conferences and workshops in the field and has presented at several international venues over the past five years. He is currently actively engaged in research seeking to enhance insights into learning and instructional processes.

# Coetzee's Postmodern Bodies: *Disgrace* between Human and Animal Bodies

Shadi S. Neimneh

English Department, Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

**Abstract**—This paper looks at the intersection between human and animal bodies in J. M. Coetzee's post-apartheid novel *Disgrace* (1999). My argument is that Coetzee employs postmodern notions about the overlap between human and non-human bodies and their proximity in his fiction. Although Coetzee problematizes our conception of the body in most of his other works, it is in *Disgrace* that we have a unique combination of human and animal bodies and a juxtaposition of each body against the other. Coetzee, I contend, writes within the rubrics of postmodern posthumanism whereby his works interrogate questions of life, death, embodiment, otherness, and the body. While it is characteristic of postmodernism to break down distinctions and to argue the irrelevance of borders, Coetzee applies this logic to his treatment of humans and animals and toward significant ethical and political ends. Through multiple encounters with animals, David Lurie in *Disgrace* is forced to reexamine the boundaries between animal and human life and, thus, to react differently to suffering and other forms of life around him.

**Index Terms**—Coetzee, South African fiction, body theory, *Disgrace*, post-apartheid literature, postmodernism

## I. INTRODUCTION: THE POSTMODERN BODY

Postmodernism has a prominent cultural and ethical orientation inadequately explored in the field of literary studies. Its critique of essentialism, capitalism, and totality is commonplace. And its celebration of fragmentation, irony, and self-reflexivity is also well-known. However, postmodernism's emphasis on the body as an avenue for ethicopolitics is the subject of this article. My concern, though, is not the interest of postmodern culture with organ transplants, cosmetic surgery, "body-sculpting", or the body as a machine. Critics like Susan Bordo (1998) have described "this paradigm of plasticity" and exposed "the material and social realities that it denies or renders invisible" (p. 1100). Nor is my goal to establish the body as a foundational metanarrative in Coetzee's work because Coetzee displaces certainty with regard to the human body even when his work seems to invite a consideration of the body as a dominant discourse. In an interview with David Attwell (1992), Coetzee argues that the body has been a common thread in his fiction. He argues that the body in pain is beyond doubt: "Whatever else, the body is not 'that which is not,' and the proof that it *is* is the pain it feels..." (p. 248). He asserts being overwhelmed by suffering in the world and justifies his fiction by adding the following statement: "These fictional constructions of mine are paltry, ludicrous defenses against that being overwhelmed, and, to me, transparently so" (p. 248). Although Coetzee's argument seems to establish the body as the main narrative within his work, the linkage between the body, death, and suffering and the human/animal encounters we find in *Disgrace* (1999) make the novel a unique one among Coetzee's body narratives.

Instead of making the body in Coetzee's work a foundationalism or a grandnarrative, I try to examine the peculiarity of the body in *Disgrace*. I draw on other works by Coetzee and Franz Kafka when relevant for the postmodern orientation of this article and for purposes of contextualization. Moreover, I seek to establish the presence of the body in Coetzee's *Disgrace* to highlight the ethicopolitical orientation of his work. The alliance between postmodernism, on the one hand, and ethics and politics, on the other, comes as no surprise and is justified by the inclusive nature of postmodern logic. For one critic, "Postmodernism is no more idiosyncratic or singular than the world is general or normal" (Radhakrishnan, 2003, p. 1). Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle (2009) argue that in the postmodern nothing is absolute or certain: "all absolute values ... become sites of questioning, of rethinking, of new kinds of affirmation" (p. 280). Therefore, postmodernism celebrates "the undecidable" (p. 280), which makes it a fit theoretical frame for a consideration of the interplay between human and animal bodies. However, *Disgrace* does not sacrifice an ethicopolitical dimension in its apparently cultural focus on the body. In *The Politics of Postmodernism*, Linda Hutcheon (2002) emphasizes the contradictory nature of postmodernism and finds the political potential of postmodernism against claims of "narcissistic and ironic appropriation" by showing how it works by turning its "inevitable ideological grounding into a site of de-naturalizing critique," thus problematizing representation (p. 3). Hutcheon asserts as her focus the politics of postmodern representation, "the ideological values and interests that inform any representation" (p. 7). Her model is a "paradoxical postmodernism of complicity and critique, of reflexivity and historicity" (p. 11). Following this logic, the novel's presentation of the body can be grounds for its political, social, historical, and ethical critique of South African realities.

Because postmodernism is critical of strict boundaries, my argument about the proximity and fluidity of human/animal bodies is relevant. Apparently, a contextualization of *Disgrace* within Coetzee's fiction in term of its

treatment of animals is beyond the limited scope of this article, and so is a discussion of the Kafkan echoes insofar as the boundaries between the human and the animal are concerned. Therefore, I will be highly selective in my treatment of the novel's allusions to Kafka's works and its erasure of a strict line of demarcation between the animal and the human. I will also discuss briefly strong relevant echoes between this novel and Coetzee's other novels.

In Kafka's story "A Report for an Academy" (1917), an ape gives a speech to a learned audience. Red Peter is a talking ape speaking about his previous existence as an ape years ago. He now wavers between the body of an ape and the consciousness and most manners of a human being. "My ape nature," says the ape, "rushed head-over-heels out of me and away, so that my first instructor himself became almost ape-like as a result and had before long to abandon my instruction and be admitted to a mental hospital" (p. 227). Kafka's story is relevant because it captures the fluid postmodern divide between the animal and the human. In this story, the animal becoming human is just another version of the human becoming animal. Red Peter acquires a human consciousness and develops rhetorical skills while his instructor loses his ability to reason. However, the ape is constantly conscious of his embodied existence, of being trapped in the body of an animal, which justifies the itchy heel in my second epigraph from the story. In *Disgrace*, what we have are not literal or symbolic transformations of the sort we find in Kafka's "A Report for an Academy" or "The Metamorphosis" (1915) (where a man wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a gigantic insect) but more of encounters between the human and the animal, and thus imaginative crossings of borders. Such encounters I am interested in are of the sort Jacques Derrida (2002) presents in "The Animal That Therefore I Am" where one's sense of identity is put to question and is subject to confusion upon an encounter face to face with the animal other, a cat in Derrida's account gazing back at him (p. 372). More references can be made to Coetzee's Michael K in *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) who is reduced to the status of an animal, living like a mole in an underground burrow and eating insects, in South Africa during the apartheid regime. In this novel, the becoming animal is figurative, a representation of life conditions in times of political unrest. And so is the case in *Disgrace* whereby animals signify the disgrace of ageing and suffering in the post-apartheid South Africa.

In *The Lives of Animals* (1999), Elizabeth Costello takes us further into questioning the boundaries between humans and animals. She offers the following argument: "To be alive is to be a living soul. An animal... is an embodied soul" (p. 33). She counters thinking and reasoning with being, sensation, or embodiedness (33): To thinking, "cogitation," she opposes "fullness, embodiedness, the sensation of being..." (p. 33). For Costello, "To be a living bat is to be full of being" (p. 33). In fact, she makes an argument for a limitless "sympathetic imagination" (p. 35) whereby there are "no limits to the extent to which we can think ourselves into the being of another" (p. 35). She offers a bodily way of relating to animals, a form of physical identification achieved mentally, though. Discussing the theme of embodiment in *Elizabeth Costello*, Elizabeth Susan Anker (2011) argues that "Costello's recognition of a shared human-animal predicament of corporeal woundedness provides an alternate basis for obligation both to animals and to other human beings, offering a competing philosophical ground for theorizing ethics and social justice" (p. 170). Costello takes the body as the starting point for a common life between humans and animals. The body becomes the site of ethical identification between humans and animals and among fellow human beings. Her argument that we can think ourselves into the being of animals is the opposite of what Kafka's ape does when he thinks himself into the being of humans and thinks and acts like them. In Kafka's 1922 story "Investigations of a Dog," a dog ruminates about its life, the nature of its food, and its bodily needs. In all of these works, the boundary between the human and the nonhuman is crossed and for a purpose that should be elaborated, be it political, ethical, or otherwise. This intersection between humans and animals can take the form of privileging the body over the mind, assuming the consciousness of human beings, and the figurative dehumanization associated with corrupt politics or simply getting old (and thus becoming a body). In the next section, I examine the problematic of the body in *Disgrace* and then highlight the human/animal encounters the novel depicts.

## II. THE PROBLEMATIC OF THE DESIRING BODY

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee establishes the problematic of sexual desire that blights David Lurie at the very beginning of the novel. The body is presented as the protagonist's main problem. The novel's first sentence reads: "For a man of his age, fifty-two, divorced, he has, to his mind, solved the problem of sex rather well" (p. 1). Lurie's frustrations in marriage and professional life<sup>1</sup> make him indulge in numerous sexual affairs with streetwalkers, a part-time prostitute called Soraya, a departmental secretary, and finally a student in one of his classes called Melanie Isaacs. The disgrace of this last affair in particular directly affects his life as he loses his job after being found guilty before the university committee that questions him. In a sense, Lurie has a problem coming to terms with the instinctive needs and desires of his body (as cited in Neimneh, 2013). Recollections of his affair with Melanie continue to stir his sexual desire throughout the novel. Married twice but divorced twice, he could not actually solve the problem of sex. And Lurie is not the only character in Coetzee's fiction who has a problem with the body in the form of trying to resolve sexual desire and the contingent shame associated with this desire.

For example, the Magistrate in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) faces the problematic of sexual desire. His sex life seems odd; he frequents prostitutes and finds in the body of a barbarian girl an irresistible source of fascination and repulsion. He fetishizes her tortured feet, and his ritual of cleansing and rubbing often ends in fits of unsustainable erotic desire. The Magistrate finally makes love to her on their way to return her to her people. Back in

his outpost, he continues to have this troubled relationship with his sexual desires, often experiencing his member as an alien, uncontrollable organ. In fact, his very relationship with the barbarian girl might have brought his downfall and subsequent “disgrace.” People in the frontier gossip about his affair with this barbarian girl, and news reach the capital. His taking her to her people is seen as a violation, an act of consorting with the barbarian enemy. Therefore, the Magistrate is tortured and humiliated publicly by the Empire’s officials. He is “disgraced” in the eyes of his people; his “disgrace” culminates when he is forced to wear a woman’s smock for a mock crucifixion (as cited in Neimneh, 2013). The Magistrate loses all his privileges as an administrator in his outpost settlement and symbolically leads a dog’s life. He is not allowed to wash himself; he wears dirty clothes; his food is rationed; he is mocked by children and imprisoned in a cell; he is pained and trots like a dog. Excessive torture makes him think: “There is no way of dying allowed to me, it seems, except like a dog in a corner” (p. 115). The dehumanized life he leads now also makes him think of himself as “a tired old bear” and “a filthy creature who for a week licked his food off the flagstones like a dog ...” (p. 113, p. 122). The Magistrate comes to experience his whole life in terms of bodily pain or self-preservative instincts like hunger and thirst. He is not symbolically different from the animals he compares himself to. The tripartite relationship between the desiring body, disgrace, and metaphorical animals is a common theme linking both novels. The animal (dogs in particular) becomes a trope for humiliation, for the base part of our existence we associate with the body. The body is a source of disgrace, and this disgraced body is often described in terms of animal imagery in Coetzee’s fiction.

In the case of *Disgrace*, critics have observed the novel’s treatment of the body as a theme. According to Sue Kossew (2003), the novel is “a complex exploration of the collision between private and public worlds; intellect and body; desire and love; and public disgrace or shame and the idea of individual grace or salvation” (p. 155). Kossew adds that *Disgrace* is a novel “in which bodies are very strongly linked to power, desire, and disgrace” (p. 156). Critics have not failed to mark the body as the novel’s central problematic. For example, Gareth Cornwell (2002) notes that Coetzee in *Disgrace* “evokes the pathos of an aging man’s recognition of the uselessness of his desire, the disgrace of its refusing to die” (p. 315). The ageing body becomes a source of disgrace because physical deterioration is inherent in the experience of embodiment. What critics have ignored, however, is Coetzee’s postmodern conception of the body and the human/animal encounters in the novel as an inherent part of such a postmodern conception.

In *Disgrace*, the “honey-brown body” (p. 1) of a prostitute is the site of carnal love, a commodity possessed by the agency she works for. This commodification of the body makes love a mechanical relation and an escape from the nagging of desire. Lurie is a follower of Eros and a man leading a promiscuous life of affairs. “He has always been a man of the city, at home amid a flux of bodies where eros stalks and glances flash like arrows” (p. 6). At the same time, he “had affairs with the wives of colleagues; he picked up tourists in bars on the waterfront or at the Club Italia; he slept with whores” (p. 7). A failed sexual fling with his department’s secretary makes him think in the following terms: “He ought to give up, retire from the game. At what age, he wonders, did Origen castrate himself?” (p. 9). The disgrace of ageing and dying make him think of castrating himself: “A man on a chair snipping away at himself: an ugly sight, but no more ugly, from a certain point of view, than the same man exercising himself on the body of a woman” (p. 9). But Lurie is in the grip of eros when he pursues Melanie. When he calls her home for the first time to invite her out, he is “in the grip of something” (p. 18). A sexual adventure with her is described in terms of forceful desire on his part and lack thereof on her part: “Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core” (p. 25). Even in times not timely for sexual love he remembers her with lust as he sees her riding a motorcycle with knees apart (p. 35) or when she comes to him crying (p. 26).

Desire makes Lurie think of animal life. He links the human body to metaphorical animals. Lurie thinks of the intercourse between himself and Soraya in terms of “the copulation of snakes” (p. 3), a copulation that is “lengthy, absorbed, but rather abstract, rather dry, even at its hottest” (p. 3). If he were to choose a totem, he thinks, it would be the snake (p. 2). He exists “in an anxious flurry of promiscuity” (p. 7) trying to come to terms with the demands of his body. Ageing is a state of disgrace in that Lurie thinks of castrating himself. At least he thinks of castration, of the sort often done to animals: “they do it to animals every day, and animals survive well enough, if one ignores a certain residue of sadness” (p. 9). Ageing, castration, love/mating, and death are common to the lives of humans and animals. What precedes Lurie’s encounter with animals—with the body of the other—are raw encounters with his own sexed body and the bodies of women he has sex with. A follower of Eros, Lurie has a heart that “lurches with desire” (p. 20). His love to his student is described in terms of animal imagery and as if she were “a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck” (p. 25). He deems himself to the university committee be “a servant of Eros” (p. 52). He pleads guilty but he refuses to issue a statement of public apology. He goes to the Eastern Cape to his daughter’s smallholding. It is in this part of the story that the overlap between human and animal bodies begins. Lucy takes cats and dogs in her farm, which allows for the human/animal encounters I discuss in the next section.

Lurie tells Lucy a story about a male dog that the neighbours kept when Lucy was young and living in Kenilworth. The dog would get excited if a bitch got close. Its owners would beat it to the extent that it “had begun to hate its own nature” (p. 90). According to Lurie, “No animal will accept the justice of being punished for following its instinct” (p. 90). He tells this story to his daughter because he felt so sometimes. He admits, however, that “Sometimes I have felt just the opposite. That desire is a burden we could well do without” (p. 90). Lurie allegorizes animals to expose his corporeal predicament in a desiring body. The animal here becomes an objective correlative for the human, a trope for human desires. In other words, desire is the animal within. And following the same logic, he who succumbs to Eros

metaphorically becomes an animal. Lurie uses animals to expose the human condition of embodiment. In other words, he draws on animals to reveal common aspects of existence.

### III. HUMAN/ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee presents an intricate account of the interrelationship between the animal and the human. The novel, roughly speaking, follows the deteriorating fortunes of its “sensual” protagonist, a divorced university professor in his fifties. Erotic desire seems to initiate the downfall of Lurie; after the sexual abuse of a student in his Romantics class at Cape Technical University, Lurie is forced by the university administration to resign his post. He leaves Cape Town to live with his daughter Lucy in a smallholding in Salem village in the Eastern Cape. There, he and his daughter are attacked by a gang of three black Africans. He is burned and beaten while his daughter is repeatedly raped, and thus made pregnant. By the end of the novel, Lurie is reduced to a dehumanized existence, working among dogs at a local veterinary clinic and acting as a caretaker for dead dogs by ferrying their corpses to the incinerator. In a sense, he becomes “the dog man.”

Lurie sees his new life as that of a dog. Like his daughter Lucy, Lurie learns to accept humiliation and brutalization as part of the historical guilt of his ancestors. He and his daughter, as white South Africans, pay a price for a history of racism against and subjugation of black African people. Their personal history is stained with the colonial guilt of apartheid. They know now that they should lead a humiliating life like that of a dog. Negotiating Lucy’s plan to give up her land to Petrus, a greedy African worker assisting her in this time of changed power relations, the following exchange takes place between Lurie and his daughter:

‘How humiliating,’ he says finally. ‘Such high hopes, and to end like this.’

‘Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start a ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity.’

‘Like a dog.’

‘Yes, like a dog.’ (p. 205)

The ending of this dialogue is clearly reminiscent of references to dogs in Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* and Kafka’s *The Trial*, and can be further explored in longer critiques. In Kafka’s *The Trial* (1925), Joseph K. dies full of shame and guilt for failing to end his own life or discover the nature of his guilt. His last words to the warders who drive a knife into his chest describe his shameful death: “Like a dog!” It seems that K’s and the Magistrate’s “disgrace” is not that different from Lurie’s disgrace, or the disgrace of his daughter for that matter. Lucy is pregnant now as a result of her gang-rape by strangers. She too is in a state of disgrace. Lurie’s disgrace also becomes that of the rape of his daughter, that of reducing her to a mere body by three black men. The rapists own the story of objectifying her body: “How they put her in her place, how they showed her what a woman was for” (p. 115). For Lucy rape is akin to killing, like driving a “knife” in and “exiting afterwards, leaving the body behind covered in blood” (p. 158). It is similar to what Bev Shaw does when she drives the needle in animal bodies. In a sense, rape dehumanizes the victim. Moreover, it equally reduces the victimizer to the status of animals. Therefore, rapists are also viewed by Lucy as “dogs in a pack” (p. 159). Commenting on the rape scene of Lucy, the killing of the dogs, and the attempt to burn Lurie, Moore (2001) argues: “We see the violence done to the house, to the dogs, to the father” (p. 466). Just as humans and animals equally enact desire, they also partake in being the objects of violence.

Human desire is expressed in terms of animal bodies. Animals for Lucy and her father metaphorically represent human shame. Lucy has to accept the humiliation of being a wife for Petrus in return for protection, to accept having an illegitimate child. Lurie has to accept the humiliation of living among unwanted animals and having to leave the intellectual realm of university life. Similarly, he has to cope with an ageing body with “bowed shoulders and skinny shanks” (p. 150). Ageing is a source of disgrace just as desire is a source of shame. While dogs metaphorically stand for the dehumanization and humiliation associated with apartheid and its aftermath, dogs viscerally suffer at the hands of humans.

Bev Shaw is an animal lover running a local clinic for animals. Lurie’s daughter Lucy is one of the animal welfare people. In a conversation with her father, Lucy thinks that “On the list of the nation’s priorities, animals come nowhere” (p. 73). Lucy is suggesting that animals have been the objects of oppression in South Africa. Lurie is different. His initial attitude toward animals is one of indifference. He is an intellectual, a man of books and a follower, or even a servant, of “Eros” (p. 52, p. 89). For Lucy, intellectual pursuits do not necessarily lead to a higher life. At a pivotal point in the novel, and while driving to the house, she tells him: “This is the only life there is. Which we share with animals. That’s the example that people like Bev try to set. That’s the example I try to follow. To share some of our human privilege with the beasts. I do not want to come back in another existence as a dog or a pig and have to live as dogs or pigs live under us” (p. 74). For Lucy, humans and animals live on an equal footing. Lurie responds: “Yes, I agree, this is the only life there is. As for animals, by all means let us be kind to them. But let us not lose perspective. We are of a different order of creation from animals. Not higher, necessarily, just different. So if we are going to be kind, let it be out of simple generosity, not because we feel guilty or fear retribution” (p. 74). At this stage, Lurie argues for difference among species and different orders of being. His intellectual detachment from animal life precedes actual encounters with animals at a close distance.



In her yard, Lucy keeps animals, which is how human/animal encounters for Lurie begin. He enters one cage one day and stretches and relaxes next to a dog “on the bare concrete” (p. 78), thus becoming one with animals in the sense of sharing their embodied mode of existence. The bitch is a deserted, unwanted one. Lucy argues in defence of animals that they “do us the honour of treating us like gods, and we respond by treating them like things” (p. 78). He argues that the souls of animals are “tied to their bodies and hence die with them” once they die (p. 78). When some black men attack him and his daughter, one attacker shoots the dogs in the cages (p. 95). One German Shepherd is shot: “There is a heavy report; blood and brains splatter the cage” (p. 95). The dogs are reduced to a body mass. Chris Danta (2007) argues that it is the “disgrace of dying” that “truly merges human and animal suffering” (p. 734). Lurie witnesses animal and human suffering first-hand. He lives their disgrace just as he lives his own. He is humbled by his physical proximity to animal lives and suffering.

Lurie buries the six dogs killed by the three invaders by tumbling them into a hole. This is his second real encounter with animal bodies. One dog with a “hole in its throat still bares its bloody teeth” (p. 110). Lurie observes the aftermath of violence on his own body that gets burned and mauled, that of his daughter, and the corpses of dogs. Another human/animal encounter is that of the two sheep Petrus keeps for a party tethered next to a stable. Lurie thinks they should be tied, he tells Petrus, “where they can graze” (p. 123). He thinks that “Sheep do not own themselves, do not own their lives” (p. 123) because humans use them. For Lurie, Petrus should not bring the animals to where the people who will eat them can see them (p. 124). In fact, he relocates them to where they can graze near the dam “where there is abundant grass” (p. 123). When the next day he finds them back in the barren area near the stable, he thinks of such country ways in terms of “indifference, hardheartedness” (p. 125). In a sense, animals bring about an ethical awakening in Lurie. He begins to identify with animals by seeing them as his existential peers and bodily equals.

Just like the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* who waits for a sign in the ruins outside his imperial post, Lurie examines the sheep: “*He stands before them*, under the sun, waiting for the buzz in his mind to settle, waiting for a sign” (p. 126; my emphasis). It is because “A bond seems to have come into existence between himself and the two Persians, he does not know how. The bond is not one of affection. It is not even a bond with these two in particular, whom he could not pick out from a mob in a field. Nevertheless, suddenly and without reason, their lot has become important to him” (p. 126). The idea here is a new form of communion with animals, the threshold of such a communion between Lurie and animals on the basis of physical proximity and face-to-face encounters. Bev Shaw seems to have accomplished such communion. He is still undergoing a change, though not without some resistance. Previously, he argued that animals do not have proper souls or lives since their souls are attached to their bodies. Now he admits to Lucy that in the case of the sheep he did not change his ideas but he is “disturbed” for reasons he cannot fathom (pp.126-7). He is exploring the limits of his sympathies with animals: “Should he mourn? Is it proper to mourn the death of beings who do not practise mourning among themselves? Looking into his heart, he can find only a vague sadness” (p. 127). This mysterious sadness is grounds for a form of sympathetic identification with animals, a mental crossing of boundaries between the human and the animal.

At the very end of *Disgrace*, Lurie gives up a dog he has developed an affinity with for a lethal injection (p. 220). Considering Lurie and his daughter’s multifold disgrace in this novel, one can argue that this act is symbolic. If their disgrace is complete now, they have no future in this post-apartheid South Africa except that of the diseased or unwanted dogs which are disposed of. The end of the novel brings us back to the dogs. Lurie helps Bev on Sunday with a session of killing, “*Lösung*” (p. 218). Such an act delivered to maimed unwanted dogs is for him a form of “love” (p. 219). He takes one young and crippled dog out of the cage and the dog licks him: “Bearing him in his arms like a lamb, he re-enters the surgery. ‘I thought you would save him for another week,’ says Bev Shaw. ‘Are you giving him up?’ ‘Yes, I am giving him up.’” (p. 220). For Michalinos Zembylas (2009), such an act of giving up the dog is “symbolic of relinquishment of desire” and acceptance of “responsibility for the Other” (p. 225). It is as if Lurie gives up the desiring human body and embraces the sentience of being with animals. Formerly, he stood facing the sheep at a close distance. Now, Lurie carries the dog in his arms. The space between the animal and the human is crossed. Lurie becomes one with animals in the process of caring for unwanted dogs. The human body and the animal body overlap and intertwine.

I have suggested that Lurie is reduced to a body, working non-stop on the farm and at the clinic, doing all the chores like cooking, sweeping, shopping, and helping Bev with animals Shaw (p. 120). He assists in killing dogs at the Animal Welfare clinic, mainly unwanted dogs. But killing is a form of love and attention for such diseased animals: “To each, in what will be its last minutes, Bev gives her fullest attention, stroking it, talking to it, easing its passage” (p. 142). However, he does not get used to the idea of assisting in killing. He becomes “more jittery” (p. 142). One day he even stops at the roadside “to recover himself. Tears flow down his face that he cannot stop; his hands shake” (p. 143). This is a shift in his personality he does not understand. What he frequently does not seem to be hardening him towards animals. “His whole being is gripped by what happens in the theatre” of death (p. 143). He thinks that dogs sense that their end is approaching, that they feel “the disgrace of dying” (p. 143). They share his state after his sex scandal and the attack on his body and that of his daughter. They sniff him and lick his hands. On the other hand, Bev Shaw strokes them and touches them (p. 143). Humans and animals get in touch. Physical proximity reduces both to a bodily being. Lurie drives dead dogs immediately to a hospital incinerator. He personally oversees disposing of them so that they are not left with other forms of refuse or waste or wait unnecessarily: “He is not prepared to inflict such dishonour upon them” (p. 144). What he does is out of respect for dead bodies, for stiff bodies that underwent “rigor mortis” (p. 144).

Dealing with ageing and dead animals is a form of initiation for Lurie whereby he comes to terms with the body in its different states—alive or dead.

Alice Brittan (2010) has called David "a spirit guide" and a "psychopomp" (p. 489) whose duty is "to continue to think of the dead after others have stopped, not to mourn them, but to enfold them in the imaginative grace that might allow the dead to recognize and understand their new and unfamiliar state, and the living to enlarge the precincts of what we can know" (p. 489). His task is therefore one of imaginative accommodation. Deirdre Coleman (2009) argues that Lurie in the course of the novel comes to recognize and accept "a shared emotional life with animals" (p. 599). Coleman writes that Lurie "sheds not only his anthropological outlook but his anthropocentric one as well" (p. 599) and moves between one version of Darwinism of struggle to another of continuity across species (p. 598). Coleman asserts that by the end of the novel Lurie, in a Darwinian fashion, comes to recognize "the evolutionary and emotional continuity between human and nonhuman species" (p. 613). This means that Lurie begins to appreciate the fluidity of bodily being in this life. It is not that human and animal bodies literally mutate into each other. Rather, Lurie comes to grasp embodiment as a common fate for humans as well as animals. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (1989) argue that postmodernists "see knowledge of the world as indissociable from being-in-the-world: knowledge and experience are inextricably bound to each other and always culturally situated" (p. 290). Lurie gets to enact this postmodern principle. He learns to unify the intellectual rigidity of his academic training with his sympathetic experience with diseased and dead animals.

For Harold Fromm (2000), Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello as an ecological thinker "wants to extend the range of personhood (in varying degrees) to include animals and is militantly opposed to a Cartesian cogito that favors rational consciousness over animal sentience" (p. 340). This applies to a transformed Lurie and animal lovers in *Disgrace*. An embodied being is the sentience we share with animals. Embodiment is *Disgrace* becomes more manifest after death and as Lurie deals with dog corpses. Lurie becomes a dog undertaker, a dog-man. He does not literally become a dog, but this is part of the novel's concern with the fluidity of existence. Death and killing become a form of love as well for Lurie just as disgrace becomes a form of grace. Disgrace and its opposite, dignity, seem to apply to both animals and humans in this novel. At one level, animality is an issue of animalization. It is a state humans are rendered to emotionally and psychologically via their actions. On the other hand, the body, be it human or animal and as an object of suffering, is viscerally material and real.

#### IV. CONCLUSION: FLUID BODIES AND ETHICOPOLITICS

Mike Marais (2011) applies the rhetoric of sympathy to postcolonial fiction that racializes the body. For Marais, sympathy has an "ethical potential": "Through its proximity with the body, sympathy constantly intimates the possibility of responding to other bodies as singular entities, that is, in a non-conceptual way that does not reduce their otherness" (pp. 94-95). When sympathy becomes a form of identification with the body of the other, such mental identification transcends bodily boundaries between self and other. Bodily proximity is a crucial step toward an ethical attention to otherness. In Coetzee's fiction, an encounter with the body of the other is often an ethical encounter which can effect a change in perspective.

Coetzee's play with the proximity of humans and animals stems from the historical and political context of his novel. It is a history of violations and injustice whereby the denial of human rights reduced people to the figurative status of animals and counter violence reduced others to the same figurative status of disgraced animals. In a post-apartheid South Africa, the apathy of strained human relations and the mistreatment of animals are analogous. Victims and perpetrators of violence become alike in partaking in a dehumanized existence. Therefore, Coetzee frames his postmodern conception of fluid and close human/animal bodies within ethical and political considerations.

Louis Tremain (2003) argues that Coetzee typically uses animals as "narrative elements associated with suffering and death" (p. 595). By contrast, Marianne DeKoven (2009) argues that in caring for dead dogs and identifying with them Lurie is actually enacting his own idea of "the proper relation to the death of 'body-souls full of being'" (p. 866). Lurie, it seems, comes to terms with the problematic of the body that began the novel through encountering animal suffering. He resolves the issue of desire and the body by learning to accept death and suffering as inherent to human life. He gets to take the materiality of the dying body for granted.

Don Randall (2007) writes that "Coetzee's writing registers and then counters this atrocious modernity by opening and extending the ethical bounds of human community, by envisioning animals as fellow beings deserving the consideration and protection that more typically are accorded only to the human being" (p. 209). Randall contends that Coetzee employs animals toward social, political, and ecological ends: "Intensified focus on the animal enables Coetzee to write in a zone of intersection between sociopolitical and ecological concerns, to elaborate an ecologically oriented ethics that sharpens the critique of modern political regimes that dominate and exploit fellow beings both human and non-human" (p. 210). Coetzee's ethicopolitical vision is as inclusive as postmodernism is. He uses the body to deliver a message about the corporeal predicament of humans and animals alike. It is the body that nags, desires, and gets violated. It is also the body that gets old/sick, suffers, and dies.

Postmodernism is not politically or ethically evasive. For a critic like Andrew Gibson (1999), twentieth-century postmodern novels are of "cardinal importance" to the "ethical critic" (p. 18). Employing the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Gibson speaks of "postmodern ethics" (p. 13) allowing for an ethical consideration of postmodern fiction.

Coetzee depicts apathy and otherness permeating human life and governing our typical reaction to animal life. Coetzee is extending the ethical and political orientation of his fiction by juxtaposing humans against animals. In *Disgrace*, feeling into the existence of another body seems to have a disarming ethical force with the power to reform those who empathize and politically reform those who transgress. Had Lucy's rapists or Lurie himself identified with their sexual victims, the violations they perpetrated on the body of the other would not have taken place.

## NOTES

David Lurie, married twice and divorced twice, is thus leading an empty emotional life. He was relegated from a professor of linguistics and literature at Cape University to an adjunct lecturer in communications in the same institution, now called Cape Technical University (p. 3). He is a man with a risky lifestyle.

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**Shadi S. Neimneh** is assistant professor of literary and cultural studies and Head of the English department at Hashemite University, Jordan. He earned a Ph.D. in literary studies from Oklahoma University (USA) in 2011. He has published numerous articles in international journals on the South African literature of J. M. Coetzee and diverse aspects of literary modernism.

# The Impact of American Students and Teachers on Gulf Students' Academic Success

Ghadah Al Murshidi

UAE University, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates

**Abstract**—The study explores the impact of students' and teachers' support on Emirati and Saudi students at U.S. Universities. Based on a sample of 219, a mixed methods approach was used to analyze responses from participants who responded to a questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire instrument reveal that almost half the number of Emirati students felt "comfortable" associating with students from the same region. Also, the survey shows that most Emirati and Saudi students were "very comfortable" and "comfortable" to discuss their challenges with their professors. The interviews results indicate that different communication skills might influence students' relationships especially if they come from different cultures. For instance, an Emirati student experienced ignorance from American students and a Saudi student emphasized the American students' preference to work with their American peers. However, Emirati and Saudi students try to get involved in group work with American students to get assistance.

**Index Terms**—social adjustment, identity adjustment, language adjustment

## I. INTRODUCTION

A scan of the literature reveals little or no significant studies have been undertaken recently in the Gulf area and I believe research on the influence of students' and teachers' support on Emirati and Saudi students at U.S. Universities will be important to educators and policymakers. In recent informal conversations with a few international students at U.S. Universities, I learned that Arab students experience challenges and struggles in their first year compared to the succeeding years of study as they may lack certain cultural and linguistic capital that is necessary to successfully function in their disciplines, particularly at the doctoral level. These students are away from their families; therefore, they merge their social and academic lives. Most Emirati and Saudi students for example, are returning adult students who typically have interrupted their careers to earn degrees that permit them to return to their countries to help others to grow. Some of these students told me how they got shocked and lost when they did not get support in their academic work from their classmates, instructors or friends.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Empirical Studies on Cross – Cultural Adaptation and Academic Socialization*

Scholars define academic socialization as a process in which students undergo a social and cultural transformation from one cultural and linguistic context to acquire academic writing skills in another context or language in order to become legitimate or proficient participants in a given academic discipline (Belcher, 1994; Canagarajah, 2002; Casanave, 1995, 2002; Hirvela and Belcher 2001; Ivanic, 1998; Ivanic and Camps, 2001; Lea and Street, 1999; Prior 1995). However, understanding the complexity of this concept improves with inclusion of "cross cultural adaptation" as anchored in multiple disciplines: anthropology, communication, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, sociolinguistics, and other related disciplines.

In a classic work, Kim (1988) presented a model of cross-cultural adaptation based on socio-psychological adjustment theory and situates cross-cultural adaptation in an integrative theory that emphasizes "stress-adaptation-growth's" dynamics of cross-cultural experiences, which "bring about cultural strangers' gradual transformation toward increased functional fitness in the host milieu" (p. 200). Even though the literature on "socialization" and "adaptation" overlap in some respects, this exposition distinguishes the two and proposes ways to reconcile them in a unique study of academic socialization. According to Kim (1988), cross-cultural adaptation occurs when people from one culture move to a different culture, learn the rules, societal norms, customs, and language of the new culture. By bringing their existing thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and beliefs with them, a person integrates those into their new society while adjusting and accepting to the new standards, thereby creating a multicultural person. Kim (1988) relieves part of the confusion by theorizing that effective intrapersonal (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) and social (interpersonal and mass) communication activities are at the heart of successful adaptation (or socialization, for that matter)—along with individual background characteristics and the host country's environmental conditions.

The current need to study these perspectives arises from possibilities realized from current technological advances and student migration patterns. The contraction of time and space, acceleration of technological innovations, and globalization has created greater mobility and access to information. For example, in 2007, about 2.8 million

international students were “mobile,” 1 million more than in 1999. In other words, every year, the annual increase of mobile tertiary students to the U.S. universities is 4.6% (UNESCO 2009). Of the numerous populations of students, 20% of the internationally mobile student population is United States enrollees (ACE 2009). The current study addresses this group of students.

Researchers such as Kim (1988) and others (e.g. Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, Shuart-Faris, 2005; Gumperz, 2001; Hymes, 1974; Barton and Hamilton, 1994, 1998; Gee, 2000) developed several theories that explain the phenomenon of academic socialization. Central to these theories is the idea that the concept of cross-cultural adaptation, which entails moving from one culture to another culture, usually (but not always) learning the rules, norms, customs, and language of the new culture encompass several social science disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and psychology. The limitation of the current research is however inclusive of only sojourners, those who travel to a culture for an extended time, but with projected limits—that is, ultimately plan to return to the home country. Such sojourners are international students or those on extended business assignments perhaps one to three years. Psychologists and communication scholars tended to focus on individual levels of adjustment, that is, the thought, emotional, and behavioral processes of adjustment (psychology), and the role of communication in both leading to “culture shock” or “cross-cultural transition stress,” and in helping to reduce these stresses.

The notion of “culture shock” (Oberg, 1955) for example, summarizes the often dramatic effect of the adjustment experience. As a consequence, the tendency is toward automatic initiation of a series of psychological mechanisms to regain comfort, a feeling of security and positive thoughts. Even though the central interest of the research centers on academic socialization, a review the extensive literature, signals the necessity of attending to issues of cross-cultural adaptation, including stresses resulting from culture shock. In other words, a systemic approach within which the notion of adjustment (which involves psychological self-transformation) that incorporates forms of socialization (that is, social factors within the new culture, including the people contacted, known, interacted [e.g., particular interactions with staff members or other students] while trying to acclimate to this new environment) is necessary. And, as noted by Kagan and Cohen (1990), the terms adjustment, acculturation, and assimilation “are used interchangeably to denote behavior, value, and attitude changes associated with feelings of mental health and social integration” (p. 133). Therefore, the overarching quest of the research is to examine the mechanics and dynamics of individual adjustment processes within the academic environment, the sources of difficulty, and the reason some adjust more easily than others.

### **1. Adjustment Complications of International Students**

Some studies on cultural adjustments of international students state that through social communication with hosts, international students have a better chance to develop skills and behaviors that can assist them adapt to their new cultural environment (Furnham and Bochner, 1986; Shaffer and Harrison, 2001). Other researchers indicate that international students often face problems with acculturation, and decreased access to their existing or familiar support systems add to the challenges (Charles-Toussaint and Crowson, 2010; Kagan and Cohen, 1990). However, research of Emirati and Saudi students’ adjustment and assimilation in the United States is limited. Few studies explored the adjustment process of Emirati and Saudi students, who arrive in the country with myriad looming challenges, such as attitudes towards religion, language, study habits, dress code, and not to mention, food, all of which require adjustments.

For these reasons, Emirati and Saudi students face many changes and difficulties in adapting to universities in the United States. Facilitating the adjustment of Emirati and Saudi students to college life has become an increasingly significant concern of administrators recently due to the negative influence of adjustment problems on student attrition (Al – Sharideh and Goe, 1998).

Cultural adjustment of international students is an important issue for educators and college administrators throughout the United States, mainly because of the negative impact of unsuccessful adjustment of the international students to the new environment. That lack of adjustment affects international students’ academic careers, personal satisfaction, and general well-being. These students share feelings of anxiety, confusion, and homesickness, among others concerns. International students’ cultural differences may hinder or delay their adjustments process.

Emirati and Saudi students seem to face many particular challenges since they are geographically distant from familiar environments and support, and English is not their mother tongue language. Students’ experiences in the host country are different from their own cultures in terms of norms, roles, attitudes, values, and expectations, which create greater difficulties and stress (Al – Sharideh and Goe, 1998). Emirati and Saudi students may suffer from loneliness due to losing of social ties with people in their native countries. Adding to these challenges, Emirati and Saudi students are expected to cope with the exigencies of their new social environments, meeting their personal needs, and performing satisfactorily in their academics.

Ward and Searle (1990, p. 210) proposed dividing adjustment into two aspects: *physiological*, which “refers to feelings of well-being and satisfaction,” and *socio-cultural*, which “relates to the ability to ‘fit in’ in the host culture. Ward and Searle (1991) explained that sojourner adjustment has attracted three main theoretical positions for the aspects that influence the adjustment: clinical perspectives (e.g., personality, life events and social support), social learning models (e.g., acquiring appropriate skills and behaviors, cross- cultural experience and training), and social cognition approaches (e.g., variables such as attitudes, values, expectations and self-concept). All these dimensions and variables influence on the international students’ adjustment.

### **2. Social Adjustment**

Loneliness predicts a sojourner's psychological distress (Ward and Searle, 1991). Sojourners who feel helpless in a new culture might seek to communicate with those they believe can help them to find answers to their questions. Social support could reduce uncertainty as Albrecht and Adelman (1984, 1987a) defined "verbal and nonverbal communication between the recipients and the providers that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and the functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience" (1987a, p. 19). According to Adelman (1988), people also seek to feel they have control over a specific situation through social support, which influences the sojourner's psychological well-being (Ward and Searle, 1991).

When international students move to a new country, they lose their old support networks (e.g., family and friends), so they try to build new support systems. Some of the international students experience culture shock and feeling of anxiety that appear in their behavior. They try to avoid the native speakers of that country and look for company from their co-nationals (Church, 1982). To gain feeling safe in the new culture, some of the international students speak their native languages with their co-nationals, practice their cultural values and express their ethnicity.

Support from co-nationals can help relieve the homesickness and stress feeling that international students go through during the adjustment process. Also, through communication with co-nationals, the international students feel less stressful to realize that their co-nationals experienced similar problems when they had arrived (Bochner, 1981; Furnham and Bochner, 1982; Kim, 1987). According to Giordano and Giordano (1976), ethnicity fulfills a psychological need for security, identity, and a sense for historical continuity. Co-nationals represent a "low-risk informant" (Adelman, 1988, p. 188) who can offer answers, while reducing the student's uncertainty for affecting the relationship by the help-seeking process. In other words, international students feel more comfortable seeking answers from co-nationals that do not make judgment on them. Sojourners who have less support from their co-nationals, apparently, have greater problems of adjustment (Torbion, 1982). Kagan and Cohen (1990) believe that the relationships with co-nationals are significant to students; however, those relationships might negatively impact their cultural adjustment.

Living in a new culture with stressful conditions, international students might also seek the companionship of other new co-nationals (Wills, 1983), and to share resources and information to cope with their adjustment issues. In this kind of informal support groups, members self-disclose their fears and concerns and participate in their new community (Greenberg, 1980). Support systems among those who are experiencing similar cross-cultural stresses, however, could also interfere with satisfying the needs of these individuals (Fontaine, 1986). Stressed individuals can negatively influence those who are vulnerable (Adelman, 1986; Albrecht and Adelman, 1984, 1987b), when sharing tensions and concerns. Also, co-nationals might unintentionally worsen the stress and anxiety of the new international students (Adelman, 1988).

Even though international students might benefit initially from the support of their co-nationals, eventually the international students will need to reduce their interaction and dependence on their co-nationals, and in turn increase their interaction with hosts in order to acquire the skills necessary to adapt successfully to the new environment. Limiting their interaction with hosts will only hinder learning the new language, values, and norms of the culture and will reinforce feelings of alienation (Aresberg and Niehoff, 1964; Garraty and Adams, 1959; Gullarhorn and Gullarhorn, 1966; Kang, 1972; Lundstedt, 1963). Insulation among national compatriots may also create protection from cultural change (Albrecht and Adelman, 1984), adding to the difficulty of acquiring skills necessary to adjust to the new environment. Essentially, communication with members outside the co-nationals group is significant for their integration (Kim, 1987).

In the beginning of an experience in a new culture, international students tend to avoid interacting with hosts and seek the company of co-nationals (Church, 1982); however, upon arrival, while the interaction with co-nationals is vital for new international students to feel supported, eventually, seeking interaction with hosts becomes equally significant. Apparently, detachment from one's co-national community eases cultural adjustment (Bruner, 1956; Kagan and Cohen, 1990; Masuda, Matsumoto, and Meredith, 1970; Montgomery and Orozco, 1984; Spiro, 1955; Weinstock, 1964; Yao, 1985), and the contact with representatives of the host culture positively facilitates cultural adjustment (Bruner, 1956; Fugita and O'Brien, 1985; Kagan and Cohen, 1990; Roskin and Edleson, 1984; Smith, 1976; Weinstock, 1964). Kagan and Cohen (1990) found that students who had close American friends were more likely to have an easier shift to the new culture than those without the same relationships.

### **3. Identity adjustment**

Cultural identity is another factor that impacts the process of adjustment experienced by international students. Cultural identity is the mental framework through which individuals interpret social cues, choose certain behaviors, respond to their surroundings, and evaluate the actions of other people (Sussman, 2001). A logical prediction is that international experiences have tremendous impact on identity formation or identity adjustment. According to Brown (2009), identity's basis is "membership of many different and simultaneously overlapping demographic categories such as religion, culture, and nationality" (p. 60). To illustrate this in practical terms, Brown (2009) showed that Indonesians share a common language, religion, and culture. Indonesian Muslims identified themselves with a shared religion, while Chinese, a major group in the country, gained further distinction from their inter-group's Chinese language (besides speaking Indonesian), a distinct marker based on a shared culture (Brown, 2009).

The situation is not different in the Gulf region. For example, to maintain cultural identity and native language, a general reluctance existed to teach English throughout the early history of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

(KSA), (Elyas and Picard, 2010). Not until 2003 was English included in the curriculum of all primary schools in KSA, and then only after considerable international pressure (Elyas, 2008a, b), and although English is generally accepted in KSA, debates still rage as to instructional methodology (Elyas and Picard, 2010). Academic reforms have, in the majority of Gulf countries, resulted in an uncritical adoption of Western (mainly American) university curricula, content, and teaching practices, all of which have not always met the needs of the learners (Mazawi, 2003). As a result, an Islamized English curriculum often ensues, and consequently, learners experience a culture shock when studying in an American university since their English and western education is not equivalent to the actual English language and western culture in America. Bahgat (1999) mentioned that Omani's male illiteracy rate was twice that of Saudi's and three times Emirati's.

In addition, the Prophet Mohammed directed his followers to search for knowledge, including knowledge characteristic of non-Muslims and broader education in general. International graduate students have become an integral part of many major U.S. universities and their adaptation to American academic and social cultures can be an arduous task (Gonzalez, 2004) but even so, international graduate students from the Gulf actively pursue education in America.

#### 4. Language Adjustment

Although realizing the importance of English, Gulf region international students mostly reported having difficulty with writing. Holmes (2005) said that "inadequate language skills have been found to mask other problems stemming from other causes such as lack of familiarity with a new educational and social environment, and with a new culture and its associated cultural norms and behavior" (p. 294). Mallinckrodt and Wang (2006) stated that "international students who have higher self-rated English abilities and have resided longer in the United States tend to be more acculturated with American culture and experience less sociocultural difficulty and less psychological distress" (p. 431).

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The focus of this research is a comparative study of Saudi and Emirati students who transition into U.S. universities. The main purpose of this study is exploring the impact of students' and teachers' support on Emirati and Saudi students at U.S. Universities. This is a mixed-method research design that combines quantitative and qualitative strategies involving surveying 250 students followed by interviews. The present qualitative strategy provided an opportunity for the voices of Emirati and Saudi students to emerge. It gave a descriptive analysis of the cultural and social experiences of six Emirati and Saudi students who were selected for interviews. The interviews were coded to themes for analysis. This study is part of a larger study that examines academic socialization and cultural adjustment process of Emirati and Saudi students in the U.S. Universities.

### IV. RESULTS

This section presents some of the findings of the questionnaire and the interviews.

#### A. Survey

The main results that the questionnaire indicates are as followed. The results discuss the support that Emirati and Saudi students received from some American and Gulf region students, and their teachers.

##### 1. American Students' Support

When Emirati and Saudi students indicated their preferences for collaborating with native English speakers for class presentation or writing projects, the highest number of Emirati students (40.2%) and Saudi students (36.9%) indicated a greater preference for working with native English speakers for presentation or writing projects. Differences between Saudi and Emirati students were significant for preferences for collaborating with native English speakers for class presentations or writing projects. Emirati students' reported preference ( $M = 2.20$ ;  $SD = 1.22$ ) as did Saudi students ( $M = 2.19$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ) (See Tables 1 and 2, Figures 1).

TABLE 1.  
ITEM 1 (WORKING WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS) RESPONSES BY PERCENTAGE

Do you prefer to work with native English speakers for presentations or writing projects?						
Option		More Preferable	Preferable	Less Preferable	Sometimes	It Does Not Matter
Country	UAE (92)	40.2%	28.3%	15.2%	4.3%	12.0%
	SA (122)	36.9%	30.3%	16.4%	9.8%	6.6%
	UAE and SA (214)	38.9%	28.6%	16.7%	7.3%	8.5%

TABLE 2.  
INDEPENDENT T-TEST RESULTS FOR ITEM 1 (WORKING WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS).

Do you prefer to work with English native speakers in doing class presentation or writing project ?					
Country	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
SA	122	2.19	1.22	.04	.96
UAE	92	2.20	1.33		

Response scale: 1= More Preferable; 2= Preferable; 3= Less Preferable; 4= Sometimes; 5= It Does Not Matter.

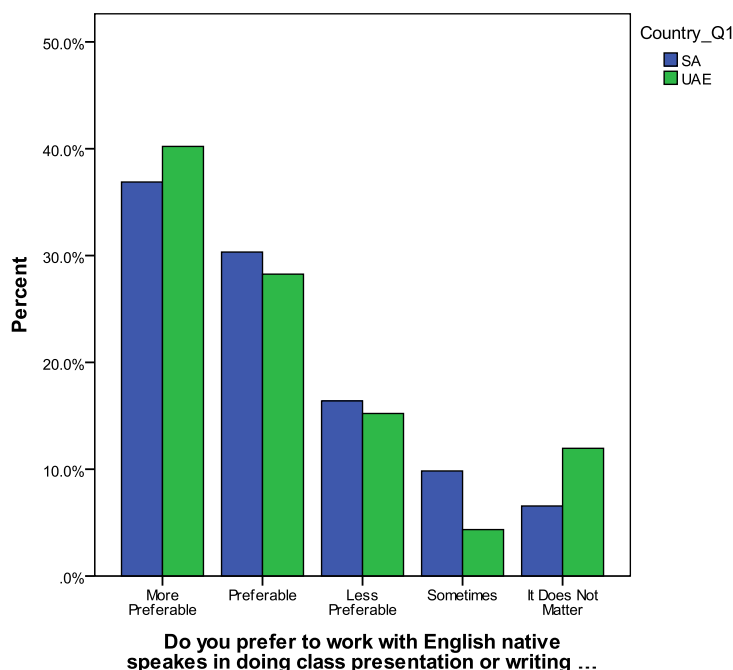


Figure 1. Item 1 (Working with native speakers) Responses by percentage

## 2. Gulf Region Students' Support

Academic socialization experience was also a study topic and the questionnaire caught responses related to classroom socialization, including comfort levels and their expectations for classes' activities. Specifically, this investigates the presence of the target populations' loyalties toward memberships in groups influential for decisions for associations for classroom activities. A single item was examined comfort levels for association with students from home regions. In terms of this comfort level, 31.2 % of Emirati students felt "comfortable" associating with students from the same region; however, 31.7% of Saudi respondents emphasized that the region of peer-associates by choosing "It does not matter." Only 2.2 % of Emirati students and 6.5 % of the Saudi students expressed "uncomfortable" for working with regional peers (See Table 3).

TABLE 3.  
ITEM 2(WORKING WITH GULF REGION STUDENTS) RESPONSES BY PERCENTAGE

I feel more comfortable working with students from the same region I am from					
country	Very Comfortable	Comfortable	Less Comfortable	Uncomfortable	It Does Not Matter
UAE	28.0%	31.2%	15.1%	2.2%	23.7%
Saudi Arabia	14.6%	29.3%	17.9%	6.5%	31.7%
UAE and Saudi Arabia	20.8%	29.7%	16.5%	4.7%	28.4%

## 3. Teachers' Support

Concerning participants' accessibility to information, the questions pertain to the identities of types of individuals with whom respondents felt most comfortable communicating and associating during classes. Do students prefer work and communicate freely with Native American students or students from the Gulf Region or even the same gender? A further focus of attention was expertise and power relations which may be closely interdependent or correlated. Often, an individual with greater expertise has greater power; therefore, examination of expertise and power relations used two measures: knowledge and explicit, socially constructed hierarchical systems. Knowledge test items deal with the ideas of expertise and focus on respondents' perceptions of lack of academic knowledge or cultural knowledge, and professors' perception of an individual student. When asked to estimate the level of comfort when discussing challenges with professors, 70.9% of Emirati students were "very comfortable" and "comfortable"; however, 29% of Emirati



students were “less comfortable” and “uncomfortable” when sharing their difficulties with their professors. In comparison, when evaluating the level of comfort when discussing challenges with their professors, 64.3 % of Saudi students were “very comfortable” and “comfortable”; however, 35.8% of Emirati students were “less comfortable” and “uncomfortable” sharing difficulties with professors (See Table 4).

TABLE 4.  
ITEM 3 (ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES) RESPONSES BY PERCENTAGE

Do you feel comfortable to discuss with your professors about your academic difficulties challenges?					
country	<i>Very Comfortable</i>	<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Less Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>It Does Not Matter</i>
<b>UAE</b>	29.0%	41.9%	25.8%	3.2%	.0%
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	22.0%	42.3%	29.3%	6.5%	.0%
<b>UAE and Saudi Arabia</b>	24.9%	41.4%	28.7%	5.1%	.0%

#### 4. Preference for Individual Work

When participants indicated their comfort levels for working independently in class, 41.3% of Emirati students emphasized that they are “very comfortable” in working independently. Similarly, 30.0% of the Saudi students stated feeling “very comfortable” working independently. No significant differences in means were apparent between Saudi and Emirati students regarding comfort with independently work (See Tables 5 and 6)

TABLE 5.  
ITEM 4 (INDEPENDENT WORK) RESPONSES BY PERCENTAGE

In class, I am most comfortable doing...-working independently							
country	<i>Very Comfortable</i>	<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Less Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Sometimes Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Very Uncomfortable</i>	<i>It Does Not Matter</i>
<b>The UAE</b>	41.3%	25.0%	7.6%	3.3%	8.7%	7.6%	6.5%
<b>The Saudi Arabia</b>	30.0%	28.3%	19.2%	7.5%	7.5%	2.5%	5.0%
<b>The UAE and Saudi Arabia</b>	33.3%	27.3%	13.4%	6.1%	8.2%	5.6%	6.1%

TABLE 6.  
INDEPENDENT T TEST RESULTS FOR ITEM 4 (INDEPENDENT WORK).

In class, I am most comfortable doing...-working independently						
Country	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p	Cohen's d
SA	120	2.65	1.67	0.09	0.93	na
UAE	92	2.62	2.00			

Response scale: 1= Very comfortable; 2= Comfortable; 3= Less Comfortable; 4= It Does Not matter; 5= Sometimes Uncomfortable; 6= Uncomfortable; 7= Very Uncomfortable.  
na = not applicable, t-test results , p > .05

#### B. Interview Results

This section presents some of the interview analysis to mainly four themes.

##### 1. Theme 1: Communication Challenges with American Students

Different communication skills might influence students' relationships especially if they come from different cultures. For instance, Emirati student “Zayed” experienced ignorance from American students and Saudi student “Khalifah” emphasized the American students' preference to work with their American peers:

Zayed commented:

I am talkative in the classroom. Some American students do not like to communicate with us. Other American students just communicate with us in our group work. They do not like to know us.

Zayed wonders whether the American students' have a fear regarding communicating with international students in general.

American students have no rapport with us. They may not be used to communicate with us or they may be afraid of us. I see American students communicate effectively with each other. American students do not communicate well with international students.

Khalifah that his observation relates to American student preferences for working in class assignments with fellow American students;

American students prefer to work with each other. I do not know the reason. Also, some of them work part-time which complicates our meeting to do our work.

##### 2. Theme 2: Arabs' Negative Influence on Their Peers

Learning English is one of Emirati and Saudi students' main goals when coming to the U.S. The existence of Arabs surrounding these students increases opportunities for practicing English, especially in language preparation programs especially if the Arabs students are mocking on each other. That is when we make mistakes we should be working with each other to learn English and improve our communications in English. However, that does not necessarily happen.

Hassan indicated this opportunity may not be utilized.

“Our problem is here we have many Arabs so we speak Arabic most the time.”

Khalifah commented that sometimes fellow Arab students are not helpful at all.

When I made mistakes, Arabs students laugh at me. Therefore, I was shy to talk in the classroom. Once, I had a fight with an Arab student because he was laughing at me. I asked him: “Why are you laughing?” “He did not give me any response

### **3. Theme 3: Socialization with Americans**

Emirati and Saudi students socialize with Americans in their daily lives. These socialization experiences influence the students’ adjustments to American culture. When the students receive respect from Americans, the students enjoy their residences and school. Positive socialization processes in classrooms transfers to strong relationships outside the classroom. Emirati and Saudi students will ask American students for support, which leads Emirati and Saudi students prefer to work with Americans.

#### *Americans’ Respect*

Hassan expressed his fondness for Americans’ morals and respect. He did not experience any kind of discrimination. Hassan commented:

My way of thinking has changed for the better. Honestly, I like the Americans’ ethics such as respecting other people and respecting the system in general. The system is respected everywhere. I mean they respect the person they talk to. They really respect people. There are some exceptions but I did not find rude people at Penn State. I have been here a year and a half and thank God, I did not have any problems with people here. In any place I go, I feel that I am respected. Even in the immigration, I feel respected. They treat us with respect.

#### *American friends*

Hoor’s adjustment to the American culture was smooth because she had some American friends when she was in private school. She even celebrated American ceremonies. Hoor commented:

I had American friends before I came to the U.S. I know them from when I was in private schools. I saw their pictures and discussed their culture. We used to celebrate Thanksgiving when I was in private school. When I came here, I did not find a big difference.

#### *Socialization with American students*

Sheikha described her adaptation experiences in socializing with American students. She commented:

The first time when I communicated with American students, I felt expatriated but now I am more comfortable to work with American students because I started to understand their communication style. American students considered me shy even though everyone knows that I am not shy.

Classroom socialization strengthens Zayed’s relationship with American students outside the classroom, as he described:

I was walking on campus. Three American girls who were my classmates saw me and said, “Hi,” and asked me about my classes. These students know me because I helped them when they needed some clarifications for some assignments

Zayed added:

In small classes, we usually communicate with American students and know them well.

The dormitory is a way of strengthening the relationship between Gulf region’s students and American students, as Zayed commented:

Some of my friends told me that if I stayed at the dorm, American students might communicate well with us.

#### *American students’ assistance to Emirati students for writing*

Saudi students seek assistance from American students for writing, especially in group work, as Khaled stated:

I have the ideas in Arabic and I do not know how to write them. I try to tell the information to the American student. He does not know Arabic so, it is difficult to deliver the idea to him. I ask help from American students in our group. I tell them that I want to write this and this so, how can I write it? Another option is that I will write it by myself and then ask the American students to edit it.

Writing is a challenge for Emirati and Saudi students, so having American students in their groups provides the Emirati and Saudi students with confidence to complete better work. Zayed commented:

During this summer, we have American classmates in our group. They wrote the report. We did the presentation. We brought the needed materials.

#### *Preference for working with Americans (Native Speakers of English)*

Emirati and Saudi students expressed their preference for collaborating with American students:

Khaled commented

I prefer to work with American students.

Zayed commented:

I prefer to work with American students because they do their work well. We communicate through e-mails and divide the work. Everyone will do his/ her work which is fair. Some Americans do not want to work but others want to study and do their work.

### **4. Theme 4: Teachers’ Socialization and Support**

Teachers support the Emirati and Saudi students’ participation, writing papers, and examinations

Khalifah commented:

My teachers were supporting me. They encourage me to be relaxed when speaking. They told me the important strategy to learn English is continually practicing.

Khalifah expressed his teacher's understanding of their difficulties:

The teacher was very cooperative and when we have questions, we go to her. The teacher told us that she will help us in our research paper and will give us the main points to focus on.

Hoor commented:

Some classes, the teachers will be available during test time, so we can ask him/her and he/she will explain to us. He/she can remind us of what we have taken and in which section, which is better than the computer-based test, for which we cannot contact the teacher or use Google to search for information or translate some words.

Zayed expressed his comfort level in discussing his difficulties with his teacher:

If I have questions, I will ask my teacher. Sometimes, to prepare for exams, I answer the exam sample and if I have some mistakes, I show it to my teacher for an explanation of my mistakes.

Zayed discovered that American teachers do not discriminate against Arabs, a fear he had when attending American University. He commented:

The teachers are friendly if we are friendly. Although, I expected that some American teachers would discriminate against Arab students, as I heard, but I did not find that.

Emirati female student "Hoor" expressed how her teachers try to facilitate her learning by providing summaries and providing training for some programs. Also, she mentioned the important role of the teaching assistants.

Hoor commented:

Instead of buying books, teachers give us materials, summaries of the important points in the books with some information which the teachers create from different resources. We do not need to read the books. These readings with my notes are important for study.

Hoor added:

My major is biology. I used some database for writing my research. Our teachers teach us how to use these databases and guide us on the process of using the databases. Before using any programs, teachers teach us how to use them. Also, if we find difficulties in using these programs and databases, teaching assistants help us as well. We have to go to the teaching assistants early before the class starts.

Hassan mentioned his experience with the language institute support:

I have only an advisor in the language institute who is responsible for solving the students' issues. He is responsible for checking the students' absences. The advisor will send an e-mail to ask the student what the problems he/she faces that makes him absent. From my personal experience of the language institute, the first semester, I had a problem in my country and I went back home. I did not start the semester. I was absent for three weeks. I told the Saudi Arabian Embassy about my situation and I travelled. I stayed three or four weeks in Saudi Arabia and went back. I think I missed more than five weeks. The semester was only 40 classes. Only 20 classes are the limit to be absent in the language institute. I completed the semester and I returned after 20 days. The language institute accepted my situation and I completed the semester. Also, in another semester, I was playing football and I had accident. My leg was broken. I went to the hospital and I was absent for three weeks for a sickness absence. They accepted the situation. They are cooperative if a student is following the rules. If a student is playing and does not come to class, they will expel him. They had already expelled some students because of absence. If a teacher gives a student a warning for a semester and he/she gives him another warning in the following semester, the student will be expelled too. That is evidence that they have rules and they follow these rules.

#### *The need for Arab teachers*

Emirati and Saudi students have different opinions about having Arabs teachers. Some students have good experiences; however, a Saudi student stated his preference for native English speakers in his language preparation program to teach English.

Khalifah commented:

My friends' advisor in Architecture Engineering was Arab. He helped them many times.

Hoor commented:

We do not have Arabs teachers. I think if we have Arabs teachers, it will be better. They will understand our linguistics difficulties and will try to explain the complex concepts.

Hassan commented:

We do not have Arabs teachers in the language institute. I do not prefer to have Arabs teachers because I want to not to use Arabic any more to learn.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The major findings of this study allow discussion of the impact of students' and teachers' support on Emirati and Saudi students at U.S. Universities. Support was one of the four issues, which doctoral students addressed in a study of understanding their disciplinary context and cultural impact on their socialization and attrition at one institution (Gardner, 2010). Khalifah, a Saudi student, expressed his teachers' support: "My teachers were supporting me. They

encourage me to be relaxed to speak. They told me the important strategy to learn English is continually practicing.” He expressed his teacher’s understanding of the students’ difficulties: “The teacher was very cooperative and when we have questions, we go to her. The teacher told us that she will help us in our research paper and will give us the main points to focus on.” Hoor, an Emirati female student, also described her teachers’ support: “Some classes, the teachers will be available in the test time so, we can ask him/her and he/she will explain to us. He/she can remind us of what we have taken and in which section, which is better than the computer based test which we cannot contact the teacher or use Google to search for information or translate some words.” Zayed, an Emirati student, expressed his comfort level in discussing his difficulties with his teacher: “If I have questions, I will ask my teacher. Sometimes, to prepare for exams, I answer the exam sample and if I have some mistakes, I show it to my teacher to explain my mistakes.” Supporting the Emirati and Saudi student in their disciplines facilitates their socialization in their academic community. The study implied that U.S. universities need to hire more Arab professors and teaching assistants to support the Emirati and Saudi students in their studies because they will understand the language and culture. Also, these Arab teachers will help Emirati and Saudi students attain admission because of the common interest.

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**Ghadah Al Murshidi**, is currently an assistant professor in Curriculum and Instruction Department, She was a faculty member in Linguistics department, the Social Sciences and Humanities College. Her Ph.D. study was in Curriculum and Instruction and Comparative and International Education, her Master degrees are in Educational Leadership and Applied Linguistics, are from Pennsylvania State University. Her Bachelor Degree in Applied Linguistics and her Professional Diploma in Education are from the UAE University. Her research interests are in academic socialization, Language socialization, Cultures, leadership, etc. Her recent publications are *The Expression and Conceptualization of Motion through Space and Manner of Motion in Arabic and English: A Comparative Analysis*, and *Emirati and Saudi Students' Cultural Socialization and Adjustment at U.S. Universities*. Her recent award was "Young Emirati Researchers Prize" (YERP 2013) competition.

# Effect of Form-focused Pragmatic Instruction on Production of Conventional Expressions

Vahid Rafieyan

School of Educational Studies, Univesiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Maryam Sharafi-Nejad

School of Educational Studies, Univesiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Lin Siew Eng

School of Educational Studies, Univesiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

**Abstract**—Knowledge of target language conventional expressions is of crucial importance for language learners not only because they contribute to nativelike speech fluency but also because speakers from the same speech community share knowledge and use of the same inventory of conventional expressions. To assess the effect of form-focused pragmatic instruction in general and the effect of type of form-focused pragmatic instruction including Focus on Form and Focus on Forms methods in particular on improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions appropriately, an experimental study was conducted over 45 senior undergraduate learners of English as a Foreign Language at a university in Iran. The experiment comprised random assignment of participants into three groups consisting of two experimental groups (Focus on Form group and Focus on Forms group) and one control group, conducting eight intervention sessions, and administration of a discourse completion task. The findings revealed that generally form-focused pragmatic instruction was effective in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions appropriately and there was no significant difference between the effect of Focus on Form and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction. The pedagogical implications of the findings suggested furnishing foreign language classrooms with form-focused pragmatic instruction.

**Index Terms**—conventional expressions, form-focused instruction, input flood, metapragmatic explanation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Conventional expressions, described as “tacit agreements, which the members of a community presume to be shared by every reasonable co-member” (Coulmas, 1981, p. 4), “consist of strings such as *no problem*, *nice to meet you*, and *that’d be great*, which native speakers use predictable in certain contexts” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009, p. 756). Knowledge of target language conventional expressions for language learners is of crucial importance not only because they contribute to nativelike speech fluency (Pawley & Syder, 1983) but also because speakers from the same speech community share knowledge and use of the same inventory of conventional expressions (Wray, 2002), in other words, “in embodying societal knowledge they are essential in handling of day-to-day situations” (Coulmas, 1981, p. 4).

However, “In spite of their communicative value, conventional expressions are not acquired seamlessly even by advanced language learners” (Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012, p. 77). In fact, language learners cannot necessarily handle social situations in the same way as native speakers because they do not have ready access to, and therefore do not make use of, conventionalized expressions in the target language for meeting the social imposition as native speakers do (Edmondson & House, 1991). Clearly, the best way to acquire target language conventional expressions is to experience language immersion in the target language community (Roever, 2012), but not all language learners in a foreign language context have the opportunity to do so (Lin, 2014).

Therefore, inclusion of conventional expressions in foreign language classroom instruction can provide some virtual language immersion in a target language community for foreign language learners. The instruction can be presented in various methods including implicit Focus on Form methods of instruction and explicit Focus on Forms methods of instruction. However, there is no consensus on the ideal method of teaching target language pragmatics in foreign language classrooms. While some studies found the positive effect of Focus on Form pragmatic instruction (e.g. Ulbegi, 2009; Khatib & Safari, 2013), some others found Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction useful in developing target language pragmatic competence in foreign language learners (e.g. Ghobadi & Fahim, 2009; Lingli & Wannaruk, 2010; Bu, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2012).

To this end, the current study adopted an experimental research methodology by conducting both Focus on Form and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction on learners of English as a Foreign Language to assess the effect of pragmatic instruction on the acquisition of target language conventional expressions in general and to determine the ideal method

of teaching target language conventional expressions in particular. More specifically, the research questions to be addressed in the current study are:

1. Does form-focused pragmatic instruction improve the ability to produce target language conventional expressions?
2. Which type of form-focused pragmatic instruction (Focus on Form or Focus on Forms) is more effective in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions?

Accordingly the null hypotheses are:

1. Form-focused pragmatic instruction has no significant effect in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions.
2. There is no significant difference between Focus on Form and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on conventional expressions conducted so far have been both cross-sectional and developmental. Some studies have explored the role of individual difference variables such as first language (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2008), language proficiency (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2008; Taguchi, 2013), study abroad experience (Taguchi, 2013), and pragmatic awareness (Bardovi-Harlig, 2014) on the production of conventional expressions. Some other studies also investigated the reasons for the low production of conventional expressions (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009) and the effect of instruction on the ability to produce conventional expressions (Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012). There is, however, a growing need to examine the ideal way of presenting target language conventional expressions in foreign language classrooms.

In one study, Bardovi-Harlig et al. (2008) investigated the influence of first language and level of instruction on the development and use of conventional expressions. Participants consisted of 108 language learners from distinct countries in four levels of classes, from low-intermediate to low-advanced, of an Intensive English Program at a university in the American Midwest. The study employed a speech production task via a computer-delivered aural discourse completion task. The findings showed that language learners of various native languages often share production strategies and language learners increase their use of conventional expressions at higher levels.

In another study, Bardovi-Harlig (2009) explored the source of low production of conventional expressions by language learners. Participants consisted of 122 learners of English enrolled in the Intensive English Program of a university in the American Midwest. The instruments consisted of an audio recognition task, an audio-visual production task, and a background questionnaire. The results suggested that low production of conventional expressions by language learners has multiple sources including lack of familiarity with some expressions, overuse of familiar expressions, level of development, and sociopragmatic knowledge.

Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga (2012) conducted another study, using an experimental research design, to investigate the effect of instruction on the oral production of conventional expressions. Participants in the study consisted of 36 language learners in the Intensive English Program of a university in the American Midwest. An aural recognition task and an oral production task were used as pre-test and post-test. Intervention consisted of three sessions centered around contextualized input and guided metapragmatic noticing. The findings suggested that instruction promoted the use of some conventional expressions.

Taguchi (2013) also investigated the effect of general language proficiency and study abroad experience on appropriate and fluent production of target language conventional expressions. Participants in the study included three groups of Japanese learners of English at a university in Japan: a low language proficiency without study abroad experience group, a high language proficiency without study abroad experience group, and a high language proficiency with study abroad experience group. The ability to produce target language conventional expressions was assessed through a computerized oral discourse completion test. The findings suggested that while all learner groups failed to reach a native level, study abroad experience presented an advantage in the appropriate production of conventional expressions whereas proficiency presented an advantage in speech rates.

Most recently, Bardovi-Harlig (2014) investigated language learners' awareness of the meaning of target language conventional expressions and the effect of the associated meanings on the use of conventional expressions in social interactions. One hundred and fourteen language learners enrolled in the Intensive English Program of a university in the American Midwest participated in the study. To explore the meaning that language learners assigned to conventional expressions, the modified aural Vocabulary Knowledge Scale was used. The data suggested that language learners' awareness of the meaning of conventional expressions seems likely to play a role in whether language learners use an expression and which expression among related expressions they use to the exclusion of others.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

Participants in the study consisted of 45 undergraduate learners of English as a Foreign Language at the Islamic Azad University of Abadan in Iran. Among the participants, 15 were males and 30 were females. Their ages ranged from 22 to 28 with a mean age of 24.5 years old. These participants were considered suitable for the study as they were at the

last year of their study and had not experienced visiting or living in a native English-speaking country. Therefore, not only they were supposed to possess a high level of linguistic competence but also they did not have the opportunity to develop pragmatic competence.

### B. Instrument

The instrument used in the study was an oral discourse completion task eliciting a variety of speech acts including expressions of gratitude, apologies, warnings, leave-takings, requests, condolences, declining offers, acceptance of a request, acceptance of an invitation, invitation, declining an invitation, an agreement, deflecting thanks, and an introduction developed by Bardovi-Harlig (2009). The discourse completion task consisted of 32 scenarios comprising of both initiating and responding scenarios. The initiating scenarios (n=13) required respondents to initiate an interaction and the responding scenarios (n=19) required respondents to respond to an interlocutor's turn.

To assess the validity of the scenarios on the discourse completion task, content validity was assessed. Two lecturers who were experts in the field of interlanguage pragmatics judged and confirmed the appropriateness of scenarios for the study. To assess the reliability of the scenarios on the discourse completion task, a pilot study was conducted over 30 other undergraduate learners of English as a Foreign Language in the Islamic Azad University of Abadan who did not participate in the main study. The reliability coefficient assessed through Kurder Richardson 21 was 0.82.

### C. Procedure

During the fall semester in the academic year 2013/2014, participants were randomly assigned to three groups of 15 each consisting of two experimental groups and one control group. Participants in one of the experimental groups received Focus on Form pragmatic instruction through watching videos and reading texts flooded by target language conventional expressions. Participants in the other experimental group received Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction through metapragmatic explanations of target language conventional expressions followed by role plays. Participants in the control group were merely taught the grammatical features of the target language. Intervention was held twice weekly for two sessions a week, comprising 8 sessions (each session lasting for 60 minutes) of instruction per group. Following the intervention, the oral discourse completion task was administered to all participants in the language laboratory of the university. Participants heard the scenarios through headphones and responded orally. The responses were recorded from their headphones onto a digital file for the data analysis.

### D. Data Analysis

All responses were transcribed and checked by the researchers. The appropriateness of the responses was then assessed by two native speakers of English using a four-point rating scale ranging from zero (cannot evaluate) to three (almost perfect). Interrater reliability was  $r = 0.92$ . Table I displays the rating descriptions. As there were 32 scenarios, each participant could get a mark ranging from 0 to 96. The performance of participants in the three groups was then compared through independent-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the effect of form-focused pragmatic instruction in general and the effect of type of pragmatic instruction in particular on the development of target language conventional expressions in language learners. Effect size was then calculated to determine the magnitude of the differences among mean scores, or the amount of the total variance in the dependent variable (i.e. production of target language conventional expressions) that is predicted from knowledge of the levels of the independent variable (i.e. type of pragmatic instruction) when the difference among mean scores is statistically significant.

TABLE I  
RATING BAND DESCRIPTIONS

3	Native-like	The utterance is almost perfectly appropriate. This is what a native speaker would usually say in the situation
2	Slightly off, but acceptable	The utterance is a little off from native-like due to minor grammatical and lexical errors but overall acceptable
1	Obviously off	The utterance is clearly non-native like because of strange, non-typical way of saying and/or major grammatical and lexical errors
0	Can't evaluate	The utterance is impossible to understand

Adopted from Taguchi (2013)

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Findings

Table II presents the results of the independent-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the performance of language learners in the three groups on the discourse completion task. The main data to be considered in the table is the significance value (p value). If the significance value is less than or equal to 0.05 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), there is a significant difference somewhere among the mean scores on the dependent variable for the three groups. However; if the significance value is more than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), the difference among the mean scores on the dependent variable for the three groups is not considered significant (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2013; Pallant, 2013). The overall significance value obtained through the independent-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the performance of language learners in the three groups on the discourse completion task in the current study is 0.00 which is less than 0.05, indicating a



statistically significant difference among the mean scores on the ability to produce conventional expressions for the language learners in the three groups. However, significance value does not show which group is different from which other group. It only shows whether or not there is a significant difference among the groups being compared. Statistical significance of the difference between each pair of groups is provided through the results of the post-hoc tests.

TABLE II  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3283.511	2	1641.756	24.951	0.000
Within Groups	2763.600	42	65.800		
Total	6047.111	44			

Table III presents the results of the post-hoc tests. The post-hoc tests show exactly where the difference among the groups occurs (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2013; Pallant, 2013). There are a number of different post-hoc tests that can be used. The current study used Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test which is the most commonly used post-hoc test for the independent-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA). The asterisk (\*) next to the values mean that the mean scores obtained by the two groups being compared are significantly different from one another. According to the results of the Tukey's test presented in the table, the mean score obtained through the performance of language learners in the control group on the discourse completion task used in the current study is statistically significantly different from the mean scores obtained through the performance of language learners in both Focus on Form group and Focus on Forms group (experimental groups) on the test. However, there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained through the performance of language learners in Focus on Form group and Focus on Forms group.

TABLE III  
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group	Focus on Form Group	-20.133*	2.962	0.000	-27.33	-12.94
	Focus on Forms Group	-15.000*	2.962	0.003	-22.20	-7.80
Focus on Form Group	Control Group	20.133*	2.962	0.000	12.94	27.33
	Focus on Forms Group	5.133	2.962	0.205	-2.06	12.33
Focus on Forms Group	Control Group	15.000*	2.962	0.000	7.80	22.20
	Focus on Form Group	-5.133	2.962	0.205	-12.33	2.06

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Figure 1 depicts the comparison of the mean scores for the three groups of language learners participating in the current study. The mean scores obtained by the language learners in control group, Focus on Form group, and Focus on Forms group are respectively 48.73, 68.87, and 63.73. The figure shows that language learners in both experimental groups (Focus on Form group and Focus on Forms group) outperformed language learners in control group on the discourse completion task used in the current study. The comparison of the mean scores obtained by the language learners in the experimental groups also shows that although language learners in Focus on Form group had better performance in producing target language conventional expressions than language learners in Focus on Forms group, the difference is not considered statistically significant.

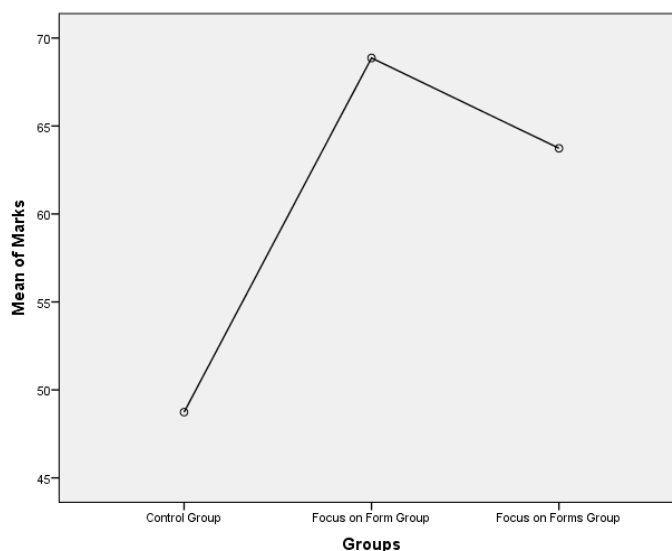


Figure 1. Performance of language learners in the three groups

To determine the magnitude of the differences among mean scores, or the amount of the total variance in the dependent variable that is predicted from knowledge of the levels of the independent variable when the difference among mean scores is statistically significant, effect size needs to be calculated. The most commonly used measure of effect size with independent-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) is eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) which indicates the proportion of variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable. The formula to calculate eta squared is: “eta squared = sum of squares between groups / total sum of squares” (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2013; Pallant, 2013). The measure of effect size computed through eta squared for the current study is 0.41 which according to the guidelines set by Cohen (1988) (i.e. 0.1 or 1% = small, 0.6 or 6% = medium, 0.24 or 14% = large) indicates a very large difference among mean scores obtained by the three different treatment groups. In other words, 41 percent of variance of the language learners’ performance on the test is explained by the type of instruction.

### B. Discussion

The current study explored the effect of form-focused pragmatic instruction in general as well as the effect of types of form-focused pragmatic instruction consisting of Focus on Form pragmatic instruction and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction in particular on language learners’ production of target language conventional expressions. The findings suggested that form-focused pragmatic instruction in general is conducive to promote the production of target language conventional expressions to a great extent. However, there is no significant difference between the effects of specific types of form-focused pragmatic instruction in this respect.

In the current study, language learners in the experimental groups who received pragmatic instruction, regardless of type of instruction, either using input flood through Focus on Form instruction or using metapragmatic explanations of target language conventional expressions through Focus on Forms instruction exhibited a significantly better performance on the production of target language conventional expressions than language learners in the control group who did not receive pragmatic instruction. However, the performance of language learners in both experimental groups did not show a marked difference from each other, that is, both Focus on Form and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction relatively equally contributed to the language learners’ knowledge of target language conventional expressions.

These findings can be explained through the noticing hypothesis proposed by Schmidt (1990, 2001) which states that “people learn about the things that they attend to and do not learn much about the things they do not attend to” (Schmidt, 2001, p. 30). Form-focused pragmatic instruction in the current study, regardless of the type (either in the form of Focus on Form or in the form of Focus on Forms), developed awareness of the differences between expressions which have been conventionalized in language learners’ native language and expressions which have been conventionalized in the target language. The awareness of pragmatic differences between language learners’ native language and target language conventional expressions most probably contributed to their noticing of the target language conventional expressions both inside classroom through the input they received and outside classroom through watching target language movies and reading target language books. Consequently, knowledge of target language conventional expressions was developed in them. Therefore, language learners in the experimental groups tended to use expressions which have been conventionalized in the target language rather than those which have been conventionalized in their native language in initiating and responding to the scenarios used in the current study to be sounded nativelike.

However, language learners in the control group did not receive awareness raising instruction about pragmatic differences between expressions which have been conventionalized in their native language and expressions which have been conventionalized in the target language to help them notice target language conventional expressions. Consequently, they relied on their knowledge of their native language conventional expressions in initiating and responding to the scenarios on the discourse completion task used in the current study as knowledge of target language conventional expressions did not develop in them.

These findings reject the first null hypothesis which states form-focused pragmatic instruction has no significant effect in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions. These findings, however, confirm the second null hypothesis which states there is no significant difference between Focus on Form and Focus on Forms pragmatic instruction in improving the ability to produce target language conventional expressions. The findings obtained in the current study are consistent with the findings obtained by Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga (2012) who found that pragmatic instruction promotes the use of some target language conventional expressions.

### V. CONCLUSION

The study found that form-focused pragmatic instruction was conducive to the development of knowledge of target language conventional expressions in language learners to a great extent. However, there was no significant difference between the various methods of presenting pragmatic instruction. Language learners in the experimental groups (Focus on Form group and Focus on Forms group) who received pragmatic instruction were more successful in appropriate production of target language conventional expressions than language learners in the control group who did not receive pragmatic instruction. However, there was no marked difference in the ability to produce target language conventional expressions between language learners in Focus on Form group and language learners in Focus on Forms group. These findings suggest that foreign language classrooms should be furnished with form-focused pragmatic instruction

comparing language learners' native language conventional expressions with those used by target language speakers to help them to be sounded nativelike (Rafieyan et al., 2014; Rafieyan et al., in press).

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**Vahid Rafieyan** is currently a PhD candidate at the school of educational studies in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). He has eleven years of experience teaching IELTS, communicative language, and academic writing. He has a number of publications in the field of interlanguage pragmatics including “relationship between attitude toward target language culture instruction and pragmatic comprehension development”, “relationship between cultural distance and pragmatic comprehension”, and “pragmatic comprehension development through telecollaboration”. He holds the 2012 best TESL student award from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM).

**Maryam Sharafi-Nejad** is currently a PhD candidate at the School of Educational Studies in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). She has five years of experience teaching IELTS and academic writing. She has a number of publications in the field of interlanguage pragmatics including “effect of pragmatic instruction on sustainable development of pragmatic awareness”, “pragmatic comprehension development through telecollaboration”, and “relationship between cultural distance and pragmatic comprehension”.

**Lin Siew Eng**, PhD is currently the Programme Chairperson (Bachelor of Education -TESOL at the School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Her areas of specialisation are Teaching of English as a Second Language and Reading. Her areas of research are Benchmarking English Language Reading Abilities, Reading Matrix Development and Benchmarking English Language Grammar Proficiency. She has won awards in the innovation of ‘Reading Evaluation And Decoding System’ and ‘Grammar Assessment and Management System’.

# TESOL Classroom Observations: A Boon or a Bane? An Exploratory Study at a Saudi Arabian University

Sayyed Rashid Shah

Faculty of Engineering, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Khalid Al Harthi

English Language Institute, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—The present study aimed to explore the EFL teachers' perceptions of classroom observation system implemented in an English Language Institute of a Saudi university. It reviewed literature on the nature of instructional supervision and classroom observation to develop an understanding of different types of classroom observation and various contextual issues related to the practice teacher evaluation through observation. The current research utilised semi-structured interviews to elicit qualitative data from five purposively chosen EFL instructors. The participants shared their lived experiences of the research phenomenon in great detail that resulted in wholesome data on the subject. The findings, presented in six overarching themes, reveal the psychological plight of the teachers as they considered the practice of classroom observation a consistent professional challenge due to several factors, i.e. their lack of autonomy in pre and post-observation conference, observer-observee trust deficit, observers' subjective approach towards the assessment criteria and classroom teaching, observers' insufficient training and qualifications, the use of observation as a means to control teachers, and the element of threat and insecurity. Based on the findings, recommendations are set forth to improve the existing observation system for the benefit of the teachers, learners and the institute.

**Index Terms**—instructional supervision, classroom observation, teachers' challenges, EFL context

## I. INTRODUCTION

Professionalism, a contested issue in educational circles around the world, is equally desirable in the field of ELT. Teachers' professionalism is primarily assessed, keeping in view teachers' professional competence, skills and effectiveness as classroom teachers, through instructional supervision (Farmer, 2006). More often than not, teachers are lambasted for their students' underachievement and poor quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. Generally, this criticism emanates from the comments of those who are responsible for teachers' supervision and classroom observations. Contrary to the principles of teacher learning and professional development, classroom observations, actually meant for teachers' professional growth, are usually more evaluative and less developmental in nature, leading to teacher burn-out and less-effective performance in classrooms. Worse still, there is a strong perception of the element of coercion and threat in the whole process. Similar to various other contexts, in the Arab World too, classroom observations are regarded as threatening and ineffectual due to their subjective, judgmental, and impressionistic nature (Mercer, 2006). Lacking autonomy and voice, teachers often resent the process of observation, and consider the observers unjustifiably powerful personnel who is there to judge and pass verdicts on their teaching practices.

Instructional supervision, formative in scope, aims at improving teachers' skills (Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). Hinchey (2010) argues that supervision 'is used to gain information that can help teachers, even those who are already proficient, to improve or expand their abilities' (p. 6). In the light of literature, supervision has two main objectives: a) collecting data on teacher performance through various means (formal and informal observation), and b) linking that data to professional development of teachers (Zepeda, 2007). With a formative approach, feedback provided to teachers in post-supervision period focuses on developing performance and is not linked with evaluation. The feedback includes descriptive data gathered during observations (Ovando, 2005). On the contrary, evaluation aims to rate the teachers' performances in a bid to decide reappointments, terminations, or pay-scales (Hinchey, 2010; Zepeda, 2007). The literature has highlighted three distinct foci related to teacher evaluation: a) rating teachers on their professional traits, b) rating teachers on instructional practices, and c) rating teachers based on their professional growth and specific classroom traits (Ovando & Ramirez, 2007). In present scenario, both in western and non-western contexts, evaluation has focused on assessing teacher performance based on demonstration of targeted teaching practices and specific skills.

In EFL and ESL contexts, instructional supervision, 'one of a number of ways of improving professional practice' (Metcalf, 2006, p.449) is mainly used as a yardstick to evaluate both novice and experienced teachers' competence and skills. As found by O'Leary (2012) in British education system, in Saudi Arabia, instructional supervision in the form of

classroom observation is a ubiquitous mechanism in teachers' professional lives, used as a means of collecting data about what goes on in classrooms through box-ticking exercise, based on which judgements about teachers' performance, skills and competence are made. This judgmental approach towards classroom observation makes it difficult to create a culture of collaboration, acceptance and constructive criticism. Moreover, using the box-ticking exercise and grading system have given rise to a range of counterproductive consequences that negatively impact the professional identity of the teachers (O'Leary, 2012). Similarly, Shah et al. (2013) found that the element of threat in the Saudi EFL context is presumably due to the uncomplimentary nature of evaluation which has implications for classroom teaching. The current study in this particular sense will attempt to explore the EFL teachers' perceptions of classroom observation as instructional supervision and its implications on their practices in the Saudi context. The findings of the study will hopefully raise the consciousness of the administrators and observers about the classroom observation related issues. To this end, research at hand attempts to answers the following three research questions:

1. What are the EFL teachers' perceptions of classroom observations in their work context?
2. To what extent is the current observation system a challenge for the EFL teachers?
3. What are the factors that make classroom observations a challenge in the present context?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a concise review of literature on the scope of classroom observation. Firstly, it defines classroom observation and considers its various roles in teacher education. Secondly, it surveys inherent challenges faced by educators in other contexts and highlights various issues related to different types and goals of classroom observations. Finally, it looks into the practice of classroom observations in the domain of ELT/TESOL.

## III. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

In the late 1960s, teachers welcomed administrators, supervisors and observers to their classrooms for formal, informal or peer observation (Bernstein, 2008; Gosling, 2002). As an integral part of summative evaluation, classroom observations are 'those operations by which individuals make careful, systematic scrutiny of the events and interactions occurring during classroom instruction. The term also applies to the records made of these events and interactions' (Cogan, 1973, p.134). These events and interactions are recorded for several purposes, i.e. for teacher annual evaluation, for teacher professional development and learners' performance assessment.

Scholars perceive classroom observations as a valuable tool which is employed to understand classroom realities and achieve high standards of effective teaching methodologies. The most recent work by Murphy (2013) highlights various aspects of classroom observation. For instance, it offers an opportunity for supervisors to assess teachers' styles, their classroom management skills and various aspects of teaching that are hard to obtain through other forms of evaluation. Moreover, it allows teachers to receive constructive feedback on their teaching techniques and methods in a bid to improve them further. In a nutshell, it is one of the most common ways of reflecting on pedagogical practices (Farrell, 2011), which can help teachers evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

The observation schemes applied in the education mainstream and ELT field have typically two procedures: the top-down procedure which is designed and implemented by experts mostly external and far removed from classroom realities; the bottom-up procedure which is initiated and carried out by teachers with collegial collaboration in their institutions (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011). However, in some contexts teachers are not frequently observed since classroom observations are considered a source of discomfort, anxiety, and stress both for in-service and pre-service teachers, and a subjective approach that aims to question and judge teachers' professional competence (Borich, 2008).

### A. Issues with Classroom Observation

Authors associate several issues with the process and implementation of classroom observations. Williams' (1989) concern is that traditional observations '...often cause problems for teachers and trainers. They tend to be judgemental, relying on a trainer's subjective judgements, rather than developmental, developing the teacher's ability to assess his or her own practices' (p.85). One of the major causes of these problems is the observers' lack of professional training as very few language teachers ever receive any formal training to carry out such crucial responsibilities (Sheal, 1989; Bailey, 2006). Literature indicates that the implementation of observation standards and procedures often differ across observers in various contexts, culminating in their giving, at times, inadequate feedback to observees, which accentuates the importance of professional training on part of the observers for effective and reliable outcomes of the process (Murphy, 2013).

Most teachers around the world despise the practice of classroom observation as the idea of being observed causes stress, nervousness and anxiety (Aubusson et al., 2007; Borich, 2008). Moreover, the whole practice is perceived as a way of surveillance and control rather than a means to professional development (Metcalf, 2006). Li (2009) has also highlighted the fact that teachers feel anxious being observed as they see observers using top-down authority and looking at classroom affairs subjectively. As a results, teachers' reservations and concerns have given space to articles with titles such as 'Survive teacher observations' (Sasson, 2008) and put the observer-observee relationship in question.

Observer-observee relationship is the key to a successful show of an observed lesson and it should not look like a private cold war between the two parties (Bailey, 2006). However, a strong relationship is dependent on the level of trust they share (Cranston, 2009). A strong bond and good relationship between the observer and observee will not only benefit the teacher, but the observer as well. With a positive learning attitude, observation will support the observer to capture the classroom events precisely and objectively and go beyond the recording of mere impressions (Wajnryb, 1992). Also, it will review the collected data collaboratively to ensure positive outcomes, initiate a useful dialogue about teaching strategies, and identify future foci for the observer and observee (Murdock, 2000). Further, it will gather “valid, objective, and recorded” data (Hunter, 1983, p. 43) that will explicitly discuss classroom events rather than personal impressions (Murdock, 2000). This process will offer the observers an opportunity to consistently observe teachers and give them feedback (Shannon, 1991). Moreover, frequent observations over an extended period of time will improve the reliability (Denner, et al., 2002) and increase the validity of the observation system (Cronin & Capie, 1986). Zepeda (2007) further elucidates the role of observers and supervisors by categorising them as visionary instructional leaders. The observers’ vision is a combination of knowledge, reality, experiences, pedagogical beliefs, and human values, which adds to the importance of providing feedback to instructors (Zepeda, 2007) and ‘provides a tangible representation of effective instructional planning and delivery’ (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008 p. 10). Furthermore, the classroom observers’ vision helps them develop skills to interlink supervision, professional development, and evaluation that result in teacher growth (Green 2010).

### *B. Types and Goals of Observations*

#### ***Appraisal observations***

The process of appraisal observation is seen as ‘supervision’ in educational circles. The term “general supervision” (Wallace, 1991, p.108) refers to outside the classroom, whereas “clinical supervision” (Wallace, 1991, p.108) encompasses the idea of practices within classrooms. In terms of clinical supervision, it is considered a special occasion when an observer is sitting at the back of the classroom observing and recording the teachers and learners’ actions (Wajnryb, 1992). The underlying assumption is that observation is a powerful tool that enables participants to gather data and gain insights into the classroom teaching and learning (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Moreover, it needs to represent an impartial and unbiased view of the observer. Although observers are required to ensure non-involvement (Gebhard, 1999), their presence may cause frustration and consequently impact the classroom dynamics (Wajnryb, 1992).

#### ***Developmental observations***

Williams (1989) asserts that classroom observation should be “developmental rather than judgmental” (p. 85) and should provide teachers with opportunities to raise their awareness of classroom dynamics, improve their abilities to assess their own teaching approaches and develop their skills to notice, reflect and enhance their pedagogic skills (Malderez, 2003).

Sidhu and Fook (2010) have placed *clinical supervision* in the humanistic evaluation model that consists of five stages which lead to developmental observations: i) in pre-observation stage, the observer and observee collaboratively plan a formal observation session; ii) in while-observation stage, the observer gathers low-inference and verifiable data; iii) in post- observation scenario, the observer analyses the data to discover strengths and weaknesses; iv) in post-observation meeting, observer and observee collaboratively focus on both the strengths and weaknesses to help teachers develop a future plan of action that will help the them grow professionally; and v) afterwards, both the parties set a time-frame to achieve the set targets. In a similar way, Malderez (2003) mentions four main purposes of classroom observations; for professional development, for training, for evaluation, and for research. Likewise, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2011) cite three main forms of observations; for professional development, for rewards, and for promotion. Notwithstanding its drawbacks cited in the literature, researchers and practitioners have consensus that the most effective goal of classroom observation is professional development (Montgomery, 2013).

In ideal circumstances, an observation is often preceded by a ‘planning conference’ in which the scope, nature and expectations of observation are explained, and are followed by a ‘feedback conference’ in which observation findings are discussed and used to identify areas for development and improvement (Gall & Acheson, 2010). In the case of post-observation dialogue, it helps promote observer-observees’ collaboration since ‘posing questions to teachers during these interactions allows them to engage in reflection, to think critically, and to approach teaching as a decision making process’ (Vasquez & Reppen, 2007, p. 164).

In sum, to make the observation scheme successful and beneficial for the teachers, the observers need to be qualified trainers who know what to look for, how to provide effective feedback and how to keep the subjectivity factor to a minimum. Moreover, observation needs to be a ‘non-judgemental description of classroom events that can be analysed and given interpretation’ (Gebhard, 1999, p.35) in feedback discussions which are integral to teacher professional development.

### *C. Classroom Observation in ELT*

In different contexts, the role and objectives of classroom observation are perceived differently, and thus the experiences of classroom observation among pre-service and in-service teachers differ a great deal (Wang & Day, 2002). The aim of observation in pre-service TESOL training is to use it as a learning tool for potential ESOL teachers to learn the basics of teaching (Gebhard, 1999; Wajnryb, 1992). On the other hand, in public sector, classroom observations

have become synonymous with teacher evaluation and teacher supervision (Sahakian & Stockton, 1996). While the significance of observation is acknowledged around the world, there is dearth of research on its goals and ways of implementation in different EFL/ESL contexts. Generally, challenges faced by teachers with observation systems are identical in nature. For instance, Wang and Day (2002) found both subjective and procedural problems with observation practices which affect observer-observee relationship and minimise the role of teachers to submissive performers. Similarly, other studies conducted in ELT contexts rate observation schemes ineffective and judgmental due to the observers' lack of professionalism and their inability to frequently revisit the same classroom in order to record teachers' progress on a long term basis (Copland, 2008; Hooton, 2008; Mallows, 2002; Murdoch, 2000; Tennant, 2006; Howard, 2010; Borg, 2006).

In the context of Middle East, teacher evaluation does not take place in a supportive and congenial environment (Murdoch, 2000). The findings of a study conducted at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) show that the tools used for teacher evaluation are often under-developed and 'ad-hoc', and observations are mainly carried out by overburdened director supervisors who give no sufficient time to prepare for, and follow up on classroom visits. Such ad-hoc evaluation practices often result into teacher burn-out, anxiety and a lack of faith in the validity of observation (Murdoch, 2000). In the same way, Howard (2010) explored various aspects of teacher appraisal and the impact of classroom observation on learners and teachers' behaviour in an observed lesson in UAE context; however, this study is the very first attempt to investigate the burning issue of classroom observation in Saudi EFL context.

#### IV. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The current study is conducted in the English Language Institute (ELI) of a Saudi university. The ELI runs the Preparatory Year Programme (PYP) catering to the English language learning needs of about 6000-7000 students each year. The faculty of the ELI comprises around 200 language teachers from 25 different countries with various L1 backgrounds. The PYP consists of four modules with seven weeks each. In each module, a level-based student textbook and workbook are covered following a weekly pacing guide. Ahead of the enrollment in the PYP, students have to take the Oxford Placement Test designed by the University of Oxford following the Common European Framework (CEF) which helps stream the students into suitable levels starting from Beginner (A0) to Intermediate (B1). After successful completion of a module, students are promoted to another level. The ELI has adopted the New Headway Plus (Special Edition) as main syllabus resource.

The ELI has adopted a rigorous system of teacher evaluation which grades teachers on a scale of 1 to 5. The lowest grades which are 1 and 2 may result in teachers' termination or transfer to remote satellite campuses. As part of annual evaluation, bi-annual classroom observations are carried out for each teacher. During classroom observation, teachers' instructional skills are assessed using a box-ticking rubric. These skills are divided into 16 categories covering a range of teaching aspects: effective use of classroom space and teaching resources, rapport with learners, classroom management skills, lesson delivery and execution of plan, and linguistic competence of a teacher. Moreover, the rubric considers the lesson components and its flow, i.e. warm up, effective instructions, monitoring, feedback and assessment, effective questioning, varied learner's centred activities, subject knowledge, and the timing and pace of the lesson.

#### V. METHODOLOGY

The current study is naturalistic and exploratory in nature, considering the experience, perceptions, and multiple socially constructed realities of EFL teachers at a Saudi Arabian university. To understand how the EFL teachers perceive the phenomenon of classroom observation in their context and how it has challenged their professional skills, an interpretive paradigm was adopted to underpin this inquiry. The interpretive research paradigm reflects naturalistic, constructivist, and qualitative features (Robson, 2002). Smith (1987) argues that 'for interpretive approaches, the object field to be studied is the acts and meanings ascribed to events by actors in a particular social context' (p.140). This correlates with Marshall and Rossman's (1999) argument that 'for a study focusing on individual lived experience, the researcher could argue that one cannot understand human actions without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to these actions, their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worlds' (p. 57).

The motivation for this inquiry came from our personal experience of classroom observation in the Saudi EFL context. The difficulties and challenges we observed and encountered in the current evaluation and observation system motivated us to look into the teachers' dilemmas of classroom observation in their contexts. Although our role in this study served as investigators, we found ourselves immersed in the interviewees' comments and empathised with their pedagogic quandaries. Borg and Gall (1983) state that 'by being actively involved in the situation that the researcher is observing, the researcher often gains insights and develops interpersonal relationships that are virtually impossible to achieve through any other method' (p. 26).

##### A. *Method of Data Collection*

The aim of the qualitative data analysis was to achieve a thorough understanding of the target phenomenon, and to this end the current study utilised qualitative techniques for data collection (Jupp, 2006). Five semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the perceptions of EFL teachers about classroom observation as part of



instructional supervision. The choice of qualitative interviews was made since it is “a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the lived experiences and lived meanings of the subjects’ everyday world” (Kvale, 2007, p. 11). From a researcher’s standpoint, the main objective to utilise interview techniques in a qualitative study is ‘to seek in-depth understanding about the experiences of individuals and groups, commonly drawing from a small sample of people, selected purposively. Such types of interviews are called semi-structured’ (Scott & Usher, 2006, p. 147). Moreover, semi-structured interviews were used for their flexible structure which allowed the interviewees to express their viewpoint freely (Flick, 2002). Also, it offered us the opportunity to develop unexpected themes which emerged during the interviews (Cohen et al., 2011; Mason, 2002). For the purpose of this study, open-ended questions, probes and prompts were mainly written in the light of the literature reviewed on the topic, however some questions, probes and prompts were framed based on our personal experience, intuition and observation of the target phenomena.

Five interviews were conducted in the English language with five EFL instructors. Each interview took approximately 40 to 50 minutes. All the interviews were audio recorded, transferred to and saved on a password-protected computer. For each interview, an MS-Word file was created with the pseudonyms of the interviewees, which are cited in the findings.

### B. Participants

Five participants took part in this study. They were interviewed at their convenience. The selected participants were all English language instructors in a Saudi Arabian University from English and non-English speaking countries. We used the *Purposive Sampling* strategy (Patton, 2002) in order to access teachers who were ranked ‘excellent’ on the rubric applied by the Professional Development Unit (PDU) at the ELI. The participants had a minimum 5 years of EFL teaching experience in the Saudi context. Purposive sampling paved our way for seeking thorough information from those experienced instructors who were in a strong position to divulge it (Cohen et al., 2011).

Considering the research ethics, the participants’ informed consent to participate in the study was obtained, and they were communicated their right to withdraw from the research at any time. Furthermore, the anonymity and confidentiality of their views were guaranteed by giving them a chance to choose their pseudonyms (Neuman, 2006).

### C. Data Analysis

Data analysis included open coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994, Creswell, 2012). We used Nvivo software to organise and examine the interview data more efficiently. After entering the interview data in Nvivo software, we read the interviewees’ responses and assigned them 29 open codes. Later, we merged the identical codes and reduced them to 20. We then re-examined the codes several times in the light of the data to ascertain that the assigned codes matched the content. Throughout the coding process, we kept looking for additional codes and remained focused on the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Newby, 2010). Later, the codes were collapsed into 12 categories and various sub-categories. As we incessantly examined the generated codes and categories, there emerged six over-arching themes. The findings section contains a description and discussion of these six major themes which inform the main research questions.

## VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As the participants recalled experiences of how the phenomenon of classroom observation has challenged their professional skills and what factors have contributed to make it a challenge in the ELI context, this section renders a detailed account of their lived experiences and informs the three research questions.

### A. Teachers’ Lack of Autonomy in Pre and Post-observation Conference

The assumption that feedback is integral to instructional improvement draws from research on formative assessment. However, if teachers can express themselves and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in post-observation session of evaluative observation, it can add to their professional growth (Jonson, 2008). Teachers in this study have raised their voice about their lack of autonomy in pre and post observation conferences where they receive ‘a blue print’ from the observers with no choice to comment or disagree (Wallace, 1991, p. 110). Being passive participants in the whole process, they are not given a choice to teach a topic; rather observers decide what to teach in an observed lesson. This often results in teacher demotivation and burnout as they lack autonomy and power to make decisions about their classroom teaching. Moreover, the patronising attitude of the observers puts the validity of observation in doubt. Bailey (2006) believes that successful observations are those which ‘are both preceded and followed by discussions with the teacher, but those communications don’t always occur’ (2006, p. 146) due to the imbalance of power relationship which needs to be recognised as a reality (Wragg, 1999). Similar to Cockburn’s claim ‘the observer is commonly perceived as possessing greater power’, which ‘is legitimised by organisational arrangements’ (2005, p. 384). In post-observation meeting, in case of disagreement or objection over the observers’ decisions, observees usually avoid to question their verdicts rather accept what is set forth as they do not want to risk their jobs. It explicates the effect of power imbalance on the observees’ participation in the feedback conference (Chamberlin, 2000) and undermines the developmental potential of the whole process.

*I don't necessarily agree with the observers' feedback and point of views, I do express myself, but at the end nothing happens. They believe that they are always right and teachers are always wrong. They never change their opinion (Joseph).*

*I express myself in the feedback stage, I give the observer my points. Sometimes he agrees but it doesn't make much difference. So it's better not to argue as arguments can result into big administrative issues and teachers can lose their jobs (Ali).*

The above quotes unveil the suppressive nature of the observation process for the observees who refrain from expressing their opinions. They seem to be dealing with stubborn observers who enjoy excessive authority to pass their verdicts on teachers' professionalism. In such circumstances where teachers are not given proper feedback and consider the feedback as 'one man show', it becomes difficult to consider the developmental aspects of the observation practice.

#### B. Observer-observee Lack of Trust

The imbalance of power relationship leads to the teachers' lack of trust in the observer's role as the latter enjoys excessive authority to give judgments on teachers' 'one shot' performance that may not be adequate to assess the potential of a teacher. In order to optimise maximum benefits of the observation schemes, establishing a congenial relationship with observees becomes vital as observation must be built on a foundation of trust (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011), otherwise, the lack of trust will lead to suspicions and doubts. Furthermore, the uneven state of affairs between the observer and observee is seen as a tug of war due to which participants in this study find it impossible to discuss their weaknesses while reflecting on their lesson in post-observation conference (Bailey, 2006).

*The element of trust is certainly not there. The observers do not trust the teachers. They should show trust in the teachers' skills. They should not underestimate teachers. In order to be positive, observers should be trainers first, they should have a good teaching experience. They should first teach here and acquire good background knowledge of the Saudi context (Michael).*

*Generally, the observers at the ELI are known for their partial or impartial approach. Teachers often consider the observers as powerful figures who can freely say whatever they want and make you feel helpless and hapless. Of course, I never believe what they say or write in the feedback session (Ali).*

*I believe the observers often give the management a different view of the teachers' performances. I would say the written or verbal feedback is only a formality and they often change their opinion. Sometimes, they change their already written feedback and inform the teachers as well, but teachers can't do anything about their verdicts (Rajun).*

It can be inferred from the above quotes that observers and management have a pre-assigned agenda. The objective may not be to facilitate teachers' professional development, rather use the system as a tool to determine teachers' future in the institute. Consequently, teachers often lack trust in the observers and give no weightage to their feedback. Moreover, their feedback is taken as biased and unreliable.

#### C. Observers' Subjectivity

The environment of mistrust finds its roots in the observers' subjectivity, a commonly found phenomenon in other contexts too (Borich, 2008). EFL teachers at the ELI consider the observers' approach subjective and different from one another since they see things through their own lenses and give their diverged opinions about a universal aspect of language teaching. Wragg (1999) in his seminal work *An Introduction to Classroom Observation*, raises the issue of reliability of observation as a form of assessment and remarks that 'we often "observe" what we want to see' (p. vii). His comment highlights the subjectivity of observation schemes and how various events are 'inevitably filtered through the interpretive lens of the observer' (Foster, 1996, p. 14). In a similar way, teachers in this study have conveyed their point that the varied interpretations of the observation rubric add to the teachers' frustration as the assessment criteria are subjectively construed by the observers.

*Generally the observations at the ELI are subjective and there is no harmony between the observers' understanding of the rubric. The rubric has 15 points and I am sure all the observers look at them from 15 different angles (Shaan).*

*Subjectivity is something that you never get rid of and it negatively affects your teaching. However, here at the ELI the observers' bossy attitude and inordinate authority make it a big issue (Rajun).*

#### D. Lack of Training and Irrelevant Qualification of the Observers

In a typical top-down management and centralised educational system, the carefully chosen people to perform certain duties are often very close to their bosses. The management expresses more trust in their chosen coordinators, supervisors and observers who are responsible for teacher assessment and evaluation, rather than teachers who hold the key to the students' success. In such scenarios, observers' qualifications make no difference as classes are often observed by those who are not only from other departments, but have no ELT experience whatsoever. This trend is indicative of unprofessional attitude that has a long lasting effect on teachers' motivation and job commitment. The observers' only qualification is the 'trust' of the boss, which invariably adds to the stress of the teachers. Since, they lack experience, training and qualification in the field of language teacher education, their comments and feedback often sound ridiculous.

*My classes were observed by those who had no ELT qualification and experience. They followed a rubric, however, they would always look for negative points. Their feedback would irritate me (Michael).*

Similar to what Namaghi (2011) found, untrained and unqualified observers with no basic knowledge of teacher training and classroom observation make the teachers' lives difficult. It affirms the fact that language teachers are usually promoted to key positions, i.e. observers and supervisors without receiving any formal training (Bailey, 2006). Consequently, their presence in classroom causes nervousness and frustration that lead to burnout and demotivation.

*The observer's qualification is a core thing. I should be aware of who is coming to my class. I should know of his experience and training. To me it is very important whether he knows TESOL methodologies or not, does he have ELT background? (Joseph).*

*It is very important to know about the observer's background, if he doesn't have an ELT background and he is going to observe me I don't think that he will understand the dynamics and the objectives of the different activities I introduce in my class, and he will not be able to grade my lesson accordingly; so, I would rather prefer a person who is qualified, who knows about ELT and who has done some kind of teacher training courses and who knows something about classroom observation. If he is qualified, I will find myself easy and I will teach confidently (Ali).*

*The observers' qualifications, relevant teaching experience and teacher training experience should be shown to the teachers that he is well-read and has attended courses because such things play a very big role in observation. Regarding classroom observation, there is a lot of stuff they need to know about (Shaan).*

The above quotes value the observers' training, qualification and experience as language teachers and teacher trainers. Hence, teachers have emphasised the need to induct observers with substantial teacher training qualifications, adequate knowledge of the teaching context and solid understanding of the learners' needs at the ELI. Adherence to these properties will help teachers not to feel the pressure, rather develop their faith in the system and teach more efficiently in a conducive environment.

#### E. Control and Accountability

In many contexts, classroom observation is still a challenge and a threat to the teachers' professional identity due to which it has become difficult to move towards a collaborative culture in which observation practice is accepted as a routine task between colleagues and where it is seen as one of a number of ways of improving professional practice. Ozga (1995) considers the 'shifting relationships between the state and professionals' and the increasing importance of 'management' in a marketised system (p. 23). On these grounds, the management aims to achieve maximum outcomes by increasing control and accountability in the guise of professionalism. For this reason, teachers regard classroom observations as a system of surveillance and control (e.g. OFSTED inspections) rather than as a means of promoting professional development. In fact, the whole process results into the deprofessionalisation of the teachers. In a nutshell, the findings suggest that there is a lack of congenial relationship between the instructors and management and the latter keep a very close check on them through classroom observations. In order to control the teachers, more often than not, observers, supervisors and academic coordinators are given inordinate powers to follow and report the teachers' on-campus activities. Teachers also believe that the academic coordinators and observers have their own vested interests to secure their positions and thus show their loyalty to the management and that results in teacher exploitations.

*Observation is not the only way to keep a close check on the teachers. They try to control the teachers in many different ways; however, classroom observation is typically used for contract renewal purposes (Michael).*

*These middle managers and observers who assess our performances are more than efficient in showing their loyalty to the management by spying on teachers and reporting petty things. They are definitely not teacher friendly (Shaan).*

#### F. The Element of Threat and Insecurity

Owing to the aforementioned concerns and reservations of the teachers, the element of threat and coercion prevail at the ELI that affects teachers' performances and students' outcomes particularly in an observed lesson. Furthermore, factors such as lack of autonomy, subjectivity, teachers-observers' trust deficit and the observers' lack of training contribute to the teachers' anxiety, stress and insecurity. Surprisingly, these common traits of the twentieth century found by Williams (1989) and Quirke (1996) still exist in Saudi EFL context, due to which teachers, mostly expats, consider the observation scheme a challenging phenomenon.

*To be honest, it really is a threat. I always feel nervous and it is never a very good experience for me. I really have to be very careful about it. When I get the date, there is a fidgety feeling (Rajun).*

*Teachers have been fired, transferred and put under check all due to classroom observation. In fact, classroom observation decides your future as a teacher (Ali).*

*One small mistake that may be a pronunciation or grammatical slip of tongue, can result into my sacking or transferring to other campuses. There is no job security (Shaan).*

The above quotes expose the failure of administration in a bid to provide a conducive professional environment where teachers could discharge their duties with confidence. Moreover, it is seen that teachers' voices are imprisoned in their classrooms and they have no right to express their concerns.

### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The current observation scheme represents an observer-dominated model that is run by undertrained and less-qualified observers. Owing to the subjective approach of the observers and the policy of surveillance on the teachers,

there is a climate of threat and insecurity. In such a scenario, teachers feel stressed, demotivated and unnerved, and thus fail to perform well in their classrooms, which in turn affects the whole learning process. Therefore, the teacher evaluation system needs to be overhauled. For the effective operation of the system, management needs to gain the confidence of the teachers. Their autonomy and job security need to be assured and the observers or supervisors' role and interference in teachers' classrooms have to be curtailed. In this highly competitive professional context, well qualified and professionally trained observers should be assigned the task to observe classes with utmost objectivity. This approach will lead to a professional environment where teachers and observers will share the bond of trust and work towards the common goal: the betterment of the students, their own professional development, and the image of the institute. From the researchers' perspective, there is a serious need for more critical work on the teachers' professional autonomy, empowerment, and voice.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study has attempted to explore the perceptions of EFL teachers about the classroom observation system prevalent in an English language institute. The findings have revealed the psychological plight of the teachers as they have experienced enormous challenges linked to the practice of classroom observations as part of their annual evaluation. Teachers consider classroom observation a perennial pressure due to various reasons, i.e. their lack of autonomy in pre and post-observation conference, observer-observee lack of trust, observers' subjective approach towards the assessment criteria and classroom teaching, observers' insufficient training and qualification, the use of observation as a means to control teachers, and the prevailing element of threat and insecurity. Similar to what O'Leary (2006) believes, the observation scheme at the research site offers an inequitable proportion of control and decision making to the observer while limiting the role of the observee to a passive recipient. In such a situation, it would be too optimistic to consider the current observation scheme as a learning tool since the research findings have highlighted a number of inadequacies in its design and implementation.

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**Sayyed Rashid Shah** is a lecturer in English at King Abdul-Aziz University, Saudi Arabia. He earned a master degree in TESOL from Sheffield Hallam University, UK. He is currently enrolled on EdD TESOL programme at University of Exeter, UK. Mr. Shah's research interests include language teacher development, educational leadership and management, and EFL classroom teaching and learning.



**Khalid Al Harthi** is Vice-Dean of the English Language Institute at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics. Dr. Al Harthi was awarded his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from New Castle University, UK, in 2012. He obtained his Master's in TEFL from Arizona State University, USA, in 2002. His research interests include student motivation for learning, developing language learning strategies, and the use of modern technology in English classrooms.

# Selectivity of Second Language Attrition

Junyan Wei

School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing, China

**Abstract**—The aim of this article is to provide an overview of second language attrition and its selective features. Second language attrition is reviewed from two different perspectives: from perspective of linguistic components as well as of language skills. Selectivity of second language attrition is analyzed in light of Markedness Theory, Retrieval Fail Hypothesis, Functional Load Theory and Regression Hypothesis. Following conclusions are obtained: 1) from the perspective of linguistic components, at intra-component level (within phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax), second language attrition is selective: linguistic items, which are of high frequency, of high functional load and less marked, are maintained better during second language attrition; At inter-component level, generally, lexicon is more subjective to attrition than morphology and syntax, while phonology can be quite robust to attrition. 2) As for the perspective of language skills, productive skills are more subject to attrition than receptive skills.

**Index Terms**—second language attrition, selectivity, theoretical consideration

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language attrition, known as the reverse process of language acquisition, is a relatively new branch of applied linguistics. Although there is a longstanding tradition of research on language loss or shift since the 1920s, the major impetus for language attrition research was given at a conference held at the University of Pennsylvania in 1980. Since then, a considerable body of research was carried out, and the research on second language attrition became one of its main fields. One of the most important issues in the field of second language attrition is “what is typically lost?” (Weltens, 1987, p.22). Evidences were provided showing that different linguistic components could be affected differently during language attrition. Researchers suggested that language attrition is selective. As more and more studies were carried out on this field, some relevant theories and hypotheses were proposed and confirmed.

To understand the nature of second language attrition is of great importance. Since second language attrition is a reversal of second language acquisition, research results on the field of attrition can shed a light on second language teaching and learning. By figuring out what language features are more vulnerable to attrition, both second language learners and teachers can find methods to better maintain that language.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Second Language Attrition

Language attrition is the non-pathological loss of a first or second language or a portion of that language by individuals, taking place within one generation; it should be distinguished from language loss within a community (the latter is referred to as language shift or language death) (Köpke, 2004).

Depending on what is lost and the environment in which it is lost, language attrition can be divided into four areas, known as the “van Els taxonomy”. These four areas are: first language (L1) loss in an L1 environment; L1 loss in a second language (L2) environment; L2 loss in an L1 environment; L2 loss in an L2 environment (Weltens, 1987). Among the four areas, L1 loss in an L1 environment can be observed in those aging people who are losing their first language; L1 loss in an L2 environment can be observed within the emigrants who lose their L1 in the new environment; L2 loss in an L1 environment can be observed among those who lose their second language learned at school, or those who once lived in a L2 environment and returned to their L1 environment; Finally, L2 loss in an L2 environment is usually observed within the aging immigrants who lose their L2. Both L2 loss in L1 environment and L2 loss in L2 environment can be considered as second language attrition.

Researches on second language attrition indicate that different linguistic features and language skills can be lost under different rates. Seliger (1991) pointed out second language attrition is selective and does not affect all aspects of language in the same way. Studies were carried out to find evidence for selectivity of second language attrition. Some researchers pointed that lexicon or syntax structures that are important to make distinctions in language use would be less subject to attrition (Anderson, 1982). Some researchers found that morphological elements, which are more frequently used, can be remained better during language attrition (Hansen and Chen, 2001). Some researchers compared the attrition rates of lexicon, morphology and syntax and pointed out that lexicon is more vulnerable to attrition than morphology and syntax, while phonology remains the most resistant (Tomiya, 1999). Also, some argued even language skills could be affected at different rates by attrition—compared to listening and reading, speaking and writing would attrite more easily. However, some researcher pointed out that researches within perspective of selectivity in language attrition still lacks coherence (Köpke, 2004). Therefore, in this paper, we tried to divided selective features of



language attrition into different categories and levels, and by applying some related theories and hypotheses, we tried to find answer to the question ‘what is typically lost and why?’

### B. *Related Theories and Hypotheses*

In the research of second language attrition, some theories and hypotheses are raised to explain why some structures are more subject to attrition. Among those hypotheses and theories, Markedness Theory, Functional Load Theory, Retrieval Fail Hypothesis and Regression Hypothesis are widely cited.

#### 1. Markedness Theory

Markedness is a linguistic concept that developed out of the Prague School. A marked form is a non-basic or less natural form. An unmarked form is a basic, default form. Markedness originally developed from phonology and then has been extended to other areas as well, such as morphology, syntax and semantics. Grammatical forms that are more complex and have a narrow linguistic distribution are considered marked (Gürel, 2004). During language attrition, it is believed that linguistic elements that are marked would be more subject to attrition than those less marked forms (Anderson, 1982; Gürel, 2004; Hanson & Chen, 2001).

#### 2. Functional Load Theory

The term functional load refers to the extent and degree of contrast between certain linguistic units, usually phonemes, in making distinctions in a language (King, 1967). In the field of second language attrition, it is believed that when the loss of certain phonological, morphological or syntactical distinctions would result in frequent loss of information, these distinctions could be considered as of high functional load (Anderson, 1982). It is believed that linguistic feature with distinctions of high functional load would be maintained longer than others with low functional load.

#### 3. Retrieval Fail Hypothesis

According to Retrieval Fail Hypothesis, forgetting is considered not as a loss of information, but as inaccessibility. “Forgetting is much like being unable to find something that we have misplaced somewhere. Forgetting occurs because the information we seek is temporarily inaccessible; if only we had the right retrieval cue, the information we seek could be successfully retrieved” (Loftus, 1976, P. 78). As for second language practice, it is common that one may recognize a certain word when he sees or hears it, but it would be harder if he needs to retrieve the word during production since there’s not enough cues for him to remember (Eckes & Peter, 2004). Gradually, language elements may be forgot due to the lack of retrieval cues.

#### 4. Regression Hypothesis

Regression Hypothesis is one of the most widespread hypotheses explaining the nature of language attrition. The theory describes attrition as the mirror image of acquisition or learning (Weltens, 1987). In losing a language, one would always follow an order opposite to the stages of acquisition (Hanson, 2001). As a result, the last learned would be the first forgotten and the first learned would be the last forgotten (Freed, 1980). As for second language learners, this kind of opposite order of acquisition and attrition has been widely found in different perspectives and levels, from linguistic components to language skills (Cohen, 1986; Edwards, 1976; Hanson 1999; Hayashi, 1999; Tomiyama 1999; Weltens, 1987).

## III. SELECTIVITY OF SECOND LANGUAGE ATTRITION

Selectivity of second language attrition can be divided into two perspectives: selectivity of linguistic components and selectivity of language skills. Further more, selectivity of linguistic components can be analyzed at the intra-component level (within phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax) and the inter-component level, and selectivity of language skills lies in the difference between receptive skills and productive skills.

### A. *Selectivity of Linguistic Components*

Selectivity of linguistic components can be analyzed at two levels: the intra-component level and the inter-component level.

#### 1. Selectivity at intra-component level

Traditionally, the intra-component level contains phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax. Studies to date have found some evidence to confirm the selectivity of second language attrition at the intra-component level. Within the phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax, some linguistic features would be more subject to attrition while some would be maintained better.

##### a. Phonology

In the field of phonological attrition, Studies by Dorian (1973) and Manessy (1977) showed that compared to native language, second language has less number and diversity of distinctive phonological features except where the phonological distinctions exist in both languages and where the distinctions in L2 carry a high functional load. According to the results of those studies, Anderson (1982) suggested in her hypothesis that 1) phonological distinctions existing both in the language learner’s L1 and L2 would be more resistant to attrition; 2) phonological distinctions carrying a high functional load in L2 would be more resistant to attrition than those carrying a low functional load.



Some proof can be found among Chinese EFL learners. When Chinese students begin to learn English as a second language, they always find consonant [θ] hard to pronounce. Taking the word 'thanks' for example, at the beginning, EFL learners in China often use the sound [s] to replace the sound [θ] since they do not have the pronunciation [θ] in their mother tongue. According to Regression Hypothesis, what learned in the latter stages would be forgotten earlier. As a matter of fact, during second language attrition, the consonant [θ] is lost much more easily than consonants existing in Chinese. As for the second hypothesis, evidence can be found in the distinction between the consonant [n] and [ŋ]. This distinction carries a low functional load. Some of the Chinese EFL students prefer to pronounce [n] instead of [ŋ] since it is easier to pronounce and seldom results in any misunderstanding in communication. For example, they may pronounce the word 'loving' as ['lʌ vɪ n]. Therefore, one can always find that among Chinese learners, during second language attrition, the sound [ŋ] is lost earlier than others.

#### b. Lexicon

It is generally believed that lexical attrition is the more prevalent than phonology or syntax. Lots of studies have been carried out to find the rules of lexical attrition.

Manessy (1977) observed some non-native speakers of several African languages and found that they tend to use a small core of highly frequent and highly useful vocabulary. There were similar results in Blum and Levenston's (1978; 1980) studies that L2 learners tend to use the common, highly frequent, unmarked lexical items when they do not know certain less common, less frequent, highly marked items. Based on these studies, Anderson (1982) proposed a hypothesis that what lexicon the L2 has retained will be of common, highly frequent, unmarked lexical items; the gaps will be of less common, low frequency, and highly marked items. This hypothesis is based on Markedness Theory, and it received some proof from a study by Hansen and Chen (2001). In their study, they analyzed the attrition of numeral classifier systems of Japanese and Chinese and results suggested that the less marked classifier is less affected in attrition. Besides, their study also confirmed the Regression Hypothesis that classifiers learned in the earliest stages would be the last ones to forget.

There may be relationships between Markedness Theory and Regression Hypothesis. The reason why marked lexical items are easier to forget than less marked ones is possibly that the unmarked lexical items are usually more common in use and appear more frequently. Thus, unmarked items may be learned in the early stages. Since they are more common and more frequent in use, they may be more resistant to attrition.

Other researchers put their focuses on the attrition of receptive and productive lexicon. Gonzo and Saltarelli (1983) used two experimental techniques picture naming and word-picture matching in an experiment. The data showed that lexicon attrition was more commonly found in the former task than in the latter one. De Bot and Weltens (1995) provided an explanation for the result. In their explanation, the first task was a retrieval task in which the actual recall was required, but the second task was a recognition task in which only recognition was needed. And in the recognition task, the target item itself could be considered as a retrieval cue. According to the Retrieval Fail Hypothesis, the vocabulary with more retrieval cues may be more resistant to attrition. Thus, the receptive lexicon is less subject to attrition than the productive lexicon.

To sum up, in the field of lexicon attrition, lexical items, which are more frequently used and less marked, would be better retained during attrition and so do the receptive lexicon.

Proofs can be found among L2 learners. On one hand, words that are more frequently used are less vulnerable to attrition. Taking EFL students in China for example, when they are required to illustrate a certain category, fruits for example, the more frequently used words such as apple, banana, tomato and orange will jump into their mind while those less common and less frequently used words such as lime, pineapple and grapefruit will take time for them to recall. And they may have learned words as durian or avocado, but as there's seldom any chance for them to use it in daily life. Gradually, they may forget those words. On the other hand, less marked words would be maintained better. Two words can be taken as an example, 'horse' and 'colt'. 'Horse' is always unmarked while 'colt', which means a little male horse, is always considered as marked. The EFL students may have known the word 'colt', but since in many situations the word 'horse' is enough for them to explain their ideas, 'colt' would be forgotten day on and day forth. For another example, in some languages, such as French, each word has its gender. In general, masculine words are unmarked while the feminine words are marked. 'le boeuf' is a masculine word, which means the cattle in general, and it is more often in use than the word 'la vache', meaning cows. As a result, Chinese students majoring in French forget the word 'la vache' much more easily than the word 'le boeuf'.

#### c. Morphology

As for morphology, some early researches on second language acquisition suggested that learning of the grammatical morphemes is affected by both positive and negative transfer from the learner's native language (Hakuta & Cancino, 1977; Larsen-Freeman, 1976). According to Larsen-Freeman's research, frequency of morphemes in native adults speech correlates with the acquisition orders among L2 learners. This finding suggests that morphemes that are most frequently used by native speakers would be learned first by the L2 learners.

In situations where languages are in contact, studies showed that the grammatical distinctions that are not shared by both languages are more subject to attrition. For example, evidence from a village where three languages are in contact showed that grammatical gender becomes reduced to semantic gender and agreement rule become simpler where the three languages do not have the same distinctions. (Gumperz & Wilson, 1971)

Some hypotheses were applied on morphological attrition. One hypothesis suggested that the morphological distinctions which appear with highest textual frequency by the native speakers would be maintained the longest by the L2 learners; and those appear with the lowest textual frequency would be the first to be lost. Also, based on regression hypothesis, those grammatical morphemes acquired in the early stages of learning would be retained the longest and those acquired in the late stages would be lost early. In addition, one hypothesis argued that the morphological categories marked both in one person's L1 and L2 would be better maintained in his L2.

To sum up, during morphology attrition, morphological items that are of higher textual frequency, of early acquisition, or that are marked in L2 as well as in L1 would be maintained better. Morphological items in the opposite situation would be more subject to attrition.

Among Chinese EFL students, proofs can be found in prefix 'un' and 'ir'. Prefix 'un' is of high frequency and is learned in the early stage during acquisition. Therefore, students often over generalize it when they need a word of opposite meaning. On the contrary, prefix 'ir' is of low frequency. As a result, prefix 'ir' is easily forgotten, and it is always taken place by prefix 'un'. Since English and Chinese have different morphological systems, there is seldom any interaction on morphological categories between these two languages. Those morphological rules not existing in Chinese are hard to learn and easy to forget. For Chinese EFL students, they always complain about inflections. Although inflections are learned during quite early stages, they are always forgotten in use, even for those learners reaching a comparatively high level of English.

#### d. Syntax

In the field of second language acquisition, some studies provided evidence for acquisition sequence of syntax. Schumann (1978) argued that in the early stages, learners would focus on the communicative function of syntax; therefore, the learners are negative to get more input. Because of this, they learned a restricted set of syntactic devices. In other words, the syntactic devices that have more communicative functions can be better retained. However, in latter stages of learning, learners would develop a wider repertoire of syntactic devices as they have sufficient need to expand the syntactic devices (Bickerton, 1977; Andersen, 1980).

In Gumperz and Wilson's (1971) research, they suggested that 'almost all the changes can be interpreted as reductions or generalizations that simplify surface structure in relation to underlying categories and relationships.' This can be interpreted as that the L2 learners always simplify the syntactic structures to the degree of the sufficient communication. This result indicates that the syntactic structures, which are simple, basic and useful in communication, are less subject to attrition.

Some hypotheses are proposed for syntactic attrition. One is that the syntactic structures that can reflect the underlying semantic and syntactic relations can be preserved better, and L2 speakers may even overuse them. This hypothesis indicates that during L2 attrition, these syntactic structures would be less subject to attrition. Another hypothesis is based on the function load theory, suggesting that where elimination of a syntactic construction of a given type would result in informational loss, that certain syntactic construction would be maintained in the use of the language. It is the same as the attrition of phonology—the grammatical devices with the higher functional load would be less vulnerable to L2 attrition.

In sum, syntactic structures, which are basic and frequently used, or are with high functional load would be maintained better during the process of syntactic attrition. It is common situation in Chinese EFL learners that they prefer simple sentences especially during oral communication. Structures as attributive clause, adverbial clause would sometimes be split into simple sentences. For those more complicated structures as inverted sentence or subjunctive mood, seldom any EFL Learners would use them during communication when attrition takes place, these kinds of structures would soon be forgotten.

#### 2. Selectivity at inter-component level

In addition to selectivity of second language attrition at the intra-component level, researches also suggested that the selectivity exists at the inter-component level as well. Evidences showed that phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax are affected to an unequal degree during second language attrition (Herdina & Jessner, 2002).

Tomiya (1999) carried out some researches on this field. She observed a Japanese boy called Ken, who left Japan for America at the age of 1 and returned home at the age of 8. The study was on L2 attrition after the subject's returning to the L1 environment. The findings indicated the selectivity of second language attrition at the inter-component level. The result of the experiment on lexical attrition suggested that Ken's attrition in productive lexicon was evident. Compared to lexicon, data on morphological attrition suggested that attrition of morphology was less evident, only showing some possible signs of instability of irregular past and plural. And syntax seemed to be less affected by attrition with only a glimpse of indication in the relative clause structure. The receptive lexicon and the phonological skills remain unaffected by attrition. Tomiya made a conclusion that for Ken, 'attrition first manifested as lexical retrieval difficulty. Some indications of attrition in morphology and syntax were present, but phonology and receptive lexicon remained quite robust throughout the course of the observation'.

On the contrary, De Bot and Weltens (1995) reported that after zero, two and four years of disuse of French a foreign language by the Dutch, learners displayed greater attrition in grammar than in phonology and lexicon.

Yoshitomi (1992; 1999) provided an explanation for this difference. She suggested that more proficient students lose more vocabulary than grammar, while the pattern is reversed in less proficient students. This is probably because advanced students have a relatively stable knowledge of grammar and a larger amount of lexical knowledge.

The comparison between primary school students and college students can be an extreme example for the different patterns of L2 attrition. Based on personal observation as a teacher, primary school students forget about grammar much faster than vocabulary. On the contrary, college students, with higher proficiency in English, always complain about the difficulty in remembering vocabulary rather than learning grammar.

### B. Selectivity of Language Skills

Basically, language skills can be divided into two categories: receptive skills and productive skills. Listening and reading belong to receptive skills while speaking and writing belong to productive skills. Hanson (1999) made a hypothesis that receptive skills precede productive skills in acquisition and the reverse is true in attrition. Results of some studies provided evidence to this hypothesis. Edwards (1976) studied second language retention in Canada and found an 8 percent gain in reading after 12 months, but a 13 percent loss in speaking. Weltens (1987) observed the loss of French competence by speakers of Dutch and found that instead of attrition, listening proficiency and reading proficiency even increased over time. Tomiyama (1999), by studying second language attrition of a Japanese returnee, also concluded in her research that the subject's productive skill of lexicon was the first to be affected while his receptive skills were virtually unaffected.

There are some possible explanations. According to Retrieval Fail Hypothesis, if one had the right retrieval cue, the information that was temporarily inaccessible could be successfully retrieved. During listening and reading, retrieval cues could always be found in the text provided. Only recognition is needed. On the contrary, during speaking and writing, one has to recall the information he needs. Therefore, the productive skills are always more subject to attrition than receptive skills. Another explanation is based on Regression Hypothesis. Commonly, receptive skills are always learned earlier than the productive skills. Thus, during the process of attrition, the productive skills are always lost earlier than the receptive skills. For most L2 learners, it is common that when they come across a word they can recognize it, but when they need certain word in writing or speaking, they can hardly recall it. That is because receptive and productive language skills are affected by attrition under different rates.

## IV. CONCLUSION

This article attempted to provide an overview of researches on second language attrition and its selective features. Based on the analysis, following conclusions can be obtained: 1) from the perspective of linguistic components, second language attrition is selective. To be specific, at intra-component level (within phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax), linguistic units that are of high frequency, of high functional load and less marked can be maintained better during second language attrition; Selectivity exists at inter-component level as well. Generally, lexicon is considered as more subject to attrition than morphology and syntax, while phonology can be quite robust. 2) As for the language skills, productive skills are more subject to attrition than the receptive skills.

However, this article mainly focused on linguistic aspects of second language attrition, extralinguistic aspects are not taken into consideration. Extralinguistic aspects such as onset proficiency of attrition, age at onset, length of exposure before attrition, length of attrition, attitude and motivation, gender also affect second language attrition (Hanson, 2011; Ni & Yan, 2006; Schmid, 2006). Second language learners under different personal situations would be affected by second language attrition at different attrite speed. Further studies can combine linguistic aspects and extralinguistic aspects of language attrition together and provide more suggestions on acquiring and maintaining a second language. Besides, most of the studies in the field of second language attrition take Indo-European languages as both L1 and L2. Studies on different language families are needed in order to provide a broader view on second language attrition and its selective features. In addition, new research methods, especially on-line measures could be borrowed from other fields. By applying methods as eye tracking and ERPs, the nature of second language attrition would be studied in a more precise way, which might finally shed lights on the understanding of language processing in multi-lingual brains.

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**Junyan Wei** was born in Nantong, China in 1985. She received her M.A. degree in Applied Linguistics from Nanjing Normal University, China in 2011.

She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing, China. Her research interests include Psycholinguistics, Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Attrition.

# Benefits and Barriers of Computer Assisted Language Learning and Teaching in the Arab World: Jordan as a Model

Nedal A. Bani Hani

Department of English Language and Literature, Irbid College, Al-Balqa- Applied University, Jordan

**Abstract**—The purpose of this ad hoc research was to highlight the benefits and barriers of computer assisted language learning and teaching in the Arab World and Jordan in particular. The researcher constructed a questionnaire consisted of the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing computer in teaching languages in the world. The sample of the study contained 200 English language teachers in Jordan. The researcher used a two-scale questionnaire (agree and disagree). The researcher asked the participants to determine whether he or she agreed or disagreed on the provided items. The percentage for each item was computed to find out the most important benefits and barriers. The findings revealed that the most significant barriers were: (1) inadequate number of computers, (2) technical problems, (3) needs more teacher training, (4) more time is needed, (5) the cost is high. The results also showed that the most essential benefits were: (1) providing immediate feedback, (2) motivating students' learning, (3) exciting and more fun, (4) initiating more interaction, (5) easy to control. In conclusion, the researcher put forth some recommendations and solutions to tackle the barriers that emerged from this study.

**Index Terms**—CALL, barriers, benefits, TEFL, Arab world, Jordan

## I. INTRODUCTION

Technology is now prevalent. It is utilized in every aspect of our life. The computer, having various pedagogical characteristics, has been utilized in teaching languages around the world. It affects the way we view teaching and learning, probably more than most educators admit. This led to the prominence of the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (henceforth CALL). Some methodologists maintain that the utilization of computer in the basic stage is the most beneficial for students. (See for example, Almekhlafi, 2006; Murphy, 2007; Bani Hani, 2009).

Moreover, there may be a de facto consensus that exists among most methodologists that the computer can only be a teaching tool and may never replace the teacher (cf., Levy 1997; Traynor, 2003; Noemi, 2007; Bani Hani, 2009; Gee, 2013). However, utilizing the computer requires establishing effective instructional programs. It is believed that the lack of efficient and authentic programs is frequently cited by teachers as a reason for their reluctance to incorporate computer-based learning techniques in their own classroom practice (Thelmadatter, 2007; Bani Hani, 2009). The researcher displays certain skepticism in teachers' inclination or ability to improve teaching. Consequently, the computer may be considered one of the visual aids that can be used to enhance students' learning and achievement in English. (Al-Ruz & Khasawneh 2011:8).

It is worth noting that there may be a long tradition of using visual aids such as videos, projectors and language labs in the classroom to supplement and amplify teaching abilities and the computer can be deemed as the latest addition to this range of tools. The prominence of the computer makes it essential to acquire basic computer skills other than computer programming. In order to use computers for teaching, there are important apparatus that must exist in the classroom. Hardware and software are considered the most indispensable. The supply of hardware and software to schools is now sufficient for educational needs. Hardware is largely a matter of funding, and is beyond the scope of our discussion in this research.

In the Arab and Jordanian context, the Ministries of Education (MoEs) can not succeed if they do not know in which direction to move. They have always been reforming their educational systems but rarely improving. Improvement can not take place unless Arab and Jordanian teachers employ markedly more effective instructional methods. Moreover, teachers ought to be convinced that teaching can be studied and improved. In addition, they should be persuaded that there is always room for improvement; no matter how well our students are doing now; it is foolish not to try to improve. Because the future of education depends largely on what is happening in the classroom, therefore, this research comes into prominence to avoid counterreformation and counterproductivity.

Taking Jordan into consideration, the government has been subsidizing the Ministry of Education for the teaching of EFL by providing an authentic curriculum and feasible teacher training programs. Meanwhile, thousands of computers have been brought into our schools. Recently, 65,000 personal computers (PCs) have been installed in 2,250 public schools, bringing the ratio of student to PC from 43:1 in 2001 to 15:1 in 2004 (cited in Bataineh & Baniabdelrahman, 2006:3).

The utilization of computers in the classroom has proven advantageous in more than one respect. Not only has it been found to facilitate student learning, but it has also been found to develop students' ability to learn independently, analyze information, think critically, and solve problems (Goldman, Cole & Syer, 1999; Smith, 2008). Al Abdel Halim (2009) reports significant increases in students' reading speed and comprehension across studies of computer-assisted reading instruction.

Following the same path, Noemi (2007) claims that even though they may never replace teachers, computers can provide excellent and fairly inexpensive supplementary materials to enhance classroom instruction. Furthermore, computers have been found not only to promote visual, verbal and kinesthetic learning, higher-level thinking, and problem solving (Turnbull & Lawrence, 2002), but also to offer immediate feedback, hands-on learning, and collaborative instruction (see for example, Becker, 2000; Zapata, 2004; Noemi, 2007; Al Abdel Halim, 2009).

Consequently, the central focus of this research is to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of CALL implementation as perceived by Jordanian teachers. Knowing these advantages and disadvantages may be significant for helping the Jordanian Ministry of Education to move in the right direction towards reformation, innovation and improvement. Thus, one pushing impetus that lies behind conducting this research is to answer the following question: *What are the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of CALL in Jordan?*

The researcher emphasizes that we must recognize both advantages and disadvantages of using computer so we can get the maximum effectiveness of technology to enhance foreign language learning. In light of the several current computer-related educational reforms in Jordanian institutions of learning, the results of the present study are expected to provide valuable information to bridge the gap in the literature about computer use in the third world countries, and the Arab world represented here by Jordan. The present study is also hoped to establish grounds for further research in this area. In addition, finding the advantages and disadvantages may be helpful in making decision i.e. to support the positive qualities and avoid the negative ones. However, the generalizability of the findings may be limited due to the fact that the present study focuses solely on Jordanian EFL teaching and learning. The data do not confirm that the respondents are indeed as proficient as they perceive themselves to be.

## II. THE LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two types of factors that affect the implementation of computer in language teaching. They are external factors and internal ones. The benefits and barriers often emerge from these factors. Previous researches have indicated that both external and internal factors influence the computer use in education (Al-Ruz & Khasawneh 2011; Lin, Wang & Lin 2012; Sang, Valcke, Braak, Tondeur & Zhu 2011; Tezci 2011). Among the external factors, the most common are access to computers and software, insufficient time for course planning, and inadequate technical and administrative support (Al-Ruz & Khasawneh 2011). Among the internal factors, teachers' attitude, confidence, and belief in the computer use are commonly cited in the existing literature (Chen 2008; Al-Ruz & Khasawneh 2011; Sang et al. 2011; Tezci 2011; Lin, Wang & Lin 2012).

Moreover, the research appears to have identified all possible external and internal factors influencing the computer use (Al-Ruz & Khasawneh 2011; Lin, Wang & Lin 2012; Sang et al. 2011; Tezci 2011). However, there has been meager research into the possible relationships between external and internal variables, and how these relationships differ according to the variables involved in the computer integration. Examining these relationships could not only help teachers, students, and administrators understand the challenges of the computer use better, it could also assist them in uncovering other solutions to overcome the existing barriers based on the relationships among different variables. (Jonita, 2002; Traynor, 2003; Wright, 2003; Noemi (2007).

Han (2008) emphasizes that with the remarkable development of computers and Internet, more and more second language practitioners are utilizing computers for foreign language teaching and learning today. Although the use of computer in teaching and learning has a positive effect on the achievement levels of second language learners, there are still some barriers to the wide implementation of computers. This paper and from the historical perspective examines the different developing phases of computer assisted language teaching, and then basically, investigates the benefits and barriers of computers in language teaching and learning. The article maintains that language specialists must recognize both the benefits and limitations of using computers so that they can try their best to overcome the barriers and get the maximum effectiveness of technology to improve second language learning.

AbuSeileek & Abu Sa'aleek (2012) argue that computer assisted language learning and teaching has entered to a new era, specifically with the emergence of microcomputer and the Internet. Computers can facilitate different learning tasks and have enormous potency as teaching aids. They can assist both students and teachers because of their special characteristics. This paper investigates the advantages and disadvantages of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) for current foreign language learning and teaching. The results imply that it is necessary to utilize computers in recent second language classroom, in spite of their demerits and weaknesses. Therefore, when we attempt to apply CALL programs to improve teaching or learning EFL, we have to recognize what the merits and demerits are in modern CALL programs so as to avoid misemploying CALL programs and get its maximum benefits for our EFL teaching and learning.

Koua (2012) emphasizes that the computer assisted learning technology, such as the internet, is deemed an ideal tool for language teaching and learning. It supports a learner-centered and functional approach to knowledge but may

present an easy but also a culturally limited, learning medium. Only a few studies examine the net benefits of the internet and other computer technologies on students' intention to learn a romance language despite the controversy surrounding their use in mastering a language. The researcher examines the role of computer technology with emphasis on the internet and its associated media in the simplification of teaching and learning French employing a review of literature, anecdotes from students' class interaction to point out that the computer enhancing technology, like the internet, is a significant but controversial cultural and political instrument for teaching and learning the French language.

Riasati, Allahyar, and Tan (2012) claim that technology, especially e-learning technology, is being increasingly employed in instruction to enhance teaching and learning. This paper is basically a preliminary discussion of the advantages of and barriers to the use of technology in language instruction. Recognizing the benefits and barriers of technology integration is an essential step in integrating technology into education successfully. Lack of this knowledge may significantly impede stakeholders and educational centers from encountering the challenges of introducing and supporting the extensive use of technology by teachers in the classroom. Results from empirical research in this area, as well as implications for language practitioners have been included in the discussion.

Fu (2013) reported on the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) in education. Specifically, this article reviews researches that have investigated the merits of ICT integration in schools, barriers or challenges encountered in the use of ICT, factors affecting successful ICT integration, in-service and pre-service teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and confidence in utilizing ICT as well as the significance of school culture in the use of ICT. This review discusses gaps in the literature and the directions that future studies may follow in order to tackle these gaps.

To summarize, with the advent of the Internet and the associated technologies, the researcher advocates that English becomes an extraordinary significant instrument for international communication. Consequently, this will lead to axiomatic cultural interaction among different nations in the world. It is no doubt true; however, that CALL can be an adequate medium for improving the quality of teaching and learning the language. This is due to the following leverage points: (1) the computer may be suitable for provoking fruitful classroom activities which help in the acquisition of the four language skills, (2) CALL can help students learn inside as well as outside the classroom, (3) it may also provide individualized, continuous and authentic teaching activities, (4) it reduces learners' apathy and lack of involvement in the learning process. So, CALL supports the latest pedagogical theory which is learner-centered approach, (5) it may also be a tool for the integration of the four skills, and (6) the computer can provide learners with immediate feedback.

Nevertheless, none of the above should blind methodologists to the fact that teachers should not be neglected or replaced by the computer. On the contrary, CALL is calling for the establishment of rapport between the teacher and the computer. Therefore, it is downright risky to claim that the computer will delimit the role of the teacher in the language classroom but it will definitely change it.

As for the disadvantages of CALL, Levy (1997: 2) lists several criticisms of CALL use in the language classroom. The most important are: (1) material produced by inexperienced teachers (software), (2) insufficient development of natural language processing techniques, (3) poor linguistic modeling, and (4) false starts and incomplete realizations of CALL. Levy also maintains the computer's limited ability in handling natural language.

Ravichandran (2000) & Bollin (2003) argue that language teachers can be more comfortable with traditional textbooks since it is what they are used to do, and there is the idea that the use of computers threatens traditional literacy skills since they are heavily tied to books. They claim that this situation emerged in part because there is indispensable generation gap between teachers (many of whom did not grow up with computers) and students (who did grow up with computers). It is worth mentioning that teachers who are not technologically competent tend to believe that computers are worthless. On the contrary, most teachers who are technologically competent think that computers can facilitate language learning.

Lu & Powell (2004) propose a methodology to discover the barriers that influence EFL teachers in the use of computers in their classroom. The findings demonstrate that there are three key barriers that influence teachers who use CALL programs to teach EFL. These barriers are: (1) technology skills, (2) funding, and (3) the acceptance of technology.

Obstacles include the quality of the instructional software and the high cost (Bani Hani, 2009:5); technophobia (Lam, 2000); Thelmadatter (2007); time pressures both outside and during class (Lam, 2000; Levy, 1997; Smerdon, Cronen, Lanahan, Anderson, Iannotti, & Angeles, 2000; Strudler, McKinney, & Jones, (1999); lack of resources & materials (Loehr, 1996:3), insufficient or inflexible guidelines, standards, and curricula (Langone, Wissick, Langone, & Ross, 1998); lack of support or recognition for integrating computers (Grau 1996; Strudler et al, 1999); a clash between new technologies at universities and older ones in schools; lack of leadership (Smerdon et al, 2000:6); and inadequate training and technical support (Levy, 1997; Langone et.al., 1998; Lam, 2000; Smerdon et al, 2000).

To sum up, the disadvantages of inhibiting the implementation of CALL can be classified into the following linchpin, common categories: (1) financial barriers, (2) availability of computer hardware and software, (3) technical and theoretical knowledge, and (4) acceptance of the technology (Bani Hani, 2009:12). The researcher believes that most of the problems that appear in the literature on CALL have to do with teacher expectations and apprehensions about what computers can do for the language learner and teacher. Responding to these criticisms, the researcher believes that designing authentic instructional computer programs may motivate language learning and ease the learning process. It may pave the way for more flexibility, understanding the global role of language and elimination of psychological

barriers. That is, computerized learning can be achieved inside and outside the classroom in a relaxed atmosphere as it fosters new strategies for learning. For example, it may create room for learner interaction with material. This interaction can be easy and tangible.

The researcher may conclude that using computers facilitate language teaching and learning, as it is hoped that by implementing CALL, foreign language teaching will be more effective and sufficient. In addition, the use of the computer can have a beneficial effect on enhancing students' achievement (Bani Hani, 2009). Moreover, the use of CALL is expected to enhance the development of language skills. The researcher may also conclude that the use of CALL does not eliminate the role of the teacher, as teachers can help students focus on the primary goals of communicating and learning language. CALL can also open up opportunities for teachers and students to experience the world beyond the classroom and open doors to communication, understanding and interaction.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The population of this study consists of all teachers who teach English in the Ministry of Education in Jordan in the academic year 2013-2014. Most of them (96%) hold a B.A degree in English Literature. The sample of the study consisted of two hundred English teachers (110) male and (90) female. Almost all (98%) of the participants in the sample (196) hold a B.A degree in English Literature and know the basics of the computer usage. In addition, 47 of the study sample have passed ICDL (International Computer Driving License) and twenty three of the participants in the sample were MA degree holders.

And since, the overriding question that begs an answer in this research is *"What are the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of CALL in Jordan?"* This question was distributed to twenty experienced English teachers. The responses were investigated and presented as shown in table 1 below. To guarantee the reliability of the results in the study, the researcher also collected the most significant advantages and disadvantages from the study literature and added them to the list as shown in table 1. As for data collection, the researcher distributed the advantages and the disadvantages to the members of the sample and they were asked to respond (*agree*) if the respondent thinks it is an advantage and (*disagree*) if the respondent believes that it is a disadvantage. The respondents were urged to ask for any explanation if there was an ambiguity.

### IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this section, the findings are presented and discussed according to the main question in this research which is *"what are the advantages and disadvantages of CALL implementation in the Arab world and Jordan?"*. The advantages and disadvantages are presented in table 1.

TABLE 1  
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF USING CALL IN JORDAN

Rank	Advantages	Agree	Disagree	Disadvantages	Agree	Disagree
1.	Providing immediate feedback	91%	9%	Inadequate number of computers	96%	4%
2.	Motivating students' learning	89%	11%	Technical problems	90%	9%
3.	Exciting and more fun	87%	13%	Needs more teacher training	88%	12%
4.	Initiating more interaction	85%	15%	More time is needed	81%	19%
5.	Easy to control	82%	18%	The cost is high	76%	24%
6.	Needs less time and effort	81%	19%	Lack of experience in computer	73%	27%
7.	More participation	80%	20%	Slow computers	71%	29%
8.	Integrating of language skills	77%	23%	Difficult to prepare the lesson	70%	30%
9.	Fostering individualization	77%	23%	It may replace the teacher	65%	35%
10.	Flexible to be used	76%	24%	The instructions may not be clear	61%	39%
11.	Providing a new experience	65%	35%	Lack of well-designed software	58%	42%
12.	Learning outside the classroom	65%	35%	The need for continuous updating	55%	45%
13.	Fostering students' role	62%	38%	Students deem computer a game	51%	49%
14.	Providing more activities	55%	45%	Large number of students in class	47%	53%
15.	Using new technologies (Internet)	54%	46%	The inability to control the class	42%	58%
16.	Helping shy students	51%	49%	Less chances for weak students	34%	66%
17.	Exchange experience with others	43%	57%	Cause physical problems	27%	73%
18.	Needs less computer skills	39%	61%	Blind students will not benefit	22%	78%
19.	Providing animation	35%	65%	Lack of students' computer skills	21%	79%

Table 1 shows that the major advantages of the use of CALL in TEFL are: (1) immediate feedback, (2) motivation, (3) exciting and more fun (4) interaction, (5) easy to control, (6) needs less time and effort, (7) more participation, (8) the integration of language skills, (9) fostering individualization, (10) flexibility, (11) new experience, and (12) the ability to learn outside the classroom. Table 1 further reveals that the most important disadvantages are: (1) inadequate number of computers, (2) technical problems, (3) needs more teacher training (4) more time is needed (5) the cost (6) lack of the computer experience (7) slow computers (8) difficulty in preparing the lesson (9) may replace the teacher (10) clarity of instructions, (11) lack of well- designed software, and (12) the need for continuous updating. Other less significant



barriers emerged such as (1) the students consider computer a game, (2) lack of students' skills on the computer, (3) time consuming, (4) more teacher training is needed, and (5) large number of students per class.

The results reveal that teachers consider providing immediate feedback the most important advantage of the utilization of the computer in the English classroom. This is inconsistent with earlier findings (see for example, Zapata, 2004; Bani Hani, 2009). This may be due to the fact that teachers may forget, but computers never. Consequently, the students' motivation will vividly improve which is the second advantage that emerged in this study. As the computer is deemed a mean of entertainment, the respondents consider implementing CALL in the classroom exciting and fun.

Regarding the forth advantage that came into prominence, it is found that implementing CALL may initiate more interaction which will hopefully lead to the utilization of language as a mean for communication. It is worth mentioning that languages have recently been taught to be used as a communication instrument, so using computer as a tool in the classroom may not only be helpful but also beneficial. Along the same lines, some new types of interactions have emerged such as student-computer interaction and computer-student interaction. In addition, class-class interaction and school-school interaction has recently become possible through the use of the computer associated technologies like the internet.

As for the fifth advantage, it is revealed that implementing CALL may help in controlling the classroom activities and practices. Undoubtedly, control in the classroom is necessary to help teachers explain and interpret the lessons properly. In addition, it was found that using CALL in the classroom may save time and effort. One significant motto in teaching is teaching effectively with the least time and effort. Based on this important assumption, the computer may be used to fulfill this goal. Concerning the seventh merit of using computer in teaching, the study results showed that it may lead to more participation. This will lead to more students' involvement in the learning process (Fu, 2013). As a result, the computer and its associated technologies may help to shift from teacher-centered approach to student-centered approach (Lu, Hou, & Huang, 2010).

Last but not least, CALL implementation may lead to the integrating of the four skills. Most methodologists have recently claimed that all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) should be presented to students simultaneously (Almekhlafi, 2010). According to the respondents, the computer can be utilized to achieve this objective. Furthermore, fostering individualization, flexible to be used, providing a new experience, learning outside the classroom, fostering students' role, providing more activities, using new technologies (Internet), helping shy students, exchanging experience with others, needs less computer skills, and providing animation were all considered advantages of CALL implementation in Jordanian schools.

However, despite all these advantages of CALL utilization, there exist some disadvantages the most important of which is the inadequate number of computers. Despite the efforts that are made by the Jordanian government, our schools still suffer from the lack of computers. The subsidization of computers has not yet been enough for the implementation of CALL in our schools.

The second disadvantage that is found in this study is the technical problem. The researcher believes that these problems can be overcome by providing a computer technician for each school. In addition, the respondents complain about the lack of training on the use of computer. This problem can be overcome by providing a course on CALL for student-teachers at universities (Zapata, 2004; Thelmadatter, 2007 & Koua, 2013). As for time, the researcher thinks that the use of CALL adequately may save time and effort. The high cost is emphasized by the respondents as a disadvantage. This is consistent with earlier findings (see, for example, Wright, 2003; Bani Hani, 2009). This is no doubt true in the Jordanian case. The researcher thinks that implementing CALL can be subsidized by putting a piaster tax on each electricity bill. Regarding the lack of experience this problem can be solved by time. Considering the slowness and the difficulty in preparing the lesson, these problems may be solved by adequate training and intensive practice. Psychologically speaking, teachers deemed the computer as a threatening tool that may replace them which indicates that teachers are afraid of computers i.e they suffer from technophobia (Lam, 2000). The researcher believes that if rapport is not established between the teachers and the computers, utilizing the computer in teaching will not be sufficient, effective and fruitful. As for the classroom instruction, if the computer program is well-designed, this problem will not exist.

Therefore, establishing well-designed digitized instructional programs may be considered the most essential step that should be implemented authentically (Fu, 2013). The lack of these programs may be deemed as an important obstacle of implementing CALL in schools. Continuous updating is the next disadvantage that is cited by the teachers. The researcher believes that as the computer is a machine that frequently needs improving, anything related to it should also be improved. As for the next disadvantage, students have a wrong perception that the computer was invented to be only a game. The time has come to change this perception by persuading them that the computer can be also a useful teaching tool. This can be best achieved practically (Bani Hani, 2009; Al Abdel Halim, 2009). The large number of students per class was considered a disadvantage of CALL implementation. This problem can be overcome by putting every two students on one computer. It has been empirically proven that students when in pairs benefited best from the computer. (Murphy, 2007; Bani Hani, 2009).

## V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A lot of research has been reported on the impact of computer utilization on different facets of the educational process (see for example, Tezci, 2011; Fu, 2013; Gee, 2013). However, little research has been conducted to inform us about the merits and demerits of the implementation of CALL in the realm of teaching. Since the use of technology has to be driven by pedagogy, teachers should be urged to assume more responsibility in utilizing the computer to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Pre service teacher training programs should include compulsory computer training for teachers to acquire optimum levels of knowledge and skills (Al-Ruz & Khasawneh, 2011; Tezci, 2011; Lin, Houn & Lin, 2012; Gee, 2013). The present researcher urges scholars to conduct further research on students and teachers need for technology for educational purposes, on the integration of the four skills, on providing cultural context for foreign language learning, on subsidizing the implementation of CALL, on convincing policymakers and parents that the use of the computer is no more supplementary.

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**Nedal A. Bani Hani** was born in Irbid- Jordan on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1965. The author got his B.A degree in English Language and Literature from Yarmouk University- Irbid- Jordan, 1989. He obtained his M.A degree in Methodology from Yarmouk University – Irbid – Jordan, 1993. The PhD degree was obtained in Methodology from Yarmouk University – Irbid- Jordan, 2010. The major of the writer in the PhD degree was Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

Dr. Nedal Bani Hani is now the Head of the Department of English Language and Literature at Irbid University College for Girls at Al Balqa Applied University in Jordan. He has been teaching English language at colleges and universities since 1993. He has published seven articles so far; the most important of which are:

(1) "The Effect of a CALL Program on Jordanian Sixth-Grade Students' Achievement. *Teaching English with Technology* (Journal of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), 11(3), 3-24, Available on line at <http://www.tewtjournal.org/VOL%2011/ISSUE3/ARTICLE1.pdf>.

(2) Jordanian EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CALL in TEFL *Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning* 9 (12), 3-16. 2012.

(3) Social communication networks....the most powerful present at the service of education" *"The Journal of practice and education"* 21 (4), 2013.

# Beyond Cultural Identity: A Reading of Sanjay Nigam's *Transplanted Man*

Lihua Zhao

College of Foreign Languages, China West Normal University, Nanchong, China

**Abstract**—Indian American (Asian Indian) writer Sanjay Nigam's *Transplanted Man* seems to focus on cultural/ethnic identification, but careful examination would find what the novel really suggests is that other identities like ego identity, vocational identity, gender identity etc. are more important when it involves a person's unique sense of being. Besides cultural identification, all the characters explore and struggle to find a self that differentiates themselves from others, a universal topic for all no matter what racial, cultural, religious or educational background they come from.

**Index Terms**—Sanjay Nigam, *Transplanted Man*, identity, vocational identity, gender identity, ego identity, diaspora

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indian American (Asian Indian) writer Sanjay Nigam was selected by Utne Reader as one of ten writers who represents the changing face of fiction. *The Washington Post* devotes one whole page to comment on Nigam's second book, *Transplanted Man*, claiming it a "work of considerable intellectual and imaginative energy" and "a charming, frolicsome book that dares to tackle complex issues." *Asian Week* claims that *Transplanted Man* has moved South Asian literature into the 21st Century.

Setting at Little India, an ethnic enclave of Indian diaspora, *Transplanted Man* presents three seriously troubled characters: The Transplanted Man whose major organs are mainly transplanted from various sources, the Hypokinetic Man whose movement is incredibly difficult and slow and Sonny, a medical resident who sleepwalks and has nightmares. Interacting with these three one way or the other are other characters who suffer from insomnia, nightmares and uncontrolled appetite etc in varied degrees. To some extent, all of them are as hybridic as the transplanted man, as lost as the sleepwalker Sonny and as stuck as the hypokinetic man. Their problems root either in childhood trauma or in their physical deficiency or their career, but all of them share one same source. That is, their marginal existence between Indian and American culture or Eastern and Western culture. As Menaka notes: "Everyone seemed positioned on a number line that began here and ended in India. People were constantly adjusting their position on that line, never comfortable in their current spot. Go forward? Or backward? Maybe this was what caused Nirdosh to stay awake night after night and Tiger to scream in his sleep—not to mention her patients who sleepwalked or suffered from other parasomnias..... One way or another, they were all sleepwalkers." (Nigam, 2002, p.259) These hybridic sleepwalkers explore and struggle, fighting for a future and a direction and finally start to move towards the end of the story. The Hypokinetic Man who has not moved one step for months leaves the street corner where he has stationed; Sonali and her husband go to the American west after their failed home retuning trip to India; Manny and Alvin finally stop daydreaming and fly to India to try their dreams; Sonny quits his job and plans to go to Trinidad; Tiger reconfirms his spicy-spicy food but file for a green card. Dr. Giri becomes to be more and more committed to his double roles as Indian Guru and American psychologist.

Living in the in-between place, Little India, all of the characters are challenged by the choice of either to be an Indian or an American, either eastern or western. Cultural identification seems to be one thing that concerns them all. But the most important question is not the choice itself, nor what is Indianness and Americanness, but a more important question, that is: What I am or want as a unique human being on the basis of being an Indian diasporic. It is not the abstract, unifying Indianness that they are clinging to, or the abstract Americanness they are yearning for, but more importantly the individual uniqueness that comes from a combination of their cultural identity and other identities that differentiates them from any other human beings. They are constantly searching and exploring to find a perfect connecting point between their cultural identity and other identities. Cultural identity might play a very important role here in their defining of their individual uniqueness, but it has to give way when it conflicts with other identities that makes up their sense of being and that they are proud of, either in terms of gender or profession or others. This paper will examine what identity tangles the characters face and how they solve them.

## II. BEYOND CULTURAL IDENTITY

On the surface, Tiger's story establishes him as an Indian who, for profits sake, tries to embrace American culture by changing his spicy-spicy Indian food to food with no hot pepper to cater for the tastes of American customers. And his

returning to spicy-spicy food seems to suggest his inability to assimilate and his stubborn hold on his ancestral culture. But to conclude Tiger's story as a story of cultural identification through food would over-simplify the whole picture. Careful examination would find that he actually focuses more on his superiority in cooking as an artist and power as a king. For him, the spicy-spicy food does not only represent Indianness, but more importantly suggest art and power. In the only one description of Tiger's preparation of food, the novel emphasizes creativity and beauty of his cooking. "Despite his considerable bulk, Tiger moved gracefully.....He metamorphosed into an artist, a conjurer in communion with another world. More than ever the divine logic of food flowed effortlessly from his fingertips into pots on the stove as he instinctively balanced hot with sour, cumin, turmeric, coriander, tamarind, cloves....." (Nigam, 2002, p.254) In Tiger's eyes, the Indian food he prepares is his "creation" and he is the best and the king in this field. Being the best artist and the king in this field establishes King's very ego identity and his sense of self and being, not just Indian. Therefore, abandoning spicy-spicy food does not just mean abandoning Indianness, but giving up his sense of being and killing his own strong ego. That is what Tiger fears the most and it explains why Tiger is so angered by Ronny's "patronizing tone", "condescending smile" and his accusation of Tiger's "cheap imitation" and "eunuch's existence".

Tiger's nightmares imply his fear of castration, a metaphor of loss of his ego and vitality. "We won't finish you off. We'll complete the process you've already begun. A swift stroke—two if they're as big as you claim. Of course, I've always been sure they were quite small, shriveled and droopy. Anyway, now we'll see. They'll just roll away. They're already so useless you won't miss them." (Nigam, 2002, p.257) For Tiger, abandoning spicy-spicy food connotes more than cultural assimilation but a loss of vitality and libido which is a great shame for the king Tiger as is shown clearly in his denial and hesitation when his doctor Menaka asks about his sex life. Therefore, his returning to Indian food can not be read as a resistance against assimilation, but a reclaim of his being and his vitality. For him, being Indian or American is not as important as his being the best artist in cooking Indian food. Therefore, sticking to spicy-spicy food and applying for a green card is not as contradictory as it seems. It simply shows that his identity as an artist and king shadows his national and cultural identity.

Similarly, Sonali and Nishad's story can only be partly read as a story of the conflict between Indian cultural identification and American cultural Identification. Nishad's problem with Sonali's big hips seems to suggest his Americanization or assimilation. Indeed he is accused by Sonali of "applying Western criteria to her body". (Nigam, 2002, p.46) She claims that he "has been turned into a perverse maniac by Hollywood and Madison Avenue!" (Nigam, 2002, p.96) But the real reason that Nishad bites Sonali's buttock is a strong urge of sexual desire caused by his appreciation of Sonali's voluptuous body instead of his former transient problem with his wife's big hips. The fact that Sonali's big hips remind him of the erotic sculptures Khajuraho, a very important and classic expression of Indian sexual ideas, and arouses his strong sexual desire suggests Nishad's Indianness is so deep that it is right there in his instincts. It is that relaxed moment that shows American standard of women beauty just blinds Nishad's eyes for a while and on the superficial level. That is to say, Nishad's try of American beauty value in a sense makes clearer his deep-rooted sexual instincts as an Indian man. But this does not indicate Nishad's total Indian cultural identification. Actually his changes at the latter part of the novel indicates that he discards Indian male chauvinism and becomes to be more understanding and tender, a husband who does not only help prepare meals but also let his wife do what she wishes in sex. Therefore, what matters is not to be Indian or American, but to be a better and happier person and husband.

Ironically, Sonali's defiance of her husband's Americanization and her hold on her Indian cultural identity seems to trigger her own assimilation. Sonali's effort of fighting to keep their Indianness by accusing her husband of being "a pawn of neoimperialist" (Nigam, 2002, p.97), wearing only saris, speaking Indian only, seeing Indian movies, visiting the local temple for the first time and even going back to Indian, turn out to make her realize she has changed. She has changed both as an Indian and a woman. She "vowed never to see another Hindi film, concluding that they perpetuated the very entitled Indian male syndrome that was behind this whole mess." (Nigam, 2002, p.98) The feminist social worker and *The Second Sex* change her to be a new woman: "it may look as my husband bit my buttock, but in reality he bit my brain! Instead of debilitating me, though, it has energized me—given me a new perspective on life." (Nigam, 2002, p.96) This new woman sees clearly the Indian male chauvinism and rejects this part of Indianness. She dumps her traditional Indian woman role and takes the active and controlling role in her relationship with her husband, including in sex. But to attribute Sonali's feminist image as total Americanization or assimilation would also be over-simplification. Sonali's new woman image is not actually new in the whole sense. The novel makes sure that careful readers understand that Sonali has always been a strong female professional and has always been proud of her engineering career, engineering skill and her engineer's mind if readers pay attention to her repeated mention of all these in her consciousness. The strong woman has always been there hidden behind the sari of traditional Indian woman. That is why she follows Nishad's ideas in many things but has refused to have babies for years. Between the choice of being an Indian woman and a strong female professional, Sonali's choice has always been the latter, even when she is deliberately wearing saris, speaking Indian and seeing Indian movies. What matters the most for her is not to be Indian or American but to be a strong woman and a strong professional. Cultural identification has to give way if it conflicts with her gender and professional identification.

Moving back to the States and out of their Indian diasporic enclave, Little India, can not simply be read as Sonali's final renouncement of her Indian identity and claim of American identity as well. Moving west is not just for survival,

but for her self-realization as a professional and her development as a new woman, a new independent, free and strong woman cutting from any Indian traditional gender role that binds her. "The Bay Area promised a new future—professionally as well as personally." (Nigam, 2002, p.330) For Sonali, it is not being an Indian woman or wife or American but being a "Ms. Woman of the Computer Age" that is important. Her professional identity is more important for her than her ethnic/cultural identity. It is for realization of her profession or self-realization that she goes to the States and it is also for her development in the engineering field that she goes back to India and then back to the States. She talks about the new India of computers, satellites and test-tube babies, cyberspace, and plans to go back to India to join firstly an engineering firm and then start their own. She is "so excited by the country's entrepreneurial spirit that she seemed to forget the strange circumstances that had brought them there. She couldn't get enough of the Delhi where she'd been born and raised. All over the city Marutis and other small cars filled the streets, mobile phone, this and that dot com, fashionable shopping centers, latest ultrasound equipment, computer rooms, internet access," (Nigam, 2002, p.309) To sum up, it is the identity of a strong female professional that makes up a uniqueness that Sonali cherishes and when cultural identity contradicts with it, Sonali makes her uniqueness more important.

For Sonny, cultural identity is even less important. Living outside Little India but working in Little India does not suggest his hesitation or dilemma between Indian identification and American identification. Like his been drawing to New York when at Arizona and feeling the pull of Arizona when in New York, it just indicates his inability to settle down. "he has to settle—inside. But he thinks finding where he needs to be inside depends on finding where he needs to be outside. He has developed a whole theory about it, a theory of a perfect place." (Nigam, 2002, p.248) His nightmares and his sleepwalking problems show that his restlessness is not caused by a cultural dilemma but an unhappy childhood. Bad relationship with his mother and lack of father make him feel like an orphan. His dreams about searching for guidance from an old man and his tender feeling to the fatherly figure Transplanted Man suggest that, in his consciousness, being a protected and guided son is the most important thing for him. "This was the fourth or fifth night in a week that he'd dreamed about the old man in the desert telling him to go somewhere. But where?" (Nigam, 2002, p.28) He is just like a lost boy endlessly looking for a father but failed. "Deep within those eyes lurked a wild longing.....It was the look of a young man searching for something beyond what the rest of the world was satisfied with, yet at the same time unsure what that was." (Nigam, 2002, p.37) In another dream, his yearning for a father is even clearer when he actually asks a group of men for a father.

Besides, Sonny's sleepwalking is also not caused by cultural conflict but by "an internal conflict so painful that it could be resolved only outside the bounds of consciousness." (Nigam, 2002, p.168) What is more, his resemblance and affinity for the Hypokinetic man suggests a state of being stuck and inability that is not caused by cultural dilemma as well since the hypokinetic man, a white in the States, does not have cultural identification problems. As a matter of fact, his belief and pursuit of a place for everyone shows that he does not want to identify with any culture, neither Indian nor American. Trinidad, "a place for everyone, where everybody has come from somewhere else, where the cultures are all mixed unencumbered by ancestral echoes." (Nigam, 2002, p.230) For Sonny, ancestral connections do not provide a sense of home and belonging, but act as encumbrances.

Likewise, Dr. Giri's struggle with the guru's robes or the psychologists' white coat suggests more than cultural dilemma. For him, playing guru is just for survival, not for keeping his Indianness. As a matter of fact, although refusing to leave Little India, he hates playing a guru because it shadows his identity as a psychologist, an identity that has nothing to do with American identity or that does not suggest assimilation either. Being a psychologist is just one very important element of his vocational identity other than cultural identity that makes him unique and gives him a sense of being. His vocational identity is far more important than his cultural/ethnic identity.

Manny's going to India can also not be read as his Indian cultural identification only. It is for his dream of being a playback singer, not for an Indian he is seeking. And the fact he goes with non-Indian Alvin strengthens that the trip is not for the sake of Indian identity, but for dreams and ambition, things that make them have a basic sense of self other than cultural identity.

What is more, the younger generation Atul and Jay's seeking for a pose for everyone and the sister's search for an ism for everyone to solve the fighting also make clear the weak significance of cultural identity for them. The writer's design of one Indian man growing up and living in India as the Transplanted Man and one white man living in the States as the Hypokinetic man further shows that even those non-diasporics might find themselves transplanted and stuck. The writer seems to emphasize that cultural/ethnic identity is just one among the many identity problems. Feeling lost, distant and unable to move and reach home is common and universal, diasporic or not. As is commented by some, *Transplanted Man* examines human questions that are without geographic boundaries.

### III. ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

The weak cultural identifications of Indian Americans in the novel find its correspondence and explanation in anthropological studies as well. According to Maxine P. Fisher, Asian Indian immigrants who have come to the States after 1965 "lack a strong sense identity as Indians." (Fisher, 1978, p.271) Fisher (1978) attributes this phenomenon to two causes. One is the major shift in U.S. immigration policy which enabled Indians, esp. Indian professionals, to enter this country in significant numbers for the first time in half a century.

*This system of issuing visas accounts for one of the most striking characteristics of the Indian immigrant*

population here: the degree to which it is professionally employed. For example, of the 14,939 Indians admitted as immigrants in 1975, 6,156 were classified by the U.S. Immigration Service as "professional/technical workers" (U.S.ISAR 1975:42-43). An additional 7,763 were classified as "spouses and children of professional/technical workers" (U.S.ISAR 1975:43). The combined figures account for 93% of the Indian immigrants admitted during that year. Also, of the 188 Indians admitted in 1975 as "temporary workers" (a nonimmigrant status), 122 were classified as "workers of distinguished merit and ability" by the Immigration Service (U.S. ISAR 1975:70). .... the government's statistics on the occupational status of Indian immigrants are impressive. In 1974 more than half of the 46,000 reported as employed were working as engineers, scientists, or in the medical profession (Doshi 1975:xii) (pp.272-274).

According to Fisher, most of these immigrants had good jobs at home and they came to the States for "greater job opportunity" (Fisher, 1978). The fact that career advancement is an important motivation for emigrating suggests that these mostly professional Indians value career more than anything else. A weak cultural identification is hence understandable. The novel does not state clearly the time of the story. But according to the information like the "computer age" the novel provides, we can assume it sets in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most probably the last two or three decades, during which most Indian immigrants came to the States were professionals. The novel's characterization of Sonali, Dr. Giri, Nishad and Dr. Ranjan etc. are all typical professionals who put their career before cultural identification and who would let go certain element of cultural identity if it contradicts with their career.

Another cause that Fisher finds for the weak Indian cultural identification is the diverse linguistic, religious, and regional backgrounds of the Indian immigrants:

*The Indian immigrant population of New York is marked by a high degree of diversity in terms of its ethnic origin prior to emigration. Speakers of no fewer than 12 different Indian natal languages are represented here. There are, in addition, five broad religious categories, and sectarian divisions are recognized within these. Membership in different castes and varnas transect all of these identities. And finally, there are immigrants of Indian origin who have spent much or all of their lives outside of India, typically in an East African country. These people have an additional layer of ethnic identity superimposed on all of the above* (Fisher, 1978, p.275).

Just as few Asians in America would identify as Asian Americans, the diversity of both the backgrounds and ethnic labels make it hard for the Indians in the States to identify as Indian Americans. As a matter of fact, the U.S. Census Bureau even did not provide a category for the Indians in America for their self-identification until 1980. The "ethnic background on the census questionnaire had only one box appropriate for Indian self-identification: a large residual category labeled "other." Census Bureau officials in Washington admitted that data on those responding "other" were added to data collected on those responding 'white/caucasian.'" (Fisher, 1978, p.279)

#### IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, Sanjay Nigam's *Transplanted Man* presents a realistic picture of the identity exploration of the Indian Americans in New York City by depicting the complicated tangle of their multiple identities. Due to the strong ego identity, career identity or gender identity of these characters, cultural identity becomes less important when it contradict with other identities.

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**Lihua Zhao** was born in Sichuan, China P.R. in 1972. She received Ph. D. of Arts from Sichuan University (Chengdu, China) in 2008. She is an English professor at China West Normal University (Nanchong, China). Her research focuses on American minority literature mainly. Her selected previous publications are: *Skin Duality in Morrison's Paradise*. *Foreign Literature Review* 104.4 (Beijing, China, 2012); *Spatial Politics: A Study of Toni Morrison's Fictions* (Chendu, China: Sichuan University Press, 2011); *Baby Suggs' Decolonized Spatial Practice in Beloved*, co-authored with Jian Shi. *Contemporary Foreign Literature* 113.3 (Nanjing, China, 2008). She is currently working on the spatial politics, spatial memory and spatial reconstruction of thirty American minority fictions.



# A Comparative Study of Two Cognitive Models in Teaching Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs: Tyler and Evan's vs. Lakoff and Johnson's Approach

Mohammad Reza Talebinezhad

Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch, Iran

Nikoo Farhadian

Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch, Iran

**Abstract**—This study was an attempt to examine whether Tyler and Evan's approach could have any advantageous contribution to teaching and learning idiomatic PVs in comparison with Lakoff and Johnsons' approach in an Iranian EFL context. To this end, 60 English learners at intermediate level of language proficiency were assigned to two equal groups: group A, treated with Tyler and Evans' approach and group B, treated with Lakoff and Johnsons' approach. Both groups received 40 idiomatic phrasal verbs with the same particles (*up, down, in, out, off, away, on*). The participants in group A were presented with the underlying systematicity of the particles based on Tyler and Evans' (2003) *Principled Polysemy Theory* within the Cognitive Linguistics framework. Group B received their instruction following Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphor Awareness*. The data were collected through a pre-posttest assessment and analyzed by T-Test procedure using SPSS demonstrated the superiority of Tyler and Evan's approach and revealed a strategy transfer to unrehearsed PVs as well.

**Index Terms**—phrasal verbs, cognitive linguistics, particles, embodiment motivation conceptualization, spatial scene, vantage point strategy, transfer

## I. INTRODUCTION

The two-unit words like turn on, turn off, wind up, wind down, etc, are a category of English language lexicon called *phrasal verb* (PVs). Phrasal verbs with one or two additional components are called *particles* (Alexander, 1988; McArthur, 1989). These particles are often a spatial preposition such as *up, down, on, in*, and so forth. PVs are important because English speakers frequently and customarily use them in their everyday communications. In fact, "no one speak or understand English, at least the informal register, without a knowledge of phrasal verbs" (Celce-Marcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p.425). Hence, learning to recognize, comprehend, and actively use PVs is an inevitable part of EFL pedagogy.

Despite their significant importance, PVs have always been annoying for EFL learners. Ironically, they are like "a nettle that has to be grasped if students are to achieve native-like proficiency in speech and writing" (Cowie, 1993, p.38). On the other hand, *idiomaticity* which means, (the meaning is not predictable because it is not equal to the sum of the meaning of its components), is the most troublesome characteristic of PVs that make EFL students confused and gives them the false assumption that PVs are random and without logical principles. In sum, difficulties such as, the wide range and abundant number of PVs, their syntax, the formal/ informal stylistic choice, learners' negative attitude and avoidance in using them and the most important, the problem of idiomaticity seems to be all-problematic issues.

Based on the above-described grounds, this paper attempts to address this issue by comparing two approaches in teaching PVs through CL frame work, namely Tyler & Evans and Lakoff & Johnsons' models.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The study outlined in this paper was designed to provide answers to the following questions:

Question 1: To what extent do Tyler & Evans' and Lakoff & Johnsons' models differ in their effectiveness in teaching phrasal verbs?

Question 2: To what extent do the students who receive their treatment using the two models differ in transferring their acquired knowledge to unrehearsed novel phrasal verbs?

Taking these questions into account, the following hypotheses were formulated.

Hypothesis 1: Tyler and Evans' model is more useful in teaching PVs than Lakoffs' model.

Hypothesis 2: Learners treated using the two different models will differ in transferring their acquired knowledge to novel contexts.

### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The subject of how best to teach PVs has attracted considerable attention and many researchers have tried to facilitate this tedious task of learning PVs for students. Some of the authors working on the field of PVs agree that there is no specified single way or a programmed manner in which a student can learn PVs and the only way to acquire such knowledge is by extensive reading and listening (Al-Sibai, 2003).

Sadri (2012) stated, "a traditional way of presenting- and not actually teaching PVs-which has been the most common approach in English course books and materials so far is providing the students with a list of PVs, based on alphabetical order or a verb with different particles or a particle with different verbs". An example is Coles and Lord's (1978, p.66), *Open Road* students have to match the PVs with the definitions at the beginning of the exercise. Or in Sue O'Connell's (1987, p. 27), *Focus on First Certificate* where a list of PVs using the verb *put* is given, together with a definition and the students had to learn this heart. In 1970's, after recognizing the inadequacy of traditional method, presentation of new language items in context seemed very promising for teaching PVs. Among the more recent studies in this connection, Wyss' (2002) work is worth mentioning. He advised teachers to present their students with various authentic texts- articles, books, etc- that contain a rich mix of PVs. Also, Cirocki (2003) developed a technique for teaching PVs that was somewhat different from Wyss; that students were able to pick up the meaning of a PV from context even though they had never seen it before. However, guessing meaning from context has its own limitation that single encounter with an unfamiliar word in context seldom reveals more than a fraction of the word's meaning and also learning from context is demonstrably more difficult in second language learning.

The last view in teaching PVs was cognitive linguistic (CL). CL believes that much of the meaning of words is constructed and driven from bodily and sociocultural experience and is non-linguistic in nature. The well-known people in this area were Lakoff and Johnsons and Tyler and Evans' approach. The first book of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) was, *Metaphors we live by*. The significant message of the book was, humans not only speak in metaphorical terms, but also think in metaphorical terms. The next book was, *The body in the mind* in 1987 that first introduced the notion of *image schema* as the building block of metaphor. The term *schema* in image schema means that "image schemas are not rich or detail concepts, but rather abstract concepts consisting of patterns emerging from repeated instances of embodied experience" (Evans & Green, 2006, p.179) or in Mandler's (2004, p.79) terms image schema is "not a simplified visual image but a schematic spatial representation that summarizes spatial relations and movements in space". At the end, although Lakoff and Johnson's theory was influential, there were some shortcomings. One of these problems refer to the *granularity* (i.e. the level of detail) of image schemas (Evans & Green, 2006, p.336). Another criticism was relate to methodological constraints and lack of clear methodological principles which means, the Lakoffian approach based on intuitions and imaginations rather than actual representing of objects in the mind of language user (Evans & Green, 2006). And the last one was, the absence of vantage point and contextual inferences.

In 2003, Tyler and Evans provided a comprehensive theoretical analysis (termed as *principled polysemy theory*) for English particles/prepositions in their remarkable book: *The semantics of English prepositions: spatial senses, embodied meaning, and cognition*. In this theory they proposed that, the polysemy of particles should be characterized based on two principles: vantage point (way of viewing a spatial scene) and contextual inferences (understanding meaning from context of use). The critical difference between Tyler and Evan's theory and the Lakoffian approach is that, in Diven's (2001b) terms, it is a *metaphorical*. While they do not reject the importance of metaphor in human cognition, they hold that metaphors are vague and unspecified concepts and do not adequately explain the cognitive mechanisms and processes of underling systematicity of particles/prepositions.

A few Iranian researches were done in the field of PVs within a CL framework, some of them as far as the researcher could find from the body of research available, was Sadri's MA dissertation which is called *A pedagogical application of cognitive linguistics in teaching idiomatic phrasal verbs* (2012). In this study she compared Tyler and Evans' method in teaching idiomatic phrasal verbs with traditional (memorization) approach with only four particles *up*, *down*, *in* and *out*. Another study was related to Farsani's PhD dissertation which named as *Mnemonic effectiveness of CL-motivated picture – elucidation tasks in foreign learners' acquisition of English phrasal verb*. In this study they presented the students with some pictures showing literal sense of a PV and on the next session they presented another picture showing more abstract figurative meaning of the same PV. Nevertheless, regarding the fact that newly-developed and small bulk of CL-based research in Iranian literature awaits much more up-to-date studies, the present study is an attempt to add one such study to this archive.

### IV. METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants who took part in study were 60 students of a private language school (Daneshjoo Language Center) in Isfahan, Iran. They all shared Persian as their mother tongue and Their age ranged from 17 to 23. The study was conducted during the summer English courses of the language institute.

In order to ensure participants' homogeneity in terms of language proficiency, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT, 2010) was run on a total population of approximately 300 candidates who had enrolled for the summer program of the institute. Based on the results of the OPT, 100 number of candidates were placed at intermediate level of English language

proficiency. Then, using a table of random number, 60 candidates were randomly selected from them as the participants of this study.

### B. Materials

The study took advantage of pre and posttest assessment as its data collection instrument. The pretest used in this study consisted of multiple-choice items in order to understand the difficult items and the degree of familiarity of students with target PVs, these 40 idiomatic phrasal verbs with particles *up, down, in, out, off, away, on* were selected based on participant's textbook that were taught during one term (Top Notch series) and the posttest consisted of 6 cloze passages with fill-in-the-blank/word bank format (first part of the test) and also 14 paraphrase sentences (second part of the test).

### C. Research Design and Procedure

Before administering the pretest, participants were briefed about PVs; highlighting that a PV consists of a verb plus a smaller word (such as *up, down, in, out,...*) and giving examples they had already been practically familiar with, such as *get up, stand up, sit down, come in*. The participants were assured that their scores on the experimental tests would have no negative effect on their end-of-term results, and then the test was distributed. The participants were randomly assigned to two equal groups/ classes.

1. *The first group/class* arranged to receive treatment in the form of CL- motivated instruction on 40 idiomatic PVs ending in particles *up/down, in/out, off, away* and *on* based on Tyler and Evan's model.

2. *The second group/class* which was to receive instruction on the same PVs as in the first group but through Lakoff's approach.

The experimental procedure for both groups was performed in the form of teacher-fronted instruction and began from the first session. Table 1. summarizes the time sequence of this instructional procedure.

TABLE 1.  
TIME SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE FOR BOTH GROUPS

Group	session 1-3	session 4-9	session 10-11	session 12-14	session 15	session 16-17	session 18-20
The first and second	Out (6PVs)	Up (12PVs)	On (5PVs)	Off (6PVs)	In (2PVs)	Away (5PVs)	Down (4PVs)

For the first group, the target idiomatic PVs of the study were taught based on CL-based explanations which was basically adapted from Tyler and Evens' (2003) theory which is proposed in their book titled : *The semantic of English prepositions : spatial scenes, embodied meaning and cognition*. However, as the name of the book reveals, it takes focus on prepositions (and not their function as particles in a verb- particle combinations). Each particle refers to a specific spatial scene which is meaningful for humans because of their similarity and correspondence to bodily actions or physical experiences. This basic meaning of particle can be extended to form a semantic network, that is, each particle has some additional non- spatial (abstract) meanings other than its basic meaning which are the conceptual and cognitive results of the basic meaning. It was clarified to class that these explanations are only clues to learn and infer the meaning of PVs and there is no need or obligation to memorize them.

The CL-based explanations were accompanied with simple drawings of spatial scenes of each particle and the vantage point configurations. CL believes in fundamental role of space and bodily mechanisms in human cognition; therefore, the researcher confined her visual presentation to simple drawing she drew on the white board whenever necessary.

As for the second group, the 40 target idiomatic PVs of the study were taught to the participants under the same time schedule but through Lakoff's metaphor awareness which was basically adapted from Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory which is proposed in their book titled *metaphor we live by*. In that book they emphasized that the foundation of human mind is metaphoric in nature and metaphors emerge from pre-linguistic representations of human bodily experience. On the other hand, they mentioned that the meanings of particles/prepositions are clearly grounded in spatio-physical interaction with the world. Gradually during the specified time each particle was explained without being contextualized and the vantage point configuration.

At the end of the program a posttest was administered. It should be mentioned that the posttest consisted of two parts; the first part that aimed at eliciting the data related to the first researcher's question covered the 40 idiomatic PVs taught during the program. It consisted of six short dialogs and paragraphs with some blanks that students were asked to fill them with a PV they could choose from a given word bank. The participants were asked to select only one and the most appropriate PV for each blank. The second part of the test was designed to collect the required data for the second research question of the study. This section consisted of 14 idiomatic PVs that were not presented in class and students were not familiar with. The second research question addressed whether the participants could transfer their knowledge of learned PVs to unfamiliar PVs; therefore, they were somewhat expected to guess the meaning of the new PVs based on the underlying systematicity of the particles.

### D. Data Analysis

The data in the form of participants' scores from pre/posttest were fed into SPSS (IBM SPSS statistics: version 20.0). The data were analyzed in terms of mean score differences and their corresponding P-values by running T-Test for independent samples between the first group and the second groups. Since the study sought answers to two research questions, two sets of analyses were performed, each dealing with one of the research questions. The results of these analyses are presented in the following part.

## V. RESULTS

### A. Results for the First Research Question

To answer the first question, the results of two groups' performances on pre/posttest were to be compared. At first, the scores of two groups on pretest were fed to SPSS (Table.2). Then the results were analyzed by independent samples T-Test (Table.3). As is evident from table 2, Sig (2-tailed) value is .180 that represents, p-value is not significant, because it's bigger than .05 ( $p > .05$ ). Therefore, the groups' performances were relatively close on pretest.

TABLE.2.  
DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS OF THE GROUPS ON PRETEST  
Group Statistics

class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest first	30	17.9667	1.95613	.35714
Second	30	17.3333	1.64701	.30070

TABLE.3.  
INDEPENDENT T-TEST DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR PRETEST

	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Equal variance assumed	-1.357	58	.180
Equal variance not assumed	-1.357	56.36	.180

The second step was to examine the groups' performance on the posttest (part1). Like the previous part the scores obtained from posttest were fed into SPSS (Table.4). in order to compare the groups' performances statistically, independent T-Test was run (Table.5). Comparing the results illustrates that there is statistically significant difference between the groups, In order to, the p-value is smaller than .05 ( $p < .05$ ). So it was indicated that after the treatment, the first group did better and outperformed the second group.

TABLE.4.  
MEAN SCORES OF THE GROUPS ON POSTTEST (PART 1)  
Group Statistics

class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest1 first	30	31.4000	1.56690	.28608
Second	30	21.3000	1.84110	.33614

TABLE.5.  
INDEPENDENT T-TEST DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR POSTTEST, PART1

	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Equal variance Assumed	-22.882	58	.000
Equal variance not assumed	-22.882	56.554	.000

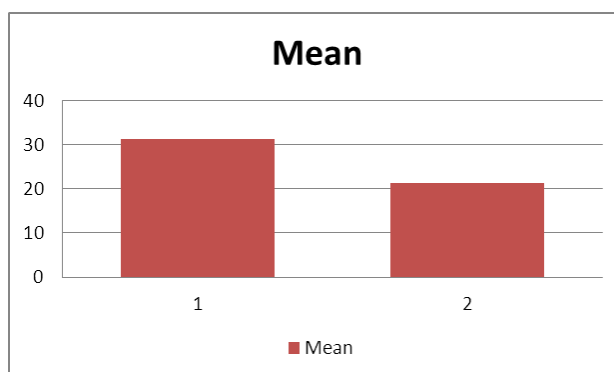


Fig. 1: Graphic representation of the means (posttest-part1)

Figure1 is the graphical representation of the groups' overall performance on posttest (part1).

### B. Results for the Second Research Question

The data from the second question was demonstrated in table6. Obviously, it can be understood that the first groups' mean score is much more than the mean score of the second group.

TABLE 6.  
MEAN SCORES OF THE GROUPS ON POSTTEST (PART 2)  
Group Statistics

class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest first 1.00	30	11.5667	1.22287	.22326
Second 2.00	30	6.3667	1.12903	.20613

To compare the results statistically an independent samples T-Test was run (Table7). It shows a Sig (2-tailed) value of .000, which entails a statistically significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the performances of the groups on posttest (part2).

TABLE 7.  
INDEPENDENT T-TEST DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR POSTTESTPART2

class	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Posttest first 1	-17.113	58	.000
Second 2	-17.113	57.634	.000

It could be concluded that the first class had a better learning gain of the taught idiomatic PVs than the second class. Besides, the first group exhibited a better knowledge transfer to novel idiomatic PVs than their second group peers. The overall performance of groups on posttest (part2) is graphically presented in figure2.

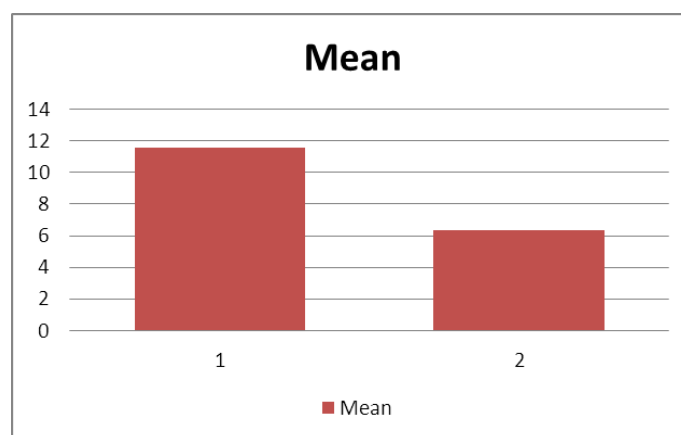


Fig. 2: Graphic representation of the means (posttest-part2)

## VI. DISCUSSION

The current study was an attempt to examine the pedagogical application of CL in teaching idiomatic PVs. The results obtained from the data analysis procedure provide a clear answer to the first posed question of the study: that Tyler & Evans approach to teaching idiomatic PVs can indeed enhance the learning of idiomatic PVs.

The students of the first class were made aware that multiple meanings associated with particles in idiomatic PVs are *motivated* by everyday normal experiences in the environment and *related* in systematic ways within a meaning network (Tyler & Evans, 2003). Moreover, the study provided the first class participants with the schematic drawings that represented the spatial scene of each particle in terms of a TR (trajectory), moveable object and a LM (land mark), immovable element, as well as the incorporation of the viewer's vantage point and figure-ground profiles.

Cognitive psychology and the light it has thrown on cognitive processes concerning memory provides a cogent explanation for such effective learning. There are two cognitive processes particularly relevant to the current study: dual coding theory and levels of processing theory. In *dual coding theory* (Paivio, 1971; as cited in Sternberg, 2006) it is held that there are two ways a person could expand on learned material: verbal associations and visual imagery. Since the treatment of the first class was a combination of teacher-fronted verbal explanations and representative drawings of spatial scenes from different vantage points, it can be concluded that visual and verbal information are processed differently and along distinct channels in the human mind, creating separate representations for information processed in each channel and both visual and verbal codes can be used when recalling information.

Another relevant theory is *levels-of-processing theory* which means, the deeper the level at which information is mentally processed, the more likely the information is to be committed to long-term memory ( Craik & Lockhart, 1972). Two levels of processing are: *deep processing* which entails durable semantic associations in memory and meaningful learning, and *shallow processing* based on no associative clues leading to rapid forgetting.

The above-described facts shed more light on why the second group displayed lower learning gain on PVs than the first group. The students received the target idiomatic PVs through Lakoff & Johnson's metaphor awareness. However, metaphors are fairly vague and ambiguous concepts. Besides, there are numerous metaphors involved in understanding the meaning of a particle. Therefore, providing the learners with metaphors and asking them to learn them practically is no better than asking them to memorize PVs from a list as non-systematic lexical items.

Going back to the second research question, the findings indicate a successful transfer of knowledge for the first group as well as a poor transfer for the second group. From Tyler & Evens' point of view, meanings are not fixed prescribed patterns to be memorized; rather, they are constructed based upon careful thought, observations of the world, and background sociocultural knowledge. The better performance of the first class on unfamiliar idiomatic PVs could be attributed to the fact that being equipped with Tyler & Evans' approach, they managed to infer the meaning of unfamiliar idiomatic PVs from the context. When they are making inferences, they combine what they have been taught about the systematicity of idiomatic PVs, their background knowledge, and their experiences about the world. Analogously, using Lakoffian approach that advocates metaphor awareness as the only way of learning idiomatic PVs tend to force the learners to believe that different senses of particles, appear to be unmotivated and unrelated. Therefore, when they see new idiomatic PVs in unrehearsed contexts they automatically skip them over without thinking because the unfamiliar idiomatic PVs do not ring a familiar bell in their memory.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to examine whether a recent CL-based approach, namely *principled polysemy theory* (Tyler & Evans, 2003), could have any advantageous contribution to teaching and learning idiomatic PVs in comparison with an approach in which idiomatic PVs are instructed through Lakoff & Johnsons' metaphor awareness approach. Lakoffian method underscores the importance of embodiment principle of CL and relying on image schemas and metaphors as the results of bodily experience provides a very narrow simplistic interpretation of embodiment tenet of CL.

The findings of the study lend strong support to the superiority of the Tylers' approach and confirmed that participants of the first group who received idiomatic PVs through CL-based instruction and students' background knowledge and contextual inferences not only learned idiomatic PVs better but also were able to effectively transfer their acquired knowledge to unrehearsed idiomatic PVs as well. Also it was shown that particles are not arbitrary but motivated by language users' experience of their physical, social and cultural surroundings, and hence, making the learners familiar with the principles of spatial and abstract meaning underlying the particles would facilitate learning and teaching of idiomatic PVs.

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**Mohammad Reza Talebinejad** is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch. He is also an associate faculty member at Sheikhabaee University, Iran.

Dr Talebinejad received his BA in English Language and Literature, University of Isfahan in 1975. He then got his MA in TEFL from the University of Texas at Austin, USA in 1977. For his doctoral degree, Dr Talebinejad was admitted to the University of Sheffield, UK, where he did his PhD in Applied Linguistics in 1994.

He has widely published in Iranian as well as International professional journals such as *Metaphor and Symbol*, *English Teaching Forum*, *Language Testing*, *IJAL*, *Language and Translation*, *Journal of Social Sciences*, *The International Journal of Humanities*, and other local and international journals. Dr Talebinejad has presented papers in international conferences such as AILA, 2000; Atiner, 2011; RAAM, 2002, 2001 in Paris and Tunis, EUROSLA, Switzerland, 2006; Multicultural Conference, 2007, China. In addition, Dr Talebinejad has authored/coauthored eight books in related fields and ESP.

**Nikoo Farhadian** was born in Isfahan, Iran, in 1978. She received an M.A. in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch, Iran, in 2013. She is a private language school teacher and has been teaching English for about 5 years.

# A Theory of Literary Realism

Ali Taghizadeh

English Department, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

**Abstract**—The European Medieval romance was far from realistic. However, the modern literary realism both in England and America has been multi-faceted. An English face of it is often the manifestation of man in search of salvation via the application of his mental capacity in a chaotic world of tension and progress. In his remote island, the hero of Daniel Defoe is concerned mainly with the development of his kingdom and the application of his sovereignty over the natives. But an American form of literary realism is that however the romance is not divided in it from the novel, but it shows the present as sharply separated from the past. The realism of Howells is the realism of here and now, that of Mark Twain is a criticism of the present social situation, and the realism of James is often concerned with the psychological development of his key characters.

**Index Terms**—romance, novel, representation, English realism, American realism

## I. INTRODUCTION: ROMANCE VERSUS NOVEL

Realism is often multi-faceted. Literary scholars often find it in relation with the rise of the novel, and thus rightly claim that it is narrative. Another facet of realism is the relation between literature and reality, between what the word says and what the life is. This dimension is usually dealt with under “representation” which is psychological, cognitive, as well as anthropological.

It can be argued that the novel is the literature of the bourgeoisie, and the romance, which is a major precursor of the English novel, was the literature of feudalism. In the present study, a question is what type of literature the romance was, and how it should be compared with the novel. Romance, or chivalric romance, takes elements from legends, fairy tales, and history. It is a form of heroic prose and verse story that was popular in the aristocratic circles of the medieval and early modern Europe. The romances typically narrated the knightly adventures of a valiant hero who often fell in love with a beautiful lady from a noble family with ancient pedigree. To take the hand of his beloved and gain the honor of knighthood, such a warrior-lover had to prove that he could defend the values of chivalry and heroism, that he was faithful to the tradition of “courtly love,” and that he could defeat all the enemies of his society. Therefore, he had to quest for a brave errand of heroism that included a series of dangerous adventures. The romance was highly elevated in form and content, and was therefore a suitable type of literature for the representation of the manners of the gentry: kings, soldiers, lovers, etc.

However, in its rise and role, the English realistic novel was in sharp opposition to the romance. If the romancer felt free from the moral reality, and if he would therefore compose a story that was quite subjective and had nothing to do with the real human society, the realist novelist would feel a heavy load on his shoulder to provide an objective rendition of the meaning of humanity. From the outset, the English realistic novel has objectively concerned itself with the daily life experiences of the common man and woman coming from the lower and/or middle classes of the early modern society. In addition, the fact that the novel was in prose as the language of the practical people, made it possible for its writer to free himself from the necessities of the elevated language of the romance. So, the simple flow of the prose language into the smallest nooks and corners of the human consciousness allowed the novelists to represent the minutest details of life experiences of the average man.

The appearance of female society, the increase of wealth, the mandatory education, and the development of journalism had also significant roles in the rise and development of the English novel as a product of realism. The higher class women, who had a lot of free time to pass at home, started to be regular consumers of the novel, because for passing their leisure time conveniently, they needed something to read. In such a situation, compulsory education led to a rapid increase in the number of men and women who could read (prose) fiction. And the development of journalism, which was itself a result of compulsory education, was influential not only in the technical promotion of story-telling, but also in making the readers more interested in the novel, because the publication of the life stories of novelistic characters in sequential issues of the magazines made it possible for the readers to follow the stories of such characters. These factors, in addition to the invention of the printing industry, the development of public health, the increase of leisure time, and the progress of public transportation changed the novel from a minimally- or privately-supported medium of culture and education to a publically-supported medium. And this, in turn, helped it to become more deeply integrated to the development of realism in Western cultures.

Moreover, if the representation of life in romance is more subjective, in the novel it is more objective. This means that doing his job, the romancer used to feel greater freedom from the social standards, whereas the novelist feels committed to represent the reality of the human experience. For Richard Chase,



The main difference between the novel and the romance is the way in which they view reality. The novel renders reality closely and in comprehensive detail. It takes a group of people and sets them going about the business of life. We come to see these people in their real complexity of temperament and motive. ... Character is more important than action and plot, ... The events that occur will usually be plausible, given the circumstances, ... By contrast the romance, following distantly the medieval example, feels free to render reality in less volume and detail. It tends to prefer action to character, and action will be freer in a romance than in a novel, encouraging as it were, less resistance from reality (1957, p. 12).

Another feature of the realistic novel is the absence from it of the great people of romance and their heroic actions. Novel is not suitable for representing the manners of aristocracy like heroism and courtly love. It is also not interested in dramatizing the superhuman characters of romance and their incredible and fantastic incidents. Instead, it tends to dramatize the life experiences of average men and women as they are involved with the real ups and downs of daily life. Characters in a novel typically represent the members of lower and middle classes. The representation of such people in the novel implies, as Sir Walter Scott says, that it speaks "the dialect, the language" that people "know—the language of unaffected people everywhere" (qtd. in Miller, 1967, p. 265).

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. Realism in English Novel

#### 1. In Daniel Defoe

The language of the novel is perhaps as diversified as the real speakers are; and it is prone both to lexical and grammatical deviations from the standard dialect. This means that the language of a novel can be as fully slangy, conversational, and colloquial as the man of business, who has something on the tip of his language to express, can speak with no attention to the form and lexicon of his expression. The diversity of the people represented in the realistic novel guarantees that it can be widely inclusive in plot, theme, and characters, for in their humor, motivations, inclinations, etc. the people of the novel can be as different from one another as real people are different. Thus, depending on the people involved in the realistic story, "everyday life" means different things and includes a whole range of concerns: love, hate, death, pride, greed, poverty, failure, success, struggle, sexuality, etc. And the characters are shown in their real attempts to develop their lives, or even to survive, in a (transient and paradoxical) society that is sometimes harsh and nonhuman.

In this way, if in realism the representation of "everyday life" is elemental, it can be argued that in different novels and for different characters it means different things. For example, for a highly ambitious and fully aspired young man like Robinson Crusoe in a novel by Daniel Defoe, it meant how to apply his power and wisdom to create life out of almost nothing on his remote island and how to survive there for about 29 years: firstly to get saved from the violent sea storms, then to primarily settle there on his island and to tame it, then again to manufacture the things he most needs, to open a plantation, to grow goats and sheep, to kill the wild animals, to teach the Bible to his man Friday, to surrender the native settlers, to exploit them to his own advantage, etc. the sum total of which meant to restore his sovereignty in his privately-established state.

The purpose of the English novel is to convey the impression of fidelity to human experience. Therefore, another mark of distinction of the novel is the newness of its subject matter. This adds to the role of the author also, because representing the variety of the modern life goes counter to the repetition of the previous plots, and it needs the creativity of the author. Such valuation of the individual means that learning is a reliable source of inspiration which can take the place of the sources of collective tradition whether they be scriptures, legends, or histories.

Thus, it is logical that the novel is more formless than the romance, tragedy, or epic. It can perhaps be as formless as the individual experience can be limitless in type and volume. For example, the story of *Robinson Crusoe* is free from tradition, and flows as spontaneously as Defoe plausibly imagines the daily lives of his characters. This is to mean that if a Medieval text, *Roman de la Rose* for example, was composed on the basis of the French tradition of courtly love, the plot of Defoe's novel develops as the hero narrates the incidents of his own life and history when he sets sail from his hometown in York, England, for an unknown destination in search of a new life. This is a wholly invented plot that originates not from tradition, legend, mythology, or history, but from the personal experiences of the author, from a series of fictive adventures when the hero ventures to go on a tumultuous journey to establish a state in the foreign lands.

The actors in an English novel are also different from those in past literatures. The human types of epic and romance are replaced in the novel by particular people who arrange their lives in particular circumstances. Therefore, it is not the accepted universals of life, but the experiences of certain men and women, that define in the novel the reality of the consciousness. In this way, in the rise of the novel the concept of "reality" changed also; and the material of realism emerged from the immediate sense impressions of the individual man. However, although Robinson Crusoe has a lot of knowledge and experience, the base of truth is neither his knowledge of an accepted tradition, nor the outcome of an individual sense impression in the particular sense. Thus, the individual man of the novel has an intellectual responsibility for the recognition of reality: he has to give shape to the unshapely flood of sense impressions by filtering them through his consciousness.

But if this new form of literature should be widely appreciated, the critical tradition should also change, for in the culture of the readership the new values of originality and particularity should take the place of the classical values of

repetition and universality. However, the dissatisfaction and departure implicit in originality, along with the power of the novel to depict the state of thought and feeling of the past generations, make the novel appealing enough to the newly emerging readership, for they could read the life story of particular men and women who were like themselves.

Additionally, the new critical atmosphere in the emergence of the novel was to give birth to new methods and standards for characterization and for the presentation of environment. It is essential that the reader of the realistic fiction collaborates with it, for in the act of composition, and by taking distance from the characters through observation, the author registers them on his/her consciousness as real and independent human beings. Thus, for preserving the "illusion of reality" in the story, the reader should infuse his own experiences with those of the characters. It can be suggested that the English realistic novel is a drama of intellectualization, for it depicts not only the state of intellect of the past generations, but also that of the readers. In the space of the novel, we not only frame our feeling and structure our intelligibility, but also discover how we are integrated to our society. Winfried Fluck perhaps means this when he describes realism as an optimistic project in America. In "American Culture and Modernity: A Twice-Told Tale" he argues that realism is a cultural project for the individual to communicate with himself and about himself.

## 2. In Henry James

But the fiction of Henry James, whom Cathy Kurtzman Lawrence calls "the main proponent of American realism" (2004, p. 287), wants to remove the divisions between past and present, and to bring the spirit of history to the modern times. Roger B. Salomon discusses James's concern with the past as in the following.

Though he had moments of being swept away with nostalgia, James' most profound vision is not of escape to an ideal past of dreams and fantasy but of the preservation of a real past as a dimension of the living and active present. For James the present could literally *incorporate* the past: make it, that is, one in body. Without a past, an individual or a society had no identity—no "tone" to use James's favorite word (1964, p. 542).

Thus, we can and should revitalize the past as a source of meaning for our present existence. Such inclusion of history in the present explains the Jamesian verdict that human relations are "the essence of history" (qtd. in Solomon, p. 542). This makes the Jamesian concept of human experience increasingly complex, while a question is how his modern reader to conceive of this sense of continuity of experience in a time of rapid changes. Salomon says James's solution was "a testimonial to the value of memory and imagination" (542).

The fiction of James allows the reader to intensify his experiences through the use of all his imaginative faculties for turning the past of his characters into imaginative simulations. However, James's realism means also the way he conceives of characters and the tasks he ascribes to them. He considers them as real – living – people who not only propel the narrative but also really perform the action of it. "You" and "I" are absolutely presupposed by one another. Without "you" there is no "I" and without "I" no "you". In the fiction of James, the narrator and character (the teller and listener or reader) are as real as "you" and "I" who relate our narratives. However, like us, the people of James are limited to what they can observe or know.

No mode of knowledge is central, and no hierarchical relation is available between the levels of knowledge. Instead, some classical ontologies want to be represented and play roles. Instead of arborescent frames of intelligibility, structures of relations are often nodal, interconnectiveness is a key function, and reference is often to the external, to the beyond, to otherness. In a cultural environment, this rhizomatic structure is made of horizontal and trans-species interconnections that want to form a multiplicity of simultaneous realities. This in-between structure can found itself nowhere, for it is always on the move. It is not only always in transmutation but is also an agent of metamorphosis. Like James's house of fiction that has several outlooks for the exchange of negotiations, this structure has perhaps numerous slots through which new epistemes can be inserted.

In *What Maisie Knew* James provides us with the occasion to understand how the consciousness of an infant girl develops to maturity and moral sense in a world of promiscuity, selfishness and enmity. For F. O. Matthiessen, the novel is "typical of the later writer's refinement of skill and sophistication" (1941, p. 279). He says James

would set himself the complicated problem of having both parents divorced and married again, of making the child the innocent meeting ground for a liaison between the step-parents, and of confining his report on the situation entirely to what could be glimpsed through the child's inscrutable eyes (1941, p. 279).

For doing this, James chooses the consciousness of Maisie Farange, because, as he notes in the preface of the novel, "the sensibility of the female young is indubitably, for early youth, the greater, and my plan would call, on the part of my protagonist, for 'no end' of sensibility" (qtd. in Veeder and Griffin, 1986, pp. 318-319). Maisie is introduced to a chaotic familial and social environment where the good and bad of life stand in sharp contrast. Such oppositional life frightens her faculties. On the one hand, we see the development of things in her limited consciousness as central intelligence. On the other hand, and not to exceed the law of probability, the author carefully controls the expansion of her understanding. The result is that although from the outset she appears promising, but she never understands much more than what her age allows her. The reader sees things in and through her mind, but he is allowed to understand much more than her.

However, for a character in a novel by Henry James, for Kate Croy in *The Wings of the Dove* for example, realism meant the application of a long sequence of clever strategies to win the love of a man via which also to get rid of her own extreme poverty. To achieve these things, Kate has to use her wit as another meaning of realism in her story. Firstly she has to get rid of her wretched and reprobate father who is making great problems for her. After that, she has

to compromise with her sister and aunt to get the benefit of their advice and support. Also, she has to do her best to win Densher's love only through which it will be possible for her to lawfully possess the fortune of Milly Theale after her death.

## *B. Realism in American Novel*

### **1. Emergence of Realism in America**

European realism does not apply neatly in America, because however it was a neoclassical movement, American realism was perhaps far from neoclassical. This is because contrary to the European realism, which originated mainly from the classical Greek and Roman heritage, American realism borrowed almost nothing from it. Instead of reflecting back to the antiquities, American realism has been concerned with the reality of the American life in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. One may accept that Alexis-Charles Tocqueville (1805-1859) had already observed individualism in America of the 1830s, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century one would believe in the existence of no widely accepted definition of American realism, because in those times it was still quite new.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was still no series of concepts available for American realism, and no manifestoes, literary models, or schools of thought that could organize and differentiate the upcoming original works and scholarships. Thus, it can be suggested that American realism has grown by trial and error, by accumulation rather than by design; and for explaining its influence on the American fiction, it would be advisable to consider different stages of its development. In this way, when we discuss American realism, we should deal with a course of development rather than a collection of concepts and theories.

The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century American fiction has gone in divergent ways. But its more significant writers have many things in common. In the 19<sup>th</sup>-century America, romance was not a genre of the past times, and the realistic story was getting established by making its social repertoire, defining its subject-matter, and addressing a middle-class consumer. There in America the romancer has had occasion to re-enliven the ideals of the feudal hierarchical society through portraying the fantastic and superhuman characters of heroes, warriors, kings, and courtly lovers in a series of fabulous incidents.

### **2. Bi-polarity of American Fiction**

A central question in the present paper is the difference in the connection between romance and novel in England and America. The English novel is a later and more developed stage of romance, so that with the publication of *Don Quixote*, in which Cervantes had satirized the chivalric romance of the medieval times, almost no other romance appeared on the stage of the European literature. However, in America the romance is not separate from the novel. The contrast which Richard Chase makes between English and American romance is angled toward this difference. Chase affirms that,

Although most of the great American novels are romances, most of the great English novels are not -- the fact, in other words, that the tradition of romance is major in the history of American novel but minor in the history of the English novel (1957, p. xii).

Chase also argues that the novel in America is a development of that in England. However, he approves that the English imagination has followed "a middle way" through cultural contradictions to produce a fiction of unities and harmonies, while the American imagination has captured the cultural opposites and disharmonies to produce a fiction of extremes and contradictions. It is perhaps for the illustration of such contradictions in the American humor that the novel in America has involved itself with romantic elements, the elements which it has perhaps not attempted to reconcile. Such involvement with polarities in the American novel has excited Nathaniel Hawthorne to admit in the preface of *The House of the Seven Gables* (1967) that although the realist novelist feels committed both to the probable and the possible, the romancer feels freer from them. This is to mean that while the truth-seeking imagination of the novelist impels him to show fidelity to the minutest of man's experience, the opinion of the romancer is more latitudinal, and his truth is the result of his own choosing or creation to which he shows an indirect fidelity through a range of language resources like myth and symbolism.

Before the Civil War in America, the romancers attempted to break away from the romantic tradition and compose stories in the style of Dickens and Thackeray for example, that had dominated the American market. However, Perry Miller argues that a "cultural lag" kept them back from doing this job. Comparing the English and American fiction from this perspective, Miller says

In England we can see how the rapid urbanization forced upon the generation of Dickens and Thackeray themes arising from the turmoil of London, the black smoke of Manchester and Birmingham, the social competition of Barchester and Grosvenor Square. But the creative imagination of this country had taken shape amid the single reality of vast, unsettled traces of wilderness. Crowded and noisy as New York seemed to country visitors in 1850, it was still not sufficiently a pile of "civilization" to make imperative a writer's forsaking the wilderness for the urban scene. The dream of Arcadia died hard. A civil War was required to shatter it (1967, p. 258).

If the lack of "civilization" was a major reason for the jointly presence of romance and realism in American fiction, "local colour" fiction was also influential in their embedding. This kind of story implies man's nostalgia to unify with his regional environment, and shows how he manages his relations with (external) nature, how he comes to terms and feels at home with it (when it is fierce and hostile). Of the external landscape, the writer of a local colour story creates all the paraphernalia of an imaginary situation. Therefore, if it can be suggested that the reader internalizes the values of

such a created fictitious world, it can also be proposed that the local colour fiction has been effective in preserving the romance in American fiction.

### 3. In William Dean Howells

However, the realistic novel was still beginning to find its way to the reading public in America by opening up new areas of subject matter that belonged to the lower and middle class people. The fictions of Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, who were perhaps the most well-read story writers in that mode, provoked often a humorous social criticism of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century American life. And Henry James dealt with the realism of the human consciousness in a most subtle and eccentric way.

Therefore, in finding solid footholds and formulating itself, American realism should have had hard times. After the civil-war, the writers with their critics and audiences started to feel interested in an exclusively American culture which would show the ways of life and thought that were native entities rather than imported products. If this did not necessarily mean that the American new generations had firstly to reject all cultural folds imported by their forefathers from Europe, at least it meant that for creating a specifically American civilization, they had to address American thought and feeling. However, the new empirical vision in the 1860s that was the outcome of the triumph of science and patriotism, and that would mingle with a heightened national consciousness, is another ground for the emergence of the American realism.

In *Literary Movements for Students* we read William Dean Howells “earned distinction as a highly influential literary critic, championing the realist writing of American authors Henry James, Mark Twain, and Stephen Crane as well as European authors Ivan Turgenev, Henrik Ibsen, Leo Tolstoy, and Emile Zola” (Galens, 2002, p. 248). Howells published his critical ideas mainly in the magazine *Atlantic Monthly* to which he was an editor for about 15 years. The journal gave him occasion to scrutinize the new American social scene for the formation of a typically realist fiction. Bernard R. Bowron JR. quotes from Howells that in the America of the late nineteenth century the new life was a “commonplace prosperity” (1951, p. 268). This shows that another meaning of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century American realism was a sharp break between the past and the present. Rejecting the past as unreal and irrelevant to the present would imply that the real is limited to the tangible, to the palpable, to whatever man can learn only through his sense impressions. In this way, the here-and-now became not only the object of dramatization but also the great source which inspired the realistic story-teller through his own intelligence. The author would necessarily zoom in on the foreground where there were the smiling aspects of life, for in the background are the streaks of the past life that is full of hazards and wanderings.

In the European culture, the past was not regarded dead or insignificant, but one period was embedded within another so that the past was contained in the present. This means that a cultural continuum was the novice of realistic literature which would hold up a mirror for reflecting the history of civilization. However, although in America there was a meaningful involvement with the past, but fiction would re-enliven the spirit of the past in the context of the present which the modern reader could recognize only with the sensibilities of his own time. This policy of historical superimposition had a certain reason: that, as Roger Salomon says, “the picturesque tradition was unable to deal with the present, and so realism made a religion of newness and contemporaneity” (1964, p. 537).

Wayne C. Booth affirms that “To ... Howells, the obvious thought occurred that life is ‘really’ often quite pleasant” (1961, p. 55). When the former considers the latter a social realist, the present reader believes he is right, because American life in the time of Howells was subject to progressive evolutions, and he saw the radical developments in literature in good harmony with such social changes. He recognized literature as a product of life, and as lawful as its other manifestations. His other postulate about literature is that like life, literature changes for better. As life moves from primitive to more civilized conditions, literature is also mutable; and it progresses internally as well as externally. Internally, it develops in form and technique, while externally it progresses in subject matter; and it devotes itself to truthful accounts of the human life.

Donald Pizer argues that literature for Howells was to embody a truthful description of contemporary life, but that he advocated a scientific role for literary criticism. However, he notes that “Howells’s limitation of the function of criticism denied to it, above all, the right of judgment” (1984, p. 79), because he believed that criticism was marred by our taste, prejudice, and wit. Criticism was not to direct or control the progress of fiction, but was to describe and analyze fiction on the basis of a realization of the law of progress as it operated in society. In other words, criticism was supposed to want to determine to what measure fiction was in harmony with the expected developments in society. This is perhaps because Howells thought contemporary criticism was a failure, for it was retarded and backward, and could not recognize the intrinsic relationship between life and literature.

In Howells’s view, the literature of the past is anachronistic; while modern literature is more truth-oriented and life-like. Howells refuted two charges against American fiction. One was the idea of sex. He admitted that American novel dealt with sex less openly than both the eighteenth-century English fiction and the contemporary French fiction. But he also claimed that by subordinating sex, American fiction represented its true position more accurately. The second charge was that American literature was too narrow. But Howells saw this rather as an advantage, since it indicated a truthful representation of the conditions of American life. The American novel is, for Howells, a thorough account of life, and its depth is vertical rather than lateral. Such depth is more desirable than a horizontal expansion in a civilization like America, where the differences are not of classes, but of types.

He also deals with the relation between literature and democracy. In democracy man feels sincerity, and the writer searches for measures of improvement and for responding to the spirit of brotherhood that is implicit in it. American democracy has paved the road for its expansion and variety. In the wide and various environment of it, literature has been encouraged to study and appreciate the common man, and to portray the finer and higher ties which unite rather than sever humanity.

Howells neither idealizes reality nor does he always stick to the pleasing dimensions of life. As an opponent of the ideal and a decisive advocate of the real, he dramatizes the ugly scenarios of life. However, an aspect of amelioration is not to represent life as lacking violence, but to control and undercut violence in fiction. In the "Editor's Study" column at the *Atlantic Monthly*, and later on at *Harper's*, he has formulated and publicized his theories of realism in literature, and has clearly defended the real while opposing the ideal. From the eye of Howells, the standard of reality is the taste of the common man, what the average man admires and selects. Reality is admirable because of its simplicity, naturalness, and honesty. The real is true to life and sincere with man, and man can stand in direct relations with it. The genuineness of the real and its organic wholeness render it faithful to life. The real delivers itself from the evils of the romantic and the heroic and the impassioned and the sentimental; from the self-devoted and the adventurous; from the trite, and the obsolete. The real is always new, fresh, absorbing, and life-giving.

Howells takes no use of what inspired moments may grant him. His method is careful observation of the minutest details of life with force. His native gifts constantly develop, and he continuously grasps the facts more strongly. A major theme of his work is the problems of character and social life. Thoughtful readers of his work realize an inspiration in the quiet but resolute progress of his art and gift which is the result not only of success but doubtlessly also of a high and disinterested ideal. The work of Howells is the product of patience and effort rather than original power. The virtues and effects of realism are clearly brought out in his work: its clearness of sight, its fixed adherence to fact, its reliance upon honest work; and, on the other hand, its hardness, its lack of vitality, its paralysis of the finer feelings and higher aspirations, its fundamental defect on the side of imagination. His fiction is crowded with characters of realism: people with whom one avoids to come into contact in real life, people without native sweetness or strength, people without any acquired culture or accomplishment. He portrays characters without force, beauty, aspiration, or any of the elements which touch and teach men. And he delivers grave portraits of frivolous, superficial, and often vulgar conceptions of life. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, Howells' method of realism is external and superficial. He endeavors to enter into the recesses of character and to learn its secret, not by insight, the method of imagination, but by observation, the method of science.

#### 4. In Mark Twain

In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain takes use of the advantages of, among other things, the vernacular, point of view, setting, satire, irony, and innocence portraiture. He produces the tale of a young boy whose disrespect to overwhelming conventions helps the reader to envision a world where there is not only no inequality between humans but also no ignorance, greed, and cruelty. However, this story does not move from plot to character, for the author creates a picaresque story that is based on a series of extraordinary incidents undertaken mainly by Huck Finn whom the story exposes to various social worlds.

The fact that the viewpoint of this young boy is the central perspective from which the reader has to look implies a decrease in the role of any kind of authorial omniscience. The reader has an occasion to look at the thoughts of Huck who writes his story in the first-person point of view. As well as a successful search for freedom, reading this novel is a process of interpreting the consciousness of a main character who has started to see the world in his own way. As Huck and Jim voyage down the Mississippi river, the reader can see them in moral conflict with the received values of their society.

The reader of this Mark Twain's story can also realize the dramatization of their consciousness through the medium of talk. Interpreting their outlooks is perhaps the most important job of Mark Twain's reader. Huck and Jim travel southward as a quest for rejecting slavery, patriarchal authority, and the restricting catechisms by which the author thinks their genuine humanity is suppressed. When Huck encounters Jim in the wilderness along the river, at first he opposes the latter's trying to escape slavery. After they talk, Huck changes his mind about life, which illustrates the modification of an individual mind in a process of talk. In fact he encounters with another different human being and his life-situation.

Also, presenting the life of innocence in human society, Mark Twain's realism is convenient to the representation of what is called "the mask of the naive" (Kolb, 1969, p. 73). Integral to the mission of the main character is his escape from the overwhelming conventions of society and his attachment to the natural rhythms of life. The main character is an unsophisticated fourteen-year-old boy who is quite innocent and has no experience about the decadent life of the adults who believe that slavery is just. His "freedom ride" is for the eradication of whatever segregates man from man and puts one man in a socially privileged position over another. Huck's naive unawareness is the author's effective reason to avoid evaluating what the characters do, interpreting the story, and motivating the reader to rewrite it in the process of reading. In this way, to represent the inhumanity of segregation, the novel shows that the struggle against slavery is not an aspect of convention but is quite natural to man.

In the realism of this novel, irony has more than one level. Although the author does not use primarily verbal irony, he makes effective use of the advantages of structural and situational irony to represent man as a mixture of good and

bad. At the end of the novel, when we realize that although Jim is black in skin, he is, as Kolb puts it, as "white inside" (76) as the white people, we understand why Mark Twain has accepted to look at man through the innocent eyes of a young boy whose symbolic long voyage on the river leads us to a utopia of peace, brotherhood, and social reconstruction. All religions of the Mississippi Valley (the religion of the Widow Douglas, the catechism of Miss Watson, the preaching of Silas Phelps) support slavery. But it is ironical that Huck cares for none of them, and that his childish carelessness for them should cancel their function because they condemn Jim to slavery.

If Huckleberry Finn rejects the pleasures of society to practice another kind of life where the logic of nature teaches us how to live more humanly, Maisie Farange struggles to develop her immature perspective about the world while she actively interacts with family and social life. Huck tells us his own story in the first person point of view. This is while although Howells believed in the historical mutation of American literature for the better, but he denied the right of judgment for literary criticism. Both Maisie and Huck succeed to leave their decadent societies behind and find a solution for themselves: the first in the form of a moral idealism which leads her to precocious knowledge and insight, the second by undertaking a chain of picaresque adventures that put him at the threshold of conversion since they are in sharp opposition with the norms and ideas of his community.

Although Huck is not, from the beginning, quite conscious about the conflicts of the society, he is, perhaps unconsciously, aware that for the salvation of this society certain of its personal and collective codes should be canceled out. But Maisie's development is more unconscious. The more actively she interacts with adolescent people, the more positive of their corruptions she comes to be, and her moral sense gets deeper. If Mark Twain's story shows the external fact of American mass life in need to alert itself to the necessity of love and brotherhood, *Maisie* deals with the realism of a developing human consciousness as it struggles not to get corrupted by the widespread moral decadence shown in the environment.

If Howells shows the present as inadequate to renovate the soul of the heroic past, Salomon admits that "Twain eventually gave up trying, and Henry James, by and large, never made the attempt" (1964, p. 539) to do so. The realist Mark Twain perhaps does not even remain split between past and present, but mainly zooms in on the latter. His realism shows no feeling of nostalgia about a lost past full of heroic and romantic values, and his nostalgic characters never grow to maturity. His characters are denied the possibility to unite imagination and rational experience to develop a socially integrated personality. However, Salomon sees him as nostalgic also:

We are face to face, of course, with Twain's *nostalgia*, his 'homesickness' for the home that had been destroyed, his sense of wondering in exile from a 'lost country'. The sentiment is common to the century and is the product of the same forces that were to produce realism: change, disorientation, the 'hateful' sense, as James put it of 'personal antiquity', of being able to trace in one's lifetime where 'an age has come out'. ... The crucial fact to remember about Twain is that he was intellectually committed to realism and emotionally committed to a nostalgic sense of the past (1964, p. 540).

The fiction of Mark Twain opens a way for the reader to comprehend a meaningful relationship between past and present by representing the past as reduced from the heroic to the sordid. The ambitious look of Americans to the future, that focused on their rapid scientific and technological developments, caused its realism to ignore the romantic heroisms of its past, for the American republic was fascinated mainly with innovations in science and technology. It is this diversion of realism in America away from the moral (past) that Salomon calls "the aesthetic of disinheritance" (1964, p. 533).

### III. CONCLUSION

Literary realism is multi-faceted. The English mode of it is itself of more than one genre however it also differs from the American mode. In addition to its cultural varieties, the strategies of each mode of literary realism are different as well as the problems and issues of each variety. The realism of the European romance in the Medieval Times was the realism of the gentry which was itself in the minority. This kind of realism was often limited to the manifestations of courtly love, kingly conducts, and knightly manners. It was considerably romantic and was therefore only marginally considered.

But in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Spanish writer of *Don Quixote* satirized the conventions of the Medieval romance for its excluding focus on the life of the gentry and overlooking the life of the middle and lower classes. As an aftermath of this history-making epoch, it was before the last years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the (realistic) novel appeared on the horizon of the English fictitious literature. However, although *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* was perhaps the first fiction of this type, it was followed by a long series of novels in this mode. In the course of several decades, the field of realistic fiction became enlarged and diversified enough to cover perhaps all the nooks and corners of the European life which was in a rapid process of transition. Around the Neoclassical Period and the Age of Enlightenment, all those church divisions and religious controversies, political debates and parliamentary fractions, philosophical arguments and scientific innovations, as well as economical and monetary improvements changed the English social life into a boiling pot which included even opposite items: power, colonialism, wealth, poverty, love, family, homelessness, failure, fraud, honesty, lovelessness, non-belonging etc. Therefore, the realism of everyday life, which the novel was taking to represent, was as diversified as the European man himself.

In this regard, the present paper has attempted to argue that the English literary realism is typically different from that in America. In the English novel, the past is not divided from the present, but is embedded in it. That is, the illustration of history in it is in a way that it often revitalizes itself in the present so that the reader realizes a cultural continuum or a plotline of historical consciousness. However, in the American novel, perhaps due to the lack of a long national and cultural history, there is often a feeling of regret and nostalgia about a past that is lost and out of reach. This unreachable history is dramatized perhaps better in the works of William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald. And although W. D. Howells believed in the historical mutation of American literature for the better, but he denied the right of judgment for literary criticism. In addition, Howells found the development of literature directly connected to democracy, and claimed that in the expansion of democracy literature gets expanded also.

On the other hand, the author of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* analyzes the American present. Instead of zooming on a lost and unreachable past, Mark Twain looks upon the present America to examine and reject the social misbehaviors like racism, slavery, and class segregation. And the realism of the later Henry James is often concerned with the evolution of the mind in narrative language. In a majority of his works, he creates a mode of realism which is psychological, and as psychological, deals also with the production of experience in a process of interpretive analysis in reading. In *The Ambassadors* James sends a highly talented relegate of the American culture like Lambert Strether to trace the development of his consciousness as he copes with the Parisian culture. However, in *What Maisie Knew* he provides us with an occasion to witness the progress of an infant girl who is surrounded by promiscuity, enmity, and selfishness.

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**Ali Taghizadeh** is an assistant professor at the English Department of Razi University of Kermanshah, Iran, where he has taught English Language and Literature at graduate and undergraduate levels for about 16 years. He has got a B. A. in English from Shiraz University and an M. A. in English from Tehran University. The title of his M. A. thesis is "The Archetypal Theme of Expiation in Six Major Novels of Thomas Hardy and William Faulkner: A Comparative Analysis." He has also got a Ph. D. in "American Studies" from John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies of Free University of Berlin. The title of his doctoral dissertation is "Structuralism and Its Aftermath in the Fiction of Henry James." "Novel", "Literary Theory", "A Survey of English Literature", and "Literature in Linguistics" are among the courses which he has usually taught. In the winter semester of 2014, he will start teaching a doctoral course: "Contemporary English Fiction," while in the semester next to that he will start teaching another doctoral course: "17<sup>th</sup>-Century Poets." The main research interests of Ali Taghizadeh are fiction, literary theory, narrative studies, cultural studies, and literature in language. He has translated J. Hillis Miller's *On Literature* into Persian, and has published some research articles both in English and in his mother tongue. He is the English editor of *Narrative Studies*, which is a research journal published by the Department of Persian Language and Literature of Razi University.

# English-Chinese Translation Strategies on Press Conference

Xuedong Shi

Foreign Language Department, Beijing Information Science & Technology University, Beijing, China

**Abstract**—This paper studies the application of domesticating and foreignizing approaches in the translation of Premier Wen Jiabao's press conferences held in recent years. It gives a general introduction of the development of domestication and foreignization and compares the merits and flaws of them in theoretical level in the first place. Then, a few specific examples abstracted from the press conferences are given to further illustrate how both the approaches are used in the practice. In addition, this research puts forward some critics on some of the applications of domesticating method and foreignizing method in the translation of the press conferences, and provides improved versions to better those examples that are pointed out. According to the analysis of the development of the domestication and foreignization theory and the examples extracted from the press conferences, the author discovers that domestication is the main method adopted in the translation of current press conferences. However, with the rapid globalization, every nation is paying increasing attention to its national culture. So foreignization is a general trend.

**Index Terms**—domestication, foreignization, interpretation, press conferences

## I. THEORETICAL REVIEW ON DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION IN TRANSLATION HOME AND ABROAD

Recent years have witnessed the great attention aroused by Premier Wen Jiabao's Press Conference home and abroad. Premier Wen quoted and cited extensively, which impressed the public. In his speech, there were large amount of traditional Chinese poetry and idioms, as well as expressions involving every aspect of world economy, politics, culture and so on. Besides, the interpreters are among the top talents. Therefore, the translation of the press conference is worth studying. This paper, mainly from the perspective of domestication and foreignization, studies how the translator has delivered the content, as well as how to better the translation to some extent.

In his landmark work *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti, the American translation theorist firstly coined the terms of "domestication" and "foreignization". According to Venuti's theory, domestication is target-language culture oriented, and it can bring back the other culture as the familiar one. (Venuti, 2004). It requires the translator to take target-language readers' comprehension more into consideration. The translation should be adapted to the features of target language, in order to avoid readers' misunderstandings due to the differences of language and culture. But foreignization is source-language culture oriented and it accepts that cultural differences and wants to bring the readers the differences, keeping the original features of the source language. The translator should give priority to the source language, adopt the usual use of original words and phrases. In this way, the translation could reappear the exotic style and linguistic disparities of the source language. Friedrich Schleier, probably, was the first to expose the notion of domestication and foreignization in a most clarified way in an 1813 lecture. (Venuti, 2004).

The debate over which approach should be adopted under what conditions has lasted for hundreds of years, long before the emergence of the two terms. It was in the first place focused only on the linguistic level. Afterwards, in the 20th century, the debates attached more importance to cultural distances between the source text and the target text. The famous representative of domestication translation is Eugene Nida, who points out the communicative function of translation, suggesting that the choice of word should adjust so that it could custom different kinds of readers. Nida lays great emphasis on reader response. He determines that it is the most essential standards to judge the quality of translation. Nida believes it necessary to make changes and adjustments to the translated text under certain conditions. Besides Nida, many other translations theorists in the west also favor domesticating strategy. Among them, Susan Bassnet proposes the equivalence of cultural functions and approves of employing domesticating to handle linguistic and cultural differences in translation. Generally speaking, Nida's Formal and Functional Equivalences: formal equivalence focuses on providing some perception in the lexical, grammatical or structure of original text. Functional equivalence is based on the principle of equivalent effect. Studied diachronically, domestication has enjoyed great popularity among translators and translation critics in the translation history. Domestication has grown a deep root in China too. In China, the prestigious translators such as Lin Shu and Liangshiqiu are the devoted advocates of domestication theory and applied it to their translation works which enjoyed tremendous popularity among the readers.

Lawrence became a central figure in the translation field since his *Translator's Invisibility* went to press in 1986 in the U.S. As a deconstructionist, Venti presents a set of innovative points of view, say, cultural colonization and translator's invisibility in his revolutionary book. According to him, the aim of work is to force both the translators and readers to know the linguistic and cultural differences of the alien articles. (Venuti, 2004) In China, similar opinions



emerged as early as the beginning of the 20th century though systematic study of translation lag behind the west. Translators such as Lin Shu and Liang Shiqiu were accused of having changed the original work brutally by many scholars, say, Lu Xun, who favored “rigid translation”-----putting forward the translation principle of faithfulness over smoothness. In modern China, the prestigious scholar Liu Yingkai points out the prevalence of domestication in *The Wrong Track of Translation*. Liu argues that domestication translation misrepresents the original text. Sun Zhili thinks the main task of translation is to deliver the thought and style of the original text. Xu Jianping suggests that foreignization should be used in English-Chinese translation as much as possible.

## II. METHODOLOGY: TRANSLATION OF PREMIER WEN JIAOBAO’S PRESS CONFERENCE

During the practice of interpreting the press conference, domesticating translation is closer to the audience’s listening habit. It removes the barrier of reading, listening and gaining the major information of the original work or what the speaker talks about for the audience. But it fails to realize the cultural communication and interactions, which lessens the beauty and the connotation of the source language and culture. However, at the press conference, where the main purpose is to exchange ideas, the primary task of interpretation is to pass on what the speaker is talking about. The interpreter shoulders less task of cultural exchange. Under such circumstances, we don’t make excessive demands on interpreters to keep the original flavor of language expressions and speech style of the source language. Therefore, domesticating translation is usually adopted as a dominant strategy. Meanwhile, even when the source language is loaded with large amount of linguistic forms with cultural features, such as writings in classical Chinese, rhetoric phrases, and prevalent idioms, domesticating translation is still a priority alternative due to the requirement of short-time results. Here, I give several examples to illustrate how domesticating translation is applied under different circumstances in the press conference.

On the spot of the press conference, it is a huge challenge for the interpreter to interpret when the speaker cites and quotes the classics, for great disparities exist between different cultural backgrounds and language forms.

**Example1.** Nida believes it necessary to make changes and adjustments to the translated text under certain conditions. The citation of the classics brings an obstacle of cultural differences to comprehension. So the interpreter has to remove the cultural divergences and bridge the cultural gaps by way of the interpretation. Since domestication is more often used when there is cultural conflict, the interpreter here adopts domesticating approach to avoid cultural conflicts. (Nida, 2004)

“gou li wo jia sheng si yi, qi yin huo fu bi qu zhi” is quoted from a poem written by the national hero Lin Zexu. The general idea of it is: As long as it is beneficial to our nation, it is worthy of sacrificing one’s life. One could never escape or shrink from his responsibility because of his fear for the loss of wealth and honor.

“zhi wo zui wo, qi wei chun qiu” is from Confucius’ words. It means: What I have done and said will be judged by the later generations, mixed with praise and blame. However, whatever others judge them, I will firmly persist in doing what I deem is right and of value.

The ancient Chinese language is extremely abstract. It often leaves out large amount of sentence constituents, leaving abundant room for readers to imagine. If the interpreter adopts foreignizing method in order to keep the pattern and flavor of the writings in classical Chinese, the audience who are non-Chinese speakers will no doubt be confused about the asyntatic translation. To the convenience of the comprehension of the foreign journalists on the spot, the interpreter dealt it with the domesticating approach, which accords with the expressing habit of English speakers.

Take the above sayings as an example: “gou li guo jia sheng si yi, qi yin huo fu bi qu zhi” is interpreted as “I shall dedicate myself to the interest of the country in life and death irrespective of personal weal and woe.” The interpreter choose the view of first person to directly put Premier Wen into the saying, making others fully understand the premier’s conviction.

“zhi wo zui wo” is translated as “There are people who will appreciate what I have done, but there will also be people who criticize me.” Here, the interpreter translated the short phrase in a detailed explanation which is quite clear; “wei qi chun qiu” as “Ultimately, history will have the final say.” “chun qiu” refers to history. The interpreter complete the meaning of the original phrase by adding the verbal phrase in the translation with “have the final say”. With “ultimately”, it emphasized the premier’s tone in confidence and clear conscience.

Considering the burgeoning expressions, during the evolitional process of language, emerging phrases and expressions crop up here and there, and become part of the culture of Chinese characteristics after their prevalence. The domesticating approach adapts the translation to the language and cultural habit of the target-language audience.

**Example2.** It is clear to the source language readers what “jia dian xia xiang” and “qi che yi jiu huan xin” mean because the Chinese language is sometimes elliptical and abstract, with some ideas not fully expressed. But the foreigner would be puzzled if they are not explained clearly. Moreover, English is a logical language, which does not allow so much ellipsis in thinking as Chinese. Readers of English need a clear and complete expression. Therefore, the translator should spare no effort to draw out the meaning from the seemingly obscure Chinese language and give the complete meaning in the version. Only in this way can the translated version be called a successful one. Therefore, the domestication is adopted here in order to satisfy the culture of the target language.

“jia dian xia xiang, qi che yi jiu huan xin” is interpreted as “subsidizing the sale of home appliances in the rural areas and the trade-in of second-hand automobiles with new ones”. By adding the verb “subsidize”, foreign journalists would better understand the policy adopted by the government.

**Example 3.** Domestication is regarded as the best way to keep the fluency of the work for target readers. Advocators of this approach believe that by overcoming the linguistic and cultural barriers, a deeper comprehension of the work on the readers’ part can be achieved. They hold the view that translators should not have a too high expectation on the readers or audience’s intelligence and imagination or even impose the source-language culture mode upon them. Instead, they should try their utmost to recreate a world reflected by the source-language work as close as possible to the world and culture familiar to the readers and audience. Adjustments result in the smoothness in the translated work, ensued by effective communication and deep understanding is the outcome of this approach.

“lian zu fang” and “jing ji shi yong fang” are respectively translated as “low-rent apartments” and “affordable housing”, which are very visual and clear in meaning by domesticating method. Some translator may translate “lian zu fang” and “jing ji shi yong fang” into “cheap housing” or “economical housing” according to the word “lian” and “jing ji”, which evidently fails to explain how the housing is economical to common people.

Considering the Chinese common sayings, the press conference, both the Chinese journalists and the premier would sometimes express themselves by illustrating some common sayings which are close to people’s life. At this moment, the interpreter would also choose the domesticating translation.

**Example 4.** “pai zhuan” is a popular net word, which means to criticize someone or something in one’s own way. Sometimes it may develop into an attack. Apparently, “pai zhuan” is smartly interpreted into “critical” attitudes towards Premier Wen Jiabao’s performance. If the interpreter adopts foreignizing method, it would be difficult for foreign audience to catch the meaning. Since time is very limited for the interpreter to explain too much for the audience about the net word “pai zhuan”, it is very clever to have it interpreted in the domesticating way.

Compared to domesticating method, foreignizing approach is less used in interpreting the press conference due to its flaws of being not that fluent and unacceptable for the audience. Though, it can better reappear the novel language style, social mentality and cultural environment of the foreign nations, which meets the requirement of some readers and audience for learning more about a different culture and language.

Since Premier Wen Jiabao’s press conference attracts more and more foreign journalists around the world in recent years, it is becoming increasingly necessary to pay more attention to spreading out and preserving Chinese culture through the conference. In this research, I have concluded two circumstances under which foreignizing approach is adopted.

With the rapid social and economic development since the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, a large number of certain new political terms and expressions emerged as the times require. Even for those native English speakers, they would firstly check the cultural, social, economic and political background of those new words and phrases in order to comprehend and accept them into their language. Therefore, interpreters and translators conventionally adopt foreignizing method to deal with those words and phrases. For instance, “gai ge kai fang” is translated into “reform and opening up”, “yi guo liang zhi” into “one country, two systems” and so on. There is no minor matter in diplomacy, any information error caused by interpretation would lead to the worst results. The interpreter must make sure the translation is safe and sound. It is inappropriate to deliberately cater to the foreign audience.

**Example 5.** Here “fa zhan de chu ji jie duan” is translated into “the primary stage of development”, “quan mian shi xian xiao kang mu biao” into “build a moderately prosperous society in all respects”, “zhong deng fad a guo jia” into “medium-developed country”, “zheng zhen shi xian xian dai hua” into “achieve true modernization”. They generally belong to literal translation, which means word-for-word translation. It is used to transform the meaning and structure of the original text directly into the form of target language. Literal translation is the most ordinary and effective way to retain the flavor of the original text and introduce the source-language culture in detail. Furthermore, it can introduce more expressions into target language and enrich the target-language culture.

Obviously, all these above-mentioned phrases and expressions are translated in a foreignizing way, without much explanation for the audience. This strategy is defined by Venuti as one that deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2004). Those phrases and expressions could be stored into an interpreter’s memory, and use them when the corresponding Chinese counterparts appear. They are regarded as they are understood world-wide.

At the press conference, the interpreter should sometimes pay attention to the speech style of the speaker to get closer to the original talk. Take Premier Wen Jiabao’s Press Conference as an example, Premier Wen Jiabao’s talk is filled with traditional Chinese culture and his deep concern for our nation. It would be the interpreter’s duty to deliver them to some extent. Also, some of the talks may be hid with some deeper meaning but it would be better not to get revealed in public, foreignizing method is a better alternative at that moment.

**Example 6.** mo dao jin nian chun jiang jin, ming nian chun se bei huan ren

Foreignization strategy is preferable for cultural translation, which preserves the original flavor and truly achieves the goal of enriching the target-language culture and promoting the communication between different cultures. Premier Wen is well-educated in Chinese culture. His talk is often loaded with Chinese culture-specific words. “mo dao jin nian

chun jiang jin, ming nian chun se bei huan ren” is actually improvised by Premier Wen at the press conference, which is adapted from “ji yu luo cheng feng ri dao, ming nian chun se bei huan ren” written by Du Shenyang, a famous Chinese poet in Tang Dynasty. The interpreter offered the literal meaning by interpreting it into “Do not regret that the spring is departing, come next year as it will be twice as enchanting.” In this way, it remains the style of Premier Wen Jiaobao’s speech. The deeper connotation of the sentence is to encourage everyone that the global economy is recovering and we should have confidence in it.

### III. CRITICS ON DOMESTICATING AND FOREIGNIZING INTERPRETATION STRATEGIES FOR THE PRESS CONFERENCE

As we all know, interpreters attending the press conferences are all among the top talents. The interpretations made by them are of high quality. However, the comprehension of Hamlet varies from reader to reader. So does the interpretations of the press conference. Personally, I agree with most of the interpretations. But I would like to point out a few things I may doubt whether there is another way to put it better, and they are just my personal views.

**Example 7.** According to the interpreter: I can see that you have put your question in a quite mild way. I know that there have been media reports which say that China has got more arrogant and tough. And some have put forward the so-called theory of China’s triumphalism. You have given me an opportunity to explain how China sees itself.

Original version: I know that there have been media reports which say that China has got more arrogant and tough. And some have put forward the so-called theory of China’s triumphalism.

In this sentence, three paralleling phrases appear together: “zhong guo ao man lun”, “zhong guo qiang ying lun”, “zhong guo bi sheng lun”. The interpreter adopted domesticating approach to interpret the first two into “China has got more arrogant and tough”; but adopted foreignizing approach to interpret the third into “theory of China’s triumphalism”.

No matter from the view of layout or the angle of consistency, I think all of the three phrases are supposed to be interpreted with foreignizing approach.

Improved version: Actually in current public opinion, some views like Haughty China, Tough China, Unshakable China have appeared occasionally.

The improved version could be trimmer and neater in form. Also, the original tone stressed by the premier with three separate phrases are delivered as well.

**Example 8.** “qing tian zai bu sui wu shu, que yue chong yuan hui you shi” is interpreted with both methods into “there’s no way to heal the wound in my heart, but there’s one day when the half moon becomes full again”, which explains the literal meaning of the sentence. But I deem that it would be better further explained combining the background under which the premier cited the sentence.

Improved version: There’s no way to heal the wound in my heart, but there’s one day when the half moon becomes full again. The history of Taiwan’s parting the mainland could not be changed, but Taiwan and the mainland will finally be reunited someday.

By adding the second part which applies the cited meaning into reality, the audience will be better understanding the premier’s quotation in the context.

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study of the English version of Premier Wen Jiaobao’s speech in the press conference, the author’s discoveries are that domesticating approach and foreignizing approach are complementary to each other. They can be adopted dividedly or together. When foreignization is adopted in translating paratactic phrases with Chinese characteristics, the author suggests paying attention to consistency in using the approach. When translating lines loaded with Chinese culture, the author suggests adopting both foreignization and domestication. With foreignization, the culture could be maintained to some extent, and with domestication, the meaning could be conveyed in a more clear way.

Generally, domesticating translation is smoother, simpler, clearer and more conventional. On the other hand, foreignizing translation is somewhat awkward, unnatural and unfamiliar and is full of exotic spirits. As for the premier’s press conference, the purpose of the translation is to make the target-language audience to learn more about China’s society, economy, politics, culture, and development, so that the language form should be familiar to the audience. Therefore, most examples in syntactical level and discourse level are adopting domesticating approach. But we can find out that most examples in lexical level and semantic level are adopting foreignizing approach in order to maintain the Chinese characteristics. Compared with domestication, foreignizing translation plays all important part in preserving the foreignness and otherness of the foreign culture.

With the increasingly prominent role China has played in the international society, the author suggests that foreignizing approach should be paid more attention to in the premier’s press conference in order to promote Chinese culture. We not only need to be understood by adopting domesticating translation, but being spread out by using foreignizing translation is much more urgent at present. When it is difficult for the audience to comprehend, the author recommends that foreignizing translation plus explanation by domesticating method would be much better than mere domestication. Though it would cause complexity in expression and higher requirement for the audience, it would be

rewarding from the perspectives of cultural communication, cultural integration, and the development of different languages in the long run.

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**Xuedong Shi** was born in Huhhot, Inner Mongolia, China in 1974. He received his MA degree in translation in Middlesex University, Britain, in 2004. He is currently a lecturer in the Foreign Language Department, Beijing Information Science University, Beijing, China. His academic research mainly focus

# Impact of Teaching Grammar through Humor on Iranian EFL Learners

Fatemeh Salehi

English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

Akbar Hesabi

English Department, Faculty of foreign Languages, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

**Abstract**—This study aimed to explore the impact of teaching grammar through humor on Iranian EFL learners. To this end, after the administration of a Solution Placement test, a total of 60 female pre-intermediate participants in a private institute in Isfahan, aged between 14 to 18 were selected and then randomly assigned to two groups of control and experimental (N=30). Following the pretest, the control group received instruction through the traditional way of teaching grammar and the experimental group received instruction through humor in six sessions; then the posttest, and delayed posttest were administrated. The results of t-test analysis for post and delayed posttest revealed that the participants in experimental group outperformed the control group in the short- and long-terms. The attitudes of participants were examined through interviewing 10 participants, chosen randomly from experimental group. Analysis of interviewing the participants demonstrates that they had positive attitudes towards teaching grammar through humor. Hopefully, the findings of this research study suggest the pedagogical value of humor for the teaching of grammar that can be used by EFL teachers, curriculum designers, and EFL learners.

**Index Terms**—teaching grammar, humor, EFL learners, attitudes

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning grammar seems to be essential especially for adult learners in any language teaching curriculum. In order to learn English, the learners should be able to use suitable structures and master grammar. Rajaei Nia (2011) argued that learning grammar is not easy for EFL learners and most of them believe that learning grammar is a difficult, boring, and tedious task. According to Wang (2010), having a firm knowledge in target language, learners can produce meaningful sentences. So teaching grammar is very important, but the matter is how to teach it to be more effective. When teaching grammar is too dependent on rules and memorization, it makes the class so boring for students. Deiter (2000) mentioned teaching is a serious business, but there is a difference between being serious and being solemn. A teacher can discuss something very seriously and be funny and laughing at the same time.

As mentioned by Deiter (2000), humor as a teaching tool can create a positive, fun, interesting environment that plays an important role in promoting class attendance and student learning. Wanzer (2002) noted that humor is one instructional tool that can be used in the classroom to increase the teaching effectiveness.

Hativa (2001) provided a classification of humor in teaching that included three categories. The first one was verbal humor that consists of jokes, anecdotes, language play, etc. The second category was nonverbal humor such as cartoon, caricature, photon, and visual pun. The last one was a combination of verbal and nonverbal humor, which consists of impersonation, parody, satire, monologue, and skit. The kind of humor that has been discussed in this research is verbal humor especially jokes.

Trachtenberg (1979) asserted that joke telling and humor in an ESL context provides ideal opportunities for mini-grammar lessons. He used formulaic jokes such as Knock, Knock ... Who's there? or traditional opening lines for jokes like Did you ever hear about the guy who...? to illustrate grammatical points. Berwald (1992) illustrated the effectiveness of humor for teaching and practicing of syntactic, semantic, and phonetic structural components of language. He offered some examples of utilizing humor involving comparative adjectives as means of effectively introducing and reinforcing such grammatical patterns: "Robert is more attractive than Thomas" (p.195). Deneire(1995) examined the specific use of humor within a linguistic context. He suggests humor as a tool for sensitizing students to phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic differences within a single language or between a student's first language and the target language. He concluded that humor is an effective tool in learning structural linguistic components that are typically presented in a rigid manner. Woolard (1999) in his book "Grammar with Laughter", used jokes to highlight grammatical structures in order to increase learners' motivation, help them to remember grammatical points, and lead learners to spontaneous practice and consolidation of grammar. Ketabi and Simin (2009) suggested that humor could be an effective way to help students remember key concepts and structures. Therefore, in learning and teaching grammatical structures humor can be used.

According to these findings, it would be fruitful to pay attention to teaching grammar through humor.

One of the biggest challenges that teachers face in foreign language settings is getting students excited about grammar. Learning grammar is considered the boring part of learning foreign language. Grammar is one of the serious parts of learning English language in Iran and is taught seriously. Grammar exercises are not so interesting and EFL learners do not try to use grammatical structures in their speaking. As mentioned by Wang (2010), it can be difficult for students to speak English well without learning English grammar. So it is inevitable for teachers who teach foreign languages to teach grammar; but it is not necessary to express everything seriously; even serious things can be taught in a lighter way.

One of the suitable materials for grammar practice is jokes. They are the best source for using language in the same way as everyday life. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to explore the impact of humor on learning English grammar, and seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- Does teaching grammar through humor have a significant effect on grammatical improvement of Iranian EFL learners in the short-term?
- 2- Does teaching grammar through humor have a significant effect on grammatical improvement of Iranian EFL learners in the long-term?
- 3- Do Iranian EFL learners have positive attitude towards teaching grammar through humor?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

This study was conducted with 60 female pre-intermediate EFL learners who were selected from a population pool of 80 EFL learners. Their ages ranged from 14 to 18, and they all spoke Farsi. In order to select homogenous participants, a Solutions Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was run. Then the participants were randomly put in two groups of experimental and control (N=30).

### B. Materials

Through the various phases of this study, the following materials were used.

#### 1. Solutions Placement Test

A solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was administered to select a group of homogenous participants (see appendix A). The Solution Placement Test consists of three sections. The first part of the test includes 50 multiple-choice items of grammar and vocabulary; the second part of the test contains 10 reading comprehension items and the third section is a writing task that is optional. The 50 multiple-choice questions and the reading task are designed to be done together in a 45-minute session. The writing task can be done separately and should take approximately 20 minutes.

#### 2. Pretest

In order to find out the participants knowledge about the grammatical structures, a pretest was conducted before the main study. A thirty multiple-choice test was designed for pretest (see appendix B); the items were selected from Grammar Practice for Pre-Intermediate Students book (Walker & Elsworth, 2000). To determine the content validity of pretest some experts were consulted. The test reliability was 0.79 (calculated by KR-21 formula), which was piloted on a group of 10 EFL learners.

#### 3. Post and delayed posttest

After the treatment, a posttest was administered to find out the effectiveness of the treatment (see appendix C). The test included 30 multiple-choice items and selected from Grammar Practice for Pre-Intermediate Students book (Walker & Elsworth, 2000). In order to know the effectiveness of the treatment in the long-term, a delayed test (the same as the posttest) was run two weeks after the posttest. The reliability of posttest and delayed posttest that was the same as the posttest was measured by the KR-21 formula and it was 0.8.

#### 4. Learners' semi-structure interview questions

At the end of the treatment, an interview was done to gather the participants' attitude towards teaching grammar through humor. To gather the qualitative data of the present study, 10 participants in experimental group were randomly chosen and they answered 8 same questions in the interview (see appendix D). These 8 questions elicited information about using humor in teaching foreign language, learners' perception of the course, their learning, and the characteristics of the class and teacher.

#### 5. Materials for experimental group

The selected grammatical structures were taught in experimental group based on the book "Grammar with laughter" (Woolard, 1999); this book was designed for pre- and post-intermediate students. Some selected papers with those grammatical structures in bold and some practices were given to the learners (see appendix E).

### C. Procedures

At first, a Solution Placement Test was administered to a group of female EFL learners (N=80) at an institute in Iran. Then 60 female learners whose scores fell between 21 and 30 for grammar and vocabulary part of the test and between 5 and 7 for reading were selected as participants with pre-intermediate level of proficiency. After that they were randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups (N=30), the control group received instruction deductively

through the traditional way of teaching grammar and the experimental group received instruction through humor in six sessions.

For the experimental group, first teaching grammar started with some jokes including some sentences based on the intended grammatical points that were the same points in both experimental and control groups. In this stage, the teacher put stress on the grammatical points. Then some jokes with that grammatical point in bold was given to the learners and they discussed the new grammatical point and told their ideas about the grammatical structures to the teacher. Then the teacher taught the grammatical point deductively and worked on the jokes on the paper. After that, the teacher asked the learners to complete the jokes in the practice part. At the end, the teacher asked the learners to memorize one or two jokes and share them with other learners in next session.

For each group, a pretest was administered to measure the learners' knowledge of target grammatical structures before the instruction. Then, after the last session was over, an immediate posttest was administered to measure the short-term effects of teaching grammar. Two weeks later, the delayed posttest the same as the posttest was administered in order to measure long-term effects of teaching grammar and for comparing the results with those of the immediate posttest. The pretest and posttest were piloted to determine their validity and reliability. Afterwards, the teacher selected randomly 10 learners in experimental group and interviewed them to find out their attitude towards teaching grammar through humor.

### III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

After the collection of the required data, the scores of the participants on all tests were processed using SPSS.

#### A. The Solution Placement Test

After the administration of the Solution Placement Test, the selected participants were divided into two groups. Then, to ascertain the homogeneity of the groups a t-test was run on the results of the Solution Placement Test. Tables 1 and 2 show the results of the t-test.

As seen in tables 1 and 2, the results show there was no significant differences among the participants,  $t(58) = -.577$ ,  $p = .801$ . Accordingly, it can be concluded that the experimental group and the control group are homogeneous.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PLACEMENT TEST

Group Statistics					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
placement test	experimental	30	23.0333	2.15732	.39387
	control	30	23.3667	2.31164	.42205

TABLE 2  
THE RESULTS OF THE INDEPENDENT-SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE PLACEMENT TEST

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
placement test	Equal variances assumed	.064	.801	-.577	58	.566	-.33333	.57728	-1.48889	.82223
	Equal variances not assumed			-.577	57.725	.566	-.33333	.57728	-1.48901	.82234

#### B. The Pretest

In order to make sure that two groups were homogenies considering their grammatical knowledge, an independent sample t-test was performed on the scores of pretest with a significance level set at .05. The results are presented in tables 3 and 4. The amount of t-observed was  $t(58) = .410$ ,  $p = .636$ . Since  $p = .636 > .05$ , it is understood that there was not any significance differences among the groups.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRETEST

Group Statistics					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pretest	experimental	30	10.7333	2.37709	.43400
	control	30	10.4667	2.64879	.48360

TABLE 4  
THE RESULTS OF THE INDEPENDENT-SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE PRETEST

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
prettest	Equal variances assumed	.226	.636	.410	58	.683	.26667	.64979	-1.03402	1.56736
	Equal variances not assumed			.410	57.334	.683	.26667	.64979	-1.03434	1.56768

### C. The Posttest

In order to answer the first research question of the present study, a t-test was performed on the results of posttest. According to Tables 5 and 6, the amount of t-observed for the effect of teaching grammar through humor on short term is  $t(58) = 5.907$ ,  $p = .000$ . Therefore, it can be claimed that the experimental group, which received grammatical instruction through the humor, significantly outperformed the control group, which did not receive grammatical instruction through humor.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE POSTTEST

Group Statistics					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
posttest	experimental	30	19.1333	2.80066	.51133
	control	30	15.1333	2.43159	.44395

TABLE 6  
THE RESULTS OF THE INDEPENDENT-SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE POSTTEST

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
posttest	Equal variances assumed	1.042	.312	5.907	58	.000	4.00000	.67716	2.64452	5.35548
	Equal variances not assumed			5.907	56.879	.000	4.00000	.67716	2.64395	5.35605

### D. The Delayed Posttest

Two weeks after the immediate post-test, a delayed posttest was administered to two groups, in order to measure the amount of grammatical improvement of learners in the long-term.

As it is displayed in tables 7 and 8, the amount of t-observed was  $t(58) = 3.797$ ,  $p = .000$ . It shows a statistically significant difference between the two groups. In other words, the performance of the experimental group is significantly better than the control group in long-term. In other words, teaching grammar through humor has a significant effect on grammatical improvement of Iranian EFL learners in the long-term.

TABLE 7  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE DELAYED TEST

Group Statistics					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
delayed test	experimental	30	14.8667	2.50149	.45671
	control	30	12.6667	1.95348	.35666

TABLE 8  
THE RESULTS OF THE INDEPENDENT-SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE DELAYED TEST

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
delayed test	Equal variances assumed	5.257	.025	3.797	58	.000	2.20000	.57947	1.04006	3.35994
	Equal variances not assumed			3.797	54.782	.000	2.20000	.57947	1.03861	3.36139



### *E. Analysis of Learners' Interviews*

In order to answer the third question of this study, 10 EFL learners participated in the interviews at the end of the treatment phase. The interview was done to analyze the learners' attitude towards using humor in teaching foreign language. All ten EFL learners believed that humor should be used in teaching foreign language because it makes learning enjoyable for them. All of them agreed that due to using jokes they paid more attention to the grammatical structures in the class.

## IV. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to explore the impact of teaching grammar through humor on grammatical improvement of EFL learners in short-term. In this regard, a t-test was conducted to probe the first question of this study. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the scores of the experimental and control groups. Therefore, it can be concluded that teaching grammar through humor has a significant effect on grammatical improvement of Iranian EFL learners in short-term. In order to answer the second question an independent t-test was run between the scores of delayed posttest. The results showed that in the long-term experimental group took better scores than control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that humor has a positive effect on EFL grammatical improvement in the long-term. In order to answer the third question an interview was done. The results showed that EFL learners had positive attitudes towards teaching grammar through humor.

This finding is compatible with some of the studies conducted earlier and reported in literature review. Trachtenberg (1979), Berwald (1992), and Deneire (1995) mentioned that some kinds of humor and jokes could reinforce learning syntax and some grammatical points. Schmidt (1994) stated that humorous sentences were better remembered than the nonhumorous sentences.

This finding is also in support of Aboudan (2009) views who suggested that humor is important for teaching and learning in order to motivate students. As mentioned by Berk (1998) and Hill (1998), humor reduces students' negativism or hostility regarding confrontational issues in the class, so improve their attitudes toward the subject matter.

## V. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of teaching grammar through humor on Iranian EFL learners as well as exploring their attitudes towards the teaching grammar through humor. The results of this research indicated that learners in experimental group achieved significantly higher scores in posttest and delayed posttest than those in control group. These findings were related to effect of humor in learning as mentioned by Banas, Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Liu (2011), due to less stress and anxiety, humor can increase comprehension and cognitive retention and when humor is related to course materials it can make information more memorable.

Humor and jokes are perceived as important elements for learning process and therefore teachers should consider the use of them in language teaching and in their language classrooms. Humor can be a powerful stimulus in language teaching to motivate students to participate in the classrooms' tasks. By application of humor in the class, teachers can provide a combination of learning, fun, and interesting environment. Students could learn much that is useful from jokes without much conscious, painstaking effort, and stress.

Learning another language means how to communicate properly in that language because language is used in authentic and real life situations. On one hand, learning grammatical structure plays a vital role in human communication. On the other hand, humor is an integral part of every languages and it is used in everyday speech. Consequently, humor could be used as a stimulus in teaching grammar.

With regard to using humor in teaching, some cautions should be considered. The use of humor in the class should not be random or used without preparation and clear objective (Chiasson, 2002, Ketabi & Simin, 2009). Teachers should be prepared for using humor in the class beforehand and they should use appropriate humor according to the course objectives and materials. In sum, humor is a powerful factor in learning and has the potential to be used in ways that can make a positive contribution to classroom language learning.

## VI. IMPLICATION

The findings of this study can give useful information to language teachers, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, and EFL learners. Curriculum designers would be able to design various materials including appropriate humor for promoting students' motivation and learning. Language teachers could use humor for refreshing the class environment, teaching a new concept, and make learners familiar with foreign culture. Individual learners could use humor for enhancing their confidence, conversational speech in another language, and learning grammatical structures of the language.

## APPENDIX A

Solution Placement Test  
Lynda Edwards 2007

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### Grammar and Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with the correct answers.

- 1- My sister \_\_\_\_\_ very tired today.  
A be            B am            C is            D are
- 2- His \_\_\_\_\_ is a famous actress.  
A aunt            B uncle            C grandfather            D son
- 3- I'd like to be a \_\_\_\_\_ and work in a hospital.  
A lawyer            B nurse            C writer            D pilot
- 4- We \_\_\_\_\_ like rap music.  
A doesn't            B isn't            C aren't            D don't
- 5- There \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of water on the floor. What happened?  
A are            B is            C be            D am
- 6- He \_\_\_\_\_ TV at the moment.  
A watches            B is watching            C watched            D has watching
- 7- Helen is very \_\_\_\_\_. She doesn't go out a lot.  
A bored            B confident            C angry            D shy
- 8- Did you \_\_\_\_\_ to the beach yesterday?  
A went            B were            C go            D goed
- 9- Have you got \_\_\_\_\_ orange juice? I'm thirsty.  
A some            B a            C any            D the
- 10- Let's go into \_\_\_\_\_ garden. It's sunny outside.  
A a            B any            C –            D the
- 11- He's \_\_\_\_\_ for the next train.  
A looking            B waiting            C listening            D paying
- 12- Mark \_\_\_\_\_ his car last week.  
A cleaned            B did clean            C has cleaned            D is cleaning
- 13- I bought some lovely red \_\_\_\_\_ today.  
A cabbages            B cucumbers            C bananas            D apples
- 14- Which bus \_\_\_\_\_ for when I saw you this morning?  
A did you wait            B had you waited  
C were you waiting            D have you waited
- 15- Where \_\_\_\_\_ you like to go tonight?  
A do            B would            C are            D can
- 16- That's the \_\_\_\_\_ film I've ever seen!  
A worse            B worst            C baddest            D most bad
- 17- My dad \_\_\_\_\_ his car yet.  
A hasn't sold            B didn't sell            C doesn't sell            D wasn't sold
- 18- I've been a doctor \_\_\_\_\_ fifteen years.  
A since            B for            C until            D by
- 19- Look at the sky. It \_\_\_\_\_ rain.  
A will            B can            C is going to            D does
- 20- If I \_\_\_\_\_ this homework, the teacher will be angry!  
A am not finishing            B won't finish  
C don't finish            D didn't finished
- 21- This book is even \_\_\_\_\_ than the last one!  
A **most** boring            B boringer            C more boring            D far boring
- 22- I'll meet you \_\_\_\_\_ I finish work.  
A if            B when            C as            D so
- 23- We're getting married \_\_\_\_\_ March.  
A in            B on            C at            D by
- 24- If you \_\_\_\_\_ steak for a long time, it goes hard.  
A cook            B are cooking            C have cooked            D cooked
- 25- I \_\_\_\_\_ you outside the cinema, OK?  
A 'll see            B am going to see            C am seeing            D see
- 26- I \_\_\_\_\_ not be home this evening. Phone me on my mobile.  
A can            B could            C may            D should
- 27- The criminal \_\_\_\_\_ outside the hotel last night.  
A was caught            B has been caught            C is caught            D caught
- 28- He asked me if I \_\_\_\_\_ a lift home.

- A wanted      B want      C was wanting      D had wanted
- 29- If I \_\_\_\_\_ older, I'd be able to vote in elections.  
A had      B am      C were      D have
- 30- You \_\_\_\_\_ go to the super market this afternoon. I've already been.  
A mustn't      B can't      C needn't      D won't
- 31- Kathy drives \_\_\_\_\_ than her sister.  
A more carefully      B more careful  
C carefully      D most carefully
- 32- The \_\_\_\_\_ near our village is beautiful.  
A country      B woods      C view      D countryside
- 33- I'm \_\_\_\_\_ I can't help you with that.  
A apologize      B afraid      C regret      D sad
- 34- It was really \_\_\_\_\_ this morning. I couldn't see anything on the roads.  
A cloudy      B sunny      C icy      D foggy
- 35- Can you look \_\_\_\_\_ my dog while I'm away?  
A for      B at      C to      D after
- 36- If I'd started the work earlier I \_\_\_\_\_ it by now.  
A would finish      B had finished  
C will finish      D would have finished
- 37- This time next year I \_\_\_\_\_ in Madrid.  
A am working      B will work      C will be working      D work
- 38- I wish he \_\_\_\_\_ in front of our gate. It's very annoying.  
A won't park      B wouldn't park  
C doesn't park      D can't park
- 39- He said he'd seen her the \_\_\_\_\_ night.  
A last      B before      C previous      D earlier
- 40- I \_\_\_\_\_ agreed to go out. I haven't got any money!  
A mustn't have      B shouldn't have  
C couldn't have      D wouldn't have
- 41- It was good \_\_\_\_\_ about her recovery, wasn't it?  
A information      B words      C news      D reports
- 42- I \_\_\_\_\_ the report by 5.00 p.m. You can have it then.  
A have finished      B will have finished  
C finish      D am finishing
- 43- Because of the snow the teachers \_\_\_\_\_ all the students to go home early.  
A said      B made      C told      D demanded
- 44- Thanks for the meal! It was \_\_\_\_\_.  
A delighted      B delicious      C disgusting      D distasteful
- 45- Look! Our head teacher \_\_\_\_\_ on TV right now!  
A is being interviewed      B is been interviewed  
C is interviewing      D is interviewed
- 46- It's \_\_\_\_\_ to drive a car over 115 km/h in the UK.  
A illegal      B illegal      C dislegal      D legless
- 47- There's a lot of rubbish in the garden I need to get \_\_\_\_\_ of.  
A lost      B rid      C cleared      D taken
- 48- I'm afraid it's time we \_\_\_\_\_.  
A leave      B must leave      C are leaving      D left
- 49- He wondered what \_\_\_\_\_.  
A is the time?      B the time was  
C was the time      D is the time
- 50- They \_\_\_\_\_ our salaries by 5%.  
A rose      B made up      C raised      D lifted

### Reading

Read the text

#### Saucy dragons

Levi Roots, a reggae singer from Jamaica, has a big smile on his face these days. In case you missed it, Levi recently appeared on the famous reality show for people with business ideas, Dragon's Den. The participants have to persuade the team of business experts that their ideas are excellent and hope that two or more of the team will decide to invest money in their business idea.

Levi did just that!

The singer, who has been a successful music artist for several years, also sells something he calls "Reggae" reggae sauce". It is made using special secret ingredients from his grandmother and is a hot Jamaican sauce that is eaten with meat. Until now it has only been possible to buy the sauce from Levi's website or once a year at a famous Notting Hill carnival. But now thanks to the TV program, that is all going to change!

Levi presented his business idea to the team and started with a catchy reggae song about the sauce to make them sit up and listen. He certainly got their attention! He then described his plans for the sauce. This part of his presentation didn't go so well. He made mistakes with his figures, saying that he already had an order for the sauce of 2 and a half and a half thousand! But, the team were still interested and amazingly, two of the team offered to give \$50,000 to the plan in exchange for 40% of the company. Mr. Roots was ecstatic!

Levi is even happier today. It seems that two of the biggest supermarket chains in the UK are interested in having the sauce on their shelves. In addition to this, Levi is recording the Reggae, reggae sauce song and we will soon be able to buy or download this. It's all about putting music into food,' saying Levi with a big, big smile on his face! And music and food will probably make him a very rich man indeed!

**1- Are the sentences true or false?**

- 1)- At the moment Levi isn't very happy.....
- 2)- Levi sells something we can eat.....
- 3)- His song is a big success. ....
- 4)- He sang his song on TV. ....
- 5)-Some supermarkets want to sell his product.....

**2- Choose the best answers.**

- 1)- Dragon's Den is a show about**
  - A) cooking
  - B) new business ideas
  - C) famous people
- 2)- To make the sauce**
  - A) you have to go to Notting Hill.
  - B) you have to ask a member of Levi's family
  - C) you need a good recipe book.
- 3)- When Levi presented his idea**
  - A) he finished with a song.
  - B) two and a half million people were watching.
  - C) he talked about the wrong figures.
- 4)- Some people on the team.**
  - A) own supermarkets.
  - B) didn't like the taste.
  - C) bought part of Levi's company.
- 5)- Today Levi**
  - A) is a millionaire.
  - B) has two thing he can profit from.
  - C) prefers music to food.

**Writing**

Imagine you have just returned from a two-week holiday .Write an e-mail to your friend telling him/her about the holiday .Include information about the journey, where you stayed, what you did and the people you met.

APPENDIX B

Pretest

Name:

Age:

1. If it ..... too much, I'll buy a smaller one.
 

A) cost	B) costs	C) will cost	D) has cost
---------	----------	--------------	-------------
2. She's got the best voice I ..... ever .....
 

A) has/hear	B) has/heard	C) have/hear	D) have/heard
-------------	--------------	--------------	---------------
3. When I arrived, they ..... hello but continued working.
 

A) said	B) say	C) were saying	D) are saying
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4. Ian wasn't ..... to get into the swimming team.
 

A) too fast	B) enough fast	C) fast enough	D) much fast
-------------	----------------	----------------	--------------
5. I can't walk any further – I'm .....
 

A) tired too	B) tired enough	C) enough tired	D) too tired
--------------	-----------------	-----------------	--------------
6. She's ..... of all the students.
 

A) the intelligent	B) the more intelligent	C) the most intelligent	D) most intelligent
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7. The film is ..... than the one you wanted to see.  
 A) most interesting    B) more interesting    C) the most interesting    D) the more interesting
8. Have you seen that new film about aliens?  
 Yes, I .....  
 A) have    B) did    C) do    D) has
9. Can you help me with this bottle? I'm not ..... to open it.  
 A) strong enough    B) enough strong    C) too strong    D) very strong
10. I ..... television when the phone rang.  
 A) watched    B) were watching    C) was watching    D) am watching
11. My brother's ..... than I am.  
 A) the youngest    B) the most youngest    C) young    D) younger
12. What ..... you do if someone tells us to leave?  
 A) do    B) did    C) will    D) have
13. This is ..... restaurant in town.  
 A) better    B) the best    C) good    D) best
14. I ..... a few letters yesterday.  
 A) was writing    B) had written    C) wrote    D) have written
15. Have you ..... your homework yet?  
 No, I .....  
 A) do/don't    B) to do/haven't    C) done/haven't    D) did/didn't
16. This lesson is ..... than the last one.  
 A) the most difficult    B) more difficult    C) most difficult    D) much difficult
17. Those jeans are ..... to wear to the party.  
 A) enough dirty    B) much dirty    C) dirty enough    D) too dirty
18. She ..... her car when she suddenly felt ill.  
 A) drove    B) was driving    C) was drive    D) were driving
19. I didn't answer ..... questions.  
 A) the most difficult    B) difficult    C) the difficult    D) more difficult
20. She'll call you if she ..... time.  
 A) has    B) will have    C) have    D) has had
21. .... you working when I phoned you last night?  
 Yes, I was.  
 A) did    B) have    C) was    D) were
22. I'm afraid we can't buy that computer. It's .....  
 A) enough expensive    B) much expensive  
 C) too expensive    D) expensive enough
23. This is ..... country in the world.  
 A) poorest    B) the poorest    C) the poorer    D) the most poorer
24. The weather here is ..... at home.  
 A) colder than    B) colder    C) the coldest    D) the colder than
25. She's the most intelligent person I ..... ever .....  
 A) have/meet    B) has/met    C) have/met    D) am/met
26. If it rains, we ..... to the cinema.  
 A) would go    B) go    C) to go    D) will go
27. It's ..... here than in London.  
 A) hot    B) the hottest    C) hotter    D) hottest
28. I ..... this film before.  
 A) saw    B) have seen    C) see    D) seen
29. If Mary finds out what's happening, she ..... very angry.  
 A) is    B) is being    C) is going to be    D) will be
30. Wear your ..... jacket. It's really cold outside.  
 A) thickest    B) the more thickest    C) most thickest    D) thicker

## APPENDIX C

Posttest and Delayed Posttest test

Name:

Age:

1. The Mississippi's ..... than the Thames river.  
 A) the longest    B) more longer    C) longer    D) the most longest
2. If you ..... Oxford, you will see some interesting old buildings.

- A) are visiting      B) will visit      C) have visited      D) visit
3. It's ..... noisy to study here. Let's go to the library.  
A) much      B) too      C) enough      D) very
4. Has he finished painting the house?  
No, he .....  
A) hasn't      B) didn't      C) doesn't      D) isn't
5. It was the ..... music I had ever heard.  
A) more beautiful      B) most beautiful      C) beautiful      D) very beautiful
6. When she telephoned, I ..... a bath.  
A) have      B) had      C) was having      D) had had
7. Your handwriting is ..... to read.  
A) so small      B) too small      C) such small      D) much small
8. He thinks Charlie Chaplin is ..... than Mr. Bean.  
A) the funnier      B) funniest      C) the funniest      D) funnier
9. John ..... when I was eating.  
A) has arrived      B) arrive      C) was arriving      D) arrived
10. If the doctor can't see me, I ..... somewhere else.  
A) would go      B) should go      C) will go      D) go
11. I think she's ..... singer in the group.  
A) the best      B) better      C) good      D) best
12. I ..... to the radio when I had an idea.  
A) have listened      B) listened      C) was listening      D) were listening
13. I'm sorry. You're not ..... to see this film.  
A) old enough      B) too old      C) too young      D) young enough
14. I think this shop is ..... than that one.  
A) very good      B) better      C) the best      D) the better
15. Have you ever heard their new record? It's the best they ..... ever .....  
A) are/made      B) are/making      C) have/made      D) have/been made
16. .... you phone me if there is any problems?  
A) will      B) do      C) would      D) could
17. Do you recommend that restaurant?  
No, it's ..... one in the city.  
A) more expensive      B) most expensive  
C) expensive      D) the most expensive
18. Was Susan driving when you saw her?  
No, she .....  
A) wasn't      B) didn't      C) doesn't      D) weren't
19. We couldn't talk to each other in the pub – the music was .....  
A) too loud      B) loud enough      C) very loud      D) much louder
20. The restaurant is more ..... than the café.  
A) expensiver      B) expensivest      C) expensive      D) the expensive
21. He ..... here since eight o'clock.  
A) had been      B) have been      C) is      D) has been
22. If they ..... him, the factory will go on strike.  
A) will sack      B) have sacked      C) sack      D) could sack
23. The Amazon is ..... river in the world.  
A) the longer      B) the longest      C) longer      D) longest
24. They came into my office and ..... down.  
A) sit      B) sat      C) have sat      D) were sitting
25. This is the fourth time he ..... my car.  
A) is damaging      B) damaged      C) has damaged      D) was damaging
26. Big cars are ..... than small ones.  
A) comfortable      B) more comfortable  
C) the most comfortable      D) very comfortably
27. I don't think Georg should get the new job – he's not .....  
A) efficient enough      B) enough efficiently      C) too efficient      D) too efficiently
28. Mary ..... worried if you don't come to the airport.  
A) is      B) will be      C) would be      D) should
29. They ..... never ..... a British policeman before.  
A) are/seeing      B) are/saw      C) have/saw      D) have/seen

30. He's the ..... in his class.

- A) youngest                      B) most youngest                      C) young                      D) younger

#### APPENDIX D

##### Learners' semi-structure interview questions

Please answer the questions as clear as you can. You are completely free in answering the questions.

1. Do you feel that humor can be effective in teaching foreign language?
2. Do you feel that the teacher can use humor in teaching language?
3. Do you feel that teaching grammar through humor and having fun can help its better understanding?
4. Do you feel that memorizing and retelling jokes and humor can help recalling the grammatical points?
5. Do you feel that humor has any effect on your relationship with your classmates?
6. Do you feel that teaching grammar through humor can increase your motivation for learning grammar?
7. Do you feel that teaching grammar through humor can increase your attention in the class?
8. What characteristics of your teacher and grammar class do you like?

#### APPENDIX E

##### A Sample of the Materials for experimental group

##### Comparatives

Mr. Smith, an American, was not enjoying married life. He was talking to a close friend who was thinking of getting married.

A: Take my advice, Mr. Smith said. Don't get married. Buy a dog instead.

B: That's a strange thing to say. Why?

A: Because a dog is **cheaper than** a wife and it already has a fur coat.

A: Which is **further** away - the moon or Australia?

B: Australia, sir.

A: Why do you say that?

B: Well, you can see the moon, but you can't see Australia.

A: Aren't you the same boy who applied for this job three months ago?

B: Yes, sir.

A: Didn't I tell you that I wanted an **older** boy?

B: Yes, sir. That's why I've come back today.

##### Practice:

A: Complete these jokes by putting the adjectives below in the gaps provided. Make sure you use the correct comparative form. For example: faster; more intelligent.

fast                      intelligent                      light                      big                      long                      beautiful

1- A: It's ..... than a feather but you can't hold it for ..... than three minutes.  
What is it?

B: I don't know.

A: Your breath!

2- A: Would you say the princess is pretty?

B: Let's just say she looks ..... on the radio than she does on television.

3- A lion was running towards two photographers. One of the photographers started to change into his running shoes.

A: Don't be ridiculous, said the other photographer. A lion can run at a speed of 50 kilometres an hour.

B: I'm not interested in the lion. As long as I can run ..... than you, it doesn't matter!

4- A: What gets ..... when you turn it upside down?

B: I don't know.

A: The number 6!

5- A woodpecker was talking to a chicken one day.

A: Woodpeckers are very clever birds, it said.

B: Nonsense, said the chicken. What's clever about banging your head against a tree all day?

Chickens are much ..... than woodpeckers.

A: really? replied the woodpecker. Have you ever heard of Kentucky Fried woodpecker!

B: Can you finish these sentences about yourself?

I'm taller than...

I'm younger than ...

I'm fitter than ...

I'm not more intelligent than ...

I'm more difficult to please than ...

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**Fatemeh Salehi** was born in Iran in 1984. She is an M.A. graduate student at Islamic Azad University, Najafabad Branch, Iran.

She has been teaching EFL courses in different institutes in Isfahan. Her area of interest is teaching methodologies. She has published a book.



**Akbar Hesabi** received his PhD degree in theoretical Linguistics in 2009 from Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran.

He is currently teaching linguistic and translation courses at the University of Isfahan. His areas of interest include Linguistics, neurolinguistics, and teaching English. He has published several articles and a book.



# A Critical Analysis of the Selection Criteria of Expert Teachers in ELT

Ramin Akbari

Tarbiat Modares University of Tehran, Iran

Elham Yazdanmehr (Corresponding author)

Tarbiat Modares University of Tehran, Iran

**Abstract**—So far, in the early years of the twenty-first century, expertise studies have been undertaken in a large number of domains. Applied linguistics is relatively a newcomer to the list which makes any study aiming to cast light on some aspect of expertise in this domain worth considering. Currently, English language expert teachers are selected according to a set of common general criteria of expertise and/or national standards. The present study casts a critical look at the most commonly used selection criteria of expert teachers including years of working experience, social/professional recognition, rewards and recommendations from school, learners' achievement, normative- or criterion-based performance indicators. It also critically addresses the perceivably most comprehensive national standards of teaching English including those of England and the U.S. Subsequently, it draws attention to the need for providing a reliable and comprehensive operational definition for teacher expertise in the realm of English Language Teaching (ELT) and discusses its possibility and quality of design.

**Index Terms**—expert teacher, selection criteria, ELT

## I. INTRODUCTION

The arena of education is currently under the effect of an international drive that focuses on uncompromising learner assessment, considering only instructors and schools responsible for academic performance of pupils. One consequence of these reform endeavors has been an increased emphasis on teacher quality and teacher evaluation (Dwyer & Stufflebeam, 1996). Recent reports in the U.S. found out that a highly significant way of enhancing students' academic achievement, for a society, is to promote teacher's efficiency (The American Council on Education, 1999; NCTAF, 2003). Following the significance of teacher efficiency, the No Child Left Behind Act set some criteria according to which by the 2005–6 instructional year all learners were to encounter truly efficient teachers of basic school courses. The determinant of teacher efficiency, nevertheless, continues to be a growing subject, both for educational decision makers (Education Trust, 2003), and those interested in the related research.

During the 1970s and 1980s, process-product research focused on teacher competence mainly by investigating the effect of particular teacher's behavior on learners' academic achievement. The next trend of studies on teacher quality highlighted how teacher's mental understanding and decision-making influenced how they taught in class (Calderhead, 1996). During the previous two decades, researchers continued to investigate the concept of teacher expertise, whose theoretical basis lies in cognitive psychology. Such researchers included Berliner (1994) and Leinhardt & Greeno (1986). In the present article, a variety of characteristics and idiosyncrasies of exemplary teachers are identified, presented and analyzed. Contrary to investigations which emphasize on particular teacher-induced mediations so that learner's performance is enhanced, research on expertise emphasizes on the complicated and flexible mental functioning that triggers teachers' particular decisions on the spot (Berliner, 1994).

Almost no importance has been given to the principles employed to distinguish expert teachers in recent different academic investigations in spite of the prevalent employment of the phrase 'expert teacher'. Unambiguous guidelines were offered by Berliner (1994) for picking out expert teachers. Berliner is mostly cited by investigators in describing their sample selections. But a more precise investigation into how they made their selection shows much discrepancy in how those guidelines were comprehended or enacted. As reminded by Sternberg (1998), researchers employ the phrase 'gifted teacher', not having thought of its complexion. The definition of an expert teacher is thus further obscured.

This article seeks to present and criticize the selection criteria widely used by researchers for expert English language teachers. A number of methodological considerations added to the inspiration of carrying out the present research. As described by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the main obsessions of science are comprised of: 1. creating ways and instruments to size up constructs, along with 2. finding out the correlations of diverse measures of various constructs. Therefore, to validate constructs it is needed to specify the domain observables concerning that construct. In sample selection, if the specific features (selection criteria) are not identified and continuously employed then it is not evident what, or, for expert teachers, who, is actually being investigated in the body of related research. The varying use of expert selection markers, therefore, will have important effects on the implications of the results obtained from such

investigations. In case we give into the divergences in detecting exemplary teachers, we are finally faced with a body of previous research whose informative value for pedagogical investigators and decision makers is restricted. So is its informative value concerning the quality of expertise in teaching and how it is developed in highly efficient teachers. As an instance, imagine study 1 contrasts novice teachers' pedagogical understandings and communications with distinguished, highly effective teachers through employing a number of aspects such as the length of working background, and subsequently contrasts the behavior of these identified teachers with that of the experts. These two investigations entail delving into teacher expertise, but the populations investigated might have been totally different. Experts in the first research could act as advanced beginners despite being recognized to be experts. No inferences concerning their teaching acts could be reliable because of the differences between the groups compared. We critically analyzed the steps followed to single out exemplary or the so-called expert teachers and categorized these selection criteria according to a review of expertise construct. The categorization we presented and our critical analysis illuminate researchers' decision-making in this realm and is investigated with reference to the relevant previous research on teacher quality.

Besides methodological concerns, there are several conceptual issues that lie beneath the requirement of a critical consideration of expert teachers' recognition. The existing standards of teachers in the U.S., presumably the most comprehensive standards worldwide, have been identified as an obstacle to the provision of efficient teaching (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). Investigations focused on teacher expertise would possibly affect the ingenuity in teacher education, evaluation, or certification. As an instance, NBPTS has focused comprehensively on the related research on teacher expertise in devising standards of instruction (Bond, Smith, Baker, & Hattie, 2000).

As for teacher's knowledge, investigators have shown subject-matter knowledge is essential for teachers to succeed but the amount of subject knowledge required and the most effective way to evaluate it is not obvious. Moreover, Berliner (1994) states that teachers' familiarity with learners and teaching procedures distinguishes experts and non-experts. Similarly, Stough and Palmer (2003) contend that expert instructors of special education possess a complicated source of knowledge or competence which includes learner knowledge. Furthermore, such teachers utilized their knowledge adaptively so that they satisfy particular expectations of their pupils. Nevertheless, the extent to which the varying types of knowledge contribute to the identification of expert teachers is not yet clear-cut.

The critical analysis of the above-mentioned criteria in studies on teacher expertise would help investigators' perusal and judgment of existing body of research on expertise as well as developing further research within this realm. The majority of instructional investigators and scholars work independently from each other; and have not frequently studied particular constructs each as part of a meta-analytic research with a cooperative goal. Therefore, there rarely is a disciplined attempt to devise reliable ways to assess various constructs (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). We propose that our article clarifies those domain observables associated with the construct of teacher expertise.

## II. EXPERTISE AS A CONSTRUCT

Fundamental investigations of expertise in teaching are based on a plenty of research on the cognitive aspect of expertise. Such research in disciplines other than instruction found that the way experts think and act is completely divergent from non-experts. Expertise was found to require long of hours of hard practice in that realm (Berliner, 1994; Ericsson, 1996). Another issue reported was that the structure of expert knowledge is different from that of non-experts. The expert knowledge can be obtained in an effective way in the face of new problems (Berliner, 1994; Glaser & Chi, 1988). Experts' cognitive attributes have been investigated in a wide array of fields such as chess, medical sciences, and physical education (Ericsson, 1996). Overall, research findings indicated that experts' intellectual features were regulated and coherent. So far, researchers have used a variety of decision rules, both implicit and explicit, to select and describe expert teachers. In the following first we deal with common criteria of identifying experts from novices including teachers. Next, we cast a look at the national standards of English language teachers in England and the U.S.

## III. CURRENT CRITERIA OF EXPERTISE IN TEACHING AND ELT

### A. *Length of Occupational Background or Deliberate Practice*

A highly prevalent criterion concerning how expertise is developed is one's experiential background, commonly thought of as years of working. According to Ericsson, Krampe, and Tesch-Romer (1993) the mere experience is not adequate; instead, deliberate practice in a specific realm is essential for the growth of expertise. These researchers describe deliberate practice as involvement in particular practices at a suitable difficulty level so that it equips the person with various chances of repeating those practices, along with useful feedback on executing those acts to sort out errors (Ericsson et al., 1993). One factor that is strictly related to experts' deliberate practice is the craving for excellence which experts show in their field. Therefore, experts appear to look for opportunities of deliberate practice in their field.

In 1998, Sternberg proposed his model for the development of expertise which similarly highlighted the active role and practice of experts within a particular domain in order for their expertise to be developed. Despite the individual idiosyncrasies in the speed of achieving expertise and the degree of expertise achieved, this scholar argued that the key

contributing factor of attaining expertise is one's goal-oriented immersion in the tasks within their domain of expertise. Such active involvement is accompanied by direct instruction as well as one's massive reflection and motivation to achieve expertise.

In the literature concerned with teaching and more specifically language teaching, it is common to view teachers with more than five years of experience considered as 'experienced' ones and even as 'experts' (used interchangeably). However, what appears to be critical is that these two notions i.e. experience and expertise are not necessarily correlated as revealed in later research or observations. The best relation which could be thought of was that the latter certainly included the former but vice versa was not necessarily true. Put it simpler, we could distinguish between expert and non-expert experienced teachers. What the latter implies, as elaborated by Tsui (2005), is that after many years of teaching, some teachers become complacent with their current practice and merely rely on their habits and routines developed throughout the years and slow down on further development of their knowledge and skills. In other words, they let their knowledge and skills become fossilized and outdated. Therefore, it seems that the length of teaching experience alone cannot be a reliable indicator of a teacher's expertise.

#### *B. Experts' Social Recognition or Group Membership*

Human expertise is described as, at least partly, a social construct (Agnew et al, 1997). A number of metaphors have been proposed for expertise by LaFrance (1997) one of which is the word courtship which means that it is the others who decide on who is called an expert and who is not. Those identified to be experts are not necessarily the most knowledgeable. They are perceived and recognized as experts by others in a group.

Another type of social recognition is to be a member of a well-recognized and credible group. Two levels of expertise are proposed here. Firstly, the entire experts are socially elected by a public community (the first plane). Such experts might as well be engaged in choosing colleagues to join their position. Besides that, a second plane of expertise is believed to exist. These experts acquire their position because of verifiable, observable practice-based criteria meeting strict scientific standards. Normative as well as criterion-based practical markers are employed to characterize expertise (to be explained later).

In Palmer et al.'s (2005) study, the most common means of an expert teacher's social recognition was the school principal's nomination. Nominations from other groups are also mentioned including other teachers, college personnel, school staff, etc. Teacher certification was also mentioned as an indicator of teaching expertise. Membership in educational organizations for instance as a mentor teacher, or supervisor were also mentioned in the literature. However, social or professional recognition have not been mentioned as the sole indicator of expert teachers in the literature. It can as well be criticized for its subjective and highly variable basis. As an instance, what is expected from a mentor teacher might differ from one educational context to another. Others' judgment could be influenced by a myriad of psychological or sociological factors which are hard to control or tell apart. That is, sometimes factors other than pedagogical skills inspire these so-called others' decisions (including colleagues, principal, etc.). Among such factors are previous acquaintance or friendship, appearance and the like. Therefore, it is hard to predict, based on what exactly, they recommend a particular person as an expert teacher. Even when asked, they themselves might find it difficult to mention all the factors involved in selecting a particular colleague as the expert.

#### *C. Rewards and Recommendations from School*

These are based on formative assessment of teachers' performance carried out by the school principal, research team or the district board. Sometimes it is in the form of awards being given (for example yearly) and sometimes in appointing the admired teachers to additional posts such as a teacher-group leader or a mentor teacher who assesses and comments on other colleagues' performance (Tsui, 2003; Tsui, 2005; Goodwyn, 2011). However, this criterion is very subjective indeed and needs to be considered with care since such awards and nominations are basically founded on other underlying criteria set by the school or district. In judging on the expertise of a teacher according to this criterion, we should first make sure of the validity of the more underlying criteria. Put it simply, when A attests to the credibility and value of B, first we should be convinced of the credibility of A!

#### *D. Learners' Achievement*

The use of this criterion in judging on the expertise of teachers has been on the rise recently. However, beneath such criterion lies the assumption that there exists a linear causal relationship between teacher expertise and learner achievement. This is where the problem lies, as we are aware that there is a host of factors affecting students' performance, among which teacher's expertise is only one. These factors range from the socio-economic status of learners to the physical/contextual condition of the classroom (Tsui, 2003; Tsui, 2005; Goodwyn, 2011).

Another problem appears when teacher's expertise is based on learners' performance on the standardized tests. This means that their expertise is determined indirectly through the performance of their students. This is different from other domains where expertise is determined directly through the performance of the expert.

#### *E. Norm-based Performing Markers*

Investigating expertise is partially delving into the actions and behavior of those outperforming the average within a scope of human performance. As Ericsson (1996) puts it, those who repetitively overcome others in competitions are

perceived as experts. According to normative criteria, in order to identify experts, they are necessarily compared to other participants. As for expert teachers, they are selected based on the quality of their action and behavior in a particular task compared to other colleagues or beginner teachers. Instances of such criteria were garrulous teachers identified by school managers for taking part in stimulated recall activities (for example Allen & Casbergue, 1997) and the direct observation of classroom teaching by independent experts (e.g., Bromme & Steinbring, 1994). Here, the judgment is highly dependent on the checklist which can vary from school to school and even from one observer to another within the same educational context. The lack of a consistent, valid and comprehensive basis of evaluation seems to be the major drawback along with the lack of reliability of the evaluation.

#### *F. Criterion-based Performing Markers*

Exemplary performance cannot be absolutely and uncontroversially defined. Criterion-based performing measures might encompass the recurrence, exactitude, as well as the time length of performing a task. One form of performance-related criteria is called criterion-based indicators according to which the teacher's practice is compared to a preexisting standard. Instances include teachers who obtained the best scores by more than one supervisor on predetermined criteria (e.g., Copeland et al, 1994). These suffer from the same drawbacks as those of the previous two criteria. The most important problem lies in the quality of the criterion based on which teachers' performance is evaluated. Who determines those criteria? Are they global or local in nature? Are they culturally, socially or politically loaded or not? Who are the major decision makers? Is their own expertise already established? And a myriad of similar questions remain to be answered.

### IV. NATIONAL STANDARDS

Notions of competence have led on to the proliferation of standards produced to describe teaching as a series of levels of achievement the most developed of which is an advanced or excellent teacher. In a number of English speaking countries, national standards of teaching English have been proposed and the level of expertise has been defined by a number of attributes. The most comprehensive of these standards belong to England and the U.S.

In the U.S.A. there are two terms which are used to imply expertise in teaching, one is 'master teacher' and the other 'highly accomplished teacher'. The former is a designation given at the district level and usually follows from some professional development work. The latter is the nationally significant one established by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This is now recognized as the most developed model in the world. The NBPTS is one of the only organizations to develop very detailed subject-specific standards (Goodwyn, 2011).

The current model in England is a developmental model of expertise the final stage of which is called an advanced skill teacher (AST). These are actually different terms for the same notion of an expert teacher of English. They truly attempt to act as a reliable, comprehensive and detailed illustration of the development of expertise. However, they suffer from particular drawbacks. Firstly, trying to encapsulate the complex notion of teaching expertise in a number of fixed, limited and static standards is far from the true nature of expertise. Secondly, there is a tension between autonomy and accountability and the use of standards. A real expert must be reasonably accountable but must also maintain a significant degree of autonomy and be able to exercise reasoned professional judgment. What degree of accountability is reasonable for teaching as an expert? Do differing degrees of accountability act as a developmental pressure on improving teaching or can they produce a compliance culture which limits creativity and nullifies expertise? These are challenging questions in relation to expert teaching.

### V. CONCLUSION

As pinpointed in the introduction, the nature of expertise has long attracted the attention of researchers in the field of cognitive psychology. However, it has been relatively less explored until recently in relation to classroom teaching and even less so in the field of second and foreign language teaching. In the background attempts of setting and defining the criteria for teacher expertise, a multitude of diverse, incomprehensive and in some cases questionable attributes have been suggested which are mostly subjectively assessed and ascribed. Not only are they not able to characterize an expert teacher of English in separation, but also together they are still unable to account for the true construct of teacher expertise. Furthermore, they are mostly based on the comparison of the novice and the experts and hide the real quality of expert performance.

What is suggested in the present research is for scholars and researchers in ELT to narrow down the focus of their investigations on the notion of EFL/ESL teacher expertise and operationalize it through the development of a well-organized and valid instrument. This instrument is supposed to act as a benchmark against which less successful teaching can be reliably compared and distinguish the expert from non-expert performance among English language teachers internationally. The prospective instrument is supposed to include the two major dimensions: teacher's knowledge and teacher's performance (behavior). The former must include teacher's subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge (Shulman, 1987). The latter is expected to include skills such as class management, decision making, problem solving, monitoring and so on. Each would have its own sub-skills. In determining exactly which issues are to be included in the framework (based on which the instrument is designed),

attitudes of the following should be obtained: ELT academics, researchers, acknowledged experienced professionals and teacher educators. Subsequently, each category along with its sub-elements can be structured as a self-rating questionnaire in a likert type. It can be used as a checklist as well, but one the answers to which are quantitatively analyzable. Application of such instrument provides an operational definition for the construct of expertise in English language teaching. Currently the design of this instrument is being done by the researchers of the present study. However, we thought it would be wise first to draw attention to the essentiality of such an attempt. This article, in fact, tried to make the gap more visible and pave the way for the further steps of providing a well-structured, valid and comprehensive operational definition for an expert teacher of English in ELT. It should be acknowledged that similar attempts have already been made in other domains, as mentioned previously such as chess, medicine, law, etc. Therefore, its necessity and usefulness is already established in other disciplines. We believe it is time we began to define it in applied linguistics too. This article is privileged to be one of the pioneering steps along this path.

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**Ramin Akbari** holds a Ph.D. of TEFL from Isfahan State University. Currently, he is an assistant professor of ELT in Tarbiat Modares University of Tehran and also the head of the teacher quality control department of Safir Language Institute of Iran.

**Elham Yazdanmehr** is currently a Ph.D. candidate of TEFL at Tarbiat Modares University of Tehran, Iran. Her main areas of interest include teacher education and critical pedagogy.

# Shifts of Cohesive Devices in English-Chinese Translation

Jing Wu

School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, China

**Abstract**—This paper explores shifts of cohesive devices in translating English texts into Chinese based on the framework of Halliday and Hasan's cohesion theory, regarding the different preferences for cohesive devices in the two languages and strategies adopted in the shifting process. In the meanwhile, the underlying causes contributing to the differences in cohesion are explored from the perspective of the two distinct language differences, namely topic-prominence and subject prominence; parataxis and hypotaxis. Several English texts and their corresponding ones in Chinese are analyzed to achieve these goals.

**Index Terms**—cohesion, topic-prominence, subject-prominence, hypotaxis, parataxis

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese and English are markedly different languages due to the fact that they have developed largely in separation from each other. The application of cohesive devices is one of the most distinguishing features between them. While usually considered a predominantly hypotactic language, English puts great importance on the cohesive means to connect sentence components together; Chinese is usually considered a predominantly paratactic language which relies more on semantic meaning rather than cohesive devices to achieve coherence. The difference in the application of cohesive devices makes it necessary to reconstruct cohesive relations in the E-C translation in order to achieve coherent text. As is pronounced by Peter Newmark (1987) that the topic of cohesion has always been “the most useful constituent of discourse analysis or text linguistics applicable to translation. (p.295). During the translation process, equipped with the knowledge of similarities and more importantly differences in cohesive devices, translators will be able to understand the original text better and accurate and they are able to shift cohesive devices in the target language so as to achieve the corresponding semantic effects. Thus, it is of great value to make a comparative study of the cohesive devices.

According to Halliday and Hasan(1976), cohesion refers to “relations of meaning that exist within the text and that define it as text” (p.4) In other words, a text is integrated by elements through the use of cohesive devices. Halliday and Hasan explain how cohesion is realized in a text: “Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text.”(ibid) In this book, they classified cohesive devices into five categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion, which will be explored one by one so as to find the differences in the way the two languages realize cohesion in hope to provide solutions to the reconstruction of cohesive devices in English-Chinese translation.

## II. DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO REFERENCES

According to Hadley, I.L. (1987), “reference is concerned with the identification of a thing, or specific group of things, by the use of certain reference items, such as personal pronouns. As these items appear in the text for the second or more times, they establish a network of meaning between the various sections of the discourse.” Reference is sentence elements that “instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right, make reference to something else for their interpretation (Halliday & Hasan 1976, p.30). It can be divided into the following three types: personal, demonstrative and comparative. English personal pronouns take different forms depending on number (usually singular or plural), grammatical or natural gender and case, while Chinese pronouns do not take inflected forms to indicate its case. For instance, in Chinese, there is neither distinction between pronouns served as the subject or object of a sentence nor in the possessive adjective and possessive pronoun; both are formed by appending the particle “的”. And possessive pronouns are often omitted in Chinese if they are not used for indicating the ownership, which is a common feature of the language. Besides, there is only one plural form “they (their, them)” in English which refers to things both animate and inanimate. In Chinese, however, the plural forms of the third persons are used in a more complicated way because they are distinguished by the human genders, and so does their singular forms. Meanwhile, the suffix “们” is added after the singular personals in the formation of the plural forms, like “他们” refers to those who are male or neutral; “她们”, those feminine; “它们”, those neutral. Furthermore, the personal reference items in English can often be used both anaphorically and cataphorically. However, they are seldom used cataphorically in Chinese. Therefore, the personal

reference should be converted from cataphoric to anaphoric in E-C translation.

From the above statements can be concluded that the differences of personal reference items is something more concerns with the form than meaning which are easy to identify and deal with in translation, however, there are differences, important but easily to be overlooked in translation. That is, in English anaphoric pronouns are used extensively, and zero anaphors are grammatically constrained (Chomsky: 1981). But in Chinese, the use of anaphoric pronouns is much less extensive and the use of zero anaphors is pervasive. Much of the use of zero anaphors in Chinese can be accounted for by Chinese being a topic-prominent language. According to Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson (1981), languages may differ in their strategies in construction sentences according to the prominence of the notions of topic and subject. And Chinese is a typical topic-prominent language. According to Zhao Yuanren (1979, p.45), "in Chinese, the proportion of applicability of the actor-action meanings is still very low, perhaps not much higher than 50 percent and wider conception of topic and comment is much more appropriate". A phenomenon related to this topic-comment construction is topic chain, "where a referent is referred to in the first clause, then their follow several more clauses talking about the same referent but not overtly mentioning that referent (Li and Thompson, 1981, p.659). In other words, once the topic is established at the beginning of the sentence, it can be omitted from the rest of the clauses, because the topic has a semantic control over the whole sentence. Due to this, in E-C translation, referents are often dropped out if they refer to something already brought up in the sentence.

#### Example 1

ST: So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. (cited from *Of Study*)

TT: 如智力不集中, 可令读数学, 盖演算须全神贯注, 稍有分散即须重演。(translated by Wang Zuoliang)

In the English translation, "a man" is followed by a number of occurrences of "him", "his" and "he" which constitutes the internal cohesion of the sentence. In contrast, in the Chinese translation, all the personal references whether they server as a subject or object are omitted, but it is grammatically correct and semantically clear and concise because they are about the same topic.

There is also another important difference that lexical repetition is extensively used in Chinese where reference is frequently used in English. Thus, it is fine if the personal and the demonstrative reference in English are converted into the repetition of the same word in Chinese.

#### Example 2:

ST: Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. (cited from *Of Study*)

TT: 狡黠者鄙读书, 无知者羡读书, 唯明智之士用读书, 然书并不以用处告人, 用书之智不在书上, 而在书外, 全凭观察得之。(translated by Wang Zuoliang)

In the Chinese translation, all the personal references "them" are converted into the repetition of its referent "书", which makes the Chinese translation compact and precise. And the adjective possessive pronoun "their" is omitted in the Chinese translation which is a common feature in Chinese.

### III. DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO SUBSTITUTION

Whereas the cohesion of reference lies in the semantic level, substitution is used to avoid the repetition of a lexical item through grammatical resources of the language (Bloor and Bloor, 1995: 96). The substitution can be nominal, verbal and clausal. Substitution words have the same function such as "one and ones" for nouns and "do" or "so" as in "do so" or "that and "it" for verbal, nominal, and clausal substitutions (Halliday and Hasan 1976:125-126).

Substitution in English coincide with "...的", "一样的", "干, 弄", and "这样" in Chinese. However, in many cases, there is not a one-to-one correspondence in terms of substitution. Comparatively speaking, substitution is more frequently adopted in English than in Chinese, and substitution in English tends to be realized by means of reference or repetition in Chinese. The main reason for this phenomenon is that English emphasizes more in hypotaxis, which is characterized by strict grammatical relationships and converge form. Because substitution is the replacement of a part of a sentence with a substitute word or phrase in the same grammatical slot, substitutions are more extensively used in grammatically strict English. On the other hand, Chinese emphasizes more in parataxis, its elements connected through hidden logic relations more than grammatical relations. Consequently, substitution as a structural link is far less used in Chinese.

#### Example 3:

ST And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. (cited from *Of Study*)

TT: 因此不常做笔记者须记忆力特强, 不常讨论者须天生聪颖, 不常读书者须欺世有术, 始能无知而显有知。(translated by Wang Zuoliang)

In Chinese translation, the substitution word "doth" is converted to the repetition of the word "知", which is rhythmic and clear in Chinese.



#### IV. DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO ELLIPSIS

Ellipsis shares some similarities with substitution which is been described in the above part and both ellipsis and substitution are used to avoid the repetition of certain items or structures. In simple words, substitution refers to the replacement of one item by another while ellipsis refers to the omission of an item. Halliday and Hasan (1976) claim that ellipsis can be seen as a special form of substitution, that is zero substitution.

While English needs some form markers which function as main way of indicating ellipsis because English is a hypotactic language, ellipsis in Chinese is not so restrict grammatically and even logically due to its paratactic language. For instance, in Chinese, when the subject in a sentence or in series of sentences is the same one, it is frequently omitted. However, this type of omission is not correct in English unless they are imperative sentences.

In contrast, English verbs serving as predicates in parallel structure are sometimes omitted to achieve the rhetoric effect, which is ungrammatical in Chinese. Considering this difference between English and Chinese in elliptical structures, translators should make some proper adjustments in translation.

Example 4:

ST: Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. (cited from *Of Study*)

TT: 读书使人充实, 讨论使人机智, 笔记使人准确。(translated by Wang Zuoliang)

English is a hypotactic language so the slot between the subject and object is easily recognized and filled by readers in a parallel structure. But in the Chinese translation, the omitted verb is reproduced.

#### V. DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO CONJUNCTION

Conjunction is a cohesive device signaling how a proposition connects to previous discourse. Conjunctive elements are not “devices reaching out to the preceding (or following) text” like reference, substitution and ellipsis. Rather they are cohesive “by virtue of their specific meanings.”(Halliday & Hasan 1976, p.226). In other words, unlike reference, substitution, and ellipsis, the use of conjunction is not to make the text cohesive by referring to the context or by filling structural slots. Instead, conjunction signals the logical relations between sentences, preparing the reader for what to expect. In cohesive relation, conjunction plays an important role not only by establishing a textual and grammatical relation but also semantic relation. Conjunction involves the use of formal markers to relate sentences, clauses and paragraphs to each other. They work as “cohesive ties between clauses or sections of text in such a way as to demonstrate a meaningful pattern between them” (Bloor & Bloor, 1995, p98). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), conjunction can be classified into four types: first, additive: and, or, etc.; second, adversative: yet, but, though, etc.; third, causal: then, hence, which, so, therefore, for this reason, as a result, etc.; fourth, temporal: previously, next then, finally, etc.

Because conjunction has its own specific meaning, through these conjunction elements, people can understand the relations between sentences semantically. It is clear that conjunction has the same meaning and function in cohesion in both English and Chinese. Therefore, within a text, a conjunctive item is used in a similar way between sentences or paragraphs in these two languages. But in Chinese, implicit links are also common. “When the relationship between two clauses is not signaled explicitly, the reader must make inference from his/her knowledge of the situation and the context (Li & Thompson, 1981, p. 641). The absence of explicit markers in Chinese is pervasive, especially in classical Chinese literature. While in English syntax, various conjunctives help to form a complete structure by elements tied together, Chinese syntax is in shorter structures and the conjunctive relations are often embedded through the order in which these elements are formed. Many Chinese idioms are good examples in case, such as 汗流浹背(The sweat broke out all over one's body and trickled down his back), indicating a temporal order, 玩物丧志(one loses his spirit due to seeking too much pleasures), indicating a cause-effect relation, 不进则退(Move forward, or you'll fall behind), indicating a condition-hypothesis relation. In English, many of the implicit linking elements are rendered implicit in the Chinese translation.

Example 5:

ST: So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. (cited from *Of Study*)

TT: 如智力不集中, 可令读数学, 盖演题须全神贯注, 稍有分散即须重演。(translated by Wang Zuoliang)

In the Chinese translation, the conjunctions “so” and “if” are omitted, for the logical relations are implied through the word order.

In spite of all the differences, the disparity of conjunction is not absolutely rigid in these two languages. It is relative and flexible. In other words, although explicit conjunctions are more possible in most English texts, implicit conjunctions are also been used in some discourses. Zhu Yongsheng (2001, p.100) claims that the frequency of conjunction in texts concerns the discrepancy of implicitness and explicitness.

#### VI. DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO LEXICAL COHESION

Lexical Cohesion is a linguistic device which helps to create unity of text and discourse. In contrast to grammatical cohesion, lexical cohesion “is the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary.” (Halliday 1976, p. 274).

According to previous studies of Halliday and Hasan as well as other linguists, lexical cohesion mainly consists of reiteration and co-occurrence with the former one being subdivided into repetitive reiteration and similarity reiteration while the latter one, contextual co-occurrence and collocational co-occurrence. Lexical cohesion is one of the major cohesive devices. Lexical items often connect to form lexical chains in discourse which enables the unity of the context and achieves the coherence of the discourse thereby.

#### A. *Reiteration*

Repetitive reiteration is the mere identical recurrence of a preceding lexical item, so it is the most direct and obvious source of lexical cohesion. It performs the function of conveying rhetorical effect, enhancing expressive force and as well as highlighting the theme of a literary work. Therefore, the repetitive semantic relation with such functions should be retained if there is corresponding lexical relation in Chinese so as to faithfully convey its stylistic significance and coherent effect, making Chinese readers obtain the same perception for such a text. English rarely uses repetition of words to construct a text, so repetition becomes an effective rhetorical device under certain circumstance and it can be seen as a variation for the convention (Wei Zhicheng, 2004). Therefore, once repetition occurs in an English text, it is worth recognizing and reproducing it in Chinese, for there must be literariness or rhetoric effects contained in such a text.

##### Example 6:

ST: Today, as never before, the fates of men are so intimately linked to one another that a disaster for one is a disaster for everybody. (cited from *The Little Virtues*)

TT: 当今世界, 人类的命运前所未有的紧密联系在一起。一个人的灾难将是每个人的灾难。(translated by author of this paper)

The repetition of “disaster” foregrounds the rhetoric effects of the text. In the Chinese translation, the repetitive item is retained to convey the semantic meaning.

Compared with the repetitive reiteration stated previously, similarity reiteration, means two or more words are semantically the same or similar but formally different. Similarity reiteration includes synonyms, antonyms, hyponymous words and part whole relation words. In principle similarity reiteration should be retained intact in translation. However, Chinese is different from English in constructing a text—it prefers to use the same word to joint related items. Therefore, it is necessary for E-C translators to convert the semantic relation, from synonymous cohesion into repetitive one for the sake of reproduction of semantic coherence. After all, synonyms have the same referent, thus it is reasonable to make such a conversion.

##### Example 7:

ST: Lady Catherine had many other questions to ask respecting their journey, and as she did not answer them all herself, attention was necessary, which Elizabeth believed to be lucky for her; or, with a mind so occupied, she might have forgotten where she was. Reflection must be reserved for solitary hours; whenever she was alone, she gave way to it as the greatest relief; and not a day went by without a solitary walk, in which she might indulge in all the delight of unpleasant recollections. (Cited from *Pride and Prejudice*)

TT: 提到她们的旅程, 凯瑟琳夫人还有许多话要问。由于她不完全是在自问自答, 因此必须留心去听, 伊丽莎白倒觉得专注于谈话是她的运气, 否则, 她这么心事重重, 一定会忘了自己作客身份呢。心事应在独处时去想。没有他人在场时, 她就尽情地想心事; 只要独自散步, 她就爱边走边想着一些不愉快的事情, 而且翻来覆去想个痛快。(translated by Sun Zhili)

In English version, there are four near-synonyms setting up a cohesive chain---“a mind so occupied”, “reflection”, “it” and “recollection”, which contributes the textual meaning that Elizabeth was overwhelmed by her apprehensions. But in the Chinese version two repetitive cohesive chain, namely “心事重重”, “心事”, “想心事” and “边想”, “想个痛快” are respectively selected to achieve the same semantic effect.

Hyponymy and hypernymy words, the two types of reiteration demonstrate the nature of English as an extensive-vocabulary-used language. For E-C translation, cohesive devices in most cases can be translated directly. However, it should be noted that it is not frequent in Chinese to choose different words to reproduce their English counterparts but make conversions by using vocabulary with overlapping morphemes, especially in general-specific relation.

##### Example 8:

ST: Pulling an old envelop from his pocket, he extracted the five hairs he had taken from the old hand of the dead barker. He opened a drawer and took out a small but powerful microscope and arranged the light. Silently he inspected the strands beneath the microscope. Finally he put the instrument away and sat back on the edge of his bunk. (Cited from *The Carnival of Death*)

TT: 他从口袋里掏出个旧信封, 从里面取出 5 根头发, 那是从死去的伙计手里发现的。他打开抽屉, 拿出一架小巧精细的显微镜, 调整光后就一声不吭地研究起显微镜下的发丝来。终于他把显微镜放在一边, 又坐回床边。(translated by author of this paper)

In the sentence, “strands” and “hairs” constitute a general-specific relation, but it is idiomatic and natural to convey it by the repetition of “头发”. Likewise, “microscope” belongs to the category of “instrument” because it is a tool or

device used for a particular task, especially for delicate or scientific work. In the Chinese translation, “显微镜” is repeated to achieve the same coherence, for repetition is a main device in lexical cohesion whereas English discourse usually avoid the repetition of the same word, in stead, discourse cohesion relies more on the use of synonyms, hyponyms, general word or other cohesive devices.

### B. Co-occurrence

Co-occurrence cohesion in the text plays its vital role in setting up certain network through the semantic links among lexical items co-occurring. The vertical lexical chains made of contextually co-occurring lexical items and the horizontal chains made of collocational lexical items connect to form lexical chains in discourse, which enables the unity of the context and achieves the coherence of the discourse. English is a language in which polysemous words predominate, so lexical chains in a text serves vital coherent functions of removing ambiguity, identifying the accurate meaning of polysemous words and restoring the semantic expression of the source text.

#### Example 9:

ST: A continuous concomitant of contact between two mutually incomprehensible tongues and one that doesn't lead either to suppression or extension of either their is translation. (Cited from Xu Lina)

TT: 语言不通的人们, 在其交际过程中, 始终离不开一种媒介, 这种既不缩小又不扩大源语的媒介就叫做翻译。 (Cited from Xu Lina)

The word concomitant is defined in dictionary as “something that happens with something else and is connected with it. Due to the lexical chains formed here as “contact-tongues-translation”, the definite meaning of it narrows down to “媒介” when translated into Chinese.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Devices in Halliday and Hason's model (1976), namely, reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical devices are present in both English and Chinese. However, the importance attached to various types of devices seems to be different. As for English and Chinese, some cohesive devices might be less used in one language or even be avoided, while they are more frequently used in the other language. The reasons lie in that English and Chinese belong to different language systems. English is a hypotactic-oriented language, featured by the tightly-knitted structures. Both words and sentences are supposed to represent clear logic relations. Discourse understanding is realized by analyzing the precise language with rigorous forms and by probing the internal relation between words and sentences. Therefore, English discourse coherence is realized by certain explicit cohesive devices. On the contrary, Chinese is paratactic-oriented, laying less emphasis on the cohesive forms, thus, the sentence structures are more flexible. Discourse understanding depends more on the reader's knowledge of the context and the real world, therefore, Chinese discourse coherence is sometimes not realized by explicit cohesive devices but relies on implicit cohesive mechanisms. The internal semantic relevance, implicit logic relations and reader's reasoning contribute to the coherence of Chinese discourse. Thus, it is of great value for translators to be aware of the different application of cohesive devices to achieve coherence in English and Chinese translations.

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**Jing Wu** was born in Jinan, China in 1977. She received her M.A. degree in linguistics from Shandong Normal University, China in 2004. She is currently a lecturer in Foreign Languages School, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China. Her research interests include translation theories and practice and cross-cultural communication. She has translated more than 10 books from English to Chinese.

# Computerized Input Enhancement versus Computer-assisted Glosses: Do They Affect Vocabulary Recall and Retention?

Mojgan Rashtchi

TEFL Department, Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran

Hassan Aghili

TEFL Department, Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran

**Abstract**—The present study aimed at investigating whether two types of computerized techniques, namely Computerized Input Enhancement (CIE) and Computer-Assisted Marginal Glosses (CAMG) had any significant impact on vocabulary recall and retention of a group of Iranian EFL learners. After designing two programs for the purpose of the study, the CIE group was exposed to texts in which the words were blinking in a different color while for CAMG group the new words were presented in the margins of the texts along with relevant pictures whenever the learners moved the cursor. Subsequently, nine passages with appropriate readability scores were selected and uploaded for further use. Next, 47 pre-intermediate level language learners in two intact classes were selected from a language school in Tehran, Iran and were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Based on Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS), 42 unknown words from the reading texts were identified. During the treatment, the participants were expected to read the texts and check the meanings of the unknown words. After the treatment, the participants took two posttests (immediate and delayed), the results of which were analyzed through repeated measures ANOVA. A statistically significant difference between the two groups showed that CAMG outperformed CIE.

**Index Terms**—Computerized Input Enhancement (CIE), Computer-Assisted, Marginal Gloss (CAMG), vocabulary learning, vocabulary recall, vocabulary retention

## I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary, as one of the components of language learning, has a vital role in improving second language learning, and thus the responsibility of practitioners and language teachers is to expand vocabulary knowledge of second language learners (Schmidt, 2008; Singleton, 1999). One of the ways to foster vocabulary learning is making use of computer technology. According to Garrett (1989), “integration of computer technology in education is the new humanism which has paved the way for the advancement of language learning” (p. 104). Computer Assisted Language learning (CALL), as Beatty (2010) argued, provides opportunities for comprehensible input and encourages comprehensible output which, in turn, aid learners to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

With incorporation of computers and multimedia programs in language learning and teaching, it has become possible to design effective tools for teaching vocabulary while reading a text. Teaching vocabulary through Web-based Language Learning (WBLL) activities has been popularly used in EFL/ESL contexts (Son, 2008). Also, hypermedia as a multidimensional computer tool has been practiced by language teachers to facilitate learning and teaching processes (Cummins, 2008a). Teachers and learners can utilize website resources for various pedagogical purposes to scaffold teacher-student interaction in and outside the classroom (Cummins, 2008b). Use of technology for teaching language skills and sub-skills increasingly gained the interest of the present study’s researchers on the basis of the assumption that it could bring about a change to the routines of ordinary classrooms, a condition EFL contexts are in dire need. Thus vocabulary, as a component of language learning which can positively affect learning all four language skills, was selected.

### A. Input Enhancement

The two non-electronic strategies of vocabulary learning, input enhancement and marginal glosses embedded in certain language textbooks can enhance incidental vocabulary learning (Watanabe, 1997). Input enhancement, as Sharwood Smith (1993) put forward, serves to draw learners’ attention to certain linguistic forms in the input that might otherwise go unnoticed or unlearned contributing to the ‘input-to-intake’ process since it highlights language forms that learners tend to ignore. Input enhancement, also, is in conformity with the theory in SLA that ‘noticing’ is essential to L2 acquisition (Schmidt, 1995). By input enhancement as some kind of necessary pedagogic intervention, learners’ attention is drawn toward target words. However, as Wong (2004) maintained, the impact of different types of input enhancement, the impact of input enhancement on learners’ processing input for meaning and form simultaneously, as

well as the way the level of comprehensibility of the input affects learners' processing have not been successfully examined. Input enhancement, as a pedagogical technique, can extort learners' attention to formal features of the input received and hence, can help them improve their language proficiency (Combs, 2004).

Reinders and Ellis (2009) suggested that exposure to input even in its most unobtrusive way (as in input enrichment) can be effective. Izumi (2002) compared the effects of visual input enhancement and output on the acquisition of English relative clause forms by adult English L2 learners. Four treatment groups were formed according to whether learners (a) were presented with enhanced input (b) required to produce output and (c) presented with enhanced input and asked to produce output. The fourth group (control) received no treatment and participated only in the pre- and posttests. Izumi concluded that while visual input enhancement constitute an external attention drawing technique, output constitute an internal attention drawing technique as "learners themselves decide what they find problematic in their production and what they pay attention to in the input" (p. 543). The results of the study revealed that those engaged in the output or output-input treatments outperformed those exposed solely to the input enhancement. Furthermore, those who received visual input enhancement failed to indicate measurable gains in the posttest. Izumi suggested that the instructional benefit of output is much more significant than that of input enhancement.

### *B. Computerized and Electronic Glosses*

A number of studies conducted to examine the impacts of different types of glosses on second language learners' vocabulary acquisition and retention indicated that single glosses and multiple choice glosses were advantageous to incidental vocabulary learning (Chen, 2002; Rott, William, & Cameron, 2002; Yoshii, 2006). Furthermore, the impacts of electronic glossing on L2 vocabulary acquisition were also addressed in a number of studies. To compare the effects of traditional English marginal gloss and CALL gloss on incidental vocabulary learning, Lage (2008) conducted a study on high-intermediate/low-advanced Spanish students from two sections of the same Spanish course at an American university. To investigate the effect of subject characteristics on gloss access, Lage divided the participants into two groups including traditional English marginal gloss and CALL gloss and asked them to answer three vocabulary posttests in three subsequent weeks and complete a text comprehension test. While the results of this study were not consistent; it was signified that there was no significant difference between vocabulary recall and gloss presentation. In another study, in order to compare the effects of marginal glosses and electronic dictionaries on vocabulary learning, Chang (2002) carried out a study in which the 92 twelfth-grader participants were asked to read a short story with 16 target words in three different conditions including reading with bilingual marginal glosses, reading with electronic dictionaries, and reading with no assistance and answer three vocabulary tests on the 16 target words and a reading comprehension test immediately and with a two-week delay. Although, the results revealed that marginal glosses had greater effect as compared to electronic dictionaries on the immediate test, the positive effect of marginal glosses disappeared on the delayed retention test. The results also showed that participants with bilingual marginal glosses acquired 18% of the target words and retained 2%; participants with electronic dictionary acquired 15% and retained 4%; and those without assistance acquired 3% and retained less than one percent (0.6%) of the target words.

A variety of studies thus far examined the use of computer in teaching vocabulary including studies on multimedia annotations (Yanguas, 2009), hyperlinked multimedia documents and computer mediated communication (Son, 2008), computerized glosses (Al-Segayer, 2001; Bowles, 2004), comparing single L2 glosses with multiple choice L2 glosses (Watanabe, 1997), recall advantage of glossing by practicing different test conditions (immediate vs. delayed) (Jacobs, 1994), and multiple-choice glossing (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Also, some researchers performed comparative studies on single glosses in L1 and L2 (Bell & Le Blanc, as cited in Hee Ko, 2005; Chen 2002; Jacobs, 1994; Huang, 2003). Moreover, in their studies Bell and Leblanc (2000) looked at the type of glossing frequently used for computer-based reading, Yen and Wang (2003) investigated the effect of three gloss types on vocabulary learning, and Bowles (2004) employed think-aloud protocols to compare computerized glosses versus traditional glosses in vocabulary acquisition and text comprehension.

The results of several studies on examining the effect of glossing on reading comprehension and vocabulary learning brought about mixed results, some suggesting that glossing enhanced reading comprehension and vocabulary learning (Hulstijn, Hollander, & Greidanus, 1996; Jacobs, 1994), and others indicating that glossing had little or no effect on reading comprehension (Jacobs, DuFon, & Fong, 1994; Johnson, 1982; Ko, 2005). However, quite recently, the focus shifted from questioning the positive impact of glossing on reading comprehension and vocabulary learning to the language (L1 or L2) of glossing to which learners should be exposed. Son (2008) proposed that "hyperlinked multimedia documents and computer mediated communication (CMC) tools could support language teachers to integrate Web resources into the language classroom" (p.34). Smith and Stacy (2003) emphasized that CMC "has changed the nature of distance from an individual experience that is largely remote and isolated from other students, to one in which the technology can enable more ongoing interaction with fellow students" (p.165). Bell and LeBlanc (2000) studied learners' actual behavior while experiencing L1 and L2 glosses in a computer-based reading course and have come up with their participants' preference for using glosses in L1 since the L2 gloss group "clicked on about twice as many of the words" as did the L2 group (p.279) although no significant difference in comprehension of the participants is detected.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering results of the previous studies on vocabulary learning through glosses and input enhancement, the following research questions were put forward:

RQ1. *Do CIE and CAMG techniques have any impact on the enhancement of vocabulary recall of Iranian EFL learners?*

RQ2. *Do CIE and CAMG techniques have any impact on the enhancement of vocabulary retention of Iranian EFL learners?*

RQ3. *How do Iranian EFL learners perceive learning vocabulary through CIE and CAMG techniques?*

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

Participants of the present study were 47 pre-intermediate male students within the age range of 19 and 29 who had enrolled in a general English course in a language school in Tehran, Iran. They were members of two intact classes, selected based on convenience sampling, and randomly assigned to two experimental groups, with 23 and 24 students in each group. The classes met three times a week, each session lasting for 90 minutes. The participants were screened by the Key English Test (KET) and were ascertained to be at the same language proficiency level. To examine whether the distribution of participants' scores on the KET was normal prior to the treatment, Shapiro-Wilk test (number of participants < 100) was run and indicated that the distributions of scores in both groups were normal.

#### B. Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study included Vocabulary Knowledge Scale list (VKS) adapted from Paribakht and Wesche (1997), a vocabulary list consisting of 59 words extracted from the computerized texts which were going to be used during the treatment, a retrospective questionnaire, and a vocabulary posttest (immediate and delayed).

The first instrument used in this study was a list of target words extracted from the reading texts. However, to ensure that the participants did not know the meaning of the words, the adapted VKS list was used to elicit self-perceived and demonstrated knowledge of specific words in written form. The scale ratings ranged from total unfamiliarity, through recognition of the word and some idea of its meaning, to the ability to use the word with semantic accuracy in a sentence. All of the learners were presented with a list of words and asked to point out their level of knowledge for each word by providing a synonym or L1 translation. Having run the VKS list, from among 100 items, 42 words which 80% of the students pointed out as totally unfamiliar were selected for the study.

The second instrument was a vocabulary multiple choice test based on the newly learned target words used as immediate and delayed posttests to compare the effectiveness of the teaching techniques in each of the two groups. The test was piloted with a group of learners similar to the participants of this study after two English language teachers with more than 10 years of experience approved its content. The reliability of the test estimated through Cronbach's alpha showed an acceptable reliability index ( $r=0.78$ ).

The third instrument was a retrospective questionnaire in Persian (see Appendix A for English version) which was used to elicit the participants' attitude toward the two vocabulary learning techniques. The first draft of the questionnaire was examined and was revised by two experts before administration. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part A consisted of 11 yes-no questions and focused on the way the participants perceived the vocabulary learning strategies they had practiced. Part B included two open-ended questions which questioned the features of each of the two techniques.

#### C. Materials

With regard to three criteria for text selection, namely complexity, authenticity, and readability (Knight, 1994), nine reading texts from englishforeveryone.org and American English files accessible at (<https://elt.oup>) were selected and their readability indexes were checked (Table 1). Also, content appropriateness of the texts was checked by two experienced English teachers who were teaching at the same language school. The readability of the texts checked through Flesch Reading Ease Formula showed conformity between the difficulty level of these passages and the ones in the participants' course book.

TABLE 1  
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SELECTED TEXTS

N	Title of the Texts	Number of Selected Words	Readability Score
1	Firefighters	8	80
2	Tunnel	10	60.9
3	To whom it may concern	17	66.1
4	Animals	13	65.3
5	What makes you feel good	2	73.4
6	Queues	2	61.3
7	How to make ...	2	73.5
8	Short stories	2	80
9	Old river hotel	2	69

Also, two types of home-made computerized programs were used to provide learners with two modes of computerized texts; Computerized Input Enhanced texts (Figure 1) and CAMG texts (Figure 2). The texts were computerized by Auto-Play Media Studio Pro software (Appendix B) by a computer program writer.

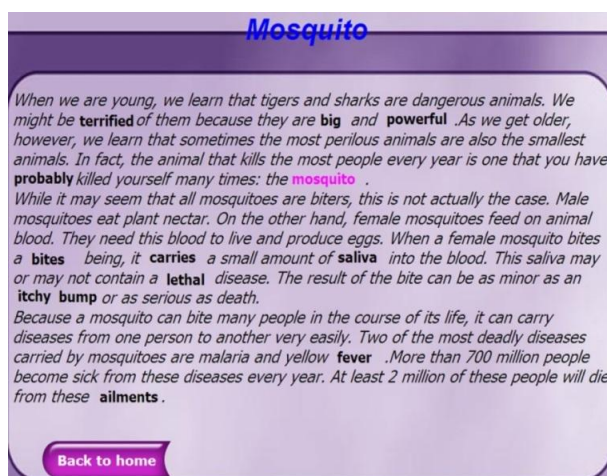


Fig. 1 CIE Text Sample

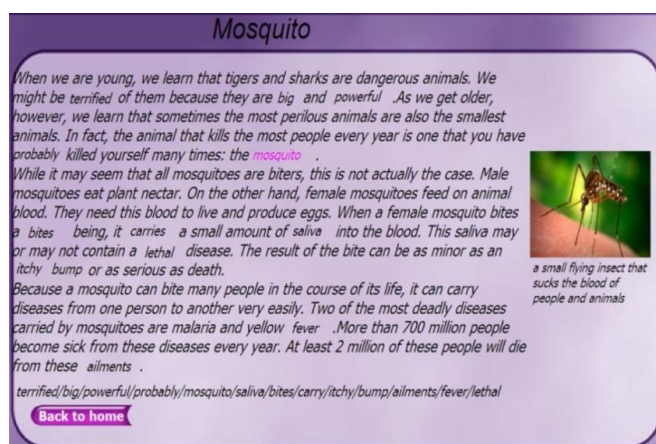


Fig. 2 CAMG Text Sample

#### IV. PROCEDURE

##### A. Treatment

Thirty minutes of each 90-minute session was allocated to the treatment of the study; that is, reading and learning new words through CAMG and CIE as two different computerized techniques. In pre-reading phase which took about five minutes, the teacher introduced the topic of the lesson with a short anecdote or a set of questions about the general idea of the text. During the while-reading phase, students began to work with computers. In both groups, students were asked to read the texts and check the meanings of the words. For CIE group, the unknown words were in bold so that students could easily recognize the words they didn't know. The words started to glitter in different colors as soon as students clicked on them. However; for the CAMG group the unknown words were not emphasized; students could click on the words only when they thought they couldn't decipher the meaning of the text due to some unknown words. When students clicked on a word, its definition along with a related picture appeared in the margin. The difference between the two programs was noticing and guessing. In the post-reading phase, which took about five minutes, a few multiple choice reading comprehension questions were given to the learners in the groups.

##### B. Posttests

In order to compare the efficiency of the teaching techniques in each of the groups, a vocabulary test in multiple choice format which included the 42 target words was administered immediately after the completion of the treatment and later, after a two-week interval.

#### V. RESULTS

The first step was to check whether the scores were normally distributed in the immediate and delayed posttests. As Table 2 signifies, the distributions of the scores in the immediate posttest for CAMG (statistics= .96, df=24, sig=.56>.05)



and CIE (statistics=.98, df=23, sig=.94>.05) and delayed posttest for CAMG (statistics=.93, df=24, sig=.10>.05) and CIE (statistics=.84, df=23, sig=.002<.05) were normal.

TABLE 2  
TESTS OF NORMALITY

	Groups	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistics	df	Sig.
Immediate posttests	CAMG	.966	24	.567
	CIE	.983	23	.947
Delayed posttests	CAMG	.931	24	.105
	CIE	.842	23	.002

Tables 3 and 4 show descriptive statistics related to immediate and delayed posttests. As Table3 illustrates, the mean of the groups (M (CAMG) =17.91, M (CIE) =17.43) are close to one another, so it seems both groups performed similarly on the immediate posttest. However, as Table 4 illustrates, the difference between the two groups' means was larger in the delayed posttest (M (CAMG) =17.29, M (CIE) =11.82).

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, VOCABULARY IMMEDIATE POSTTEST

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Std. E	Minimum	Maximum
CAMG	24	17.91	8.93	1.82	3	39
CIE	23	17.43	7.50	1.56	4	35
Total	47	17.68	8.18	1.19	3	39

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, VOCABULARY DELAYED POSTTEST

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Std. E	Minimum	Maximum
CAMG	24	17.29	8.40	1.71	4	34
CIE	23	11.82	9.40	1.96	1	40
Total	47	14.61	9.23	1.34	1	40

In order to statistically compare the groups on the two tests, Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) was run. These results implied that CAMG outperformed CIE as far as lexical retention was concerned.

As Table5 shows, the variances of the groups were homogeneous across groups [F (1, 45) =0.72, p=0.39>0.05] for the immediate [F (1, 45) =0.014, p=0.90>0.05] and delayed vocabulary posttests. Therefore, running a RM ANOVA was legitimized with a within-subjects factor (test type) and two levels, vocabulary immediate posttest and vocabulary delayed posttest.

TABLE 5  
HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES, IMMEDIATE & DELAYED POSTTESTS

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0.72	1	45	0.39
.014	1	45	0.90

TABLE6  
RM ANOVA FOR WITHIN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared ( $\eta^2$ )
Factor1*Groups Sphericity Assumed	145.853	1	145.853	5.035	0.030	0.101
Greenhouse-Geisser	145.853	1.000	145.853	5.035	0.030	0.101
Huynh-Feldt	145.853	1.000	145.853	5.035	0.030	0.101
Lower-bound	145.853	1.000	145.853	5.035	0.030	0.101

The results of the within subject effects, shown in Table 6 reveals that the type of treatment in each group had a significant impact on vocabulary retention [F (1, 45) = 5.03, Sig=.03<.05]. Also partial eta square ( $\eta^2$ =0.10) with a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988, pp. 284-7) shows that the independent variable in each of the groups accounted for 10% of the overall variance.

Table 7 illustrates the between subject effect verifying the fact that the interception of the participants had a significant impact [F (1, 45), F=205.59, .000<0.05]; that is, there was a significant difference between CAMG and CIE groups, in general.

TABLE 7  
RM ANOVA FOR BETWEEN-SUBJECTS FACTOR

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	24407.08	1	24407.08	205.59	.000	.820
groups	207.71	1	207.71	1.75	.193	.037
Error	5342.19	45	118.71			

As Figure 3 indicates, there is no significant difference between the means of the groups in the immediate posttest although the difference in the delayed posttest is significant. That is, CAMG did significantly better in the delayed posttest as compared to CIE group.

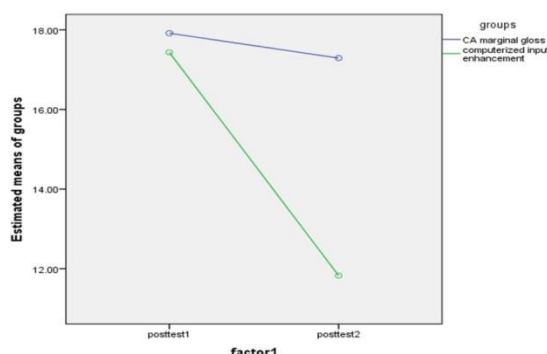


Fig. 3 Estimated Marginal Means, Comparison of Two Test Types in Groups

### The Questionnaire

As mentioned earlier, an eleven-item retrospective questionnaire was administered to learn about students' perceptions regarding the use of the techniques. The data obtained from the questionnaire showed that 87% of the participants believed that checking the meaning of the words in marginal glosses made reading task easier. However, while 75% agreed that CAMG was effective for learning vocabulary, 25% believed that the technique did not have any effect at all. Concerning the preference to attend computer-oriented classes, 62% from CAMG group and 56% from CIE group expressed their preference for the techniques as compared to ordinary reading classrooms. As far as working with hypertexts was concerned, 60% of the members of CAMG and 54% of the members in CIE group asserted that they preferred to work with such texts. In general, 64% of the CAMG group and 56% of the CIE group believed that the techniques could enhance their motivation for language learning. Regarding the effect of the techniques on vocabulary retention, 75% of the students in CAMG group and 65% of the students in CIE group thought that the techniques helped them learn the new words better than traditional classes. Additionally, 62% of the students in CAMG group asserted that they preferred the technique to be used in their classes in future; whereas, 47% of the CIE group asserted that they would like to use it again. The data obtained from the questionnaire indicated that 72% in CAMG group and 52% in CIE group believed that it was easy to work with computers with no serious problem. In addition, 70% in CAMG group and 57% in CIE group emphasized that working and learning through the techniques were pleasant and that they enjoyed learning language with the software they used.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The positive answer to the first research question signifies that both techniques had a positive impact on vocabulary recall of the participants and the groups did not show any significant difference in the immediate posttest. This finding authenticates the use technology as an aid in foreign language learning classrooms. Nevertheless, the analysis of the results for the second research question indicated that difference between the groups was significant in delayed posttest and CAMG group outperformed the CIE group. This could, partially, be due to the pictures available in the margins of the reading texts in CAMG group's treatment. In a critical analysis of L2 vocabulary learning techniques, Oxford and Crookall (as cited in Al-Seghayer, 2001), asserted that "most learners are capable of associating new information to concepts in memory by means of meaningful visual images that make learning more efficient"[electronic version]. Pictures in the margins reminded learners of their experience with the real world and helped them form an association. The pairing between the words and pictures seems to enhance retention. That is to say, the coordination of language and pictures in CAMG technique provided an appropriate stipulation for the learners to process language which is the condition for information "to find its way into long-term memory" (Lefrancois, 1982, p.64). Another reason for better performance of the CAMG on the delayed posttest could be found in theories related to brain lateralization. It could be hypothesized that appearance of pictures in the margins along with the definition of the words could stimulate both right and left brain hemispheres work while learners were engaged in processing language.

Another indicative factor for the outperformance of the CAMG group in the delayed posttest could be inferencing. The learners in this group tried to guess the meanings of the words before clicking on them; therefore, it is likely that inferencing as one of the central cognitive processes helped the learners to be more successful in the delayed posttest (Nassaji, 2004). Thus it can be concluded that "making informed guesses about the meanings of unknown words based on the available linguistic and non-linguistic cues in the text" (Nassaji, 2004, p.108) assisted learners in moving the words to their long-term memory. Hence, it can be argued that glosses can provide a wider span of focus for learners as compared to input enhancement technique, and can facilitate reading (Nation, 1990). Likewise, it seems that learners in

CAMG group experienced deeper cognitive involvement while tried to check the meaning of the words available in the glosses; a finding in line with Izumi's (2002) assertion that enhancement "does not necessarily encourage further cognitive processing that may be necessary for acquisition" (p. 567); since enhancement seems to facilitate focus on form.

Accessibility (Aust, Kelley, & Roby, 1993) of marginal glosses and the speed with which participants could check the meanings of the unknown words could be another interpretation for the results of the study. As proposed by Hulstijn, Hollander, and Greidanus, (1996), Jacobs, Dufon, and Hong (1994), and Rott (2007) the possibility of the use of glosses is facilitative for L2 learners' vocabulary learning while reading due to the fact that the definition is easily available in the text.

Also, using computerized marginal glosses boosted learners' motivation for learning the new words more than the CIE group, a conclusion obtained from the participants' answers to the open-ended questions of the retrospective questionnaire. The findings of the present study, also, are in line with some recent studies on multimedia annotations (Chun & Plass, 1996; Davis & Lyman-Hager, 1997; Mart ínez-Lage, 1997) which indicated that students who worked with multimedia program had a stronger retention of new words than students who had worked with non-computerized texts. However, the findings of the present study is in contradiction with those of Jacobs, Dufon, and Hong (1994) who found that glossing did not significantly affect recall of intermediate level students and could only be an effective technique when used for students whose proficiency level is above average.

On the other hand, previous studies on the effects of visual input enhancement-both those that used short-term treatments with rather limited exposure to the input (Alanen, 1995; Charaee, 2002; Leow, 1997; Shook, 1994; Williams, 1999), and those that adopted longer-term treatments with a greater amount of input exposure (Doughty, 1988; White, 1998) appeared to have quite mixed results. Two of these studies (Shook, 1994; Williams, 1999) yielded positive findings for the facilitative effects of input enhancement; whereas, four of them (Alanen, 1995; Charaee, 2002; Robinson, 1997; White, 1998) showed only limited effects. Finally in their studies, Doughty (1988) and Leow (1997) found no significant effects at all. The findings of the present study show limited effect of CIE in comparison to CAMG technique.

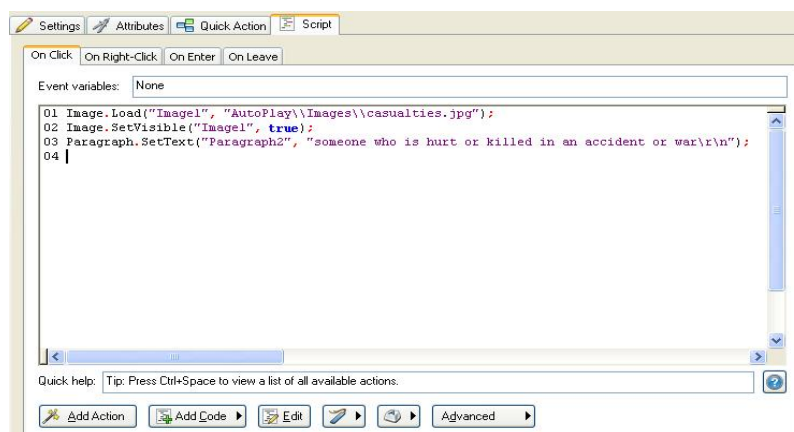
## VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study confirm the use of technology for teaching vocabulary in EFL classrooms. Moreover, it suggests the use of marginal glosses because of their advantage in retention of the vocabulary. Using glosses, students find an opportunity to read with less interruption for looking up the meanings of the new words from a dictionary and allow for greater autonomy on the part of learners (Hee Ko, 2005). As one of the most challenging tasks for EFL teachers is to bring some change to the routines of their classrooms, implementation of computer-assisted techniques can be beneficial for language learners and can help them in effective vocabulary learning. The change of atmosphere brought by technology into language classrooms can help EFL learners to take a more active role in the process of learning English.

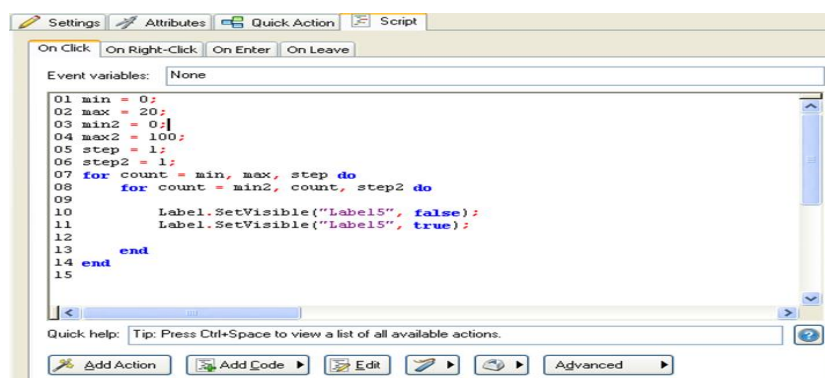
## APPENDIX A. RETROSPECTIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Was it easier to check the meaning of the words through **Computerized Input Enhancement/Computer-Assisted Marginal Gloss** than using online/paper dictionaries?
2. Did the **technique** help you to better understand the texts?
3. Do you like to use **Computerized Input Enhancement/Computer-Assisted Marginal Gloss** texts for practicing reading in the next term?
4. Do you like all of the reading texts in your text book to be computerized?
5. Did **Computerized Input Enhancement/Computer-Assisted Marginal Gloss** texts provide an easy way to find the meaning of the unknown words?
6. Do you think that computerized texts (with highlighted, italicized, and bold / marginalized words) help you remember words easier?
7. Do you think you were more eager to practice reading with computerized texts?
8. Do you think using computers or digitalized tools are more motivating for learning L2 words?
9. Do you think that using computerized texts are an easy way for learning words?
10. Did you enjoy using the technique during the term?
11. What do you generally think about the technique you experienced during your classes?
12. What are some of your recommendations for computerized classes?

## APPENDIX B



Written Program Lines of CAMG



Written Program Lines of CIE

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**Mojgan Rashtchi** is Associate professor of Applied Linguistics in the faculty of Foreign Languages of Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch where she is the Head of the Graduate TEFL Department. She has worked in EFL for 23 years and has published several articles and books on different topics related to the field. Also, she has participated in several national and international conferences. Her areas of interest include second language teaching research, P4C, first language acquisition, and second language learning.

**Hassan Aghili** got his MA in English language teaching. He has been teaching English in different language schools for seven years. His research interests include CALL, language testing and applied linguistics.

# Impediments of Reaching God and Ways of Surmounting Them in Two Selected Allegories of Rumi's *Spiritual Couplets*

Ahmad Gholi (corresponding author)

English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Gonbad Kavous University, Golestan Province, Iran

Masoud Ahmadi Mosaabad

English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Gonbad Kavous University, Golestan Province, Iran

**Abstract**—Rumi frequently utilizes allegories in the grand architecture of his six-book *Masnavi-ye Manavi* to explain the complex philosophical and religious issues refreshingly, give aesthetic dimension to otherwise cold subjects artistically, and teach morals delightfully. Like his predecessors, he also picks up the ancient old motif of spiritual journey in some of his allegories to depict the problems of the seeker on his path towards God. The present study is undertaken to shed light on the wayfarers' barriers and the ways of surmounting them in two selected allegories from *Masnavi*.

**Index Terms**—allegory, journey, seeker, path, barriers, surmounting

## I. INTRODUCTION

From the time Islam became an established religion in Persia in 7<sup>th</sup> century, most Persian poets and scholars particularly in medieval times devoted their intellectual and literary energies on the ideals of Islam. One of those eminent poets is Rumi (1207-1273) who achieved this goal through composing *Masnavi-ye Manavi* or *Spiritual Couplets*, consisted of 25700 rhyming couplets in six books. Jami, classical Persian poet, considers it as “the interpretation of Qur'an in Persian” (qtd in Emerick, p.18, 2008) because Rumi extensively and heavily got his inspiration and materials from Qur'an. In fact, Rumi in his masterpiece built an eternal- sumptuous palace whose building materials are “the teachings of the Qur'an, the sayings of Muhammad, and the stories of the prophets and saints of the past” (ibid.) along with, according to Nicholson, “the history of religion, morals, and culture, in fables and folklore, in divinity, philosophy, medicine, astrology, and other branches of medieval learning, in Eastern poetry and life and manners and human nature” (qtd in Avery, 2003, p.874). In this work Rumi like biblical prophets, Milton, and Romantic poets such as Blake, and Wordsworth assumes the role of a bard or grand Sufi endeavoring to show both the common and elite where the right path is and how to avoid various traps and satanic ambushes on their path towards God, as well as how to deliver themselves when they are spiritually dried to the core. This article accordingly endeavors to explain the impediments of embracing God and ways of overcoming them in two selected allegories of *Masnavi-ye Manavi*: *A Man's Search for his Lost Camel* and *The Struggle of Intellect with Nafs (lower instinct) like the Struggle of Majnun<sup>1</sup> with his She-Camel*.

### A. Rumi's Allegory

Allegory by definition is a narrative both in verse or prose which has two levels of meanings; the first level of meaning corresponds with the second one; that is, characters, plot, and setting in the surface level match with those of the deep level. Sometimes a literary work is wholly allegorical like Orwell's *Animal Farm* or the allegory is injected in a part(s) of it; Rumi's allegories in *Masnavi* belong to the latter one. Unlike allegories common in English literature, Rumi's allegories do not closely conform to the definition of the allegory because he throughout his allegories briefly mentions the lesson he is going to bring home to his audience at their ends. In fact, his allegories more like parable rather than allegory in the strict sense. However, his allegories are vague, and demands further study so that their deep significance can gradually unravel itself.

### B. Plot Summary of *Man's Search for His Lost Camel*

This allegory tells the story of the man who lost his camel when their camel caravan halted on the outskirts of the city to refresh themselves. It was night and the caravan was due to depart. Much to his consternation, he failed to find his camel nearby, and this agitated him a lot. Leaving his cargo behind, he set out to look for his camel in the city. Wishing to find the camel soon, he promised to give a good reward for anyone who gave the correct address or the clue of his camel. During seeking his camel in the streets, he met some people who poked fun at him by offering him false clues

<sup>1</sup>. Legendry lover in Classic Persian and Arabic Literature who is well-known for loving Leili, his beloved.

just to get the much coveted prize. Knowing his camel well, he did not get deceived by their wrong clues; and their fabricated signs did not frustrate and deter him from following his camel with stamina. While the man was searching for his camel, a young man saw him and was deeply impressed by the man's burning desire to find his camel; therefore, he decided to imitate him and pretended that he also lost his camel; during his search the young man blindly copied the man's deeds and speech, but his vain search paid off and he saw a camel which reminded him of his own camel that in the dim past had been lost. In close inspection it dawned on him that the camel was really his. He was negligent in searching it due to the hustle and bustle of life. After that event, he stopped aping the man, and instead started pursuing his own. When the original camel loser asked why he left him at last, he replied that at the beginning his quest was just for mimicry but by accompanying him, he truly found his own camel, so he was sincerely grateful for his help.

### C. Plot Summary of the Struggle of Intellect with Nafs (Lower Instinct) Like the Struggle of Majnun with His She-camel.

The allegory relates the tale of Majnun, a passionate lover, who likes to visit Leili, his dearly beloved, living far from him. The best transport medium for him to pass the desert and court her is his she-camel. To reach his destination faster, Majnun keeps his camel's foal at home thinking that her foal will prolong his trip by causing problem for its mother. In the middle of desert while riding his camel, he becomes utterly absorbed in the sweet thought of Leili; he gets oblivious of the fact that where his camel is taking him. Majnun's daydreaming provides an ideal opportunity for the camel to head towards her foal back at home. When Majnun comes out from his trance like state, he realizes that he is at home once more, and this event became repeated many times. At the end, Majnun resolves not to ride the camel, and leaves it at home near to her foal. He in place of riding the camel undertakes his journey on foot.

## II. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### A. Impediments of Reaching God and Ways of Overcoming It in a Man's Search for His Lost Camel

Like Christian, the protagonist of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the real camel loser in this allegory encounters two important obstacles on his path: materialism and false religious sects. He according to Zamani (2013) "stands for the true seeker of truth [mystic] and his camel for Ultimate Truth [or God]" (p.714). The first impediment which challenges his spiritual mettle is the love of the precious objects which were gained with sweat of his brow. When the caravan symbolizing the gravitational attractions of business was preparing to set out for its destination in the middle of night, the loser suddenly realizes that his camel is lost and his cargo was left on the ground unattended, the whole world got dark for him and felt depressed. In this situation, he could rent another camel and put his merchandize over it and set forth with the caravan into his homeland, but in a maverick reaction, he forwent the prospect of gaining a substantial profit by dint of selling off his goods in the markets. More strange is his committing himself to search his camel. Attar (1142?-1220), in his *Conference of the Birds* delineates seven stages for any mystic bent of reaching God; the first phase is passing from the valley of Seeking (Talab in Persian). In this point the mystic "must renounce all earthly things and detach himself from all that exists" (Smith, 1932, p.29) and the camel loser like Attar's ideal mystic bravely cut himself from the fetters and allurements of the world dominated by making much lucre which was represented by his forsaking the caravan,

*The caravan is ready to move on; They have all packed up, but your camel's gone—With parched lips you are searching left and right The caravan sets off, and soon it's night. Your things have just been left there on the ground, While in your search you have been wandering round* (Masnavi II, 2923-2925)

Lines above vividly demonstrates that his momentous decision does not come about without any vacillation because leaving caravan with its strong pull can entice him into stooping in front of business life and hold him from commencing his journey into the new realm. The mystic with his entire surrendering to God and choosing the right path breaks down the first barrier.

Another significant hurdle for the mystic is the warring religious groups. Making every endeavor to find his camel in the short period of time, he offers a prize for anyone imparts him accurate information about his missing camel. He chances upon a group and inquires them about his vanished camel; they claim that they have seen his camel while their main intentions were receiving the 'generous compensation,'

'We saw a camel head that way, A reddish camel, searching for some hay.' One asks, 'Was it crop-eared and quite perplexed?' 'Its saddle was embroidered,' claims the next. Another asks, 'Did it have just one eye?' The next, 'Was it sick and about to die?' Each wretch in hope of a reward from you Presents to you his fabricated clue (2930-2933)

These people represent the jarring religious sects that pretend that they can lead the mystic towards God if he follows their instructions properly and comply with their defined rules. In truth, they are ferocious and voracious wolves in the cloak of very benevolent spiritual leaders who with their misleading teachings abuse the sincere religious sentiments of the multitude solely to ensure their own comfort and affluence regardless of the ordinary people's deviation from the right path and their consequent confusion. Hafiz, 14<sup>th</sup> century famous Persian poet, in one of his ghazals acknowledges the existence of these warring groups in Islam and wanting his readers to forgive them, Let's forgive the seventy-two sects for their ridiculous Wars and misbehaviors. Because they couldn't accept The path of truth, they took the road of moonshine (qtd. in Lewisohn, p.187, 2010)

On the contrary, Rumi is relentless in exposing their evil intentions and menaces they pose to the mystic with honest heart. To draw an analogy, these groups are similar to Mr. Talkative in *The Pilgrim's Progress* who "say and do



not...He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of new birth...He is saint abroad and devil at home" (Bunyan, 1917, p.64). John Milton in *Paradise Lost* clearly illustrates the intention, manner, and approach of these sects,

...Grievous wolves, Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven To their own vile shall return Of lucre and ambitions and traditions taint, ...though feigning still to act By spiritual; to themselves appropriating The Spirit of God, promised alike and given To all believers; and, from that pretense, Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force On every conscience, (VII, 508-522).

The mystic overcomes the problem by ignoring their fake gospels and keeping on his quest of the Divinity indefatigably without being contaminated by poisonous wine (falsehood) which they offer as healing sherbet (truth) on his thorny path. Since he knows the taste of divine wine well, he abhors the stench of their wine, and hence he is longing just to drink the heavenly one; that is why he is deaf to their clamor and clanging.

In the same allegory, there is another character whose impediment is being stuck in a spiritual quagmire from which he comes out. He is from the same city where the real camel loser is looking for his lost object. The strange conduct and gusto of the seeker wields overwhelming influence on his will power and awakens his longing though in the wrong way: he resolves to follow him and copy whatever he does and utters out of coveting his camel and jesting,

A man who hasn't lost a camel now Competes with you in searching anyhow; He'll claim, 'I've lost a camel, everyone!

I'll give a big reward for her return.' To share your camel is this mimic's aim; Because he covets yours, he plays this game. From false clues he can't tell a truthful clue, But, for this mimic, your words serve as cue:

If you declare, 'That clue's false!' you will see Him do the same, but it's just mimicry. And if a man gives clues you think are true (Masnavi II, 2981-2986).

The main impediment of this pretender in striving towards Him is his purposelessness which disappears by epiphany he experiences in the middle of the way. At the outset of his spiritual voyage, he is not unlike Stephen in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Youngman* who is unclear about his ultimate destiny. He is in limbo until the moment of his secular epiphany. His epiphany occurs when he eyes the beautiful sea-bird on the waves, at that time he clearly perceives that his mission is, "[to be the] priest of the eternal imagination" (Joyce, 2004, p.196) and to devote himself for creating beauty. Likewise, the pretender experiences his own epiphany when he sees a camel which evokes the vague memory of his lost camel in dim past, "He [pretender] first recalls her [camel] when he sees her, / then He covets no more those of other men" (3007-3008). After detecting his own camel, he stops mimicking and begins searching his own camel separately because he finds *raison d'être* for his meaningless quest. Explaining the symbolic significance of the characters, Karimi notes that "the camel symbolizes the secret of Truth [God] and the pretender represents the disciple of the mysticism who does not understand the importance of mysticism and just mimics its superficial aspect and the real camel loser is the symbol for a mystic leader" (vol. 2, 2012, p.729), thus throughout his journey the immature and aimless disciple spiritually grows and his search becomes purposeful on the account of sudden remembrance of God. Rumi implies that his epiphany stems from accompaniment of the true mystical leader and searching God. In other words these two factors work as alchemy for the novice mystic, and transform him into real mystic who finally attains his goal: God. Commenting on the role of leader in Rumi's *Masnavi*, Iqbal (1991) says that "the hands of guide is the hand of God" (p.181). The leader performs constructive role in purifying his soul and purging his dishonesty "whenever dishonesty accompanies honesty, dishonesty becomes honesty suddenly [if the dishonest himself has capacity]" (Masnavi, II 2993). Regarding the importance of the quest in approaching God, Rumi praises the dynamicity and the remarkable power of quest but he has "utter opposition to quietism, withdrawal, and escape" (Iqbal, 1991, p.225). It is evident that if the disciple of mysticism was passive, never can he achieve his end because quest in *Masnavi* holds the key to success,

This search is a killer of obstacles on the way to God.

This search is the key to the things sought by thee, this (search) is Thy army and the victory of the banners.

This search is like chanticleer crowing and proclaiming the dawn is at hand (qtd. in Iqbal, p.227).

#### B. *Impediments of Reaching God and Their Solutions in the Struggle of Intellect with Nafs (Lower Instinct) Like the Struggle of Majnun with His She-camel*

Sufis, according to Emerick (2008) "have generally likened the quest of *Majnun* or crazy one as a metaphor for the imperfect human search for God" (p.50); thus, *Majnun* stands both for intellect and a person who is strongly desirous to reach God symbolized with *Leili*; nevertheless, the path leading to Beloved is not smooth and well-trodden; it is fraught with difficulties. One of them is *nafs* or soul represented with a stubborn she-camel trying just to join her foal which is emblem of lust in this allegory. *Nafs* is an ambiguous word, and needs to be elucidated in the context of Islam owing to the fact Rumi heavily draws on the teachings of Islam and Qur'an. Muslim scholars divided *nafs* into three types "*nafs ammara*, which incites to evil, ...*lawwama*, blaming soul... and *nafs mutma'inna*, the soul at peace (Schimmel, 1992, P. 256). Rumi in this allegory by *nafs* he means *nafs ammara* which is adamant that sensual needs have to be fulfilled; this *nafs* is an implacable enemy of spirituality. In Freudian psychology the *nafs* in question acts like id. Schimmel (1975) in her book entitled, *Mystical Dimension of Islam* beautifully summarizes it,

The lower self, the base instincts, what we might render in the biblical sense as "the flesh." The faithful had been admonished in the Koran (Sura 79:40) to "fear the place of his Lord and hinder the nafs from lust." For the nafs is the

*cause of blameworthy actions, sins, and base qualities; and the struggle with it has been called by the Sufis "the greater Holy War"*(p.122).

Considering the symbolic meaning of the she-camel and its foal in the allegory, Zamani (2012) asserts that "the camel stands for nafs *ammara* and the foal for lust; the nafs *ammara* constantly wants to satisfy its carnal desires and fights with intellect" (IV, p. 252). It should be mentioned that intellect in the allegory does not mean cold analytical mind but it means gnosis or superego, to borrow Freud, and one of its main responsibilities is to remain vigilant in order to curb nafs *ammara*'s refractoriness, otherwise it does not hesitate in destroying the purity of the soul and pushing the innocent soul to the mire of horrible sins; similarly the destructive power of flesh which is equivalent of the nafs *ammara* is referred in Bible, "What human nature [flesh] does is plain. It shows itself in immoral, filthy, and indecent actions" (Galatians, V, 16). The struggle between intellect and the nafs *ammara* is ongoing and both unwilling to surrender. In the battlefield, so many times the nafs *ammara* is victorious especially when Majnun/intellect gets absorbed in the sweet thought of Leili/God, and becomes heedless of the aim of his quest or journey. Rumi illustrates the victory of nafs with Majnun's loosening the rein of the camel/ Nafs and the camel's immediate trip back to the foal/lust,

But the she-camel was very regardful and alert: whenever she saw her toggle slack She would at once perceive that he had become heedless and dazed, and would turn her face back to the foal without delay. When he came to himself again, he would see on the spot that she had gone back many leagues (Masnavi IV, 1538-1540)

This type of negligence in Sufism is called *Ghaflat*, sleep of heedlessness, which is regarded as one of the serious dangers threatening the integrity of the seeker of truth like Majnun in the allegory. *Ghaflat* befalls when the seeker "[in his] constant watching over one's actions and thoughts... the adept [Sufi or wayfarer] may neglect, for a moment, his spiritual duties (*ghaftat*), that he may become entranced by the sleep of heedlessness" (Schimmel, 1975, 107). The victory of the Nafs proves impermanent as Majnun comes to his senses and resumes his journey to his Beloved; nevertheless, his resumption of his trip is not enough because the state of heedlessness or *Ghaflat* ensnares him again and again and his intellect is too vulnerable to be resistant against the ruses of the Nafs. To remove the hurdle, Majnun like the heroes of epics has to do an extra ordinary deed to rescue himself from this vicious circle in which he is stuck and accomplish his long and arduous journey. To do so, he throws himself down from the camel and injures his foot and walks on foot towards Leili,

He threw himself headlong from the camel. He said, "I am consumed with grief: how long, how long?" The wide desert became narrow for him:

He flung himself on the stony place. He flung himself down so violently That the body of that courageous man was cracked. When he flung himself to the ground thus, At that moment also by destiny his leg broke (Masnavi IV, 1551-1555)

To interpret it symbolically, the intellect at the end comes to this realization that the only way to draw closer to God is repressing and taming the evil nafs which nourishes lust and not permitting it to accompany him anymore in his journey. In addition, his broken leg indicates that taming the nafs is not without price and one has to suffer a lot to reunion with his Beloved. By controlling his nafs *ammara*, he/intellect brings the nafs *Mutmainna* to the fore and allows it to govern him. This nafs is capable of taking Majnun to God because God Himself calls and invites it to His garden, "But ah! Thou soul at peace-nafs *mutma'inna*, Return unto thy Lord, content in His pleasure! Enter thou among my bondsmen! Enter thou my garden! (Koran, 89, 27-30).

### III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a poet and mystic par excellence, Rumi has a special liking for employing symbols throughout his *Masnavi* because they enable him to clarify the complicated mystical and philosophical issues in a manner that is both delightful and undemanding to follow. Human beings spiritual yearning for God motivates him to embark on spiritual journey to get the gates of eternal homeland; all the same, the journey is replete with spiritual entanglements, and the mystic has to surmount them if he is tenacious to reach God. Rumi clearly displays the stumbling blocks which a seeker of Truth generally encounters when he is moving towards divine destination, as well as ways of their overcoming in two allegories in his *Masnavi*: *A Man's Search for his Lost Camel* and *The Struggle of Intellect with Nafs (lower instinct) like the Struggle of Majnun with his She-Camel*. In the former allegory, two main impediments harassing the wayfarer are materialism and jarring religious sects. The first step for wayfarer to attain the goal of his longing is to throw off the all shackles of greediness, and the mystic in the allegory accomplishes it by abandoning the trade caravan and his precious merchandise. The second barrier is the warring sects who are attempting to deviate the pure heart seeker with their deceptive teaching from the right path of Truth whom Shakespeare vividly portrays,

Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravining lamb!

Despised substance of divinest show!

Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st, A damned saint, an honourable villain! (Act III, Scene II, lines 78-81)

Since he can distinguish the wolf from lamb and Divine from Satan, he disregards their insincere teachings, accordingly their efforts to mislead him proves utterly futile.

In the same allegory, the disciple of mysticism who just blindly follows his mystical leader is imprisoned in the dungeon of his aimlessness who gets released through an epiphany resulting from his quest and keeping the company of

a spiritual sage. Rumi places emphasis on being dynamic and one form of it is searching (Truth) though it is in vain, "The Friend [God] loves this agitation:/it is better to struggle vainly than to lie still" (Masnavi I, 1819) because he believes that it will end in success. How could the novice mystic imbibe the wine of reunion from the cup of Friend if he did not get succor from his master?

Choose a Pir [mystical leader], for without a Pir this journey is exceeding full of woe and affright and danger. Without an escort you are bewildered on a road you have travelled many times Do not, then, travel alone on a Way that you have not seen at all, do not turn your head away from the Guide (Masnavi I, 2943-2945)

In latter allegory, Rumi uses camel symbolism for the dark force of soul, *nafs ammara*, which works as a spiritual road block for the wayfarer because it guides to the wrong address "Be not a friend to temptation and desire, since it leads you astray from the Way of God" (Masnavi I, 2957) and the best way to conquer this road block is to act against it. In an allegory similar to the allegory under inspection liken the *nafs ammara* to ass (camel), and lust to fodder (foal),

Beware! Do not let your ass go, and do not remove your hand from him, Because his love is for the place where green herbs are plentiful. If you carelessly leave him free for one moment, He will go leagues in the direction of the herbage. The ass is an enemy to the Way, madly in love with fodder:

Oh, many is the attendant on him that he has brought to ruin!

If you know not the Way, whatever the ass desires, do the opposite:

That, surely, will be the right Way.

"Consult them, and then oppose:

He that disobeys them not will be ruined."

Be not a friend to temptation and desire, Since it leads you astray from the Way of God (Masnavi I, 2952-2957)

With obeying the commands of Intellect, the seeker resists the strong urges of the *nafs ammara*, and grants permission to the *nafs mutma'inna* to be his absolute sovereign; the fruit of such a new kingship is enormous pleasure of God and His cordial invitation to "[His] *Garden of resort* and [his] vision..." (Masnavi VI, 334).

To conclude, according to Rumi in these allegories main hurdles on the path of an honest seeker are materialism, the false religious groups, aimlessness, *nafs ammara*, and lust and their solutions lie questing, in having a spiritual leader, renouncing greediness and lust, as well as following Intellect.

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**Ahmad Gholi** was born in Kalaleh, Iran in 1984. He received his M.A. degree in English literature from Lorestan University, Iran in 2007.

He is currently a lecturer in the Gonbad Kavous University, Golestan, Iran. His research interests include Persian Literature, Travel writing and English literature.



**Masoud Ahmadi Mosaabad** was born in Gonbad, Iran in 1984. He received his Ph.D. 2002 in degree in English literature from Pune University, India in 2002. He is currently an assistant professor in the Gonbad Kavous University, Golestan, Iran. His research interests include American literature, English Literature, and Turkmen Literature.

# Quest for the Female Self-awareness in Iris Murdoch's *A Fairly Honourable Defeat*

Mingying Xu

Dalian University of Technology, Dalian, China

**Abstract**—This paper is devoted to examine the reconstruction of female selfhood from the aspect of the growth of female self-consciousness in a changed and revised world through the quest for female self-awareness as an individual in Iris Murdoch's *A Fairly Honourable Defeat*. Through the analysis of Iris Murdoch's comparative characterization of the siblings Hilda and Morgan, the paper reveals that the social and economic changes in the modern world and all kinds of women's liberation movements will necessarily lead to the improved situation of women if they have no capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile themselves as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals. Compared with Morgan's emotional perplexity, economic hardship, and male contempt, Hilda's affluent life, happy marriage and her popularity among the male indicate Murdoch's reluctant admission that women still live in the androcentric world where the women's self-improvement are not widely welcome.

**Index Terms**—Iris Murdoch, female self-awareness, quest

## I. INTRODUCTION

The developments that occurred in British society during the 1960s and 1970s must be taken into consideration in order to explore Murdoch's characterization of the female characters in her novels. Martin Pugh notes that the Women's Liberation Movement expedited progress in Great Britain though women were still struggling for equality in some respects during the late 1960s and early 1970s. He points out that the advances for women are embodied in more employment opportunities for woman. Besides, Pugh also notes that people began to change the attitudes toward marriage and didn't consider it as a social ideal (Pugh, 2000, p.314-5). Under these circumstances, Murdoch's depiction of the female characters in this period reflects these social changes accordingly as these women's views on marriage and career are consistent with opportunities increasingly available to women in the 1970s.

Along with these social developments, Murdoch explores the themes of good and evil, form and contingency and the growth of women's self-consciousness in the novel *A Fairly Honourable Defeat* published in 1970 after twelve previous novels. The central character in this novel is Julius King, a Jewish American biochemist in his mid-forties, who throws the lives of several friends into disarray by the machinations for his bet with his ex-girlfriend Morgan Browne that he can take advantage of human weaknesses and break up any relationship only if he wants. Using a mixture of high cunning schemes and garbled letters, Julius puts his friends in situations which they would never have anticipated and which ultimately result not only in the revelation of their character flaws but also in the death of Rupert, for which Julius takes no responsibility. From these happenings, everyone realizes their ridiculous vulnerability: Axel and Simon strengthen their love and become less shamefaced about being homosexual; Morgan Browne and her elder sister Hilda Rupert increase the female self-consciousness in the marriage and love dilemma.

In this novel, the female character Morgan is so empowered that she has much more power, education and independence than many of the female characters in Murdoch's other novels. And another female character Hilda is also a shining example of middle-class women with a beautiful and satisfactory matrimonial connection. However, at the beginning of the narrative, their seemingly honourable life fails to endow them with female self-consciousness and then save them from Julius's trap. In Murdoch's view, Julius's success as puppeteer is highly due to his victims' lack of an adequate theory of personality. In her earlier essays, Murdoch has "challenged existentialism's as well as British empiricism's stress on sincerity" (Dipple, 1982, p.191), and contended that "in the contemporary world accurate and humble knowledge of the self has been obscured by these grand theories. The result is the inability of contemporary people to think outside themselves or to effect desired real change or amelioration" (Dipple, 1982, p. 191). As the plot processes, Morgan and her sister gradually enhance their self-consciousness through their attempts to quest for the female self-awareness and liberate from androcentric fantasy while encountering with the plights of love and marriage relationships.

Self-awareness is defined as the capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile oneself as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals. As the conscious understanding of one's thoughts, feelings, actions and interpersonal connections, self-awareness can help him/her gain insight into the factors that influence the external world as well as the internal beliefs, values and morals. In *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir states that "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (Butler, 1986, p. 35). Gender is shaped by social, cultural, and historical forces. Her assertion is that social forces work together to construct femininity and make women depend upon men. According to

Beauvoir, women become disempowered in their attempt to conform to the sociocultural expectation of female passivity. Women's dependence on and oppression by man hinder women from the acquisition of female self-awareness "because she is alienated in him – that is, her interests as an individual lie in him" (Beauvoir 465). In this novel, Murdoch portrays the ongoing process of Morgan and Hilda's quest for the female self-awareness by means of depicting the changes of their characters.

## II. MORGAN: THE ANGEL THAT LIVES ON EARTH

As Tallis' malevolent wife and Hilda's younger sister, Morgan is a scholar in a theoretically based academic field with the intention to publish a book on her own linguistic theory. At the beginning of the narrative, she just returned to England after two-year teaching in America where she had an affair with Julius King to gain freedom for the constraints of "old-fashioned and exclusive" (Murdoch, 2001, p.194) marriage, which she describes to her husband Tallis as: "I've had a wonderful adventurous time these last two years. I've really lived. I'm not going into any more cages. We ought never to have got married" (Murdoch, 2001, p.111).

Murdoch has her personal preference for the female character Morgan Browne for she empowers this woman with a good education background, her own career and a seemingly independent life which Murdoch's previous female characters seldom own. Concerning the phenomenon that women are occupied by the unproductive housework in the marital home, Beauvoir maintains that having a career is essential for women's independence (Beauvoir, 1953, p.419). On this point, Murdoch believes that education is the essential way for women to change their female inferiority and their self-perception. When being asked in her interview with Sheila Hale about women's education, Murdoch responds:

"The problem for women is the way they think about themselves. Education is fundamental to their socially conditioned behaviour of inferiority. The wretched girls are demoralised at each age by fobbing off with soft subjects; and unless there is a positive move for women's education, there is no hope. But is education important for a writer? I'm told that it's not." (Dooley, 2003, p. 31)

Murdoch attaches great importance to women's education for the awakening of their female self-awareness while Beauvoir values the importance of women's career for their independence.

However, to their disappointment, all these factors fail to guarantee Morgan to possess a sound female self-awareness at the very beginning although she has strong sense of obtaining her self-consciousness. Morgan's first appearance in the novel leaves the reader an impression that she is greatly involved in a sentimental crisis, vacuous and depressed. After the breakup of a two-year extramarital affair with Julius, Morgan gave up her work, abandoned her students and went back to England from America. Her arrival at her sister Hilda's house, where there is a party for the Ruperts' 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, makes the people there surprised and then receives a warm welcome from them. But she reacts to their excitement rather indifferently with a blank stare across the pool. When Hilda embraces her warmly, "Morgan remained completely stiff, then jerked her head away. With a firm pressure of the hand she terminated Hilda's embrace" (Murdoch, 2001, p.39). Then "she looked round at them all with vague eyes, ... still standing rather stiffly and frowning against the sun" (39). She confesses to Hilda: "I don't know who I am, Hilda. I have no home" (Murdoch, 2001, p.43). And "I've lost all sense of time" (Murdoch, 2001, p.51). Morgan also claims to her brother-in-law Rupert that her mind is "bedlam" (Murdoch, 2001, p.78) and her heart is "dead" (Murdoch, 2001, p.78), although he tries to convince her saying "If you use your mind and your heart you can put everything together again" (Murdoch, 2001, p.78). When Hilda consults her about her future plan, Morgan replies:

'I don't know what I'm doing,' said Morgan. 'I don't know where I'm going. I have no plans. I have no intentions. I have no thoughts. I have just got off a jet plane and I feel crazy.' (Murdoch, 2001, p.40)

Although Morgan "feels mad and a wreck" (Murdoch, 2001, p.42), she starts to rethink her life with a little self-reflection and self-awareness rather than indulge in her depression. While looking at herself in the mirror, Morgan feels like to "say something to herself, something apt, something bracing and encouraging, something witty perhaps". Although "she could not formulate it and she looked at herself in silence, ... that moment of self-regard had strengthened her, as she knew it would." (Murdoch, 2001, p.42) Therefore, at the moment when Morgan can't see anything, herself and her marriage, she expects Hilda to "exist quietly near [her] while [she] discover who [she is] and what the purpose of life is" (Murdoch, 2001, p.45). Morgan then tells Hilda that she has got a "job", that is "to find out who I am and what life means. And to stop worrying about Tallis ... to set myself free..." (Murdoch, 2001, p.48). Hilda's care and support provide Morgan with a sense of safety and comfort her frail mind on some level, so that she is "only just beginning to feel human again" (Murdoch, 2001, p.77).

However, considering that becoming a woman with full self-awareness is imperative to resume her normal life and order, Morgan takes an unwise and wrong approach to attain it. She proves her existence by the manipulation of men's love and the establishment of personal relationship with them. Julius' comment on her is that "I am afraid you attach too much importance to personal relationships" (Murdoch, 2001, p.213). She implores the cruel love of her lover Julius at all costs, despises the faithful love of her husband Tallis, and even induces the ignorant love of her nephew Peter. Her physical attraction to Peter makes him attempt to make love with her, which causes her believe that she "can make him do anything [she] want[s] these days" (Murdoch, 2001, p.179). Regardless of Tallis' warning not to "mess around with Peter unless you're really prepared to commit yourself to him in some serious and sensible sort of way" (Murdoch,

2001, p.194), Morgan argues: “Why shouldn’t I be serious and sensible? I’m going to love people. That’s what I mean by living differently. That’ll be my new way of life. I’m going to be free and love people” (Murdoch, 2001, p.194). And she believes that she seems to “have succeeded where you all failed” (Murdoch, 2001, p.194). Julius’ aloofness, Tallis’ persistence and Peter’s blind passion all make Morgan fulfilled and satisfied:

‘Of course there’s still so much – But I feel better. I can cope. Perhaps something divine has happened to me. I’ve made a discovery. [...] It is possible to love people. [...] Falling in love is something different, it’s a form of madness. I think I just didn’t realize that at this moment in time I was really capable of noticing other people at all or that I could come to care for people in a new way, in an unselfish unfrantic sort of way. I feel I’ve won a victory and I’m rather pleased with myself. There are good surprises after all. (Murdoch, 2001, p.179)

Indulged in the blind self-confidence and unreliable self-awareness, Morgan gets an unreal understanding of herself and these interpersonal relationships around her. Julius pinpoints her fatal weakness that her trouble is that she doesn’t know who she is. So “the metaphysical search is always a sign of neurosis” (Murdoch, 2001, p.236).

Her conceitedness leads her to be trapped by Julius’ machinations and then become his accomplice as well as a victim at the same time. She believes the lie made up by Julius about Rupert and decides to “come close to Rupert, help him to bear his private grief, keep the secret of the wildness within and transform by patience the violence of his love” (Murdoch, 2001, p.248) despite the possible offence to her sister. Moreover, “after so much misery and so many disappointments and so many people letting [her] down”, Morgan still anchors her hope in her brother-in-law Rupert but not herself believing that he is “the one person who could really help” her if only he would “*keep his head*” (Murdoch, 2001, p.299) and everything “could be perfectly all right” (Murdoch, 2001, p.299).

After her affair with Rupert was uncovered, Morgan becomes upset by Hilda’s departure and disillusioned by Rupert’s responses to what happened. She considers Rupert as a “blind instrument of destruction” (Murdoch, 2001, p.387) in her reflection:

And Morgan blamed herself for not having rejected this dangerous frivolity at the very beginning. ...The sight of Rupert now would make her sick with shame and about the future of her relations with him she forbore to think. She reproached herself constantly with Hilda’s voice, falling down in abject and passionate supplication before that accusing shade. (Murdoch, 2001, p.387)

The reflection on her misdoings brings the gradual establishment of her self-awareness back to the right track and makes her realize what she can’t do and the shame of her previous misdemeanor causes her “groan with remorse” (Murdoch, 2001, p.387). Meanwhile, Morgan realizes that she focuses too much on herself and neglects her sister’s personal life without asking her even “one searching question” (Murdoch, 2001, p.389), which embodies her increasing female self-awareness in another aspect.

Murdoch’s characterization of Morgan exposes to the reader the new predicament of the woman who has better education and job opportunities than her female predecessors. Morgan’s frustrated emotional experiences reveal the limited role of education and career in the establishment of the female self-awareness if the social ideology is still male-centered. And the reader really doubt what kind of independence and happiness women finally get through all these Women’s Movements when they find Morgan, who makes herself agreeable nowhere, even suffers more emotional and financial troubles as well as personality flaws in the novel despite all the advantages she has:

Her cynicism about the abortion until Julius points out that there may be a moral issue and that the child might have salvaged the relationship, her great love towards Hilda which she lessens by claiming it cannot survive a financial or emotional transaction with Rupert, her lying to Tallis about money, her arrogant lying power over Peter, all contribute to the sense that she is demonic in her suffering. (Dipple, 1982, p.195)

Abandoning the conventional female virtues as “the Angel in the House”, Morgan fails to acquire the new goodness as an independent woman. Instead her character weaknesses are becoming abusive to the people around her in her quest for her self-awareness. After Rupert’s death, Morgan moves to America with her sister and resumes her teaching career, living a big house they bought. Morgan’s depiction is a firm denial of the idea that the social and economic changes in the modern world and all kinds of women’s liberation movements will necessarily lead to the improved situation of women if they have no capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile themselves as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals. However, we cannot deny the fact that better education and more job opportunities enable Morgan, in her quest for the female self-awareness, to have more freedom to choose and have the possibility of a freshly new start, which is unimaginable and unreachable for her female predecessors.

### III. HILDA: THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE

Murdoch’s characterization of Hilda Foster, Morgan’s elder sister, is directed towards the self-awareness of traditional females in the contemporary society. As a comparable character to Morgan, Hilda lives an idealistic and well-off life in the traditional sense. Her responsible husband Rupert, a high-ranking civil servant, is working on a book concerning moral issues. Unlike her sister Morgan, Hilda doesn’t receive a college education as an intellectual, which she regrets a lot. So she considers herself not one of “the trained minds” (Murdoch, 2001, p.16) and not “an academic type” (Murdoch, 2001, p.17). She is “always busy serving others” (Murdoch, 2001, p.199). She performs good works and belongs to several charitable organizations. The first setting in the novel is the celebration of their 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in the garden of their big house located in the rich area in London. Murdoch describes her as “a plumper

angel" (Murdoch, 2001, p.1) and the couple as "a handsome pair" (Murdoch, 2001, p.1) for "they were altruistic, but treated themselves judiciously to luxuries" (Murdoch, 2001, p.1). But Morgan's unexpected intrusion to the house destroys the joyful and peaceful home atmosphere and her return opens the prelude to the unforeseen events in Hilda's life. Morgan's return impacts on Hilda's life more violently than anything that she expected and lays "her soul open to fears" (Murdoch, 2001, p.57) because she expects much from it, "almost a renewal of life" (Murdoch, 2001, p.265). And the following happenings prove her presentiment.

Murdoch seldom casts the image of the perfect mother in her novels, and Hilda is not exceptional. The only flaw in her life is that her only child Peter seems likely to drop out of Cambridge. Ironically, Rupert's moral philosophy is signally ineffective in relation to his son. For Hilda, Peter's dropout and rebellion is "such a cloud on the horizon" and she "can't help worrying the whole time with Peter in this awful mood" (Murdoch, 2001, p.17). Peter is lodging with Tallis, who his parents hoped would be a good influence, but whose virtue seems as useless as Rupert's philosophy. Hilda is not a confident and successful mother since "when the prospect of meeting Peter was close it was now always rather alarming" (Murdoch, 2001, p.57). And she admits to her son with tears that she is "just no good at being a parent" (Murdoch, 2001, p.60). Murdoch illustrates women's general dilemma as being a mother through Hilda's situation:

This meant that she was a unique and precious being to him, but it also meant that it was her special privilege to put up humbly and uncomplainingly with any degree of casualness and neglect. Peter knew that it was a metaphysical impossibility that her love for him should diminish by one iota whatever he might or might not do, and this precisely enabled him to dismiss her altogether from his mind. (Murdoch, 2001, p.266)

Hilda is so strong-willed and self-controlled as not to be "addicted to feeling sorry for herself" (Murdoch, 2001, p.266) and then to concentrate herself upon other matters. In other sense, Hilda is not a dutiful mother since she takes no effective measures to help her son except some trivial and empty talks with him in tears.

Hilda's contented world is severely shaken by the discovery of the fact that Peter falls in love with his aunt Morgan and completely collapsed by the news of the likely involvement between her husband Rupert and Morgan. When Julius hints the love affair between Morgan and Peter to Hilda, she feels "completely puzzled" (Murdoch, 2001, p.270) and "then frightened, as if her life was suddenly menaced" (Murdoch, 2001, p.270). Still being greatly shocked and unaware of Julius' scheme, Hilda is broken down by Julius' lie that Rupert and Morgan are involved with each other. "On reflection it seemed absurd and everything that she feared so shadowy" (Murdoch, 2001, p.293). She consoles herself by imagining that perhaps "Morgan was in some secret trouble and Rupert was helping her? Perhaps she was in some trouble which she would feel ashamed to confess to Hilda? This supposition had a ring of sense about it. ... Morgan was in trouble, Rupert was helping" (Murdoch, 2001, p.293). However, Julius tempts her to believe its facticity and become suspicious of Rupert's unchanged love to her:

Julius's company had been a stimulus. Now that he was gone she felt utterly dejected and rather frightened. ... Hilda thought, I must do something to stop myself from getting panic-stricken. ... She could feel her eyes staring with fright. She thought, I must find something to hold onto, something to peg me down into the real world, something to make me believe in the reality of the past. (Murdoch, 2001, p.323)

Dejected and rather frightened, Hilda is awakened to reexamine her self-awareness as a wife and even as a human being in the past and at present. She suspects that Rupert regrets having married her for "she was not clever, she was not an intellectual. She had been a very dull wife for such a brilliant man. Why should he love me, after all? Perhaps there had been gradual slow regrets" (Murdoch, 2001, pp.293-4).

While she questions Rupert's satisfaction with the marriage as well as hers, "Her own motives for self-deception were strong and for the first time visible to her" (Murdoch, 2001, p.316). Hilda begins to be aware of the fact that she only exists in the self-other relationships since people around her take it for granted "that Hilda *had* no personal life" because "happily married people don't" (Murdoch, 2001, p.389). Hilda is Rupert's wife and Morgan's sister and Peter's mother, and "into these eminently satisfying relationships the whole of that generous being was without residue absorbed" (Murdoch, 2001, p.389). So Morgan's two love affairs respectively with Peter and Rupert deprive Hilda of all the social roles and destroy the meaning of her existence. As for her husband, she has "a shudder intuit a whole dimension of otherness, Rupert's otherness" (Murdoch, 2001, p.324). She finds she knows nothing about all kinds of thought and needs and impulses Rupert has. And as far as Morgan is concerned, Hilda is "utterly impossible to exist with her" (Murdoch, 2001, p.378) and cannot accept her back into her life. Being destroyed by "that particular alliance" (Murdoch, 2001, p.378) and "by that special and absolute cruelty" (Murdoch, 2001, p.378), Hilda feels she has no future while others have. Her sense of being drives her to ask herself what will become of her now.

Hilda's life is completely destroyed by that particular betrayal which "had injected its venomous power into the whole of her past, changing all that was good into torrent specious appearance" (Murdoch, 2001, p.379). As an image of happy housewife, Hilda is cast as the most substantially good character in the novel: warm, witty, self-effacing, and shrewd. She keeps busy with volunteer charity and community work, and at least equals her husband in common sense and compassion. Besides, she puts into effect what her husband probably theorizes about in his treatise on love and virtue. However, the betrayal of her sister and husband leave Hilda totally lost in her life path regardless of these traditional virtues she owns. "Everything was different now right back to the start" (Murdoch, 2001, p.379). To find a way out, she chooses to flee to the cottage alone instead of clarifying the whole event with Rupert and Morgan,



imagining that the cottage would be a refuge and the solitude there could provide a kind of freedom. “She had imagined herself sitting there and steadily thinking things out” (Murdoch, 2001, p.378). However, it turns out to be that “the loneliness and all sorts of physical fears...had reduced her to such a state of panicky misery that she was quite incapable of thinking at all” (Murdoch, 2001, p.378). When she realizes her lack of self-awareness as an individual and urges to think about herself as well as her future life, both the physical and mental sufferings hinder her from thinking at all. Even without finding her way out, she starts to regret for her absence without notice. “There’ll have to be talk and it’s unkind as well as cowardly to run away like this” (Murdoch, 2001, p.380). After Julius told her the truth of the matter, she feels the eagerness of talking to Rupert at once for that all was unchanged and then ask him to forgive her. The reflection on her reaction to the whole event makes her reproach herself for her instant judge on Rupert, little faith in her husband and her sister because “[A]ll those years of love and trust should have made her at least wait, at least keep quiet” (Murdoch, 2001, p.385). With the phone being broken down, Hilda sets out immediately for home regardless the heavy rain at night. The journey to her female self-awareness abruptly ends when Hilda starts on the way back home and back to her past life.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In *A Fairly Honourable Defeat*, Murdoch puts the problems that traditional women and modern women may encounter on the way to quest for the female self-awareness in comparison. Murdoch depicts two different female characters in this novel: one with traditional women’s virtues and the other with modern women’s advantages. So while exploring for their female self-awareness, they experience different problems. As the typical example of “the Angel in the House”, Hilda is content with her life as a wife, mother and sister and has no sense of her individual self before her marriage crisis while Morgan struggles to find what she is and what she wants from the very beginning. Hilda is always other-regarding, so she considers the meaning of her existence for others but not as an independent individual woman. The farce conducted by Julius makes her aware of the lack of self-awareness and determined to think seriously about herself and her future. But her mind draws a blank and leads her nowhere near the full awareness of herself. So she chooses to be what she was without any hesitation with the end ripped out. Though she withdraws her step on the way to quest for her female self-awareness, Hilda has been conscious of her own situation as a woman after these twists and turns in her life. Meanwhile, as an intellectual woman with the advantages brought by the Women’s Movement, Morgan is self-regarding and has a totally different trajectory of life. Her education and academic career do not ensure her an easier way if not rougher than her elder sister, which fails to guarantee her a happier life than the traditional peers.

Murdoch focuses on the characterization of the siblings Hilda and Morgan respectively as a typical example of traditional women and modern educated women. Compared with Morgan’s emotional perplexity, economic hardship, and male contempt, Hilda’s affluent life, happy marriage and her popularity among the male indicate Murdoch’s reluctant admission that women still live in the androcentric world where the women’s self-improvement are not widely welcome.

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XU Ming-ying, Ph.D., associate professor, School of Foreign Languages, Dalian University of Technology.

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**Mingying Xu** was born in Harbin, China in 1977. She received her PH.D. degree in English Language and Literature from Shanghai International Studies University, China in 2013.

She is currently an associate professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Dalian University of Technology, Dalian, China. Her research interests include British and American literature and literary criticism.

# The Effect of Second Language Writing Ability on First Language Writing Ability

Nastaran Mehrabi

Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan, Isfahan, Iran

**Abstract**—This study was conducted to investigate the influence of second language writing ability on first language writing ability. To do so, two different groups of university students, majoring in English and non-English (nursing), were chosen to write compositions on a topic of their interest. At first, students in both groups were asked to write about 200 words on a topic in their first language. Then, the students studying English passed a course in writing which was called Grammar and Writing Course 1. During the course, they were taught paragraph and essay writing in second language (English). After passing the course, both groups were asked to write on the same topic in their first language again. Then, 30 compositions of each group were chosen randomly and they were scored on a scale of 0 to 20 by two qualified Persian raters. In compositions, reasoning, understanding the purpose of the task, vocabulary choice, structural well-formedness, developing ideas, presenting connected ideas, punctuation, and style were identified. Finally, appropriate statistical operations, including t-test, were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that L2 learning is effective on the development of L1 skill and writing ability in L2 affects L1 writing ability.

**Index Terms**—first language writing ability, second language writing ability

## I. INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language involves the handling of four basic skills; listening speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is the ultimate skill that learners should master. It is a basic communication skill that cannot be acquired; it can be culturally transmitted or can be learned through formal instruction. Among the four skills of language, writing and speaking are productive skills. Of course, there are important differences between them. All normal people learn to speak while writing should be taught to them. In comparison to speaking, writing imposes greater demands on the learners since there is no immediate feedback in written interaction. The writer has to anticipate the reader's interaction and make a text which adheres to Grice's (1975) cooperative principle. According to this principle, the writer should try to write a clear, relevant, truthful, informative, interesting, and memorable text. The reader, on the other hand, interprets the text with regard to the writer's presumed intension if the necessary clues are available in the text. Linguistic accuracy, clarity of presentation, and organization of ideas are all essential in the efficacy of the communicative act, since they provide the necessary clues for interpretation.

Broadly speaking, writing requires a greater in-depth knowledge of the grammar system than the receptive skills and perhaps even than speaking. Writing both in practical sense and in the communicative sense, entails unique features that result in distinct contributions to overall language learning. Writing anything to be learned assists learners to practice and rehearse the material and store it in long-term memory. Although seeing the language in written form is not essential for some students, for others the vocabulary, grammar, and patterns are easily learned by writing and looking at what they are to learn.

Writing emerged in societies as a result of cultural changes that created new communication needs. Writing is important because it is a basis for communicating clear thinking. The development of writing skill is a complex and dynamic cognitive process because it requires more than the mastery of vocabulary and linguistic competence.

Writing is considered as a means of learning language forms and a way of communication. Language teachers should incorporate both types into their classes and they should develop classroom activities that include both communication and language forms.

The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill. Writing skills must be practiced and learned through experience. Writing also involves composing which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing. Perhaps it is best viewed as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspects of 'writing down' on the one end, to the more complex act of 'composing' on the other end (Omaggio Hadley, 1993).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing plays an important role in our personal and professional lives, thus, it has become one of the essential components in university curricula. Second language writing has always been a difficult area for second language learners and a hot topic for second language researchers. To state it differently, the field of L2 writing is a fairly recent phenomenon. Historically speaking, the field of L2 writing originally emphasized on the teaching of writing to the

increasing population of international ESL writers at institution of higher education in North America in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. During the last 50 years, the number of inquiries into L2 writing issues have grown rapidly and produced results.

Leki, Cumming, and Silva (2008) point out that the last 30 years have seen several firsts in L2 writing research.

#### *A. Various Contexts of Second Language Learning*

There are two main concepts of second language learning; submersion programmes and immersion programmes. They lead to subtractive and additive bilingualism respectively.

##### **1. Subtractive bilingualism; Submersion programmes in the United States**

The terms "subtractive" and "additive" bilingualism were coined by Lambert (1964). The significant factor dividing two kinds of bilingualism is social. A good example of submersion programme in the U.S.A is Mexican children. In this case, children's first language is Spanish while they are schooled from the beginning in English that is their new second language. In other words, their first language (Spanish) is slowly replaced and is being "subtracted out" (Lambert, 1992, p.213).

These minority children are forced to assimilate into the mainstream culture while their L1 system has not been developed yet, and they do not develop it further. This deficiency in both languages (Spanish and English) is called "semi-lingualism" (Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomma).

Submersion programme had negative effects like eliminating minority children's language, weakening their cultural identity and putting them at risk in academic achievement. Thus, bilingual education has been an important political issue in the United States. In order to remedy this situation, "transitional" programmes have been introduced. In these programmes, children are schooled in reading and writing in their first language in the first school years. At the same time, English language (L2) is taught to them. By using this programme, a time of transition is being provided between schooling in the first language and learning L2 in order to use it as the language of instruction. The children would have a positive attitude toward their own culture.

Cummins (1996) concluded "that strong promotion of minority students' L1 throughout elementary school contributes significantly to academic success" (p.121). Despite the effort made, transitional programmes as well as submersion programmes lead to subtractive bilingualism. They lead to monolinguality in English by the end of elementary school.

##### **2. Additive bilingualism; Immersion programmes in Canada**

In this situation the first language is the majority language. In Canada English speaking students enter a French immersion or a core French programme. In a core French programme, students are taught French (as a second language) about 30 minutes a day. In immersion programme, there is "early immersion" (starting in kindergarten or grade 1), "mid-immersion" (starting in grade 4) or "late immersion" (starting in grade 6 or 7). Also there is variation of model throughout Canada in teaching all or some of the subjects in the second language. Programmes can be identified as either partial (a few subjects, about 50% in L2) or total immersion (all instruction in L2). When only one subject and language arts are taught in the second language, the programme is "enriched second language programme". In immersion, both languages have social value. L1 is further developed at school, in the family and other situations outside the school. Since L2 is an addition to the L1 competence, this type of bilingualism is called "additive" bilingualism (Lambert, 1964; 1975; 1990).

The difference between two types of programmes and situational context is important. Cummins illustrates these differential results with two hypotheses, the threshold hypothesis and the interdependence hypothesis. These hypotheses are often used to explain the results about the effect of second language learning on first language skills and other domains.

#### *B. Cummins' Hypotheses*

##### **1. Cummins' threshold hypothesis**

Cummins postulated his "threshold hypothesis" by comparing the immersion and submersion situation, considering the results of both groups, and looking at linguistic social and school programme factors. Threshold hypothesis explains that the learner's level of L1 competence already reached by him or her determines if she or he will experience cognitive deficits or benefits from schooling in the second language (Cummins, 1976; 1978a). To state it differently, students have a certain "threshold" in first language competence. When the first language is minority language in the community this threshold level has not been reached yet and their L1 is not fully developed. But when the first language is the language of majority children, they have developed this threshold.

Cummins (1979) developed this hypothesis and represented that there is a threshold for L2 which must be attained to influence a student's cognitive and academic functioning (Cummins, 1979, p.222).

##### **2. Cummins' developmental interdependence hypothesis**

Cummins (1984) described the interdependence hypothesis as follow:

"to the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly." (Cummins, 1984, p.41).

In other words, Cummins believes that when the usage of L1 is promoted by the child's linguistic environment outside the school, then a high level of L2 achievement occurs. Conversely, when the child has not developed L1 sufficiently, low level of L2 is the result. Thus, there is an interaction between child's L1 competence and the language of instruction.

Cummins (1983) explains that L1 and L2 are manifestations of "common underlying proficiency". Moreover, L1 and L1 literacy skills are interdependent. To state it differently, high level of L1 proficiency can help L2 acquisition, and high proficiency in L2 can have a positive effect on L1 development.

### *C. Effects of Learning a Second Language on First Language Skills in Context*

Much of the research has been done about the influence of the first language on the second language (Harley, Cummins, Swain, & Allen, 1990), and the result is that in developing second language, mother tongue is an important factor. On the contrary, there has been research about the influence of second language learning on first language literacy skills especially in studies in immersion education. The fact that bilingual students often outperform the unilingual was shown by studies (Cummins, 1980).

The first French immersion programme in Montreal in 1965 was investigated by Lambert and Tucker (1972). The goal of the experiment was to provide English-speaking children with functional competence in written and spoken French. During kindergarten and grade 1 all instruction was in French while in grade 2 English language arts instruction was introduced. An immersion student group and an English control group were compared after grade 1, 2, 3, and 4 by Lambert and Tucker. They found that the immersion group scored lower in English literacy skills such as reading comprehension, spelling, and written vocabulary before starting English instruction (Lambert and Tucker, 1972, p.45).

However, by the end of grade 2 this lag was made up (p.103). The immersion group did not fall behind in oral English skills like listening comprehension, and oral production (Lambert and Tucker, 1972, p.45). Listening comprehension of the immersion group was equivalent to English control group. Students listened to a short story and answered multiple-choice questions. Furthermore, their speaking was examined by asking them to create a story based on a comic strip. The stories were also equivalent to those of the English control group.

In a study carried out by Genesee, Tucker, and Lambert (1975) it was found that total immersion and partial immersion students on an interpersonal communication task performed better than students in regular English schools. Genesee (1979) reported high correlation between reading skills in L1 and L2. In other words, he concluded that reading skills are transferred from one language to the other. Here also, there is correspondence between this explanation and Cummins' hypothesis.

Immersion studies in Toronto and Ottawa, Ontario were carried out by Swain and Lapkin (1982). They were interested in investigating whether immersion programme has effect on students' first language (English) skills. In their study, the results show that when literacy skills of one language are established, they can be transferred to the other language.

Verhoeven (1994) investigated the relationship of students' L2 and L1. In this study 98 six-year-old Turkish children lived in Netherlands were compared. Turkish was their L1 and their L2 was Dutch. In both languages, Verhoeven looked at the development of literacy and found out that lexical and morpho-syntactic skills developed autonomously (p.408) and in phonological skills there was a moderate interdependence. However, a strong positive transfer from L1 to L2 was shown in pragmatic skills and reading abilities. Thus, reading skills are interdependent across languages. In Hong Kong, in a large scale longitudinal study the effect of immersion education on the achievement of students in Chinese, with Chinese as L1 and English as L2, was investigated (Marsh et al., 2000). The results show that when students are instructed in English their achievement in the first language (Chinese) and second language (English) were enhanced.

The findings support Cummins' interdependence hypothesis: L2 abilities are transferred from L1 when both languages are developed to a high degree. It means that thinking and language abilities are developed in one language and transferred to the other. There is a "mutually beneficial interplay between L2 and L1" (Lambert, 1990, p.217).

In the research community, Cummins' theory is a controversial issue since there is no definition to the "threshold level necessary" and the theory cannot be supported experimentally. Some researchers such as Geva and Ryan (1993) suggest other variables to explain the results found. They state that there are some other variables like individual differences in intelligence and memory span (p.37).

## III. METHODOLOGY

### *A. Participants*

The study was conducted on two different groups (30 students each) of university students. The first group consisted of 30 male and female students studying English at Esfahan University, and the second group included 30 male and female students studying nursing at Esfahan University. As far as both groups of students have passed university entrance exam, at the beginning of the study and before passing Grammar and Writing course 1 by English students, the level of their knowledge in general courses (like general English) would be the same. To compare the effect of L2 writing ability on the L1 writing ability, a group of English major students is compared with a group of non-English major students. So, nursing major is selected since students do not pass any course in writing while in English major do.

Both groups were first-semester students. These students were selected from among 105 accessible university students. All the participants were Persian native speakers with almost the same Persian background knowledge. Their age ranged between 18 and 25.

## B. Materials

### 1. Pretest

In order to determine the impact of L2 writing course on L1 writing, before the beginning of the experiment, the students in both groups were asked to write in their first language at least 200 words on a topic (*characteristics of a good friend*). This is a descriptive topic and students describe a good friend. This topic was chosen since it was of students' interest and students had ideas to write about it.

### 2. Writing task

Then, in order to find out whether or not having a writing course in a second language has any impact on writing in the first language, after the English major students finished their course, once again the students in both groups were asked to write at least 200 words on the same topic (*characteristics of a good friend*) in their first language. The students were asked to write on a neutral subject, and the topic was the same for both groups. The topic chosen for the purpose of writing comprised a broad and general one which was not culture-bound or discriminatory.

### 3. Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following procedures were employed. At first, two groups of first-semester University students were selected (majoring in English and nursing). Then, both groups were asked to write on a topic about 200 words in their first language. Then, the students studying English passed a course in writing which was called Grammar and Writing course 1.

During the course, they were taught paragraph and essay writing in second language (English). After passing the course by the students studying English, both groups were asked to write on the same topic in their first language again. Then, the Persian passages were scored for their writing ability on a scale of 0 to 20 by two qualified Persian raters. The criteria which were taken into consideration in the writings were reasoning, understanding the purpose of the task, vocabulary-choice, structural well-formedness, developing ideas, presenting connected ideas, punctuation, and style. In order for our findings to be reliable and consistent, an interrater reliability has been conducted. To do this, two literate experts were asked to correct the writing compositions produced by the participants. The reason was that in comparison to translation and teaching experts, literature experts are more familiar with appropriate writing techniques and application of language conventions. Then, the scores were statistically analyzed. If there is a strong reliability, one can assume with reasonable confidence that raters are judging the same set of data as representing the same phenomenon. Therefore, interrater reliability was measured and it turned out to be .917. Finally, the two sets of scores, that is, one set for English major students and one for nursing major students, were compared to find the probable differences.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study an attempt was made to further our understanding of the role of second language writing ability on first language writing ability hoping that the findings can bring about a positive change in the writing of English and pave the way for the improvement of writing instruction. To this end, two sets of writing were compared together to answer the research question.

The first set of writing, which was written before the experiment, was corrected and scored by two raters. Table 4.1 gives the descriptive statistics of the pre-experiment writing scores. The scores reported here are the averages of the two ratings.

TABLE (4.1)  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRE-EXPERIMENT WRITING

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEN
English	30	12.60	3.174	.580
Nursing	30	12.40	2.581	.471

As it can clearly be seen, there is difference between the two means. In order to make sure that this difference is not significant, a t-test was run. Table 4.2 indicates the results of the t-test.

TABLE (4.2)  
THE RESULT OF THE T-TEST ON THE PRE-EXPERIMENT WRITING

Sig.	df	(2-tailed)	Mean Difference
T			
.268	58	.790	.200

According to table 4.2 above, it can be claimed that the participants in the two groups were homogeneous regarding their ability in writing in Persian. Further analysis was applied to the scores of the post-experiment writings of the two groups to find out if the writing instruction in L2 had any effects on writing ability in L1. Table 4.3 shows the descriptive statistics of the post-experiment writings.

TABLE (4.3)  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE POST-EXPERIMENT WRITING

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEN
English	30	16.35	1.733	.316
Nursing	30	12.32	2.066	.377

According to table 4.3 there is a 4.03-mark difference between the means of the two groups. In order to understand whether this difference is statistically significant or not, the researcher employed another t-test.

TABLE (4.4)  
THE RESULTS OF THE T-TEST ON THE POST-EXPERIMENT WRITING

Sig. T	df	(2-tailed)	Mean Difference
8.194	58	.000	4.03333

By studying table 4.4 one can find out that the amount of t-observed is significant at the probability level of  $p=.000$ .

The results show that there is a significant relationship between the ability to write in the second language and the first language. In fact, in this study, students who knew a second language were better able to write in their first language. The findings are in line with Cummins (1991) who states that skills in L1 and L2 are at least partially interdependent. Providing enough exposure and motivation to learn and transfer is possible from one language to another. According to Cummins' interdependence hypothesis, transfer from L2 to L1 occurs. So, language abilities are developed in one language and transferred to the other.

In this study, English major students were better able to write in their L1 and they considered skills such as, vocabulary choice, structural well-formedness, punctuation, and style in their writing while non-English major students did not. This finding is in agreement with Bialystok (2001) who found that L2 user children have more precocious metalinguistic skills than their monolingual peers.

On the whole the results of the present study showed that a person with two grammatical systems is better able to manipulate language more easily and more effective than can a monolingual person.

## V. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to measure the effect of second language writing ability on first language writing ability. To this end, two groups of male and female freshmen university students (English major and non-English major) were asked to write a descriptive writing about 200 words on a topic in their first language (Persian). The topic for both groups was the same. Then, the students studying English had a course in L2 paragraph and essay writing. After passing the course in L2 (English) writing (that is, grammar and writing course 1) by the students studying English, both groups were asked to write on the same topic in their first language (Persian) again. Afterward, two qualified Persian literature raters were asked to score writings.

Persian writings were scored on a scale of 0 to 20 by the raters. The criteria which were taken into consideration in the writings were reasoning, understanding the purpose of the task, vocabulary-choice, structural well-formedness, developing ideas, presenting connected ideas, punctuation, and style. After scoring the writings and comparing the results of the study, the researcher came to the conclusion that English major students were better able to write in their L1. In other words, English major students, after having a course in writing, could write better. Thus, it could be concluded that there is transfer of knowledge and learning processes across languages.

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**Nastaran Mehrabi.** Isfahan, Iran, 1980. Master's degree in English language teaching (TESOL), Khorasgan University, Isfahan, Iran, 2011.

She has worked as an ESOL Teacher in different language institutes in Isfahan, Iran.

# The Effect of Length of Exposure to Computer-based Vocabulary Activities on Young Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Gain

Karim Sadeghi  
Urmia University, Iran

Masoumeh Dousti  
Urmia University, Iran

**Abstract**—In recent years, research in the area of CALL and its role on teaching foreign languages has gained a strong foothold. This study was an attempt to explore the effectiveness of CALL technology in comparison to traditional book-based approach in teaching vocabulary to young Iranian EFL learners. As this study addressed young learners in an EFL context, it was supposed that time factor would play a crucial role in this regard. Hence, attending to the possible role of length of exposure to CALL technology was another objective followed in this study. To this end, one control and two experimental groups, with 15 participants in each group, took part in this study. The second experimental group used computer-based activities for 30 minutes, while the first one used them for 15 minutes. The experimental groups used *Family and Friends 2* with its accompanying CD-ROM. This CD-ROM presented computer-based vocabulary activities. To measure the degree of the participants' vocabulary gain after the treatment sessions, a pre-test as well as a post-test were used. The results of one-way ANOVAs revealed that in the administration of the immediate post-test, the integration of computer-based activities did not have any significant effect on learners' vocabulary gain in general, and even no significant difference was noticed between the experimental groups. However, the findings of the delayed post-test showed the second experimental group performed significantly better than the other groups. The promising findings should call the teachers' and administrators' attention to take into consideration the integration of CALL technology into EFL classes.

**Index Terms**—computer-assisted language learning, computer-based activities, length of exposure, vocabulary teaching

## I. INTRODUCTION

Technologies have been enhancing education most of the time and novel technologies have typically been used in education, particularly with the appearance of computer-related information technology (Devedzic, 2002). There exist some optimistic viewpoints toward the presence of technology in educational settings such as '1+1 is more than two'. It implies that the proper utilization of technology and an adept teacher can offer positive learning outcomes for learners.

Ramachandran (2004) asserts that the application of new technological tools in language classes will be a great contribution to encourage and positively influence learners to use the target language. Among the technological tools, computer as the outstanding one is a big help in the improvement of language learning in numerous ways. As Arslan (2006) properly stated, presentation of learning activities in a stimulant rich environment can be more effective for teaching and learning, and computers are one of the tools that are capable of providing such an environment.

Considering the valuable merits of computer integration into EFL teaching, the potentiality of computers to present educational games and consequently adding fun to teaching and learning settings cannot be neglected. Quinn (2005) expresses the power of fun in classes and states that fun must be added to learning because learning will occur most effectively if learners' concentration and enthusiasm are attracted. Moreover, if learning is contextualized and the learner is required to offer a proper action, the learner easily realizes when and how to apply the target language.

While playing educational computer-based games, children have the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from their experiences without getting harmed. It is not an exaggeration to say that computer-based games are technological miracles that support learning. Being attention-grabbing and new, offering more desirable atmosphere and helping to keep the learners' attention on the task are believed to be the peculiar features of educational computer-based games (Heinich, Molenda, Russell, & Smaldino, 2002). Gee (2003) argues that the potentiality of suitable computer-based games to let people have new experiences in the worlds created in games and at the same time to learn deeply are indicative of the importance of these games.

The instructive power of computer-based games for classroom use has been explored by some researchers (Dickey, 2005; Kafai, 2006; Jalali & Dousti, 2012); however, the great role of games in improving learning is more obvious in their application in young learners' classes; in other words, their implementation in elementary education is a more



promising area of research and practice in education (Warren, Dondlinger, & Barab, 2008). Jessen (2001) discussed that computer-based games can be considered as part of children's everyday life which are absolutely integrated in modern child culture.

Taking into account all these advantages, designing appropriate games for educational purposes should be done with caution. In this regard, Nedomová (2007) highlights two major points for teachers. The first point relates to the application of games to keep the children alert and change the boring lessons to more attractive ones and the second one relates to the utilization of games to teach or learn specific parts of grammar, vocabulary, etc. This suggests that utilization of games in educational settings should be in line with educational purposes to improve learning.

Research has revealed that retention of words is improved when they are presented in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) environments. This result is due to the fact that sounds, images, and even video that are provided in computer-enhanced environments greatly contribute to the contextualization of the words (Akbulut, 2007; Hu & Deng, 2007; Kim & Gilman, 2008). Seferoglu (2006) believes the visuals provided in video games play a crucial role in the process of learning. He claims that the major part of learning takes place with the help of visual descriptions. According to Seferoglu (2006), visual elements:

- a) attract the learner's attention and guides them,
- b) keep their attention alive,
- c) yield them to give emotional reactions,
- d) formalize the concepts,
- e) simplify complex concepts,
- f) help to organize and perceive information by the use of geometric shapes,
- g) easily connect the relations between a concept and its related elements by the use of organization flow charts,
- h) give the chance to grasp some ideas which could be missed otherwise by some of the students (p.18).

Recent developments in audio, video, and computer techniques provide marvelous new chances for the inevitable infusion of technology into education. However, the particular focus of the research in the area of CALL should be the context in which it takes place. As it was stated, computers like any other teaching tools promise to be beneficial only if their practical use in a particular context is examined (Kern & Warschauer, 2000). The peculiar role of context in the application of new technologies has been addressed by other researchers in the field too. As Egbert (2005) rightly says currently the differences in the contexts of CALL application is not addressed well while it is the most important point to be dealt with. This point of view is in line with the complaint made by Timucxin (2006) that the gap between the present literature regarding the utilization of computers in teaching settings and the actual application of them in EFL contexts is noticeable. Similarly, Huh and Hu (2005) highlight the important role of settings, learners, and events in CALL contexts and state that the profession could benefit from more description of the context. On the other hand, learners themselves play great roles in the process of language learning and teaching. Higgins and Johns (1984) call attentions to this point. They argue whether all students at all levels would benefit from computer-based activities or just one particular level of learners would take advantage of them.

Furthermore, a group of researchers questioned the effectiveness of games in general and computer games in particular to be integrated into educational settings. As some scholars have raised a concern (Facer, 2003; Kirriemuir & McFarlane, 2004), there exist conflicting and limited number of researches addressing the usefulness of games in educational settings and their motivational roles in these settings. Wheeler (2009) claims that computer games are not useful for all group of learners and in all learning contexts unless they make the learning environments reliable and cooperative and it occurs when they are designed effectively.

Keeping in mind that very few studies have investigated the effectiveness of CALL in Iranian context and the newness of computers as teaching and learning instruments, more studies are welcome in this area. Given the widespread interest in using CALL across various settings and a variety of age and proficiency levels in EFL/ESL contexts, this study applied the technology to a less-touched focus group, i.e. young learners in an EFL setting. Considering various variables that might account for differences in the performance of young learners exposed to CALL, length of exposure seemed to be one of the influential factors that deserved investigation. Hence the study sought to address the effect of computer-based activities on learners' vocabulary gain while attending to length of exposure to these activities in particular.

The following questions were formulated to address the above objectives:

Q1: Does the integration of computer-based vocabulary activities have any significant effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain?

Q2: Does the length of exposure to computer-based vocabulary activities have any significant effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain?

Q3: Does the integration of computer-based vocabulary activities have any significant long-term effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain?

Q4: Does the length of exposure to computer-based vocabulary activities have any significant long-term effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain?

Accordingly, the following hypotheses were formulated to be tested at the probability level of 0.05:

H1: The integration of computer-based vocabulary activities does not have any significant effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain.

H2: The length of exposure to computer-based vocabulary activities does not have any significant effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain.

H3: The integration of computer-based vocabulary activities does not have any significant long-term effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain.

H4: The length of exposure to computer-based vocabulary activities does not have any significant long-term effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

In order to obtain the required data to properly answer the research questions, 49 female elementary EFL learners, who constituted three intact classes, were involved in the research process. They were within the age range of 11-13 and according to the classification of the language school, their proficiency level was FLC7 (First Language Course), which was a categorization to address young teenager learners' language proficiency level. Although they were all supposed to have a similar level of general proficiency in English, Cambridge Young Learners English Test was utilized to assure about their homogeneity in terms of their proficiency level. This test includes three examination papers from University of Cambridge ESOL examinations. The mean score of 60.82, 62, and 62.44 for the first, second, and third groups was observed after the analysis of the gained data. However four outliers, who got extreme scores in comparison to the rest of participants, were omitted from the study and the results revealed that all the other participants could be considered as beginners with more or less the same proficiency level. Hence all of these participants were qualified to serve the purpose of the research. Following a semi-randomization procedure, the intact classes were assigned to two experimental groups and one control group. It is worth mentioning that 15 participants were present in each of these groups.

### B. Instruments

The following instruments were used in this study for data elicitation purposes.

#### 1. Cambridge young learners English test

Cambridge Young Learners English Test was utilized to assure about the homogeneity of the participants with regard to their language proficiency. This test has been developed to assess the proficiency level of elementary learners within the age range of 7 to 12 while adding entertaining elements to testing. The updated edition of 2007 was utilized in the present study. This edition, taken from the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, was considered to be appropriate for learners within the age range of 9 to 12. Appealing activities and eye-catching pictures utilized to increase young learners' motivation are peculiar features of this test pamphlet. The first test from this edition was chosen on the basis of researcher's familiarity with the language school's educational system as well as learners' current level of English. The test focused on all of the four skills. In the first section, 25 listening questions were included in five parts. Reading and writing were addressed in the second part which presented 35 questions in seven parts; it should be mentioned that writing section followed objective scoring. Three types of tasks named as find the difference, information exchange, and tell the story checked participants' speaking ability. 30 learners comparable to the target members in terms of their language proficiency tried their answers to assess the reliability of this test. The results of KR-21 demonstrated 0.76 degree of the reliability for the test, which was a satisfactory one.

#### 2. Achievement test

An achievement test was developed by two teachers to be used as post-test with the aim of assessing participants' vocabulary gain after the implementation of computer-based activities. The teachers involved in the process of test development were both familiar with the aim of test and the content of the lessons. Also, another teacher reviewed all the items to identify any mistakes and to add to the quality of the test. The test consists 25 items in the form of fill in the blanks and open-ended questions. Since only one answer would be correct for each of the items, they were scored objectively. The content validity of the test was checked taking into account the table of specifications by two other experts. Following this review and problem solving stages, the test was piloted on 30 peer learners whom possessed the same level of proficiency, age range, and gender as the target group. KR-21 method was applied to examine the reliability of the test and the results showed a desirable degree of reliability, e.g. 0.68.

#### 3. Family and Friends 2

*Family and Friends 2* published by Cambridge University Press was used in all three classes. The outstanding feature of the *Family and Friends* series is its student MultiRom with computer-based vocabulary activities presented for each unit. The quality of these activities is improved using interesting pictures and sounds. In the vocabulary part, the students are required to match the words with pictures and then software checks the given responses to the activities and expressions such as 'Congratulations' or 'Try Again' are provided to indicate participants' success in doing these activities. Using these expressions, the software presented a kind of instant feedback. Although this book was taught in all the classes, the computer-based activities were only used as post-teaching activities in experimental groups in different ways. It was assured that the control group did not receive the book's accompanying software.

### C. Procedure

To investigate the potential effects of using computer-based activities on young learners' vocabulary gain, the following steps were followed:

At first to address the homogeneity of the involved participants within the intact classes, Cambridge Young Learners' English test was administered. This test checked the proficiency level of 49 elementary young female EFL learners in three different sessions. The decision to conduct this test on three separate sessions was made on the basis of the possible negative effect of learners' short attention span on the reliability of the obtained data. Hence reading and writing in one session and each of the listening and speaking parts in two separate sessions were administered. To avoid any violation to the reliability of the test scores for the speaking part, two raters provided their scores for each participant. Then inter-rater reliability was checked and a high correlation between the two sets of scores was noticed, 0.81. However, in the process of examining participants' general proficiency level, four outliers were observed and consequently excluded from the study. After this homogenizing step, a semi-randomization procedure was followed to randomly assign the classes to one control and two experimental groups, with 15 participants in each group.

In the treatment sessions, the book was taught in the control group without the application of the computer software. However, this group took advantage of paper-based activities. These activities were similar to the practiced computer-based activities in the experimental groups in terms of their content. These activities were deliberately used to be sure about the adequate exposure of the control group to the same vocabulary as the other two groups. These activities were distributed as immediate post-teaching activities in the 12 sessions of treatment. Each session, participants had the time limit of 15 minutes to answer these activities. It must be mentioned that each session participants made groups of four to work on these activities, however due to the number of participants there was always a group of three.

Both of the experimental groups utilized the computer software as post-teaching activities in their classes. Length of exposure was the only differential feature between the two experimental groups. The length of exposure for the second experimental group was twice as long as the first experimental group; the first experimental group used the computer activities fifteen minutes and the second experimental group used them thirty minutes. Each of the participants tried their answers for the presented computer-based vocabulary activities in their groups, then they were supposed to check their answers and if the correct answer was not provided, the participants had to repeat the activity. It must be emphasized that the used MultiRom was only accessible in the classes.

Finally, the achievement test was administered to compare the performance of all groups and to diagnose any possible effects of computer-based activities on improving young learners' vocabulary gain after the treatment sessions.

To get a better understanding of treatment effects and to evaluate longer-term effects of the utilization of computer-based activities, the same test used in immediate post-test was also utilized as delayed post-test two weeks later. It is worth mentioning that the total score of the test was 25.

### D. Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for the analysis of the data. To address the questions concerning the effectiveness of computer-based activities, a one way ANOVA was utilized. Moreover, an independent *t*-test was used to examine whether length of exposure to computer-based activities has any significant effect on learners' vocabulary gain. To gauge the long-term effects of computer-based activities using the results of delayed post-test, the same data analysis procedures were followed.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Results of Proficiency Test

As it was stated earlier, Cambridge Young Learners English Test was used to check the participants' homogeneity in the intact classes. To do so, a one way ANOVA was run. Table 3.1 provides the information related to this analysis.

TABLE 3.1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PRE-TEST PROFICIENCY TEST  
95% Confidence Interval for Mean

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
first class	17	60.82	7.88	1.91	56.77	64.88	40	70
second class	16	62.00	5.31	1.32	59.17	64.83	49	70
third class	16	62.44	5.16	1.29	59.69	65.19	47	68
Total	49	61.73	6.19	.88	59.96	63.51	40	70

In table 3.2, the significance value is 0.37 which means that the homogeneity of variances is not violated.

TABLE 3.2  
TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES FOR PRE-TEST

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.99	2	46	.37

In the following step, the presence of significant difference is examined among the intact classes. No significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in pre-test scores for the present intact classes was observed:  $F(2, 46) = .29, p = .74$ . The results revealed that all of these groups have similar proficiency level at the outset of the study; therefore the results of the achievement test are comparable (Table 3.3).

TABLE 3.3  
ANOVA FOR PRE-TEST SCORES

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.14	2	11.57	.29	.74
Within Groups	1818.40	46	39.53		
Total	1841.55	48			

However, on the basis of the box plot which demonstrates the presence of four outliers, the aforementioned participants' performance was not taken into account in the analysis of the rest of the data (Figure 3.1).

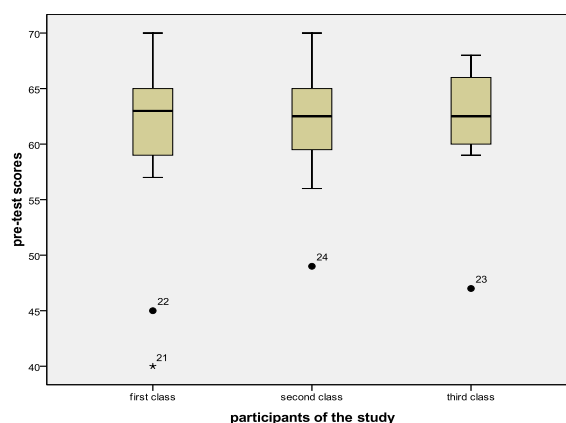


Figure 3.1 Box plot for Pre-test

### B. Computer-based Activities and Vocabulary Gain

This study attempted to investigate the effectiveness of computer-based activities in improving participants' vocabulary gain. Furthermore, the length of exposure was also focused on to determine its effect on vocabulary gain. To find the answer for the first question mentioned above, a one-way ANOVA was utilized. But at first, the mean scores and the other descriptive statistics for all groups on this variable are presented below (see Table 3.4).

TABLE 3.4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR VOCABULARY POST-TEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Control	15	10.80	2.17	.56	9.59	12.01	7	15
experimental1	15	10.73	1.38	.35	9.97	11.50	9	13
experimental2	15	11.00	1.69	.43	10.06	11.94	8	15
Total	45	10.84	1.74	.26	10.32	11.37	7	15

To ensure that the homogeneity of variances is not violated, first the significance value in Table 3.5 is checked and since the significance value is 0.36, the homogeneity of variances is not violated.

TABLE 3.5  
TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES FOR VOCABULARY POST-TEST

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.03	2	42	.36

One-way ANOVA was applied to identify the presence of any significant difference among the groups. The results show that there is no significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in vocabulary post-test scores for the three groups:  $F(2, 42) = .09, p = .91$ . Table 3.6 presents the already mentioned results in detail.

TABLE 3.6  
ANOVA RESULTS FOR VOCABULARY POST-TEST

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.57	2	.28	.09	.91
Within Groups	133.33	42	3.15		
Total	133.91	44			

### C. Length of Exposure to Computer-based Activities and Vocabulary Gain

Though no difference between the experimental groups is observed in the previously discussed statistics, for triangulation purposes, a separate *t*-test was run. Checking the assumptions for the equality of variances shows that the significant value is .95 that is greater than .05; the equality of variances is assumed. Hence, the first line is checked and the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is .64 that is above .05; this result implies no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental groups (see Table 3.7)

TABLE 3.7  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR VOCABULARY POST-TEST  
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
vocabulary post-test	Equal variances assumed	.00	.95	-.47	28	.64	-.26	.56	-1.42	.89
	Equal variances not assumed			-.47	26.97	.64	-.26	.56	-1.42	.89

### D. Longer-term Effects of Computer-based Vocabulary Activities on Vocabulary Gain

In this section, the longer-term effect of computer-based activities on learners' vocabulary gain is examined. At first, the descriptive statistics is presented to offer detailed information about the present groups. Table 3.8 provides the mentioned information.

TABLE 3.8  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR VOCABULARY DELAYED POST-TEST

					95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Control	15	10.27	1.66	.43	9.34	11.19	7	13
experimental1	15	10.60	1.72	.44	9.65	11.55	8	13
experimental2	15	12.60	1.72	.44	11.65	13.55	10	15
Total	45	11.16	1.96	.29	10.57	11.75	7	15

The homogeneity of variances was checked and as Table 3.9 demonstrates, the significance value is .85 which is greater than .05, so this assumption is not violated.

TABLE 3.9  
TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES FOR VOCABULARY DELAYED POST-TEST

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.15	2	42	.85

Following this step, a one-way ANOVA was used to compare mean differences between groups as far as vocabulary long-term gain was concerned. The results of the analysis reveal that there is a significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in vocabulary delayed post-test scores for the three groups:  $F(2, 42) = 8.21$ ,  $p = .00$  (see Table 3.10).

TABLE 3.10  
ANOVA VOCABULARY DELAYED POST-TEST

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	47.77	2	23.88	8.21	.00
Within Groups	122.13	42	2.90		
Total	169.91	44			

To check where the exact place of the difference was, post-hoc Tukey HSD test was used. The comparisons showed that control group ( $M = 10.27$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) did not differ significantly from first experimental group ( $M = 10.60$ ,  $SD$

=1.72). However, the mean score for control group ( $M = 10.60$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) was significantly different from the second experimental group ( $M = 12.60$ ,  $SD = 1.72$ ). Furthermore, the first experimental group ( $M = 10.60$ ,  $SD = 1.72$ ) was significantly different from the second experimental group ( $M = 12.60$ ,  $SD = 1.72$ ). The mean difference for the groups is compared at  $p < .05$  (see Table 3.11).

TABLE 3.11  
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS FOR VOCABULARY DELAYED POST-TEST

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	experimental1	-.33	.62	.85	-1.85	1.18
	experimental2	-2.33*	.62	.00	-3.85	-.82
experimental1	Control	.33	.62	.85	-1.18	1.85
	experimental2	-2.00*	.62	.00	-3.51	-.49
experimental2	Control	2.33*	.62	.00	.82	3.85
	experimental1	2.00*	.62	.00	.49	3.51

#### E. Longer Term Effects of Length of Exposure to Computer-based Activities on Vocabulary Gain

Though the presence of significant difference was observable in the above discussion of results, a separate *t*-test was run for triangulation purposes. Since the significant value is .79 that is greater than .05, the equality of variances is assumed. The value of the Sig. (2-tailed) in the equal variances assumed line is less than .05 that means there is significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the experimental groups (see Table 3.12).

TABLE 3.12  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR VOCABULARY DELAYED POST-TEST  
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	
vocabulary delayed post-test	Equal variances assumed	.06	.79	-3.17	28	.00	-2.00	.62	-3.28    -.71
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.17	28.00	.00	-2.00	.62	-3.28    -.71

#### F. Computer-based Activities and Young Learners' Vocabulary Gain

Once more, the results of the analysis of the obtained data for vocabulary gain in the application of computer-based activities are briefly presented in this section. The results demonstrated that in the administration of the immediate post-test, the integration of computer-based activities did not have any significant effect on young Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary gain in general, and even no significant difference was noticed between the experimental groups. However, the findings of delayed post-test were different from those of the immediate post-test. Though no significant difference was seen between the control group and the first experimental group, the control and the second experimental group performed significantly different in the favor of the application of computer-based activities. The length of exposure was also influential in that the second experimental group had significantly higher means in comparison to that of the first one in the delayed post-test stage.

The results of the immediate post-test suggest that even paper-based pictures can help to acquire the new words as effectively as computer-based pictures though computer-based materials were enhanced with sound and color. The idea of the effectiveness of paper-based pictures is supported in Akbari's (2008) investigation. His comparison between the control, picture-based, and context-based groups revealed that both picture and context enhanced the vocabulary development of the learners, though picture-based group outperformed both paper-based and context-based groups. It may be due to the fact that for short term retention of words, even black and white paper-based pictures are influential.

As stated earlier, the second experimental group with longer length of exposure outperformed the other groups. Similar studies support this finding. For example, Hu and Deng (2007), Kim and Gilman (2008), and Akbulut (2007) reported the improvement of word retention in CALL environments because it places the words in context. Tamjid and Aghlari (2011) reported similar findings. They aimed to find out whether Iranian young learners' vocabulary learning promotes through the application of digital computer games. They ran independent samples *t*-test to compare the performance of the control and experimental groups. The analysis of the obtained data showed the outperformance of the experimental group as they got higher mean scores. This finding is an evidence of the positive effect of integration of computer-based games in vocabulary teaching.

Likewise, Ghabanchi and Anbarestani (2008) focused on the improvement of learners' vocabulary learning in computer-enhanced teaching environments. They related learners' long-term retention of words to the intensive mental processing that took place in CALL classes. Not only vocabulary learning was boosted, but also better pronunciation was observed. It must be mentioned that in the immediate test the control group considerably outperformed the experimental one. However, the scores of the experimental group were significantly higher in the delayed test.

Segers and Verhoeven (2003) reported the same positive results in their study. They utilized computers for intensive vocabulary training. This study, which was conducted in a kindergarten in the Netherlands, lasted for two years and at the end of the treatment the experimental group's good performance was observed. Tsou, Wang, and Li (2002) also studied the possible effects of CALL integration on elementary learners' English abstract words learning in southern Taiwan. The results revealed that more abstract words were acquired by the experimental group in comparison to the control group. In the support of the present findings, Barani, Mazandarani, and Rezaie (2010) examined whether young Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning would increase through the utilization of audiovisual aids. It was interesting to find out that the experimental group's mean scores differed significantly from pre-test to post-test in the favor of the integration of audiovisual aids. Sabet and Shalmani's study (2010) compared the vocabulary gain of two groups. In the treatment for the first group, the items were taught using visual texts and video, while the second group used spoken texts and video. The obtained result showed better performance of the first group.

In Seferoglu's study (2006), the power of the colorful images accompanied with sound in teaching vocabulary was noticed. Learners' improved vocabulary learning was attributed to the presentation of the target words through multimedia materials. He highlights that the visual elements called learners' attention, guided them, kept them attentive and at the end formalized the presented words.

Furthermore, Huyen and Nga (2003) argue that games are helpful in teaching vocabulary. They found that the application of games did not lead to any significant difference in the performance of groups in the immediate post-test, however better retention of the words was seen in a longer period of time. They attribute their finding to the contextualization of vocabulary in the application of games. Moreover, they believe that better vocabulary gain occurs during the process of learning, practicing, and reviewing it in a pleasant atmosphere. They cited relaxed atmosphere, competitive but friendly environment, and contextualization as the key elements in gaining the optimistic results in their study.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

As the aforementioned results demonstrated, the overall effectiveness of the application of computer-based activities in the Iranian context is proved in this study. Furthermore, it was found that with longer length of exposure better results were achieved. Hence, the amount of time devoted to the use of these activities in elementary classes should be concentrated on to achieve better results. Taking into account these promising findings, more effort should be put on the integration of CALL to EFL settings in general and elementary EFL classes in particular.

One of the major implications of the present study is for teachers. Considering the increase of motivation that was observed on the part of the learners in the experimental groups, this may be a good clue for teachers to utilize more computer-based activities in their classes. One of the reasons for such a boost in learners' motivation was the experience of such new learning equipments in their EFL classes. While paper-based activities were done with the least enthusiasm in the control group, the computer-based activities encouraged all learners in both of the experimental groups. To some extent, the presence of such motivation was due to the sound, music, and colorful images that were utilized in designing these games. Furthermore, these computer-based activities were game like; and consequently, they involved all learners, especially passive ones, in the process of learning. The application of these activities changed almost all learners to active and attentive participants in the class. Hence, teachers are recommended to apply new technologies in their classes which will lead to teaching and learning language successfully.

The other implication for teachers is creating a sense of group work among learners. They had time to work together, discuss the answers in their groups, and sometimes they did their best to convince each other and justify their answers. Furthermore, peer correction provided a more relaxed environment to improve learners' gain. It improved the presence of cooperation among learners.

As a final remark, although CALL application is still in its infancy in Iranian context, its unquestionable advantages intrigue teachers to apply it in their classes.

Finally in this section, some research areas are proposed for further scrutiny. First, this study focused on vocabulary as the dependent variable on which the effect of length of exposure to computer-based activities as the independent variable was examined. Other areas of language that are worth being investigated, for example four main skills can be focused on in the application of CALL in educational settings. Second, further studies should be conducted to examine whether gender is also influential in the effectiveness of computer-enhanced classes or not. Third, as this study only addressed young elementary learners' achievement, exploring other proficiency levels and different age ranges will provide better insights on the issue. Fourth, computer-based activities may be good to be used as home assignments. Hence, their effectiveness outside the class is worth examination. Fifth, further research is necessary to examine the more subtle differences among learners because some experienced learners may find some of the educational games too simple and boring.

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**Karim Sadeghi** has a PhD in TESOL from the University of East Anglia (UK) and is an academic staff member of Urmia University, Iran. In addition to serving as an editorial board member of a couple of national and international journals, he is also the editor in chief of Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research. He was selected as Iran's top researcher in Humanities and Social Sciences in 2013.



**Masoumeh Dousti** has an MA in ELT MA from Urmia University. Her research interests are computer-assisted language learning, educational technology, and teaching English as a foreign language.

# A Study of Mother Tongue Interference in Pronunciation of College English Learning in China

Jianping Luo

Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology, China

**Abstract**—There exists a phenomenon of pronunciation confusion of [n] with [l], which appears among the College English learners who come from the provinces along the Yangzi River regions in China and speak their hometown dialects. And something alike happens to the other dialect speakers from the south of China, who could hardly distinguish [f] from [h], or to the Zhuang dialect speakers who could hardly distinguish the aspirated sounds from the non-aspirated ones. These college students usually unintentionally transfer these confused pronunciation of their hometown dialects to English pronunciation and make pronunciation confusion when they speak and read aloud English, which is called mother tongue interference. What's more, this phenomenon also occurs among some teachers who are from these dialect regions. This paper has discussed and analyzed the causes of these mispronunciations phonologically, and then points out some solutions to help both College English teachers and students to realize and overcome their problems. Also, this paper suggests that: first, some knowledge of phonology is necessary to tell phones apart from phonemes; second, as a College English teacher, he or she should learn something about the phonetic features of the students' dialects so as to predict what mistakes these learners would probably make when speaking and reading English; third, helping learners with their pronunciation correction practice is an essential part of the teacher's job, and use of learning strategies, group activities and self-directed learning or autonomous learning ideas and so on is much helpful to guide the classroom teaching and learning.

**Index Terms**—phone, phoneme, phonology, mother tongue interference, Chinese dialects, English pronunciation, college English teaching and learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. College English Learners in Chinese Universities and Colleges

English is one required course called College English in China for almost all students of universities and colleges according to the *College English Curriculum Requirements* issued by the Chinese Minister of Education (2007). In any one of the universities or colleges today, there are almost students who come from inside or outside of the province in which the university or college is located. A local college in Guangdong Province, for example, has a lot of students who come from more than twenty provinces like Hunan, Hubei, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Shanxi, Shandong, Guangxi, Anhui, Sichuan, Gansu, Fujian, Yunnan, Hainan, and even Nei Mongol the province north far away from the province where that college is situated (Huang Ling-yan & Luo Jun, 2011). These students speak different dialects of their hometown, which would likely more or less cause some trouble for English pronunciation.

### B. The Problems of These Students' English Pronunciation

Some students who come from Hunan Province would find it hard to distinguish the English pronunciation between the alveolar nasal sound [n] and the alveolar liquid lateral sound [l]. For example, they would incline to pronounce “knife” for “life”, “need” for “lead”, or something like that. But on the contrary, some students from Hubei Province would likely pronounce “life” for “knife”, “lead” for “need”, and so on. In teaching practice, such things usually happen to those students who come from the regions along the Yangzi River, like the provinces of Sichuan, Chongqing, Jiangsu, etc. Besides, some students of Zhuang nationality from Guangxi would likely pronounce “gat” for “cat”, and “bark” for “park”, and so on. What is wrong with these dialect speakers? Why do they habitually make such wrong pronunciation? Generally speaking, these phenomena are called mother tongue interference, which frequently happens in second language teaching and learning, and today still remains a hot topic for scholars (Akinwamide, T. Kolade, 2012; Elina Tergujeff, 2012) to discuss and study.

As William Littlewood (2002) points out in his book named *Foreign and Second Language Learning* that the interference results from the fact that the learner uses what he already knows about language, in order to make sense of new experience. In the case of mother tongue interference, the learner uses his previous mother-tongue experience as a means of organizing the second language phones. In fact, surprisingly, surveys from university and college in China obviously show that not only students but also teachers are often found to be much confused with such interference problems in the course of College English teaching and learning (Luo Jian-ping & Huang Ling-yan, 2008).

### C. *Purposes of This Paper*

So, the purpose of this paper is intended to look into the phenomenon, discuss the problem of mother tongue interference in English pronunciation, analyze the causes from phonology and then suggest some solutions to solve these problems mentioned above for College English teaching and learning.

## II. CAUSE ANALYSIS

### A. *Some Chinese Dialects and Their Pronunciation*

Chinese language consists of eight dialects, with Putonghua as the standard based on Beijing and Northeastern regions. The eight dialects are spoken mainly in eight regions, but in each region there are also a lot of sub-dialects which are different from each other a little. Chinese university students would like to speak their hometown dialects in daily life, especially when they meet those school friends who come from the same province and get together. Sometimes, their utterance sounds quite ridiculous or funny to those from the other dialect regions. For example, if the students from Lanzhou or Chongqing want to say “the sky is blue, and the earth is green” in Putonghua, they would habitually pronounce it as “Tian shi NAN de, di shi NU de”, instead of “Tian shi LAN de, di shi NU de”, which might cause a burst of laughter immediately because their utterance sounds like “the sky is male, and the earth is female” to those who come from the other provinces like Guangdong, Henan, etc. So, it is clear that these mispronunciations are closely related to their hometown dialects. And actually their English pronunciation is also somehow interfered by their dialect pronunciations, which happened more frequently in local colleges according to some surveys (Huang Ling-yan, 2011).

### B. *English Teaching in the Middle Schools in These Regions*

Usually, those students who are likely to pronounce English sounds in the same way as they do their hometown dialect sounds do not have any chance to go out of their hometown before they go to universities or colleges. They attended middle schools in their hometown, where their middle school teachers would probably speak the same hometown dialect and did not notice that funny phenomenon, or they also have much obstacle to do the correction, to say nothing of helping their students with the right pronunciation. In fact, this is an often-seen phenomenon in the countryside schools in these dialect regions, especially in those backward mountainous rural schools. To College English teachers, it is a hard job to help these students to pronounce English sounds correctly because they have been long misled when they were young in their middle school.

### C. *Phonology Difference between English and Chinese*

Academically, as the scholar points out, English is an intonation language and intonation is meaningful, while Chinese is a tone language which uses tone to distinguish meanings (Zhang Qingxiong, 2011). So, there must be a lot of differences in the number of phones and the ways of sound combination between the two languages. Generally speaking, for example, in English phonetic system there are twenty vowels and twenty-four consonants, but in Chinese phonetic system there are only six vowels (or monophthongs), twenty-five consonants and four tones (Wei Zhi-cheng, 2003) which do not exist in English. And therefore wrong transfer would be sparked again and again in the course of the foreign language learning. In fact, the phenomenon called “mother tongue interference” mentioned above is often found in foreign language teaching at the level of pronunciation, morphology, syntax, vocabulary acquisition, lexicology (Luo Jian-ping, 2013), etc. The Chinese students learning English would come across more or less pronunciation interference at the very beginning, no matter where they are from, as different languages have different sound systems, or phonological systems. And therefore, pronunciation problems would unavoidably come up here and there in English learning.

In most cases, the cause of pronunciation interference is much related with phonology. In phonology, the sounds [n] and [l] are two different phonemes in both English and Chinese Putonghua, but in some dialects in the region of Yangzi River, they are only a group of sounds representing one phoneme. So, when these dialect speakers go out of their dialect regions and communicate with people in other dialect regions, the substitution of [n] for [l] would sound funny or even cause trouble in understanding. Something like that also happens in the other dialect regions. For example, in some local dialect regions in Jiangxi Province, local people always pronounce [f] for [h], and some people in the east of Guangdong Province would pronounce [g] for [j].

## III. SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

### A. *Some Knowledge of Phonology Is Necessary*

It seems that some knowledge of phonology will help us a lot with the matter. For example, it will certainly help to predict what problems some dialect speaking students might have and find ways to solve the interference caused by their mother tongues in learning College English.

Phonology is the study of the sound patterns in different human languages, and speech sounds are in themselves physically different from each other in a number of ways, such as place of articulation, manner of articulation, voicing, tongue height, etc (Hu Zhuanglin, 2001). They may also function differently in different languages. So, for the question

mentioned above, some knowledge of phones, phonemes, allophones is first necessary.

A PHONE is a phonetic or segment. The speech sounds we hear and produce during linguistic communication are all phones. For instance, in the words: *pit*, *spit*, *tip*, we have the phones: [pʰ] (as in *pit*), [p] (as in *spit*), [pʰ] (as in *tip*). But the three different phones do not reflect any difference in meaning. That is to say, if [pʰ] is pronounced in “spit” incorrectly, the sound would not cause any confusion in meaning, and the speaker is just only considered to be poor in English pronunciation. So, we say that these three phones are just regarded as the same phone as [p] which is called phoneme.

A PHONEME is a phonological unit with distinctive value, which is one key point that should be kept in mind. In English, the example again, the aspirated [pʰ] as in “pit” and the non-aspirated [p] as in “spit” are just phones, rather than a phoneme as discussed above, but in Chinese, the two phones are quite different from each other in meaning. Take two Chinese characters pronounced as *p'in* and *pin* for example, the former with the aspirated [pʰ] means “fight” or “try hard”, and the latter with the non-aspirated [p] means “guest” or “soldier” (but only spelt as “bin” in the Chinese Phonetic System). So, in Chinese Putonghua pronunciation, [pʰ] and [p] are regarded as two different phonemes, not just two phones, because they represent two different meanings.

Strictly speaking, every sound is different from each other, and even the intended repetition of a sound will be different every time when it is produced. But, in phonology some of the differences are ignored, and the phonologist is only concerned with what differences are significant or distinctive (Dai, Weidong & He Zhaoxiong, 2002). A good way of reasoning is comparison (Luo Jian-ping, 2011), just like the comparison of the aspirated [pʰ] with non-aspirated sounds [p]. In English, they are non-distinctive, but in Chinese Putonghua, they are significant in meaning. In order to determine which sounds are distinctive, the customary practice is to set up MINIMAL PAIRS, a pair of words which differ from each other only by one sound. The scholar explains it in the linguistic course book that, for example, in the English words *tip*, there are three separate speech sounds or phonemes, that is /t, I, p/. In a further English word *lip*, there are speech sounds, /l, I, p/. The only difference between *tip* and *lip* is the initial sound in each word and the meaning of the words. When we substitute /t/ for /l/ in this way and bring about a change in meaning, we say that the sounds in question are phonemes and that there is a phonemic distinction between them (Yang Xinzhang, 2005).

So actually a phoneme is not any particular sound, but an abstract unit just as a word is an abstract unit (Dwight Bolinger, 1999). A phoneme is represented or realized by a certain phone in a certain phonetic context. Take the example of sound [p] again, an aspirated [pʰ] is always at the beginning of the phonetic context like *pit*, the non-aspirated [p] usually appears after the sound [s] as in *spit*, and the stop [pʰ] is only seen at the end as in *tip*. The three sounds constitute a group of sounds represented only by the phoneme [p]. Then, such a group of sounds are phonologically called ALLOPHONES.

Allophones are the non-distinctive forms of a phoneme, which are used in two ways. One way is in COMPLEMENTARY DISTRIBUTION, which can be seen as above. The other way is in FREE VARIATION. In some situations, for instance, some English speakers pronounce [e] or [i] for the beginning sound of the word “economics” differently, and do not change the meaning of the word at all. That is to say, the two phones occur in the same position without an apparent change of meaning, and so here in that case, [e] and [i] are allophones in free variation.

Back to the confusion of [n] and [l] in some Chinese dialects, the dialect speakers in Hunan Province would always pronounce [n] for [l], but the speakers in Hubei Province would utter [l] in place of [n]. To their dialects, [n] and [l] are allophones in free variation.

### B. Some Knowledge of Dialects Is a Basic Job

Not only the phonology knowledge but some knowledge of difference of language and dialect is also certainly necessary for College English teaching and learning, which might help to predict what kind of trouble would occur in pronunciation training, and help to realize and analyze the mispronunciation caused by mother tongue interference, and finally help learners to do their correction.

In universities and colleges today in China, students come from every part of China, north or south, east or west, not only just the local students themselves as before. All kinds of regional dialects would come along with these regional dialect speakers into a new university environment, and the so-called mother tongue interference would certainly occur and might put some of them into an embarrassing situation when reading and speaking, or even sometimes form a conflict among these new freshmen.

Following is the difference of English and Chinese pronunciations, first. In Chinese Putonghua phonetics system, there are almost no such minimal pairs as voiceless and voiced sounds as in English, but there exist the pairs as aspirated and non-aspirated sounds. So, for the students from the north like Henan, Shanxi province, they would find it difficult in distinguishing the voiceless from voiced sounds like [s] and [z]. They are inclined to add a vowel after these sounds and might pronounce [sə] for [s], [fə] for [f]. For example, they might read *worker* for *work*, and *better* for *bet*, and so on. Besides, in Chinese there do not exist some dental friction sounds like [θ], and thus quite a lot of Chinese students are likely to utter [sin] for “thin”, and something like that (Zhang Qingzong, 2011).

Second, another difference which causes pronunciation trouble also exists between various dialects. In Cantonese, the dialect spoken in most part of Guangdong Province, Hong Kong, and some part of Guangxi Province, the phonetics system has voiceless and voiced sounds (Li Zhuomin, 1980) and so the students of this regional dialect would not mispronounce the sounds like [s], [z], [t], [d], [k], [g], etc. but the other regional dialect speakers would probably do.

Like the Hunan dialect speakers, the students from Nanjing, Chongqing, Lanzhou and Hubei would also be likely to confuse [n] with [l]. Besides, the students from Jiangxi Province are likely to confuse the sounds [f] and [h], which is also likely to happen to the students of Cantonese speakers in most part of Guangdong Province and some part of Guangxi Province. Take “lake” for example, in Putonghua system they would utter [fu] (sounded like “beard”) instead of [hu] (lake). And so in English speaking and reading, the mispronunciation of “fardly” for “hardly” is often heard from these dialect speakers.

For the students from Zhuang natives of Guangxi Province, they are found difficult to distinguish the aspirated sounds from the non-aspirated ones. And when they speak Putonghua, their customary non-aspirated utterances might often cause laughing from other dialect speakers. For example, when they pronounce the Chinese expression like “da feng kou” ( meaning “big wind gap”), they would often mispronounce it as “da feng gou”, which sounds like “a big mad dog” in Putonghua, and so at once causes a burst of laughter. What’s more, for the Chinese expression like “have a look”, they would incorrectly pronounce the word “look” as *gangan* (do), rather than *kankan* (see or look) in Putonghua. There is joke about the Zhuang dialect pronunciation that a native, who found a beautiful girl over there and wanted to go over and have a look, says “let’s go over and “gangan” the girl”, which first surprised his friends of Putonghua speakers and then caused laughter from them, because the Putonghua pronunciation of *gangan* means *rape*, not *look*, which should be pronounced as *kankan*.

### C. Pronunciation Correction Practice Is an Essential Job

Practice makes perfect. The students should be directed to do pronunciation correction practice. They should be divided into mixed groups, which are good for learning practice (Huang Ling-yan, 2010). The so-called mixed groups mean that, in every group, there are students from all dialect regions, or from all provinces, or from the north and the south, but never at all from just one dialect region in one group, because in the mixed group they could easily find what is wrong and how to make correction of English pronunciation. For example, it would be difficult for a student from Hunan to find the pronunciation confusion of [n] and [l], let alone to say help right practice, but it will be easy for a student from Guangdong to find it wrong and help make correction training. Again, a student from Zhuang dialect region in Guangxi would also probably ignore the mispronunciation of aspirated sounds made by those who speak the same region dialect as he or she, but a student from other dialect regions might probably easily detect the mispronunciation immediately at the time when it occurs.

Learning College English needs strategies (Huang Ling-yan, 2010), so it is with the practice of pronunciation training. A good language teacher is good at directing learners to use learning strategies like self-help learning, self-directed learning or autonomous learning (Tricia Hedge, 2002). A tongue twister is a good help for pronunciation training. Though the tongue twister is a language game and may seem funny, yet it is a good practice for those Chinese English speakers who have a problem of mispronunciation. You may begin with the easy ones like “a bitter biting bittern”, “a lusty lady”, “a flea and a fly”, “a big black bug”, “do tongue twisters twist your tongue?”, and so on. It is said that the toughest tongue twister in the English language is “sixth sick sheik’s sixth sheep’s sick”. Teachers could arrange those students practice tongue twisters before the blackboard, in groups, and even after class or at home. Both English and Chinese tongue twisters are a good practice for correcting the mispronunciation. In all, learners should often read out loud their English vocabulary words not only tongue twisters.

Finally, remember that these pronunciation training and practice should be organized on the notion of learner-centered learning. Some scholars (Freeman & Richards, 2002) believe that learner-centered learning is good for positive classroom relationships and ensures that the learners’ affective needs are considered. They hold that it is important to increase the learners’ confidence and to establish a positive and nonthreatening classroom environment. Apart from the group activities, it is necessary for the teacher to conduct an action research to solve his or her such problems found in classroom learning (Luo Jian-ping, 2013), and mother tongue does exert interference in second language learning,. Only when the teacher does researches, could he or she really makes such matter clear and help the dialect speakers understand the cause of their problems. That would be helpful for them to act positively and enjoy doing their practice of pronunciation correction training consciously and energetically.

## IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, many a Chinese college student would come across more or less the problem of mother tongue interference. Many of them would unintentionally confuse the phoneme [n] with [l], or [f] with [h], or the aspirated sounds with the non-aspirated ones in the course of learning English pronunciation, including some teachers who speak their hometown dialects instead of the standard Chinese. Both students and teachers might hardly avoid the mother tongue interference in learning or teaching a foreign language. Interference does not only occur at the level of pronunciation because of the different phonological systems between English and Chinese, but also appears at the other levels like collocation (Abdul Ali Mphil, 2013) and writing (Somchai W. Siriluck Usaha, 2013). So, as a teacher of English as a foreign language, he or she should have in mind some knowledge of linguistic theory and the ability to do research on problems found in classroom teaching. Facing the problem of mother tongue interference, we do not mean to “get it right from the beginning on form” (Lightbown, Patsy M, & Spada, Nina, 2002) for foreign language learners, especially for the beginners, but the most important thing is that a right imitation and practice may be a proper way to success

from the very beginning,. The College English learners who are likely to make mispronunciation should be helped to realize the causes and do more practice purposefully, just as the old saying "Practice makes perfect". For the College English language teachers, they should be first equipped with some linguistic theories to research and analyze the causes theoretically they have found in teaching practice (Huang Ling-yan, 2001), because only the linguistic knowledge and phonological discussion could save them from the puzzles they have encountered in classroom activities, and make themselves enabled to guide their students to analyze and settle such problems as mentioned above.

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**Jianping Luo** was born in Guangzhou, China. He received his bachelor degree in linguistics from Guangzhou Institute of Foreign Languages, China in 1980s.

He is currently an associate professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology, Maoming, Guangdong, China, and was the dean of the Foreign Language Department of Maoming University from 2002 to 2007. His research interests include linguistics and College English learning.

# Dynamic Assessment of Grammar with Different Age Groups

Elham Malmeer

Department of English Teaching, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran

Masoud Zoghi

Department of ELT, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran

**Abstract**—This study intended to explore the effect of an interactionist model of dynamic assessment (DA) on Iranian EFL adult and teenage learners' grammar performance. To this end, 80 students were selected based on the convenience sampling procedure and assigned into teenage ( $n=40$ ) and adult ( $n=40$ ) groups. An interactionist model of DA was implemented in both teenage and adult groups. The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed by the independent samples  $t$ -test. The results indicated a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the grammar test. It is concluded that the adult EFL learners benefits from DA more than the teenage EFL learners.

**Index Terms**—dynamic assessment, teenagers, adults, grammatical ability

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are well aware that every decision that they make or every step that they take in their class has a profound effect on learners' academic achievement. Teacher actions consist of both teaching and testing. Recent views and works in the field of applied linguistics have attempted to reveal the interfaces between teaching and testing so that these two fields are now considered interdependent. The recent approach known as dynamic assessment (DA) has established a stronger link between language teaching and language testing. The term dynamic assessment, probably unfamiliar to some of the Iranian EFL learners and teachers, is rooted in Vygotsky's work, i.e. the zone of proximal development (ZPD) theory. Vygotsky (1998) in his study on the actual and future development of children's ability found that a two year old child, if helped, can have the ability that a seven year old might have. He goes further in education by stating that, "the results of conventional assessment models look like an empty medical diagnosis in which a doctors' job is merely restating the patients 'known problem in a scientific term" (p.205). As Vygotsky (1998), believes this kind of diagnosis is unacceptable and must be changed with a kind of "True Diagnosis" something that includes "an explanation, prediction and scientific basis for practical description" (p.205). DA, a term which was introduced for the first time by Luria (1961), Vygotsky's colleague, tries to do so. As the term DA or more broadly ZPD theory first evolved from the observation of young children; that is why it is still unclear whether the DA can influence young and adult learners to a similar extent. The recognition of this issue can shed light on the language pedagogy and provide further avenues for future research.

While several studies have been conducted to investigate DA in foreign language learning, (Ableeva, 2007; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Poehner, 2008; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002; Zoghi & Malmeer, 2013), it appears that almost no research has been carried out to examine the effect of dynamic assessment on grammar. As mentioned earlier, the investigation of the different age groups in this area has gone unnoticed as well.

Thus the main goal of this research was to investigate the effects of DA on the EFL learners' grammar skill and the degree of the effect that DA can have with regard to learners' age. To this end, the interactionist model of DA was adapted to address the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant difference between teenagers and adults' performance in grammar when a DA procedure is implemented. In other words, there is a significant difference between the teenagers and adults' grammar post-test scores after a DA procedure is implemented.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### A. Theoretical Basis of Dynamic Assessment

The ZPD introduction by Vygotsky was a step toward understanding the process of cognitive development and it's supporting. Mediation and internalization are two interrelated constructs in this theory. According to Vygotsky (1986), individuals are always mediated by social practices, cultural interferences and activities. Even when they are working alone their cognitive functions are being mediated by their history of interaction with the world. In other words as a new cognitive function is processing, the original abilities resides in one's mind reemerge to interfere with the new brain function. Therefore external environment is not the only source of mediation and the individual is quite able to self-

mediate or in Vygotsky's term *self – regulate* whether consciously or subconsciously. Each individual has got two levels of performance; a full development and proximal development. To see what functions are being fully internalized one can observe a person performance when it's done alone. But only through external forms of mediation we would be able to see the abilities that are still forming. Vygotsky was against measuring one's ability on the basis of his solely performance. What he tries to show in his favorite example on the two seven- year old children was to show how misleading the assumption of measuring an individual performance of a person could be. He explained that when the two children were helped whether by hinting, asking leading questions or the other forms of assistance they reacted differently, so they achieved different results. One of the children progressed to the level of 7.5 year old and the other to the level of 9 year old. By this experiment Vygotsky concluded that the independent performance of the individual is a mask on their real performance. As he state it, "from the point of view of their independent activity they are equivalent, but from the point of view of their immediate potential development they are sharply different" (Vygotsky, 1986, pp.447-448). Since the introduction of ZPD, more and more researchers came to the idea that assessment is a relative concept and one's individual performance is not a clear cut index of his real ability. Therefore the idea of integrating mediation into assessment for a better understanding of one's ability was emerged (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). Later on Vygotsky argued that individuals past achievement is not a valid principle to predict their future performance. In Feuerstein term the goal of DA is to help the learners to construct a better future by intervening appropriate modifying strategies.

### *B. Dynamic Assessment VS Static Assessment*

The term dynamic assessment for the first time was introduced by Luria (1961), Vygotsky's colleague. Dynamic assessment and none dynamic assessment are fundamentally different testing methods. As McNamara (2004) puts it, "NDA is a process of gathering information about test takers from observed performance" (p.766). He continued with explaining that this process include observing testes under assessment condition and make inferences about their underlying abilities in order to make statements about their probable performance in a non- assessment situation. Bachman (1990) states that testers must take great care to model abilities such as language proficiency to the extent that one could claim that the assessment is an index of the individual true ability. But in a NDA the abilities will be affected due to the assessment means and the testing context McNamara (2004). In NDA, this interference is highly problematic because what NDA relies on is a strict procedures for a kind of interpretation from the test results which are predicated on the assumption that the abilities are not changing during the testing procedure (Glutting & McDermott, 1990). accordingly assessors are able to describe the individual amount of ability using numbers (e.g., scores, percentile ranking, percentages). In a DA the instructor works continually in order to alter both tasks and mediation to engage the learner's ZPD. DA follows Vygotsky's principle that the basic responsibility of an education is not to document the problems in an individual's process of learning but to discover the underlying process for the poor performance to help the learners in setting new developmental trajectories. So the active role taken by the examinee during the testing situation is a core difference between DA and none DA. As Vygotsky (1998) states it the results of conventional assessment models look like an empty medical diagnosis in which a doctors' job is merely restating the patients 'known problem in a scientific term (p.205).

As Vygotsky (1998), believes this kind of diagnosis is unacceptable and must be changed with a kind of "True Diagnosis" something that includes "an explanation, prediction and scientific basis for practical description" (p.205). DA tries to do that therefore the conventional and traditional terms applied in NDA procedures such as generalizability do not apply in DA.

### *C. Major Contributions*

#### **1. Interventionist versus Interactionist Approaches to DA**

Interventionist and interactionist are two general approaches to DA. In an interventionist model, the standardized mediation allow the greater use of inferential statistics in analyzing and computing results; in interactionist model mediation is attuned to the individuals amount of responsiveness thus it is more sensitive to the ZPD. The basic difference between these two orientations is that interventionist model tries to gain "an index of speed of learning" (Brown and Ferrara, 1985, p. 300) quantifying the amount of help required for the learner to reach the pre-specified end point. Interactionist focuses on the individual development without considering the effort required or having any attention to the end point of development.

#### **A). Interventionist DA**

The instructor using an interventionist DA could use either a "sandwich" or a "cake" model (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002). In the sandwich model no mediation is offered during the assessment but instead a training phase is introduced between a traditional pre-test and post-test. An Individual performance is reported using pre training score, post training score and post training score adjusted for pretest level. The results could be used in specifying three groups: A) high scorers: those whose pre-training scores were already high and therefore do not manifest much improvement as result of training, B) Gainers: those whose scores showed marked improvement as result of training and C) no gainers: those who performed poorly on the pre-test and didn't profit from the instruction. In the second form of the interventionist DA, cake model, mediation is provided to the examinee which is drawn from a standardized menu of



hints, including both implicit and explicit. The scores are the reported results that are based on the amount of the prompts provided to the examinee and the amount of time taken to complete the test.

#### **B). Interactionist DA**

As was discussed above the interventionist DA, has a strong propensity toward quantification and psychometric analysis, interactionist approaches care for “qualitative assessment of psychological processes and dynamics of their development” (Minick, 1987, p.119). As Vygotsky believe and put it in several ways that we must not measure the child, we must interpret the child and to achieve this goal we have to interact and cooperate with the child (Vygotsky, 1998, p.204). One of the pioneers in this field is Reuven Feuerstein (Feuerstein, Rand, and Rynders, 1988). He believes that the traditional concept of having two extremes having an examiner on one side and the examinee on the other side- in the testing context could not be accepted anymore. What instructor has to focus more is a kind of teacher-student relationship in which both are working to have successful students. He argued that a “mediated learning Experience”, (MLE) is at the heart of the process. Here an adult mediate carefully by selecting, scheduling, and repeating the a culturally based Stimuli in order to make sure that in certain ways the relations between certain stimuli is experienced( Feuerstein, Rand, and Rynders , 1988,p.56) .

#### **D. Zone of Proximal Development**

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory has two major components. First he discusses about the role of interaction in the process of language development then he discussed about the cognitive capacity of an individual in the process of language development. He goes on with calling this idea the " zone of proximal development"(ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) defines ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). This theory will describe the potential capacity to learn in future and has nothing to do with a prior level of an individual capacity to learn. Poehner and Lantolf (2005) believe that “DA is very much in line with future-in-the-making models of development” (p. 237). Vygotsky's ZPD theory is a bridge between testing and teaching considering the language ability assessment procedure. He believes in a dynamic form of assessment and consequently teaching.in his mind assessment and teaching should always interact and he left no room for a static way of assessing the language in his ZPD theory. Thus, it can be proposed that while static tests focus on the performance belonging to ZAD, DA tries to measure the emerging abilities which are not still fully developed and do not belong to the existing knowledge repertoire.

#### **E. Approaches to Dynamic Assessment**

In Vygotskian notion of ZPD the human ability has gotten a new perspective. He believes in individual s potentials to exceed beyond their current level of performance in corporation with a mediator who helps the person by providing appropriate mediation strategies (Poehner, 2008). He goes on with stating that recently there are a number of methods and procedures in theaching that would be covered with the DA term .this diversity in the use of the term DA is because the mediation can be intered into the process of teaching and assessment in a number of ways. But, According to (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004) DA could be categorized under two general approaches: interactionist and interventionist.

### **III. METHOD**

#### **A. Participants**

The three phases of the sandwich model of DA were conducted with 80 EFL learners in Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Kermanshah, Iran.40 from the adult department( ranging in age from 20 to 40) and 40from the teenager( ranging in age from 13to 19) department. All participants had been learning English for a year as a foreign language. And they were mainly university students or school students and were studying English for the purpose of finding a better job or achieving higher degrees in their course of education. They were studying ILI book series for improving their language proficiency. They had classes two times a week for 25 sessions.

#### **B. Design**

The design of the study was based on a quasi-experimental design with non-randomized pre-test post-test comparison groups. As random selection and assignment of students were almost impossible, we had to employ intact classes. For this reason, 40 learners from teenager department and 40 learners from adult department were chosen. To be consistent with other DA studies, this investigation drew on a *Sandwich model* which was introduced by Sternberg and Grigorenko (as cited in Poehner, 2008). According to Poehner (2008) a mediation phase is sandwiched between pre-test and post-tests that are administered in a non-dynamic manner. The mediator, who is the teacher in this research, helps the students with their wrong answering in the pre- test and does her best not to reveal the answer directly but to provide them with proper hints .Then there would be another test which is a post test. The performance on the post test can then be compared to that of the pre-test in order to decide how much improvement has been made.

#### **C. Instruments**

The researchers administered two different grammatical tests in this study. one in the pre-test stage and one in posttest stage.

#### D. Materials

For the purpose of data collection on the students' ability in English grammar the teacher used the exercises on the students *ILI students' books and workbooks* and exercises from the *grammar in use book* series, and some of the exercises were chosen from the *top notch* teacher manual as well.

#### E. Procedure

As the researchers are quite familiar with the ILI manager and clerks, they would ask them for allocating four classes to them two from the teenager's department and two from the adult's department. They would even ask them to equate the number of students in each class 20 in each for the purpose of having an equal sample size in each department in order to be able to compare the mean scores of the groups. The classes are 25 sessions in a term and the researchers implement the three stages of DA in the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> session of classes. Two tests on grammatical skill are prepared to be implemented in pre- test and post- test. The three stages are as follow;

Stage one: in the pre-test stage the students in both groups were given some selected exercises and were asked to answer the questions. The questions involved both multiple choices and open ended types. Then the teachers took the papers home, corrected them and scored them. They even provided individual comments and explanation to the errors in a marginal format and gave the papers back to the students.

Stage two: the teachers in a discussion format class tried uncover the problematic areas. The teachers, who adopt a mediator role offered feedback, gave explanation, asked them to explain why they chose the wrong answer, and provided them with different techniques mostly with thinking aloud, and mainly focused to give hint to the answers and not to reveal the answer.

There was even peer-correction and collaboration at times.

Stage three: in this stage another test was administered. The mediator used the same procedure of scoring in the pre-test. Hand back their scores but there was no discussion on it. In order to compare the students' amount of grammar improvement in both age groups, the researcher compared the mean scores of pre- test and post – test in each age group and to see if the obtained results is statistically significant and to see how differently the groups benefit the implication of DA in their classes the data were entered into Spss for two independent sample t- test between the groups i.e., teenagers and adults..

### IV. RESULTS

This study was designed to investigate the possible effect of dynamic assessment on students' grammar skill and the degree of the effect that DA can have with regard to learners' age. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: There is a significant difference between teenagers and adults' performance in grammar when a DA procedure is implemented. In other words, there is a significant difference between the teenagers and adults' grammar post-test scores after a DA procedure is implemented.

In order to probe the research question the three phases of an interactionist DA was proposed to the learners in both groups. Then the learners pretest and post test results were entered in to Spss for quantitative analyses. First a descriptive statistic was conducted on both groups' pre-test and post test score. The results of descriptive analysis are presented in Table 1. As the tables indicate, at pre-test stage both teens and adults group were homogeneous in terms of their grammatical language ability and there was no statistically significant difference between the teens ( $M=16.52$ ,  $SD=3.17$ ) and adults ( $M=16.52$ ,  $SD=2.77$ );  $t(80) = .00$ ,  $p > .05$ . Table 1 shows the result of descriptive statistics. And the result of t-test independent sample is presented in table 2.

TABLE1.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: RESULTS OF PRE-TEST POST TEST SCORES IN BOTH GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test Adults	40	16.5250	2.77339	.43851
Pre-Test Teens	40	16.5250	3.17027	.50126
Post-Test Adult	40	17.8500	2.41311	.38155
Post- Test Teen	40	16.8250	3.17755	.50241

TABLE 2:  
INFERENTIAL STATISTICS (RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES TESTS FOR PRE-TEST  
posttest pretest)

	posttest		pretest	
	Equal variances assumed	Equal variances not assumed	Equal assumed	Equal variances not assumed
F	2.631		.455	
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	.109		.502	
T	1.625	1.625	.000	.000
Df	78	72.757	78	76.645
t-test for Equality of Means			1.000	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.108	.109	.000000	.000000
Mean Difference			.66600	.66600
Std. Error Difference			-1.32591	-1.32628
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			1.32591	1.32628
Lower	.63087	.63087		
Upper	-.23097	-.23239		
	2.28097	2.28239		

After the first independent t-test between the groups pre- test, and having enough evidence that the groups are equal before treatment, another t-test was calculated on the groups post-test to show the different amount of achievements and to see if the obtained difference is statistically significant enough. Table 2 shows the results of independent sample t-test related to the groups post test score.

An independent t test was conducted in order to decide whether this mean difference (1.023) is meaningful for the t value of 1.62 or not. Independent-samples t-test presents a significance of different of .108,  $t(80) = 1.62$ ,  $p > .05$ . Also, the eta square is .03 which is small.

## V. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigated the effects of interactionist DA on the development of grammar ability among Iranian intermediate students learning English as a foreign language. With increasing interest in DA all over the world especially in the applied linguistic field, there is more need to investigate the role which DA could play on SL/FL learning. The research aimed to add a new dimension to L2 DA research, i.e. its specific influence on learners regarding age parameter.

The findings of the present study could be discussed regarding two areas of study that the researchers intended to measure. First DA effect would be discussed on EFL learners' grammar improvement; next DA effect would be discussed considering age parameter.

To start with, the results obtained from the comparison between the mean scores in pre test and post showed the learners in both age groups would benefit the application of DA in their classes. It seems that although grammar learning in first language is mainly implicit; students learning a language as a foreign language would benefit explicit rule governing strategies. And DA could be an interactionist way which includes explicit and implicit teaching strategy. The results obtained from the current study is quite in accordance with the other studies showing the positive effect of DA on students learning Masoud Zoghi and Elham Malmeer (2013), Ableeva (2007); Lantolf, J.P. & M.E. Poehner (2004); Poenher, M, E. (2008); Sternberg, R.J. and E.L. Grigorenko. (2002).

This study also revealed that learners belonging to different age groups are not influenced by dynamic assessment to the same degree. It was evident that adults benefit more than teenagers when an interactionist DA was presented. One way to deal with this reaction is to consider the interactionist nature of DA. According to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory DA is both a teaching and assessment procedure in which interaction has a crucial role. And it is presented in the form of mediation and interaction. A very purposeful interaction which happens between the adult learners and teachers in the interactionist DA lead this group to gain more from this procedure, as adults love to interact more with each other than the teenager. Teenagers seem to benefit more from the controlled teaching techniques and methodologies. Moreover, these learners react better to the techniques that aim to create good learning habits through repetition. This can be best explained by their absence of interest in deductive approach of rule leaning

Moreover, the results could be interpreted from Piaget view of intellectual learning. For Piaget language development is the result of gradual growth of general intellectual skills (Wool folk, 2004). As adults have more advanced intellectual system it is unlikely that they could benefit cognitive processes including interpretation strategies more when they are learning a language than teenagers that their intellectual brain is not as developed as adults. Therefore the developmental theory of Piaget could gain more support when the instrument of learning is a cognitive one and where

age plays an essential role. The results obtained add supports to the Bandura, 1986 model of learning, in which he claimed that students' abilities to learn depends on developmental factors. Young learners have difficulty attending to an event for long periods and distinguishing relevant from irrelevant cues. Information processing such as organizing, elaborating and rehearsing improve with development.

While much of Vygotsky findings on ZPD theory have been evolved from his personal observation of children learning processes and their possible potential capabilities, it appears that the DA which originates in ZPD theory has not proved to influence children language learning to the extent that it does in adults' language learning process.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the effect of introducing an interactionist model of dynamic assessment course on the learners' demand of grammar. The proposed hypotheses predicted that DA can influence Iranian EFL learners' grammar skill and that there is significant difference between teenagers and adults' achievement when a DA procedure is implemented. In other words this study revealed that that dynamic assessment plays an effective role on the learners' demands of grammar. The results and findings of this study offer practical implementation for classroom learning. The use of dynamic assessment in classrooms can pave the way for better teaching and learning which subsequently improves the quality of education. Through the persistent interaction of teachers and students, students can be aware of their own weaknesses as well as their strengths. Teachers can also compensate for their breakdowns in the course of teaching. And having the exam in three phases will bring the students a sense of belonging to the class and responsibility for what has or hasn't been learned in the course. The results also revealed that young learners, teenagers, will not benefit DA to the extent that the adults do. This gap can open the doors for new research and investigation on this issue for those who are interested in such a controversial issue.

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**Elham Malmeer** was born in Iran, has earned her MA in TEFL at Teharn University (South Branch), and now is a PhD. Candidate majoring TESL at Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch in Iran.

She has been teaching English for about 9 years in different institutes and universities. Her main interest is testing and teaching English as a foreign language to Iranian learners. She is working on the Dynamic Assessment and its different applicability for Iranian language learners.

**Masoud Zoghi** is assistant professor of TESL in the Dept. of ELT of Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch in Iran. He earned his Ph. D. in TESL in 2009 from the National University of Malaysia. He has taught courses on research methodology, ESP, applied linguistics, and language testing at the M.A. and Ph.D. programs in ELT and General Linguistics. His current research and teaching focus includes research methodology in applied linguistics, psychology of language (esp. affective variables), cooperative learning, and reading comprehension.

# Second Language Acquisition in Informal Setting

Taher Bahrani (Corresponding author)

Department of English Language, Mahshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mahshahr, Iran

Tam Shu Sim

Department of English, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University Malaya, Malaysia

Marziyeh Nekoueizadeh

Department of English Language, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran

**Abstract**—For second language acquisition (SLA), having access to language input is critical. Although the theories of SLA attach different importance to the role of language input, they all acknowledge the need for it (Ellis, 2008). Learners of English as a second (ESL) or a foreign language (EFL) are always encouraged to avail themselves of all forms of authentic language input within the classroom and beyond. In contexts with limited social interaction in the English language, however, various audiovisual technologies are available to be utilized as sources of authentic language input for enhancing language learning in both formal and informal learning settings. In the same line, the present aims at considering the role of language input for SLA development in informal setting.

**Index Terms**—second language acquisition, informal setting, authentic language input

## I. LANGUAGE INPUT AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In this section, the role of language input in SLA is discussed. This is done based on: firstly, the importance which is given to the role of input in various theories of language learning, and secondly, some frameworks for SLA such as those introduced by Gass and Selinker (1994) and Ellis (1997) with the direct focus on language input for SLA. Additionally, Krashen's input hypothesis is followed by critiques of his hypothesis.

### **The role of input in second language acquisition**

There are many internal as well as external factors which influence SLA. Among them, the language input that learners receive in SLA is one of the external factors which plays a fundamental role. Corder (1967) is one of the pioneers among SLA researchers who underscored the importance of language input for SLA by drawing a distinction between input and intake. According to Corder, language input refers to what is available to be utilized by language learners for SLA which should be differentiated from intake which is that part of the input which is comprehended by the language learners.

The review of the literature on language input and SLA reveals that much work in this area of research has been concerned with the importance, the role, and the processing of linguistic input (Doughty & Long, 2003; Ellis, 1994; Ellis, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Gass, 1997). From a large pool of research, it can be deduced that SLA simply cannot take place in a vacuum without considering having exposure to some sort of language input (Gass, 1997).

However, while the importance and the role of language input have been advocated by various theories of language learning, there has been a difference between those theories which attribute a small or no role to language input and those attributing it a more important role. According to Ellis (1994; 2008), SLA theories attach different importance to the role of input in the language acquisition process but they all acknowledge the need for language input. In many SLA theories, language input is considered as being a highly essential factor while in other theories it has been given the secondary role. In fact, what has been changed in relation to the role of input in language learning from the viewpoint of various language learning theories is the conceptualization of how language input is processed by language learners (Doughty & Long, 2003).

In this relation, Ellis (2008) considered the role of language input in SLA based on behaviorist, mentalist, and interactionist theories of language learning. Gass (1997) also considered the role of language input in the input-interaction model, the input hypothesis, the universal grammar model, and the information processing model which treat the role of language input in different ways. According to Gass (1997), in the input-interaction model, the language input that language learners receive is strengthened by the manipulation of the input through interaction which forms a basis for SLA. Within Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis (1981), SLA takes place merely by means of comprehensible input which the language learners receive. That is, only the language input that is a little beyond the learners' language competence is useful for SLA. The third model as explained by Gass (1997) is the universal grammar which asserts that language input is important but there must be something in addition to language input. This is the innate capacity which helps language learners acquire the second language. The last model is the information processing model in which the learner must first notice that there is something to learn. Then, the learner's attention is

drawn to those parts of the input which do not coincide with the internalized competence. In this model, language input is necessary for providing information for language construction (Gass, 1997).

Besides the role of language input in SLA which has been considered from the perspectives of different language learning theories and models, language input has also been given the initial role to provide the necessary data for SLA in some frameworks. Among the researchers who have studied the role of language input in SLA, Gass and Selinker (1994) and Ellis (1997) proffered two frameworks which indicate the importance of input in the SLA process.

Within the framework introduced by Gass and Selinker (1994), there are five levels for turning input into output: apperceived input, comprehended input, intake, integration, and output which account for the SLA process. According to their model (Figure 1), language input refers to various sources of second language data which the learners are exposed to.

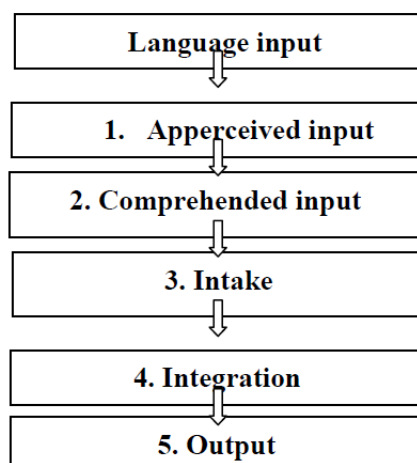


Figure 1: Gass and Selinker's model (1994) for second language acquisition

The first stage of the SLA model which is concerned with input utilization is called apperceived input. In this stage, some of the language input is noticed by the language learner because of some specific features such as frequency, prior knowledge, affect, and attention (Gass & Selinker, 1994). The second stage is the comprehension of that bit of language input which is apperceived. Then, in the third stage which is a mental activity, the language input is comprehended and internalized by the language learners which refers to intake. The fourth stage is the integration of the intake with the prior knowledge to arrive at the fifth stage which is the output in the form of written or spoken language.

Likewise, Ellis (1997) introduced a basic computational model of SLA with an initial focus on language input (Figure 2). In this model, language learners are first exposed to language input which is then processed in two stages. First, some parts of the input that are comprehended by the language learners turn into intake. Second, some of the intake which finds its way to the long term memory is then turned into knowledge which results in spoken or written output. While Gass and Selinker's (1994) and Ellis's (1997) theoretical frameworks for SLA attach the initial importance to language input, they differ from each other in the number of stages that language input is processed in the minds of language learners.

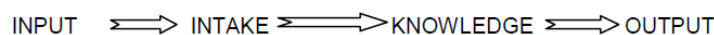


Figure 2: Ellis's model (1997) for second language acquisition

In a nutshell, both the above-mentioned frameworks are concerned with the various steps in which language input is turned into output. In other words, the language input processing is the focus of both frameworks. However, comparing the theories and theoretical frameworks for SLA based on the role of language input, it is revealed that the importance of language input is highlighted by various theories and theoretical frameworks for SLA. Taking up on this, one of the most influential SLA hypotheses concerned with the role and importance of language input in SLA is the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985). Indeed, most of the studies on the type of language input and SLA have been developed to either support or criticize Krashen's input hypothesis which first claimed the important role of comprehensible input for SLA. Indeed, input hypothesis triggered numerous studies in the investigation of issues related to the type of language input for SLA (Ying, 1994).

#### **Krashen's input hypothesis and second language acquisition**

One of the important psychologically-oriented theories of language learning was established by Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985). He proposed a 'monitor model' of second language learning including five hypotheses: the input hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. The hypothesis related to this study is the input hypothesis which is put forth.

The input hypothesis strongly claims that for SLA to take place, language learners should have exposure to a type of second language data which they can comprehend. Krashen identified comprehensible language input as "the only causative variable in SLA" (Krashen, 1981, p. 57). According to Krashen, for SLA to occur, language learners have to have exposure to comprehensible language input that includes language structures that are beyond their current level ( $i+1$ ).

Based on Krashen's claims regarding language input and SLA, the basic assumptions of the input hypothesis are summarized as: (1) access to comprehensible input is the main feature of all cases of effective SLA, (2) more quantities of comprehensible input seem to cause faster or better SLA, and (3) lack of access to comprehensible input causes little or no SLA.

A few researchers (Ellis & He, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1994; Long, 1982) have advocated the input hypothesis by suggesting modified input, interactionally modified input, and modified output as three rich sources of comprehensible input for SLA. Modified input refers to a type of language input that has been modified or simplified in some ways before the language learners are exposed to it, interactionally modified input, on the other hand, originates from input modification that occurs when language learners experience difficulty comprehending a message in interaction with interlocutors, and modified output refers to language learners' efforts to modify their output to make it more comprehensible to the interlocutor (Ellis & He, 1999; Long, 1996).

Another aspect of the input hypothesis in relation to acquiring the language in informal settings (out of the classroom environment) is the importance of direct exposure to a source of language input. According to Krashen (1981), language acquisition can take place in an informal environment if language learners are directly involved in intensive exposure to language input. Later, it will be discussed that this aspect of the input hypothesis which emphasizes the necessity of exposure to language input for language learning to occur has also been emphasized by Krashen's critics. Nevertheless, empirical evidence related to the sources of language input, the quality, and quantity of the input have not been provided neither by Krashen nor his critics.

### **Critiques of the input hypothesis**

Regardless of the significant effect that the input hypothesis has had on the researches about the role of language input in SLA, it has been criticized strongly by several researchers. Serious concerns regarding the input hypothesis were expressed by McLaughlin (1987). McLaughlin claimed that it is very difficult to define the concept of a learner's level which limits the application of its rule in the classroom because individual differences should be taken into consideration when determining the learners' current levels. In fact, determining the current level of each language learner and providing  $i+1$  language input for each of them separately in the classroom seems to be very difficult to fulfill. Krashen did not provide solutions considering this issue. There are also some problems regarding the approach to provide language learners with language input which matches their " $i+1$ " level.

The input hypothesis has also been challenged by many researchers particularly because it has made a large number of claims about the type and the qualitative aspect of the necessary language input for SLA development without providing solid empirical evidence. In other words, because Krashen's input hypothesis limits SLA to merely exposure to comprehensible input, the criticisms directed at the input hypothesis are mainly around the nature and the type of language input that can constitute the primary data for SLA. In fact, although second language researchers and the critics of Krashen's input hypothesis highlight the important role of input in SLA and agree on the fact that language input is a necessary ingredient in SLA (Salaberry, 2003), they claim that SLA is not achieved merely through comprehensible input. Other types of language input such as incomprehensible input, comprehended input, and comprehensible output are also considered to improve language learning through providing the necessary input.

White (1987) considered the necessary language input which constitutes the primary data for SLA to be either comprehensible or incomprehensible. In his incomprehensible input hypothesis, White underscored the point that it is the comprehension difficulties or input incomprehensibility that can provide important negative feedback to the learner that is indispensable for the constitution of SLA. When language learners encounter language input that is incomprehensible to them because their inter-language rules cannot, for example, analyze a particular structure, they have to modify those inter-language rules to understand the structure (White, 1987). As a result, the incomprehensible input enhances SLA.

It can be concluded from what White (1987) has put forth in relation to comprehensible or incomprehensible input that when the language input is comprehensible, the acquisition of the missing structures may not occur. In contrast, when the language input is incomprehensibility because of some aspects which the language learners have not yet acquired, the given language input to the language learners draws their attention to the specific features to be acquired.

Gass (1988, 1997) also emphasized that priority should be attached to the concept of comprehended input rather than comprehensible input. According to Gass, only that part of the language input which is comprehended is involved in the SLA process. In other words, the primary language input which is necessary for SLA may be beyond the boundaries of comprehensible input.

In the same line and as was discussed earlier, in Gass and Selinker's (1997) and Ellis's (1994) theoretical models for SLA, language input which is apperceived by the language learners and then is turned into comprehended input and intake is not limited merely to language data (input) which should necessarily be comprehensible. Indeed, language learners are exposed to a body of second language input which may or may not be within the range of  $i+1$ . Out of this



initial body of language input, some of the input is noticed by the language learners because of frequency, affect, prior knowledge, and attention (Gass & Selinker, 1997). Hence, the qualitative aspect of language input in Gass and Selinker's (1997) and Ellis's (1994) theoretical models for SLA is not limited to language input that is necessarily at the language learners'  $i+1$  current language proficiency level.

In addition to incomprehensible input and comprehended input, Swain (1985) also argued that besides comprehensible input, comprehensible output can also provide the necessary data for SLA. The comprehensible output hypothesis put forth by Swain (1985) states that language learning occurs when the language learner faces a gap in his/her linguistic knowledge of the second language. By noticing this gap, the language learner tries to modify his/her output. This modification of output may end in learning a new aspect of the language which has not been acquired yet.

Although Swain did not claim that comprehensible output is solely responsible for all or even most parts of the language acquisition, she highlighted the point that under some conditions, comprehensible output facilitates SLA in ways that it can provide the necessary input. As a matter of fact, although Swain (1985) acknowledged that without comprehensible input language learners are not able to make connections between forms and meanings for SLA development, she provided evidence of the immersion programs in which comprehensible input alone did not lead to SLA. This view sharply contrasts with Krashen's input hypothesis where the role of comprehensible output is neglected or minimized.

To this point, according to what was put forth in relation to Krashen's input hypothesis and his critiques' concerns, it can be concluded that the importance of language input for SLA is not questioned and some type of language input is necessary for SLA. Accordingly, in addition to modified input, interactionally modified input, and modified output which are considered as various types of comprehensible input for SLA, comprehended input, incomprehensible input, and comprehensible output can also provide the necessary language input for SLA. Hence, without debating on the right or wrong of Krashen's hypothesis which is beyond the scope of this study, the premise taken is that some forms of language input is necessary for the study without delving into the psychological aspects of the language input.

## II. INFORMAL AND FORMAL LANGUAGE LEARNING SETTINGS

The term informal learning was drawn from informal education which was first introduced and popularized in the field of education by Knowles (1950). In focusing on the concept of informal education, Knowles highlighted the informal environment in many learning situations, the flexibility of the process, and the use of experience. Although Knowles did not explicitly define informal education, he utilized the term to refer to the use of informal programs and, to some extent, the learning obtained from interaction in society. In the same line, Coombs and Ahmad (1974) defined informal education as a widely accepted process of developing knowledge and skills of people in a highly uninstitutional and unstructured setting. In contrast, formal education is highly institutional and occurs in structured settings.

Following the concepts of informal and formal learning, informal and formal language learning were also introduced and studied by some researchers (Lightbown & Spada, 2001; Marsick & Watkins, 1990; Rogers, 2004). In this regard, similar to Coombs and Ahmed, Rogers (2004) noted that informal language learning is unstructured and unpurposeful but is the most extensive and essential part of all the learning that all of us do every day of our lives. On the contrary, formal language learning is structured, purposeful, and school-based.

The distinction between formal and informal language learning is significant in terms of the settings of the learning (in-or-outside the class environments), and instruction which refers to focus on the form or the meaning of language (Lightbown & Spada, 2001; Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Informal setting is considered as the context in which language learners are exposed to the target language at school, home, and work or in social interaction and formal setting as the context where the target language is being taught to a group of second or foreign language learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

In view of that, formal language learning takes place in the class environment but informal language learning, mostly, takes place out of the class environment. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that it is not always the case that formal and informal language learning settings are separate from each other and do not overlap. Informal language learning can also occur in a class setting when the focus is not on the form of the language (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Marsick and Watkins (1990) highlighted the point that informal language learning may occur in classrooms or institutions when peers have interaction with each other, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured. Moreover, informal learning can be deliberately encouraged where the environment is not highly conducive to learning. Figure 3 shows the comparison between formal and informal language learning in terms of settings and instructions.

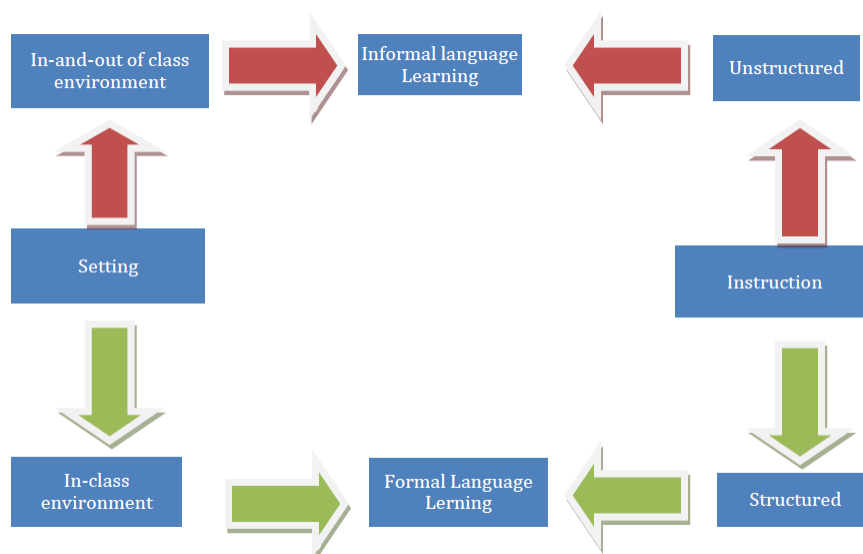


Figure 3: Graphic representation of the distinctions between formal and informal language learning in terms of setting and instruction

Based on what Marsick and Watkins (1990) put forth, formal language learning is classroom-based, highly structured, and teacher-directed in terms of the content to be learnt. Conversely, informal language learning occurs in-and-out of classroom while the focus is not on the form of the language. Moreover, informal language learning is not structured.

Considering the fact that some type of language input is required for language learning/acquisition, one issue in relation to acquiring the language in informal settings in EFL/ESL contexts is the source of language input.

### III. SOURCES OF LANGUAGE INPUT IN EFL/ESL CONTEXTS

Various sources of language input are available in ESL and EFL contexts. Before the discussion on the sources of language input in EFL and ESL contexts is put forth, the concepts of ESL and EFL contexts need to be elaborated.

An ESL context is an environment where English language is spoken in society as the official language or the medium of communication among people from different countries. In fact, English language plays an institutional and social role in the community in an ESL context (Ellis, 2008). According to Ellis (2008), in an ESL context, English language functions as a means of communication among members who speak various languages. In contrast, an EFL context refers to an environment where English language is not the primary or secondary language spoken. Indeed, English is considered as a foreign language rather than a *second* language and the use is limited to language classrooms (Freed, 1995). In EFL context, English language has no major role in society and is learnt in the classroom setting (Ellis, 2008).

Back to the discussion on the available sources of language input in EFL/ESL contexts, it should be mentioned that in ESL contexts, people can have interaction with other people from different countries using the English language. English is then considered as a source of language input which can facilitate and pave the way for SLA (Gass, 1997). The social interaction in ESL contexts is one of the authentic sources of language input which can help language learners acquire the language in informal settings.

This has been emphasized by Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis in which conversational interaction enhances SLA. Accordingly, negotiation of meaning which triggers interactional adjustments by the native speakers or more proficient interlocutor in social interaction can contribute to SLA. In contrast, in an EFL context social interaction as a source of language input in an informal language learning setting is lacking. English is not used as a medium of communication or for other purposes in society in the EFL contexts. Indeed, the use of English language is mainly limited to formal settings at universities, language institutes or language classrooms. As a matter of fact, in EFL contexts, limited usage of English language can only be observed when language learners use English language in interactions with their instructors and their peers.

In short, examples of learning the language in informal setting include learners' interaction with native or non-native speakers in the target language country or a country where English is the second language. Besides, learners' use of different technologies at home or at work via watching a movie or listening to music or song which provide appropriate language input is considered as another example of language learning in informal settings (Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

By viewing, for example, a movie or listening to a song, language learners indirectly get involved in the language learning process when they try to understand the movie or the song by using different language learning strategies (Pemberton, Fallahkhair & Mosthoff, 2004). The various types of audiovisual programs are considered to be authentic language materials which have the potential to provide the necessary language input for SLA in informal setting by indirectly involving the language learners in the language learning process (Pemberton et al., 2004).

#### IV. AUTHENTIC LANGUAGE INPUT FOR SLA DEVELOPMENT

In this section the concept of authentic language input needs to be defined first. Then, the sources of authentic language input which are available in EFL and ESL contexts will be highlighted. Lastly, the benefits and possible drawbacks of utilizing authentic language input in language learning are considered.

##### **Defining authenticity**

Using authentic language input through authentic materials in foreign/second language learning has a long history. For example, Henry Sweet (1899, cited in Gilmore, 2007) is considered as one of the first linguists who utilized authentic texts because he was aware of their potential advantages over contrived materials.

In order to determine the definition of authentic language input as precisely as possible, the term authenticity should be considered first. In this regard, there are varieties of definitions of this concept which relate to second/foreign language classroom (Gilmore, 2007; Nunan, 1999; Porter & Roberts, 1981; Taylor, 1994; among others). These various definitions emerge from the debate as to whether authentic materials which are utilized in language classrooms are in fact considered to be authentic or inauthentic.

Taylor (1994) considered different types of authenticity as falling into three categories: authenticity of the task, authenticity of language input, and authenticity of the situation. Authentic language input is any material which has not been explicitly prepared for the purpose of language teaching such as movies, singing shows, stories, games, and plays. Although these materials are not made for language teaching purposes, they contain the characteristics of language used by the native speakers (Taylor, 1994).

In relation to the concept of authentic language input, Nunan (1999) described authentic language materials as written or spoken language materials that have been produced in real communication. In fact, these spoken or written language materials are not specifically produced for the very purpose of language teaching. Nunan (1999) further highlights the assumption that authentic language input can be extracted from various sources such as news, movies, singing shows, series, and comedies, recorded conversations, meetings, and newspapers. Gilmore (2007) also defined authentic language input as the language conveying a real message which is produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience. In short, the point can be concluded that authentic materials that are not initially made for language teaching purposes can be extracted from various print or audiovisual sources.

##### **Sources of authentic language input in EFL/ESL contexts**

There are varieties of authentic teaching sources and materials available to EFL/ESL teachers to utilize for different needs for various teaching situations in formal as well as informal language learning settings. As was discussed earlier, while social interaction as an authentic source of language input is not available in EFL contexts, many other sources of authentic language input are available in both EFL and ESL contexts. In this relation, desktop technology such as computers and non-desktop technologies such as TV and radio can provide easy access to authentic language input for SLA in both EFL and ESL contexts.

The review of the literature on the integration of different audiovisual programs as sources of authentic language input for language learning highlight the pedagogical value of such materials. As Gebhard (1996) put forth, there are unlimited sources of authentic language materials from various audiovisual sources such as TV commercials, singing shows, cartoons, news clips, quiz shows, comedy shows, movies, series, and documentaries that language teachers and learners can use for language learning purposes.

#### V. AUDIOVISUAL TECHNOLOGIES AS SOURCES OF AUTHENTIC LANGUAGE INPUT

Computers as a type of desktop technology have systematically been used in teaching and learning of foreign/second languages since the 1960s. The early use of computers in language learning both in informal and formal language environments constituted an extension and development of the work done in the audiovisual language labs. The pedagogical effectiveness of computer-assisted language learning in formal and informal settings also began with the development of the capacities of computers. In fact, the remarkable developments in audiovisual and computer-mediated communication programs provided many possibilities for teachers to construct activities for second language learning.

Considering the fact that in the last few years audiovisual technology has dominated the world by showing different programs both to instruct and entertain various audiences, many studies have focused on the incorporation of computers as an audiovisual technology that can provide authentic language input for SLA in formal as well as in informal language learning settings in ESL/EFL contexts.

Regarding the use of computers in informal settings of language learning, Adams, Morrison, and Reedy (1968) noted that computers have the potential not only to supervise language learners' performance in informal settings but also to monitor, record, analyze, and summarize data about their learning. Decker (1976) also argued that most significantly, computers provide instant feedback through correcting exercises and tests. This application of computers for language learning has been based on the behaviorist approach that emphasizes stimulus and response for habit formation. In other words, language learners use the computers to learn the language in both formal and informal learning settings through a number of repetition and drills which are believed by the behaviorist theory of learning to boost language learning.

Although, the application of computers in language learning has apparently gone beyond limited repetition and drills since the 1980s, it still reflected the behaviorist viewpoint. Egan (1999) developed a computer-based software program requiring the language learners to get engaged in language learning through doing some exercises such as filling the blanks, choosing the correct answers, practicing in reading and listening to authentic written and spoken language, producing language by repeating words or sentences, recording their responses and comparing them to native models (Egan, 1999).

Although Egan's software leads language learners to produce speeches through interaction with the computer, the interaction is based on stimulus and response which reflect the behaviorist approach. Language learners seem to be in charge of their learning but the authentic language input which is offered to them and what they can gain is limited to what the software offers. This limitation may break the interaction when the software lacks the necessary stored data for a particular stimulus or response. In other words, the critical point is that this type of interaction with machines rather than human beings can be limited at times. If one stimulus is not recognized by the software, the interaction may fail or may be directed to something rather than what the language learner intends. The reason behind this is that computers may not be able to negotiate for meaning to facilitate comprehension in a way which is done in real communication.

The acquisition of communicative language skills through computers makes it necessary to develop computer programs that engage the language learners in real interactive speaking activities with native or proficient non-native speakers or language learners in both formal and informal settings. In fact, the use of any technologies including computers to provide the necessary input for language learning in informal setting should not reflect the behaviorist view to language learning (Pemberton et al., 2004).

The point to be underscored is that in informal language learning setting compared to formal language learning setting, language learners are not supposed to get involved in a sort of activity which requires them to do repetitions and drills similar to that of the classroom settings. In fact, if different technological tools are to be utilized in informal settings for language learning, it should be unstructured, unconscious or unpurposeful (Rogers, 2004). As a result, informal language learning cannot be based on the behaviorist approach because it requires repetition and drills in informal settings similar to that of the formal settings.

Bray (2005) also claimed that the integration of computers for language learning in both formal and informal settings should not be based on the behaviorist theory. According to Bray, in informal language learning setting, adults like to have fun and have little desire to solve a problem. When it comes to learning the language in informal settings, language learners do not like to get involved in the same scenario which exists in most of the formal language learning settings. Informal language learning is in contrast to the behaviorist approach which requires language learners to do some repetitions and drills even in informal settings. In learning the languages in informal setting through, for example, the Internet as a computer based technology, language learners are self-directed, self-motivated, and have the ability to interact with other language learners using computer-mediated communication (Bray, 2005). In fact, the Internet can provide the language learners with a huge amount of authentic language input for SLA without requiring them to do any repetition and drills exercises.

To sum up, the important point to be underlined in relation to the application of computers as a desktop technology for language learning is that in most of the cases computers have been employed in informal language learning setting based on the behaviorist theories of language learning which does not comply with some of the criteria for informal language learning such as unstructured, unconscious or unpurposeful learning.

In recent years, however, the use of non-desktop technologies such as audiovisual devices, for example, television is also attracting increasing interest among many researchers in informal learning and SLA (Milton, 2002; Pemberton et al., 2004).

According to Milton (2002), mass media technologies can give the teachers as well as the learners a pool of activities and experiences that can reinforce language learning in informal settings as well as the formal settings of the school. Watching different programs, for example, on TV is a sort of activity in informal settings which can lead to language learning regardless of the fact that the focus is not on learning (Milton, 2002). In other words, language learners learn the language without directly getting involved in any sort of explicit language learning activities. However, in highlighting the pedagogical value of exposure to mass media technology, Milton did not further specify what type of mass media technology can boost language learning in informal language settings. Also, he did not provide any details on the amount of exposure to a specific type of mass media which may lead to language improvement. More importantly, in his study, language learners were required to do some exercises in informal settings which does not comply with informal language learning criteria.

Another study concerning the use of non-desktop technology such as interactive television to provide authentic language input for language learning in informal setting was conducted by Pemberton et al. (2004). The foremost rationale of the study was to focus on the learning potential of interactive television in informal settings, currently available in the UK and some other countries via cable and satellite technologies. According to Pemberton et al., unlike conventional television, interactive TV allows the users to interact with each other and also provides new facilities for information retrieval and communication.

In order to support the great potentiality of interactive TV for language learning in informal settings, Pemberton et al. (2004) based their claim on a sound pedagogical framework that was derived from language learners' interests,

motivations, and learning styles. Furthermore, the study considered the possibility of using interactive TV in informal setting based on different language learning theories such as constructionist and constructivist.

According to the constructionist view, the acquisition of language can occur through exposure to authentic language input in informal settings (Pemberton et al., 2004). In this regard, various audiovisual programs from different non-desktop technologies such as TV have the potential to be utilized as authentic sources of language input in informal settings. The study of Pemberton et al. (2004) supported the constructionist approach through the use of subtitle which provided comprehensible input. The participants of the study were given a language learning version of subtitles that provided extra language support, which could help language learners to understand more from their viewing.

The study also supports the self-directed language learning approach which reflects one of the characteristics of informal language learning. The constructivist approach can be supported by enabling language learners to create their own learning space that can be accessed anytime or anywhere. Accordingly, language learners are in charge of selecting their preferred type of language learning material through interactive TV which enables them to be in charge of their own learning experience. In fact, in learning the language through interactive TV in informal language learning setting, language learners want to sit back and relax while being immersed in pedagogically valuable authentic audiovisual programs and to be able to get extensive support to help them gain more from their foreign language viewing (Pemberton et al., 2004).

In short, the above discussed study anecdotally considered the pedagogical value of interactive TV as a type of non-desktop technology in informal settings for language learning and its application based on different language learning approaches. It also focused on introducing a framework to support the use of interactive TV as a source of authentic language input in informal settings. However, the study lacks empirical evidence of the effect of exposure to TV on SLA. Furthermore, it focused on interactive TV rather than conventional TV or satellite TV which is readily available around the globe.

## VI. CONCLUSION

One of the essential issues in SLA which has been the focus of many studies in the last three decades is language input and its role in SLA. Among the pool of researchers, Krashen (1982) claimed that language acquisition can happen in formal and informal language learning settings only if language learners are directly involved in intensive exposure to a type of input which is comprehensible. In contrast to this claim, other researchers also considered comprehended input (Gass, 1988, 1997) incomprehensible input (White, 1987), and comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) to provide the necessary language input for SLA.

Considering the fact that some sort of language input is necessary for SLA in both formal and informal settings, authentic language materials have the potential to be used as sources of language input for SLA which can indirectly involve the language learners in the language learning process. In the same line, the remarkable developments in audiovisual technologies recommend many possibilities for teachers to construct activities for second language learning by providing easy access to authentic language input for language learners in both EFL and ESL contexts.

Since the 1970s, the application of various authentic programs such as news, movies, singing shows, cartoons, and comedies from various audiovisual technologies such as satellite or conventional TV to provide the necessary language input for SLA have also been attracting increasing interest among researchers.

However, while there is an agreement on the use of various types of audiovisual programs as sources of authentic language input particularly in classroom environment for language learning, little empirical evidence has been provided about their effects on the enhancement of language proficiency in informal setting. To bridge the gap, the opportunities for informal language learning through exposure to various audiovisual programs as sources of authentic language input in EFL/ESL contexts may be the subject matter of future research.

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**Taher Bahrani** was born in 1979 in Iran. He is a Ph.D holder in TEFL from the University of Malaya. He has published 4 ISI-indexed papers and many peer-reviewed ones. He is also the editor-in-chief of the international journal of language learning and applied linguistics world.



**Tam Shu Sim** is a senior lecturer and the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Malaya. She obtained her PhD in the area of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and her other research interest include the various aspects of TESL. She has published 5 ISI papers and some peer-reviewed ones in other journals.



**Marziyeh Nekoueizadeh** was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1979. She received her M.A. degree in Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) in 2013. She has presented several papers in different national conferences such as International Teacher Education Conference (ITEC 2014). She has also published some papers in peer-reviewed international journals.

# Prophecy in William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Baoguo Shen

Baoding University, Hebei, China

Yinxia Liu

Baoding University, Hebei, China

Junxia Yang

Baoding University, Hebei, China

**Abstract**—William Blake is a famous English poet and engraver, one of the leading poets of the pre-romantic period. Many critics consider him as a remarkable poet, prophet, philosopher and artist in the world. He was unknown during his lifetime and was often called a madman. Many people surprisingly find that Blake has depicted the life in modern time in his poems and pointed out the prospects. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is a classical prophetic book, which shows Blake's gift of prophecy. The thesis will deal with Blake's prophecy in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* from the perspective of contradiction, vision and imagination. William Blake's prophecy includes the destruction of empire and Jerusalem's reconstruction.

**Index Terms**—William Blake, prophecy, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

## I. INTRODUCTION

*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is one of those prophetic books written by the poet William Blake. In this work Blake expressed his own revolutionary thought and Romantic ideas in form of biblical prophecy. The poem was composed among 1790-1793, during which the French revolution is widely carrying on. And Louis XVI was put to death January in 1791, then Britain declared war on France a year later. So Blake has a personal experience and distant observation and deep insight on the violate revolution, and all of which are reflected in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The book consists of five chapters: the argument, the voice of the devil, a memorable fancy, proverbs of the hell, a song of liberty. The first two parts could recognized as the prude of the poem, and the voice of the devil and a memorable fancy can be seen as the formal performance, then last two are the curtain falls.

Blake lived and worked in London. The social and political changes in London at that time had great impact on his writing. But for quite a long time, Blake's reputation floundered. Modern scholars study William Blake's works mostly according to Geoffrey Keynes's *A Bibliography of William Blake* (Bloom, 1976, p.47). S. Foster Damon's pioneering *William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbol* argued that Blake's major prophecies, sometimes thought to be incomprehensible or the product of an irrational mind could be interpreted through a systematic research of his use of symbol. (www.duke.edu) In the year of 1947 Zhang Zhiheng(1989) regarded William Blake as one of great giants in English literature for his prophetic imagination and mythic structure. In Frye's hands, Blake's system does not even require the outside reference of mystical experience and is actually carefully organized in its structure of expanding frameworks of interpretation. G. E. Bentley's *Blake Records* carefully records all known evidences about Blake's life, including contemporary accounts of him. Among the numerous explications of Blake's poetry that followed, Harold Bloom's *The Visionary Company* and *Blake's Apocalypse* influenced many critics in the reading of his individual poems.

However, domestic Blake's studies seem deficient and no important thesis has covered his *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* yet. And the majority of the researchers put their emphasis on the analysis of cultural meaning and religious ethics by artistic perspectives, which ignores the prophecy itself. It is my hope to enrich former findings while opening up some new perspectives which former researches have not pursued. Thus this study focuses on the embodiments of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* by the theory of prophecy. Blake predicts the destruction of empire and Jerusalem's reconstruction through the prophetic methods of contradiction, vision and imagination. Today Blake is now recognized as one of the most original and challenging figures in the history of English literature.

## II. THE THEORY OF PROPHECY

Prophecy is a process in which one or more messages that have been communicated to a prophet are then communicated to others. Such messages typically involve divine inspiration, interpretation, or revelation of conditioned events to come as well as testimonies or repeated revelations that the world is divine. The process of prophecy



especially involves reciprocal communication of the prophet with the source of the messages. Various concepts of prophecy are found throughout all of the world's religious and cults. To a certain degree prophecy can be an integral concept within any religion or cult. The term has found deep usage in the Abrahamic religious, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Baha's and Mormonism along with many others. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophecy>) The thesis below talks about two aspects of prophecy including origin and historical developments.

The English word prophecy came from Old French *profecie* about 1225. Its meaning is the person who has the gift to interpret the will of the gods. Gradually in Greek the word prophecy means to say something beforehand.

In Chinese history prophecy played an important role in the ancient society. It was originated from mysterious thinking and closely related with primitive religion. Witches had special identities between heaven and earth, and they used a variety of witchcraft, astrology to predict the future. Jiang Ziya, a famous predictor Chinese history, made a great contribution to building Shang Dynasty by using his prophetic abilities and military strategies. His poetical book *Wan Nian Ke* predicts the changes of China from Zhou Dynasty to the Glorious Harmonious World.

*Zuozhuan*, a famous book written in Spring and Autumn period in ancient China, permeated with prophetic features. The Spring and Autumn period was a notable reform period. In that time, both the magic and rationalistic activities prevail in such a period. The prediction was frequently used when people talked about nature, heaven, spirit, luck and disaster, augury and dream and they put forward all kinds of forecast and the future development. The Spring and Autumn period became a prophetic times when people are so confident and impulsive to make prophecies, therefore we could see such a large number of prophecies in *Zuozhuan*. It includes including horoscopy, oneiromancy, divination, face reading and so on. The prophecies not only represent the mystery of predictions but also reflect the evolution of thought in the frame of rational thinking. *Ma Qian Ke* is another famous prophetic book by Zhuge Liang, the counselor of Country Shu in the Three Kingdoms period. He wrote down the lessons in the army in my spare time. The book forecast most of the historic events that would happen in China from Three Kingdoms period to the foundation of Republic of China. *TuiBei Figure* is one of the most famous prophetic book in Chinese history. It was composed by Li Chunfeng during the Tang dynasty. The book predicts the future of social changes from Tang dynasty to the glorious harmonious world. Each poem with a figure in the book represents a change of dynasty.

In a remote period of Greek history, the ancient Greeks often ask the Oracle or find answers to the problems threatened to their real life. In the ancient Greek city-state political life, Oracle was also a very powerful influential way of citizens' lives. They found prophecies from the sacrifice, birds, dreams and any other things. More importantly, they asked the Oracle. There are many oracle temples in Greece. Delphi was the most famous one. Apollo in Delphi became the divine founder around 800 B.C.. Delphi had become an oracular center of the ancient Greek world gradually, and its prestige continued during the entire golden era of Hellenic culture. Originally the oracle could only be consulted once a year on the 7th of Bysios, and this restriction was only removed at a late period when consultation once a month was allowed, except three months when Apollo leaved Delphi in winter. The procedure of the oracle was restricted strictly. Apollo's priestess and enquirers must obey the special procedure during consulting the oracle. The tripod, sacred spring and laurel are necessary things. Pythia give oracles in form of poetry and prose.

*Holy Scripture* accepted as Word of God, is believed as the text dictated by different authors in God's call. A Hebrew prophet is the spokesperson of God. Bible is permeated with prophecies. Furthermore there are a thousand specific prophecies. It contains the natural disasters, Israel's fate in the future, the coming of the messiah. The Bible prediction contains many species and covers large time span. Most of the prophecies in the Bible have come true accurately. Prophets through the words of God foretell the fate of a person, the life of a nation, prosperity of a city, and the replacement of countries over a time from that time to a thousand years later. A recognized form of Christian prophecy is the prophetic drama and a metaphorical relationship between present situations and future events. In the Old Testament prophets are concerned about the crisis that they face at that time. And they are associated with the realities of the contemporary society. The prophets are described as real person. They fight for the rights, justice, defense, glory, freedom and social morality. In The New Testament, Prophecy is one of the spiritual gifts, and the prophets are the ones who have supernatural abilities and could receive the information from God. And they convey the message of God to save the kind people and punish the enemies. There are instances in the Gospels where individuals are described as being prophets. Jesus foretells his death and resurrection.

### III. BLAKE'S PROPHETIC METHODS IN THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL

The prophetic methods of contradiction, vision and imagination are the main methods for William Blake to express his prophecy. Blake uses the contradictory ideas "without contraries is no progression" to predicts the development of human society. The experience is an indispensable step to achieve one's goals. And the society is composed of people. So only the contradictory power of innocence and experience effect on the society can the society develops and evolves. In addition, he also employs his fourfold vision and imagination to predict the coming of a new world. In this new world humanity achieves liberation from the tyranny of church.

#### A. *The Prophetic Method of Contradiction*

William Blake employs the specific people and thing in the physical world to express his philosophy of contradiction, which is vividly embodied in his prophetic poems. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, he puts forward "without

contraries is no progression, attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence" (Blake, 1975, p.15). Here Blake is saying that without things to contrast each other one cannot progress. That is the law of development applied to human development. And also it is the prophecy that Blake has expressed.

In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake switches the values heaven and hell represent around, so angels have negative connotations and the devil connotations. So as it is in the real world. During his times, the majority of the intellects praised the achievements revolution had brought in. Actually people only find one aspect in the world. While Blake employs the contradiction to predict the law of human development, the revolution will inevitably bring good and evil. Blake has established his basic tone for all the poems in that collection in *Songs of Innocence*. It is supposed to be full of joy and pleasure. He depicts a perfect world in the children's eyes and expresses the writer's inner feelings. Love and hate energy and reason, innocence and experience, are components that belong to his framework of the contrary states of the human soul. Through the anatomy of these states in his *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Blake is able to prophesy the advent of a new age when God manifest in man and the natural spontaneous acts of man instinctively create a world of love and freedom. In such a world, the seeming evils of climate, disease, and death are rendered painless by the inner strength of faith. This belief is the moral basis upon which the reconstruction of Jerusalem must build.-It is also the basis to which his view of body and soul is attached.

While In *Songs of Experience*, Blake has established the social reality, which is the opposite of Innocence. Combining *Songs of Innocence* with *Songs of Experience*, same titles reflect contrary meanings. So Blake thinks that God created the world and endowed the equality to it. He created lamb and tiger at the same time. So people can not simply think that the tiger is definitely the evil and the lamb is good, innocence and experience also apply to it. Behind the experience there is energy and illiteracy exists in the innocence. They are all contradictory power, necessity of survival and the condition of progressing. Here Blake predicts that the experience is an indispensable step to achieve one's goals. And the society is composed of people. So only the contradictory power of innocence and experience effect on the society can the society develops and evolves.

#### B. *The Prophetic Method of Vision*

William Blake puts the competence of poem or creativity and prophecy in the same important position. Those who are of competence in having a deep insight of the real life of things in the world and can predict eternity. And this kind of competence is called vision. He predicts a new world through the prophetic method of vision which is also called his visionary world. And he divides his visionary world into different worlds:

Now I a fourfold vision see,  
And a fourfold vision is given to me  
This fourfold in my supreme delight  
And threefold in soft Beulah's night  
And twofold always. (Glen, 1983, p.25)

Here Blake describes different levels of imaginative perception. While we must always reject the single vision of the scientists and cultivate twofold vision. There are other levels of perception which enable us to envisage an earthly paradise; the threefold vision comes to us in dreams and the fourfold vision vouchsafes a glimpse of the supreme unity of heaven. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, for example, the threefold vision creates a union of rationality and imagination. The result is that we get a glimpse of an earthly paradise. Actually Blake is predicting a new world, and in this new world humanity achieves liberation from the tyranny of Church and State. Crucially, Blake believed it was insufficient to rely on the eye to see the world as the scientists and materialists. Qian Qing (2006) said the eye was a useful tool but insufficient unless working in combination with the creative imagination which could transform mere sensory impressions and conjure up the visionary levels. And the fourfold vision is the supreme insight which reconciles all of the other levels offering an almost mystical insight into the nature of the cosmos. The point is made in the wonderful lines which open the poem entitled *Auguries of Innocence*. The Imagination, says Blake, can help us:

To see a world in a grain of sand  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour. (Blake, 1976, p.25)

In *Songs of Innocence* there is a repeated pattern in which the poet's perception first sees then transforms the material world (twofold vision), then projects an earthly paradise watched over by a loving God (three-fold vision) while conceiving the whole in terms of a mystical joy immanent throughout the universe (four-fold vision). An understanding of this, of course, also helps us by contrasts to come to terms with the evils and corruptions of the fallen, rationalist and materialist world described in *Songs of Experience*.

#### C. *The Prophetic Method of Imagination*

Blake's idea of imagination stems from his political and religious radicalism, with reason as the core target. The social realities disillusion his belief that human beings can be liberated through revolution, and he comes to realize that the true freedom of man is spiritual. Yet man's mind is restricted by churches and the falsity of reason. Through attacking churches that exploit human beings in this universe, Blake is completely convinced that imagination is true means of perceiving this world. Besides, Blake holds that man's true state is imaginative. Possessing imagination,

human beings in the state of experience could see the divinity, which in turn could liberate their lapsed souls.

To Blake, imagination is not a state but is human existence itself. Imagination is the faculty whereby Blake sees into the reality of things. This is Blake's definition of Imagination. This imagination, Wang Zuoliang (1991) described in his *History of English Romantic Poems*, which sees the truth of the infinite inner life of the human, is the eternal body of man as well as god himself (p.22). It is best manifested in the works of art, which Blake termed as Poetic Genius. Like imagination, Poetic Genius is not bound by experience; but instead, through its vision, its renders' experience infinite. Poetic Genius is the true man; it applies its unchangeable power of imagination to changeable objects or environments. Being conscious of the difference between imagination and natural memories, what is eternal and what is changeable gives birth to an image of truth. The vision of this truth scatters the clouds of reason and gives creative energy to man. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* the weak in courage is strong in cunning. Though depending on the energies of the other men, the weak priests shows they are superior to the active men by denigrating the importance of human energy and productive work. Further, they try to associate their power with an incomprehensible supernatural source. By claiming they are carrying out God's commands, the priests make the strong active men believe whatever they do is definitely right.

#### IV. THE EMBODIMENTS OF PROPHECY IN THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL

William Blake employs the prophetic method contradiction, vision and imagination to predict the destruction of empire and Jerusalem's reconstruction. The empire is not specific but abstract. That is the religious empire and the empire of combination of industrial revolution and machines. The machine is the slave of people created, also the tolerate monarch. Then Blake predicts the coming of new age.

##### A. *The Prophecy of Destruction of Empire*

In the prelude Blake tracks the essence of value of good and evil twisted by the religion trying to thoroughly change people's value of good and evil. At the same time he declares the unity of body and soul as well as the new value of good and evil. Those positive, creative and authentic acts are good, which promote the progress of human being. However those acts of negative effects and blocking others are evil, which lock up the development of human beings. So the combination of the background of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and the poems itself can indicate the destruction of the empire. So in the argument:

Rintrah roars shakes his fires in the burden'd air;

Hungry clouds swag on the deep. (Blake, 1975, p.35)

Rubrah is prophet and his anger indicates that big change is coming. Here the hungry clouds symbolize the impetuous air of and the greedy desire. In the last part a song of liberty, the son of fire was also called the new terrorist and the new miracle, which is the sun in Blake's heart. Before he was born:

The Eternal Female groan'd! it was heard over all the Earth;

Albion's coast is sick silent; the American meadows faint!

Shadows of Prophecy shiver along by the lakes and rivers and mutter across the ocean.

France rends down thy dungeon;

Where the son of fire in his eastern cloud, while the morning plumes her Golden breast, Spurning the clouds written with curses, stamps the stony law to dust, loosing: the eternal horses from the dens of night, crying, Empire is no more! And now the lion wolf shall cease. (Blake, 1975, p.66)

This is the religious empire and the empire of combination of industrial revolution and machines. The machine is the slave of people created, also the tolerate monarch. And we increasingly use it then we become dependent on it. The progress of industrial civilization didn't bring in happiness, and we are still bound, but the empire will be destroyed.

##### B. *The Prophecy of Jerusalem's Reconstruction*

To a certain degree, Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is the manifesto of his view of contradiction and vision. One of the most striking features of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is the complexity of allegorical images, including those of angels, devils, animals, as well as fire and flame. They are intentionally used to build a dual world, in which two opposites exist contrarily. They are symbolically used to argue for a prophecy. They are poetically used to reconstruct man in a new image, a fully realized man who is imaginative, through creativity. They are symbolically arranged to appear in a process from a dual world through a prophetic transformation to a new world. This process is both the process of the poem's development and the process of Jerusalem's Reconstruction.

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence. From these contraries spring what the religious call Good Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy. Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell. (Blake, 1975, p.25)

Blake distinguishes between contraries and negations, the former as existence necessary to each other, and the latter as a condition in which one quality is opposed to the other. These contraries or paradoxes are essentials of human nature, and are paradoxically expressed. These devils are witty and lively and have wise things to say; whereas the angels are dull and in error. Thus, to Blake's viewpoint Heaven is a terrible and dirty place, whereas Hell is a pleasant and clean place. William Blake was strongly opposed to the conventional Christian doctrines.

Blake proclaims in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* that "If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite"(Blake, 1975, p.20). This reminds us that Joseph Campbell describes Shiva, the Hindu goddess, in whose hand the flame burns out the block of time and opens the way to eternity for our minds. It is just like the burning bush in the Biblical description. God himself appears before man in the column of fire. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* speaks of fire for its transformation of convention and revelation of truth. But transformation seems to Blake a two-way traffic, leading either to the better or to the worse, and at times even shocking. For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard of the tree of life: and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy, whereas now it appears finite and corrupt. Indeed, the last "Memorable Fancy" ends with the transformation of an Angel into a Devil(www.cyberpat.com):

When he had so spoken, I beheld the Angel, who stretched out his arms embracing the flame of fire, he was consumed and arose as Elijah", and "This Angel, has now become a Devil. (Blake, 1975, p.35)

However, this shocking transformation may function as a negation of the Jerusalem Swedenborg intended to build. As for Blake himself, it might be another matter, because when taking fire as a transforming power, fire can act as a symbol of transformation, inspiration, and spiritual vision. To Blake, this visionary energy can empower imagination and it is God within us to build the New Jerusalem. It is believed that we all have the potential of creating heaven on earth when we find God within us.

But we must remember at the same time that this very Jerusalem he attempts to rebuild is one that is poetic, visionary, and in human mind. This, however, does not reduce Blake as a poet, instead, it helps us to see him as a true poet, because the reconstruction of Jerusalem is what any great poet can do, and no other poets has done it so visionary, so dialectically, and so unified as he has. This alone confirms his significance, as well as his reasons and aim of Jerusalem's reconstruction.

## V. CONCLUSION

In their treatises and articles, many critics have probed thoroughly into Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* from which they discovered his world and philosophy. Blake's works are not a monotonous and universal system designed by him, but a reflection of a kind of collective experience which he underwent and has been changed through his course of mature. In this sense, much criticism on Blake's religious thoughts tends to be partial.

This thesis draws a conclusion from the discoveries of the specific embodiments of prophecy in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Blake predicts the destruction of empire and Jerusalem's reconstruction through the prophetic methods contradiction, vision and imagination. This is the religious empire and the empire of combination of industrial revolution and machines. The machine is the slave of people created, also the tolerate monarch. And we increasingly use it then we become dependent on it. The progress of industrial civilization didn't bring in happiness, and we are still bound, but the empire will be destroyed. Blake's early spirit of revolt is most notably expressed in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The contraries in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* are unlike the examples of innocence and experience. Blake wishes them to be understood that he strongly espouses one of his contraries, and firmly rejects the other, and God. He is for energy and against reason, for the Prolific and against the Devourer. He insists on the fact that the world is a product of human labor and imagination.

This not only has historical meanings but also have modern significance. Actually, with the developments of industrial civilization, people feel more and more unhappy. Considerable people begin to realize the fetter of reason and start to seek inner unity and harmony. Most surprisingly, Blake's worries have become reality. And he hopes that human can surpass fetter and boundary and became a unity with infiniteness and eternity.

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**Baoguo Shen** was born in 1962 in Hebei, China. He received his Master's degree in Literature and Art from the College of Foreign Languages of Hebei Normal University in Hebei, China in 2004.

He is currently an Associate Professor and the director of the academic committee of Department of Foreign Languages, Baoding University, China. He has published more than 50 papers and 3 books including *Practical English Course* (Guangdong, China, Shantou Publishing House, 2006), *Study on Fostering College Students' Quality Based on Metacognition* (Beijing, China, Foreign Languages in China, 2008), *Building Competency Model for Foreign-related Talents Based on SEM* (New York, U.S., the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, 2012). Now His research interests include talent development and cross-culture communication.

Prof. Shen is a member of International Association of Applied Linguistics and a committee member of National Association of Foreign Language Education in China.



**Yinxia Liu** was born in 1977 in Hebei, China. She received her Master's degree in Literature and Art from the College of Foreign Languages of Hebei University in Hebei, China in 2006.

She is currently a lecturer in the Department of Foreign Languages, Baoding University, China. She has published the paper: *Beauty of The Flowers of Evil—A Study of the Style and Characteristic of Its Writing* (Guizhou, China, 2013). Her research interests include language teaching and English literature.

**Junxia Yang** was born in 1991 in Hebei, China. She received her Bachelor's degree in Literature and Art from the Department of Foreign Languages of Baoding University in Hebei, China in 2008.

# Dialogical Odes by John Keats: Mythologically Revisited

Somayyeh Hashemi

Department of English, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

Bahram Kazemian

Department of English, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

**Abstract**—This paper, using Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism tries to investigate the indications of dialogic voice in Odes by John Keats. Indeed this study goes through the dialogic reading of '*Ode to a Nightingale*', '*Ode on a Grecian Urn*', '*Ode to Psyche*', and '*Ode on Melancholy*', considering mythological outlooks. Analyzing Keats's odes through dialogical perspective may reveal that Keats plays a role of an involved and social poet of his own time. Moreover, Keats embraces the world of fancy and imagination to free himself from sufferings of his society. Keats' odes are influenced by expression of pain-joy reality by which he builds up a dialogue with readers trying to display his own political and social engagement. Applying various kinds of mythological elements and figures within the odes may disclose Keats's historical response and reaction toward a conflicted society and human grieves in general.

**Index Terms**—Bakhtinian dialogism, Keats' Odes, pain, pleasure, mythology

## I. INTRODUCTION

John Keats as one of the major poets of Romanticism, composed multiple popular poems and his odes gained the most attention of them. Going through his odes, it appears to the reader that Keats attempts to deal with different interpretation of pain and pleasure concepts. Despite the pure Romanic nature of his poems that requires them to pinpoint the most personal issues of the poet, here in his odes, his persistent challenge with ever-existing delight and sorrows of human life inspires a kind of communication with and a response from the reader. Bakhtinian dialogism as one of the theories discussing the possibility of communicative rhetoric may help justify the need for interaction with the reader in Keats's poetry.

Numerous attempts have been made to study Keats from various perspectives. Hashemi and Kazemian (2014a, b) studied dialogical nature of structure as well as theme in Keats's odes in two individual papers. This paper aims to go through mythological study of Keats's odes in the light of Bakhtinian Dialogism. Thus, primarily it will discuss the traces of Greek mythology in Keats's odes, and then it will further argue its social and political implications resulting from the main concerns of his poetry about inseparable joint of pain and pleasure of human, expressed in the odes. Finally, dialogical nature of Keats's odes indicated in a shared sense of mythology between the poet and reader will be dealt with.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Bakhtin's view, observer's position has the utmost importance. Bakhtin's observer is an operative contributor in the connection with simultaneity. Considering self from dialogical perspective means that reality is not only observed but also experienced from a specific position. Thus, there is no choice, there is a must to be in dialogue both with other human beings, and with natural and cultural arrangements put together as the world. We cannot help but give the world a response. Holquist (2002) maintains that: "The world addresses us and we are alive and human to the degree that we are answerable, i.e. to the degree that we can respond to addressivity. We are responsible in the sense that we are compelled to respond" (p. 30).

In so far as human beings are organism, they cannot choose but pay attention to life. No matter how passive one appears in the eyes of others, life will not let him be inactive. Therefore, being dormant even will seem to be the activity of choosing to be passive. As a result, as Holquist (2002) mentions: "Speech had first to come into being and develop in the process of the social intercourse of organisms, so that afterward it could enter within the organism and become inner speech" (p. 143). In fact, situation of utterance and its audience determine forms of any actual utterance. In Holquist's view (2002):

Any actual utterance is an island rising from the boundless sea of inner speech; the dimensions and forms of this island are determined by the particular situation of the utterance and its audience. Situation and audience make inner speech undergo actualization into some kind of specific outer expression that is directly included into an un-verbalized

behavioural context and in that context is amplified by actions, behaviour, or verbal responses of other participants in the utterance (p. 144).

To put in other words, the utterance is a social unit in a way that what makes up the appropriate beginnings and endings is approved by participants.

Dialogism is structured on the basis of the social, and the belief that all meaning is gained by struggle. In Holquist's (2002) view since in dialogism always more than one meaning exists, it necessitates to be *philosophy of language*. For Bakhtin, the only way to understand and explain the world is by minimizing the number of its meanings to a limited set. Here, language seems as a place in which dialogical relationships are perceived; it displays itself in discourse which is the world centred towards another. Dentith (1995) introduces social languages and states that:

Bakhtin does not draw substantially upon the category of *ideology* but instead insists upon the multiplicity of social languages that make up the apparent unity of a national language; any utterance therefore takes place between language users who are socially marked in the very language they use (p. 50).

Dialogism discusses that we comprehend existence by defining our particular place in it within time and space. Dialogically believed, the present is a dynamic moment, a combination of past and present relations. Indeed, there is neither a first word nor a last one and the contexts of dialogue are infinite. Holquist (2002) argues that dialogues go through the deepest past and the most far-fetched future:

Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will never be finally grasped once and for all, for they will always be renewed in later dialogue. At any present moment of the dialogue there are great masses of forgotten meanings, but these will be recalled again at a given moment in the dialogue's later course when it will be given new life. For nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will someday have its homecoming festival. (p. 39)

A good deal has been written about differences between heroes in Greek texts and heroes as they appear in later works. An important distinction is a kind of increase in self-consciousness that earlier heroes used to lack. In fact, ancient heroes' lives unfolded in public since they were so externalized. Nonetheless, the pattern of public space that forms Romantic literary texts has some aspects in common with the chronotope of public spaces in 5<sup>th</sup>.B.C Athens. Holquist (2002) also adds that:

In such a chronotope nothing was intimate, or private, secret or personal, anything relating solely to the individual himself, anything that was, in principle, solitary... [Therefore] the individual is open on all sides, he is all surface, there is in him nothing that exists "for his sake alone," nothing that could not be subject to public or state control and evaluation. Everything here, down to the last detail, is public (p. 125).

Bakhtin also comes up with a series of different literary forms, beginning again with the Greek romances, trying to show how they are organized around interconnected ideas of time and space. "Thus in his account of the *adventure time*-the manner of conceiving the time in which the adventures happen-of the Greek romance, time is empty, outside biographical, social or natural significance; it is a hiatus in which adventures occur"(Dentith, 1995, p. 76).

A literary genre by its nature is reflective of the most stable inclinations in literature's development. It can introduce special aspects of conflict in life and career of ancient time and develop them without any changes from mythic forms. Moreover, immortal elements of the archaic are maintained in a genre. Due to their persistent renewal, these archaic elements are kept as authentic. Thus, Bakhtin maintains that: "a genre is always the same and yet not the same, always old and new simultaneously" (Holquist, 2002, p. 126). Holquist (2002) later argues that:

The encomium's emphasis on generalized careers, for example, is a structural inheritance from the past of ancient myth: it translates into stories about humans a pattern already present in older tales about demi-gods. In those, too, names signified certain well-known career narratives rather than individuals with unique lives (p. 127).

Since it is assumed that language is never related to or existed in a single unit, literary language is itself capable of being stratified and heteroglot; e.g. stratification into genres. Furthermore, social classes and stratifications can utilize and also change language. Thus, in Holquist' (1981) view, language at any given moment of its historical being is heteroglot:

It represents the coexistence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between different epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These *languages* of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying *languages*. It might even seem that the very word *language* loses all meaning in this process - for apparently there is no single plane on which all these *languages* might be juxtaposed to one another (p. 291).

Greek had a strong influence on English political imagination. Legends dealing with real people and events contain unreal elements conventionally related with myth: confrontations of mortals and gods, superhuman triumphs, magic and monsters. Bellingham (2002) argues that: "it is hardly surprising to find the poets glamorizing the Greek heroes as well as embroiling the facts with mythical stories of gods and monsters" (p. 6). The resulting breaking of the surviving myths was hastened by later poets who wanted to alter them, offering different endings or explanation for a character's behaviour. These changes might only seem for variety, but they were mainly utilized to reflect contemporary social outlooks. In fact, the poets used mythical structure of their poetry to express the social and political problems of the time.

Hellenism introduced an openness and an innovative liability to the Greek mythology that could be used as a kind of escape. Curran (1993) states that Keats' mythological poems particularly Endymion, Hyperion and his odes are among

some major Romantic creative works that could communicate new outlooks through international popularity of translation. Keats' interest in Greek Mythology can express itself "as a nostalgic yearning to escape into another place and another age apparently more golden than the present and sometimes as a desire to make the lesson of past immediately relevant to the urgencies of contemporary life" (Curran, 1993, p. 150). Curran (1993) says that: "In this respect Keats is less detached from political controversy than he is usually taken to be" (p. 64). In fact, the Romantics, merely by being poets were destined to react in at least one aspect. They recognized that as writers their task was to spread the ideas and to change the minds. Then Curran (1993) maintains that:

The Romantic's faith in the power of imaginative vision to transform the world is the source of some of their greatest achievement. To it we owe among other poets ....the odes and fall of Hyperion of Keats..... to rely on vision transform the world untouched by reality (p. 71).

### III. DISCUSSION

In *Ode on a Grecian Urn* the urn is a product of rediscovery of the art of Greek poetry. Keats' Romantic discovery of Greek mythology was vigorous and creative and often expressive of his main concerns. The retransformation of cultural powers that could be traced back to Greece comes up with an understanding of Greek accomplishment related to social specificity. Curran (1993) asserts that: "Keats internalized from his encounters with Greek art a sense of strength, power and authority that demanded imitation, but also experienced a sense of tension" (p. 164). In his view "The urn itself is a silent historian and the poet makes strenuous efforts to interpret its legend" (p. 153). Besides, Matthews (2005) considers Keats a poet greatly influenced by Greek mythology:

No ancient poet would have dreamed of writing thus. There would have been no indistinct shadowy warmth, no breath of surrounding beauty: his delineation would have been cold, distinct, chiselled like the urn itself. The use which such a poet as Keats makes of ancient mythology is exactly similar. He owes his fame to the inexplicable art with which he has breathed a soft tint over the marble forms of gods and goddesses, enhancing their beauty without impairing their chasteness (p. 216).

In Keats's view, human experiences art in both social and alienating way. On the one hand, since art discloses to us the image of what we all have in common, it lets us to explore in it our shared social affiliation. Such discovery unveils to us our basic equality that would help us to democratize human history. On the other hand, art is also essentially excluding the human history that Keats hopes to have the potential to shape. Sider (1998) believes that:

The men, women, gods, and lovers depicted on *the urn* exist far above all breathing human passion. They live in the slow time of the urn's great art, their stories spatialized and therefore emptied of the real time and change which define human life. A human community formed from art is, in this sense, a contradiction in terms, a society robbed of human reality (p. 162).

Moreover, the *urn's* origins exist, as Wu (1999) argues, in the cult-hymns of Ancient Greece and in the songs where Pindar, the great lyric poet of fifth-century Greece, celebrates triumphs in the ancient games. He notes that: "By definition, a hymn is an act of religious worship, while Pindar not only links ephemeral human deeds to what is enduring and divine, but also embodies social solidarity, because his songs, written for public performance, made him literally the voice of the community" (p. 239). Thus, it can be indicated that *mytho-poetic* patterns of thought coexist with modern forms while they are supporting each other. Therefore, Dialogical nature of realities outlined by Bakhtin's theories reveals that Keats' odes gives us resources we need to come to understand the social, political and ethical life of societies and the practical nature of trust within them.

Romantic period was involved in living through the exasperation of elevated ambitions in modern times. Keats's urn is expressive of both desire and frustration where images coexist in and out of existence. Curran (1993) believes Keats as the poet of oxymoron "who created for himself bowers of imagined pleasure in the midst of the wreckage of a war-torn world" (p.233). In truth, his ode springs from a continuous kind of experience that is an extreme consciousness of the pleasure and pain, the happiness and the grief of human life. This awareness is feeling and becomes also a thought that the poet sees them in others and feels them in himself. It is a sort of pondering of a lot of human beings, who want to fulfil their desire of happiness in a world where pain and pleasure are unavoidably connected to each other.

It seems necessary to be armed with a little knowledge of Greek mythology before starting any kind of review on Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*. As mentioned by Abrams (1987) in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Keats in his poetry attempted to hold a strong position within mythology of English poetry. *Ode to a Nightingale* begins when Keats admits feeling *a drowsy numbness* that he relates using drugs like hemlock or opium, or to drink from the classical river, Lethe, which causes humanity to forget what it was like to live a common life. It is obvious that the reason Keats was so interested in Greek mythology is due to the fact that the gods and spirits of Classical mythology barely displayed special qualities of natural world that Keats was willing to make common people apprehend it. The examples can be seen in *Tasting of Flora and the country green, not charioted by Bacchus and his pards*, the former as goddess of flower and the latter as goddess of wine that are mentioned by Abrams (1987). According to Keats's idea of salvation, the mythological figures and their relationships are emblem of the experiences that humans need to go through for developing their soul in spite of the suffering that it sometimes may cause. Thus, it is important to note that in human activities with dialogical nature, the workings of these divine elements are not something supernatural or external to the social activity.



The basic story of *Ode to Psyche* is a popular myth. In the story told by the Roman author Apuleius in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, as mentioned by Abrams (1987), the youngest and the prettiest daughter of a king was Psyche. She was so charming and beautiful that *Aphrodite*, the goddess of love and beauty, became envious of her, sent her son, *Eros*, the god of love (the Cupid of Roman mythology and the *winged boy* of Keats's poem) in order to punish Psyche for being so gorgeous. But *Eros* became so surprised and absorbed by Psyche's beauty that he pierced himself with his own arrow and fell in love with her. *Eros* called for Psyche to his temple, but he kept to seem invisible to her, came to her only at night and ordered her not to try and want to see his face. One night, Psyche strived to light a lamp to have a glimpse at her lover; but breaking his trust by her made *Eros* so angry that he decided to leave her. Psyche was made to perform some laborious tasks to appease *Venus* and gain back *Eros* as her husband. Psyche is symbol of the soul in Greek mythology and the story can be seen as an allegory of the soul's expedition through life and finally, its unification with divine powers after being suffered by life's grieves and death. Therefore, as Sider (1998) believes, representation of *Eros* is not the statue of an ideal trans-historical society: "but Keats attempts to present it as the spring of potentially social power" (p. 12).

Psyche's tale and her experiences with Cupid are mythical expression of the idea of *vale of soul making*. This concept was first revealed in a letter of May 1819 in which Keats rejected the Christian belief that the earth is a *vale of tears* to turn it as a *vale of soul making*. It claims that the soul becomes matured through suffering and love in order to achieve a higher understanding of the stability of good and evil which is the crucial bond in human experience between pleasure and pain. Indeed, when Keats composed this poem, his mind was busy with the soul that is grown through suffering. It is Keats's particular quality of his thought when he ties soul's development (a positive experience) to suffering (a negative experience). The troubled nature of life and the attempt to connect opposites exist through his poetry.

Although it is believed that the gods lack their power in modern communities, Keats's *Ode to Psyche* still wishes for transcendence that means to go beyond the limits of real life to obtain a higher reality which can involve the greater capabilities like spirit and fancy. The narrator, revitalized by young goddess, becomes her idolizer. His imagination leads him to communicate with both Psyche's natural and supernatural aspects, and kind of his glorification is within himself when *Ode to Psyche* functions as a song in reverence of the goddess. The narrator remains the prophet for Psyche and says in the final stanza:

*Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane  
In some untrodden region of my mind,  
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,  
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind.* (Abrams, 1987, p. 1844)

Therefore, in this ode, Keats tries to lead the reader's consideration toward the internal link with other features of human life and can also form reader's reaction to it by the use of Psyche's image that appears to be dialogically shared between the poet and reader.

Briefly, in this ode, Keats's narrator addresses the goddess, Psyche, forcing her to listen to his words, and wanting her to forgive him for singing to her own secrets:

*O Goddess! Hear these tuneless numbers, wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung.* (Abrams, 1987, p. 1843)

In the second stanza, the speaker addresses Psyche again, portray her as the most elegant and the youngest of all the Olympian gods and goddesses: *O latest born and loveliest vision far, of all Olympus' faded hierarchy*. He assumes that, unlike other divine powers, Psyche does not own any trapping place of worship: She has no temples, no altars, and no choir to sing for her etc. But the speaker is willing to say that even in the conflicted days of his own time that divinities' power is fallen, he would like to worship Psyche and become her choir:

*So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
Upon the midnight hours;  
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet.* (Abrams, 1987, p. 1844)

Thus, Keats's energetic intonation in praising Psyche and becoming her *priest* clearly registers the other's presence that creates a kind of portrait in sound the addressee to whom he is speaking.

The three stanzas of the *Ode on Melancholy* discusses about the subject of how to *cope with* sufferings and pain. The first stanza suggests what not to do: The sufferer *should not go to Lethe*, or *forget their sadness* (Lethe is the river of forgetfulness in Greek mythology); *should not commit suicide* (nightshade, *the ruby grape of Proserpine*, is a poison; Proserpine is the mythological queen of the underworld as mentioned in the Anthology); and *should not become infatuated with symbols of misery, grief and death the beetle, the death-moth, and the owl*. Because, as the speaker contends, it will make the agony of the spirit drowsy, and the sufferer should do his best to stay conscious of his deepest anguish and suffering.

In the third stanza, Keats argues that pain and pleasure are closely related and affected: Beauty is doomed to die, joy is short-lived, and the flower of joy is *turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips* for good. The narrator states that the shrine of melancholy is in the *temple of Delight*, but that it will only be possible to be visible if you can overcome yourself with pleasure until it shows its heart of sadness, by *burst Joy's grape against his palate fine*. The one who can

do this should *taste the sadness* of melancholy's power and *be among her cloudy trophies hung*. In his ode, the poem's creator in dialogical way is encouraging the reader to react against the Melancholy and he tells what is advisable to do and what is not. Moreover, this poem goes through the nature of melancholy and recommends a treatment for it: to defeat the fit of melancholy, human has to be entirely involved at the top of an emotional position, which makes the sensitivity sharper to pleasure or even to pain.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

To conclude, it can be said that Keats, like many other Romantic poets, was greatly influenced by Greek mythology and made an attempt to deploy mythological symbols and characters to communicate his experiences with his reader. Since mythological concepts were mostly rooted in social and political events, Keats took this implication into account in order to reflect sufferings of his troubled society. On the other hand, mythological air of his poetry can be seen as an escape into the imaginary world of legends from the harsh and conflicted world of reality. Thus, these mythological images are a kind of a shared sense that affords the readers and the poet the possibility of coordinating their thoughts together in term of a shared reflection that can be expressed in response to the current conditions. This common sense can be found in dialogical nature of social attitudes of Keats's poetry that invokes reactions and responses from the individuals in society that are parts of uniquely created joint responses to joint circumstances.

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**Somayyeh Hashemi** is a PhD candidate and was born in Tabriz City, East Azerbaijan Province, Iran in 1984. She received her M.A. degree from Islamic Azad University-Tabriz branch, Iran in English Literature. Currently, she is a lecturer in Osveh University in Tabriz, Iran. Her major areas of interest are Bakhtinian studies, Systemic functional linguistics, Discourse Analysis, Rhetoric, Critical Discourse Analysis and Romanticism, Appraisal Framework, ELT and EFL. She has published several articles based on her areas of interests.



**Bahram Kazemian** is a PhD candidate and was born in Tabriz City, East Azerbaijan Province, Iran in 1980. He obtained his B.A. in English Translation and his M.A. in ELT from Islamic Azad University-Tabriz branch, Iran. Currently, he is the managing director of Unique Language Center in Tabriz. He has a ten-year experience in TEFL at different language institutes in Tabriz. His major areas of interest are Systemic Functional Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, Rhetoric, Bakhtinian Studies, Contrastive Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Appraisal Framework, ELT and EFL. He has published several articles and one book based on his areas of interests.

# Translation of Culture-specific Phrases in the Holy Quran

Mojtaba Moradi  
IAU, Qeshm Branch, Iran

Hossain Mohammad Sadeghi  
IAU, Bandar Abbas Branch, Iran

**Abstract**—Translating cultural elements can be a demanding task due to the fact that such elements have specific meanings in the culture and language in which they arise but not necessarily in others. Taking this fact into account, the present study investigated the strategies used in translation of culture-bound elements in three English translation of Holy Quran and the frequency of such strategies. In this study, the data gathered consist of the terms related to Islamic law in the original Arabic text of Holy Quran based on the classification made by Khoramshahi (1990) as well as their equivalents in three English versions by Shakir (1985), Yusuf Ali (1996), and Pickthall (1996). To gather the required data, chapter thirty of holy Quran randomly selected. Then, the culture-specific elements of this chapter of Holy Quran were detected and were compared with their English equivalents to identify the strategies used in translating them. Finally, the frequency of the employed strategies was studied in order to find which strategy has the highest potential for conveying the intended meaning.

**Index Terms**—religious translation, culture-specific items, holy Quran

## I. INTRODUCTION

Religious texts and the Holy Quran in particular, have played a significant role in the life of man throughout history by aiming at guiding mankind into the right path. Now, the question that arises is that how such a global guidance should be carried out; In other words, how the universal message of the Quran should be conveyed to the receivers.

This study sets the scene by introducing the problem and subsequent research questions. It also discusses the purpose of the study and ends in the definitions provided for the key terms used in the present study. Translation as a phenomenon is such an incredibly broad idea that it can be understood in many different ways. Therefore, not surprisingly, many different definitions have been offered, each reflecting a particular underlying theoretical model. The American theorist Venuti (1995) for example, define translation as "a process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the source –language text is replaced by a chain of signifier in target language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation"(p.17). Venuti (1995) sees the aim of translation as:

To bring back a cultural other as the same, the recognizable, even the familiar; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text, often in highly self conscious projects, where translation serves an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, and political.(p. 18)

Newmark (1998) introduce (Culture specific items) which the readership is unlikely to understand and the translation strategies for this kind of concept depend on the particular text-type, requirement of the readership and client and importance of the cultural word in the text.

In this study effort will be made to compare culture bound terms concerning cultural specific concepts in the holy Quran and three English translation of them to see what kind of procedures have been used by different translators and which procedure(s) is / are the most appropriate one(s). In doing so, the strategies used in dealing with culture-bound elements will be identified and finally, the frequency of the applied strategies will be studied in detail.

The significance of proper translation of cultural items is most apparent in the translation of religious texts where even the mistranslation of one cultural item could result in the complete distortion of the meaning. As such, the importance and need for present study which attempts to identify the most appropriate procedures for translation of culture-bound terms in sacred texts, and the holy Quran in particular, is self-evident. In this regard, the problems found in the translation of cultural specific items are studied in order to determine which translating strategies are used and how they reconstitute the cultural notion of the source text in the target text.

The culture-bound terms were classified based on the taxonomy presented by Khoramshahi (1990). The data were gathered from analyzing the English equivalent of the Holy Quran. The acquired data are analyzed on the basis of the following translation strategies based on the Ivir (1987) model which includes seven procedures as:

(1). Definition (2). Literal translation (3). Substitution (4). Lexical creation (5). Omission (6). Addition (7). Borrowing.

So, the present study could gain significance as it draws attention to different strategies employed by the translators to render culture-specific items into their English equivalent. Furthermore, this study aims at scrutinizing whether there exists any point of similarity and differences between these procedures and strategies used in the translation of cultural specific concepts (CSCS) of Holy Quran that are used by three different translators.

### **Culture-Bound Terms**

Cultural-specific items refer to those which have no equivalents or different positions in target reader's cultural system, thus causing difficulties of translation of their functions and meanings in the source text into target text. According to Hatim and Mason (1990, pp. 223-4) "it is certainly true that in recent years the translator has increasingly come to be seen as a cultural mediator rather than a mere linguistic broker. It is also true that, in any form of translation, translators tend to apply a general strategy that will favor either an SL-oriented approach, or a TL-oriented approach."

Newmark (1988, p.78) maintains that translation problems caused by culture-specific words arise due to the fact that they are intrinsically and uniquely bound to the culture concerned and, therefore, are related to the "context of a cultural tradition". There are many ways to categorize culture-specific items, for instance Newmark (1988) points out five areas that cultural items may come from: (1) ecology (flora, fauna, winds, etc), (2) material culture (artifacts food clothes houses and towns, transport), (3) social culture (work and leisure), (4) organizations, customs, ideas (political, social, legal, religion or artistic), and (5) gestures and habits.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

### **Theoretical Model for Analysis**

The theoretical framework of the present study will be the classification made by Ivir (1987). He has proposed seven procedures in the translation of cultural items, namely, definition, literal translation, addition, omission, lexical creation, substitution, and borrowing.

The data gathered consist of the terms related to Islamic law in the original Arabic text of Holy Quran based on the classification made by Khoramshahi (1990) as well as their equivalents in three English versions by Shakir (1985), Yusuf Ali (1996), and Pickthall (1996). Then, Ivir's (1987) suggested procedures for translating culture-bound terms were applied to the terms in question to see which procedures have been preferred by those translators.

The purpose of this study was to find the strategies employed in translation of culture-bound terms in the English translation of Holy Quran and to investigate the frequency of the used strategies to determine which one has the highest potential for conveying the intended meaning.

### **Materials**

This study is mainly descriptive. In the present study terms related to Islamic law in the original Arabic text of Holy Quran have been compared with their equivalents in three English versions in order to find culture-bound terms and to investigate in details the translation strategies adopted by the translators in dealing with these terms.

The data will be gathered from analyzing the 36 suras of chapter thirty of Holy Quran.

The reason for choosing the Holy Quran as the base for this study was two fold. First, the original Arabic text of the Holy Quran is complete with terms specific to Muslim culture thus highly appropriate for the current research. Secondly, the significance of the proper translation of cultural items is most apparent in the translation of the religious texts where even the mistranslation of one cultural element could result in the complete distortion of meaning. Keeping this in view, chapter thirty of Quran were randomly chosen as samples, these thirty six Sourahs have a number of peculiarities as: they are not so long that may cause tedium on the part of the readers about the central topic of that sura and also due to the fact that these sourahs are so popular among the non-Arab speakers including Persian speakers and are widely used with all the Muslims in a way that the majority of them are reading them by heart due to their widely use and repetition.

### **Procedure**

As it was amply discussed respecting particular elements of each kind of translation the culture -bound words of all the thirty six Sourahs of chapter thirty were listed in tables .then, efforts were made to locate such terms in the Holy Quran, i.e. to find the verses containing each term. Afterwards, the equivalents of Arabic terms were identified in the above mentioned three English versions of the holy book. Next, Ivir's (1987) suggested procedures for translating culture-bound terms were applied to the terms in question to see which procedures have been preferred by those translators. then, the frequency of occurrence of each procedure was counted in order to see which translation procedure(s) has/have been used more frequently. finally, the distribution of the three translators procedure for translating terms related to Islamic Ahkam in the Holy Quran was presented in the tabular form for subsequent analysis and discussion.

### **Framework of the Study**

One of the most revealing translation crisis points is when some reference to the Source Culture is made, and there is no obvious official equivalent. Different theorists have suggested different procedures in the translation of cultural items. For example, Vladimir ivir (1987) has proposed seven procedures:

1. **Literal Translation:** is often regarded as the procedure for filling of the cultural and lexical gaps in translation (ivir, 1987, p.41). In this procedure, a SL word or phrase,, as a translation unit, is translated into a TL word or phrase, without breaking the TL syntactic rules.

2. **Addition:** may turn out to be necessary procedure in the translation of the implicit elements of culture (ibid, p.46). In this procedure, an addition and note is added after the translation of the TL word or phrase.

3. **Definition:** is a procedure that relies on what members of the target culture know in an attempt to make them aware of what they don't know (ibid, p.40). in other words, defining means reducing the unknown to the known and the unshared to the shared.

4. **omission:** is necessitated not only by the nature of cultural element but by the nature of the communicative situation in which such an element appears (ibid, p. 46). in this procedure ,SL word or phrase, as a translation unit, is dropped in the TLT.

5. **Substitution:** a procedure that is available to the translator in cases in which the two cultures display a partial overlap rather than a clear-cut presence vs. absence of a particular element of culture (ibid, p. 43). In this procedure, a SL cultural item is substituted by a TL term.

6. **Lexical creation:** is a procedure which greatly taxes the translator's ingenuity on the one hand and the receiver's power of comprehension on the other hand, hence it is less frequently used. It takes a variety of forms from lexical invention and word formation to the semantic extension or specialization of words that are already present in the target language (ibid, p.45).

7. **Borrowing:** is a frequently used procedure and one that assured a very precise transmission of cultural information (ibid, p.39). in this procedure, the SL word is brought into the target language text.

#### **Analysis of Culture-Bound Elements of the holy Quran**

In the following parts the collected data will be analyzed after being classified on the basis of the before mentioned framework. It should be added that although the emphasis of this study is culture-bound elements, but in the following sections some of the culture-bound elements will be offered in tables, to help the reader have a clear understanding of culture-bound elements and their meaning in context.

TABLE.1  
TERMS TRANSLATED USING THE PROCEDURE "LITERAL TRANSLATION"

Terms	T1(Shakir)	T2(Yusuf Ali)	T3(Pickthall)
ابن السبيل	Wayfarer	Wayfarer	Wayfarer
اسفل سفلين	lowest of the low	(to be) the lowest of the low	the lowest of the low
الازلام	(dividing by) arrows	(Divination by) arrows	Divining arrows
الامر بالمعروف	Enjoin what is right	Enjoin what is right	Enjoin right conduct
الكفرون	Unbelievers	ye that reject Faith	Disbelievers
الاياامى	Those who are single	Those who are single	Such of you as are solitary
الاقسام	Swear	Swear	Swear
الايدى-قطعها	Cut of hands	Cut of hands	Cut of hands
الايلاء	Swear that they will not go in to their wives	Take an oath for abstention from their wives	Forswear their wives must wait four months
التين و الزيتون	I swear by the fig and the olive	By the Fig and the Olive	By the Fig and the Olive
الاسرى	Captives	Prisoners of war	Captives
الاسير	Captive	Captive	Prisoner
الامه	Maid	Slave woman	Bondwoman
الايمان	Oaths	Oaths	Oaths
الحلف	Swear	Swear	Swear
الحرام	Unlawful	Forbidden	Forbidden
الحرمات	Sacred things	Things prohibited	Forbidden things
الخمس	A fifth	A fifth share	A fifth
الدم	blood	Blood	Blood
الدماء	Blood	Blood	Blood
الدين	Debt	Debts	Debt
الديه	Blood-money	Compensation	Blood-money
الربا	Usury	Usury	Usury
الزنا	Fornication	Adultery	Adultery
الزكاة	Poor-rate	Regular charity	Poor-due
الزوج	Husband	Husband	Husband
الزوجين	Pairs	Pairs	Two spouses
السفر	Journey	Journey	Journey
السفها	The weak of understanding	The weak of understanding	Foolish
الغسل	Wash yourselves	Wash whole body	Bath
القرىبان	Offering	Sacrifice	Offering
الكفارات	Expiation	Expiation	Expiation
المعاهدة	Covenant	Covenant	Covenant
النحر	Sacrifice	Sacrifice	Sacrifice
النذر	Vow	Devotion	Vow
النفقة	recompense	Recompense	Due payment
النفى من البلاد	Be imprisoned	Exile from the land	Be expelled out of the land
النهي عن المنكر	Forbid what is evil	Forbid evil	Forbid the wrong
الوالد	Father	Father	Parent
الوالده	Mothers	Mothers	Mothers
الوالدان	Parents	Parents	Parents
الوقف	Spend(benevolently)	Give(freely)	Spend
الهبة	Grant	Grant	Vouchsafe
الهدية	Present	Present	Present
اليتامى	Orphans	Orphans	Orphans
بيت الله الحرام	Sacred house	Sacred house	Sacred house
خطبة النساء	Asking of (such) women in marriage	Make an offer of betrothal	Troth with women
دين	Religion	Way	Religion
سجيل	stones of baked clay	stones of baked clay	stones of baked clay
طيرا ابايل	birds in flocks	Flights of Birds	swarms of flying creatures
ليلة القدر	the grand night	the Night of Power	the Night of Predestination

All translators have translated the above 52 terms literally. In the case of these terms, the following points are worth noting.

As regards the term سجيل term, none of the translators have used explanation about the kind of stone that god used for scratching the enemy.

Regarding the terms الخمس, none of the translators have used the English equivalent 'tithe' meaning 'a tenth of the goods some body produces or tenth part of one's income paid as a tax for the support of religious institutions' as such they have preferred the procedure of literal translation to that of substitution or cultural equivalent, since the root of the Arabic word is related to the Islamic law.

In the case of concepts such as اليتامى, الدين, الدم, الهدية, etc all translators have used the same English equivalent since there is no cultural gap between such terms in the SL and TL and they are among the most-widely used lexical items in both the source and target language.

According to Ivir (1987) "the main value of this procedure is its faithfulness to the source language expression and its transparency in the target language"(p.41)

TABLE.2  
TERMS TRANSLATED USING THE PROCEDURE OF "DEFINITION"

Terms	T1(Shakir)	T2(Yusuf Ali)	T3(Pickthall)
الحجاب	Let down upon them their over-garments	Cast their outer garments over their persons(when abroad)	Draw their cloaks close round them (when they go abroad)
التيمم	Betake yourselves to pure earth	Take for yourselves clean sand or earth	Go to high clean soil
الراكعون	Those who bow down humbly(in worship)	Those who bow down humbly(in worship)	Those who bow down(in prayer)
الرشوة	To gain access thereby to the judges	Use it as bait for the judges	Nor seek by it to gain the hearing of the judges
الساجدون	Who prostrate themselves	Who prostrate themselves in prayer	Who fall prostrate (in worship)
اللواط	Come to males in lust	Practice your lusts on men	Come with lusts unto men
المحارم	Fathers, brothers, brother's sons ,sister's sons their own women, of what their right hands possess	Fathers or sons, brothers, brother's sons, sister's sons, or their women, or the (slaves) whom their right hands possess	Fathers, sons, brothers, brother's sons, the sons of sisters or of their own women, or slaves
الوضوء	Wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles	Wash your faces, and your hands(and arms) to the elbows; rub your heads(with water);and (wash) your feet to the ankles	Wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and lightly rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles
صلة الرحم	What Allah has ordered to be joined	What Allah has ordered to be joined	What Allah has ordered to be joined
تعدد الزوجات	Marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four	Marry women of your choice, two or three or four	Marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four
ملك اليمين	What your right hand possesses	Any thy right hand should possess(as handmaidens)	Those whom thy right hand possesses

In the case of the above 11 terms, shown in table 4.2, all translators have adopted the procedure of definition.

As regards the terms الرشوة, all translators chose the definition procedure for better extension and focus on this matter, since they can substituted with words like bribery ,meaning' giving of money or favors to influence or corrupt another's conduct.

As regards the term الوضوء , التيمم all translators have used definition procedure, since by choosing literal translation procedure, a cultural gap can occur, and these terms is in the depth of Islamic and Muslim culture.

According to Ivir (1987) "definition can quiet accurately transmit the necessary cultural information depending how extensive it is made"(p.41)

TABLE.3  
TERMS TRANSLATED USING THE PROCEDURE OF "BORROWING"

Terms	T1(Shakir)	T2(Yusuf Ali)	T3(Pickthall)
البعل	Ba l	Baal	Baal
الجنه	Jinns	Jinns	Jinns
القبلة	Qiblah	Qiblah	Qiblah
طور سينين	mount Sinai	The Mount of Sinai	Mount Sinai

In the case of the above 4 terms, shown in table 4.3, all translators have adopted the procedure of borrowing. In this case the following point is worth noting.

The borrowing procedure is located in the third place about translation of cultural terms and in some situation is essential, as the term القبلة ,the best equivalent is "Qiblah", since this word have a long history and came back to the creation of Islam.

TABLE.4  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الاستمتاع

Term	T1	T2	T3
الاستمتاع	Profit by	Derive benefit from	Seek content(by marrying them)
	Literal translation	Literal translation	Literal translation, addition

Regarding the term الاستمتاع, all translators have used literal translation but, T3 combined addition to the procedure.

TABLE.5  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM ابي لهب

Term	T1	T2	T3
ابي لهب	Abu Lahab	the Father of Flame	Abu Lahab
	Borrowing	Literal translation	Borrowing

Regarding the table.5., T1& T3 have adopted the procedure borrowing and T2 has applied literal translation.

TABLE.6  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM التقتيل

Term	T1	T2	T3
التقتيل	(horrible)murdering	Slain (without mercy)	Slain with a (fierce)slaughter
	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation, addition

According to table.6., all translators have adopted the same procedure for the translation of التقتيل.

TABLE.7  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM التهجد

Term	T1	T2	T3
التهجد	Pray Tahajjud	Pray	Awake for
	Borrowing	Literal translation	Literal translation

Except for T1 the other two translators have translated the term التهجد literally.

TABLE.8  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الجزية

Term	T1	T2	T3
الجزية	Tax	Jizya	Tribute
	Literal translation	Borrowing	Literal translation

Regarding the term الجزية T1 & T3 have used literal translation and T2 has applied borrowing procedure.

TABLE.9  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الجنب

Term	T1	T2	T3
الجنب	Are under an obligation to perform a bath	In a state of ceremonial impurity	Polluted
	Literal translation	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation

As regards the term الجنب, T1&T2 have used the procedure definition; T3 has translated it literally. In the Christian religious is baptize' meaning' perform ceremony of baptism by immersing in water (Christian ritual symbolizing admittance into the church) which is in some case near to the term الجنب which is special in Muslim.

TABLE.10  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الحج

Term	T1	T2	T3
الحج	Pilgrimage	Hajj	Pilgrimage
	Literal translation	Borrowing	Literal translation

According to table.10, T1 & T3 have used the procedure of literal translation; T2 has adopted the borrowing procedure.

TABLE.11  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الزانى

Term	T1	T2	T3
الزانى	Fornicator	Man guilty of adultery or fornication	Adulterer
	Literal translation	Definition	Literal translation

Regarding the term الزانى, T1 & T3 have used the literal translation procedure and T2 use definition.

TABLE.12  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الزانية

Term	T1	T2	T3
الزانية	Fornicatress	Woman guilty of adultery or fornication	Adultrress
	Literal translation	definition	Literal translation

According to the table.30., all translators have applied literal translation except T2.

TABLE.13  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM السارق

Term	T1	T2	T3
السارق	The man who steals	Male thief	Male thief
	Definition	Literal translation	Literal translation

In the case of the term السارق, all translators but T1, who has used the procedure of definition, have translated it literally.



TABLE.14  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM السارقة

Term	T1	T2	T3
السارقة	Woman who steals	Female thief	Female thief
	Definition	Literal translation	Literal translation

Regarding the term السارقة, all translators but T1, who has used the procedure of definition, has translated it literally.

TABLE.15  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM السائبة

Term	T1	T2	T3
السائبة	Saibah	A she-camel let loose for free pasture	Saibah
	Borrowing	Definition	Borrowing

As regards the term, T1 & T3 have used the procedure borrowing; T2 has adopted the procedure definition. This is another example of terms embedded highly in Arabic culture thus making it necessary to be translated by means of the procedures borrowing or definition.

TABLE.16  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM السائل

Term	T1	T2	T3
السائل	him who asks	the petitioner (unheard)	the beggar
	Definition	Literal translation	Literal translation

As shown in table.16, T1 has used the procedure of definition and other two translators have used the term السائل literally.

TABLE.17  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الصلوات

Term	T1	T2	T3
الصلوات	Prayers	(habit of)prayers	Prayers
	Literal translation	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation

In the case of the term الصلوات, except for T2, who have used the procedure of literal translation plus addition, other translators have preferred to literally.

TABLE.18  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الظهار

Term	T1	T2	T3
الظهار	Wives whose backs you liken to the backs of your mothers	Zihar	Wives whom ye declare(to be your mothers)
	Definition	borrowing	definition

Regarding the term الظهار, T2 has used the procedure of borrowing; T1 & T3 have adopted definition.

TABLE.19  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM القارعه

Term	T1	T2	T3
القارعه	The terrible calamity	The (Day) of Noise and Clamour	The Calamity
	Literal translation	Addition , literal translation	Literal translation

In the case of the term القارعه, all translators applied literal translation but, T2 use a combination of addition and literal procedure.

TABLE.20  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الكفالة

Term	T1	T2	T3
الكفالة	To have some body in charge	To be charged with the care of somebody	Be the guardian
	Definition	definition	Literal translation

As regards the term الكفالة, T1 & T2 have used definition procedure, and T3 literally translate it.

TABLE.21  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM اللواط

Term	T1	T2	T3
اللواط	Come to males in lust	Practice your lusts on men	Come with lusts unto men
	Literal translation	Borrowing	Literal translation

According to table.21., all translators use definition procedure, and focuses on men ,since this term is one of challengeable and meaningful culture bound term in Islam, all translators by defining stated that this action happen between two men instead of 'homosexual and lesbian' in western country. This is one of terms embedded highly in Arabic culture thus making it necessary to be translated by means of the definition procedure.

TABLE. 22  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM المساجد

Term	T1	T2	T3
المساجد	Masjids	Place for the worship of Allah	Sanctuaries
	Borrowing	definition	Literal translation

In the case of the term المساجد, T1 has used the procedure of borrowing; T2 has applied the procedure of definition and T3 has translated it literally.

TABLE.23  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM المسكين

Term	T1	T2	T3
المسكين	Poor man	One that is indigent	A man in need
	Literal translation	definition	Literal translation

In the case of the term المسكين, T2 has used the procedure of definition; the other two translators have applied literal translation.

TABLE.24  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM المهاجرون

Term	T1	T2	T3
المهاجرون	Muhajirs	Those who forsook(their homes)	Muhajirin
	Borrowing	Definition	Borrowing

According to table 4.24., except for T2, other translators have used borrowing procedure for translating المهاجرون.

TABLE.25  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM النفث

Term	T1	T2	T3
النفث	those who blow on knots	those who practise secret arts	malignant witchcraft
	Definition	Definition	Literal translation

All translators but T3 have translated the term النفث in definition procedure.

TABLE.26  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM الوقف

Term	T1	T2	T3
الوقف	Spend(benevolently)	Give(freely)	Spend
	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation

Considering the term الوقف, all translators except T3 have used the procedures of literal and addition.

TABLE.27  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM تواباً

Term	T1	T2	T3
تواباً	oft-returning (to mercy).	Of-Returning (in Grace and Mercy).	ready to show mercy
	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation

As regards the term تواباً, all translators except T3 have used the procedures of literal and addition.

TABLE.28  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM علق

Term	T1	T2	T3
علق	a clot	out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood	a clot
	Literal translation	Literal translation, addition	Literal translation

Considering the term علق, all translators have used literal translation; farther more, T2 has adopted the combination of procedures literal and addition.

TABLE.29  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM حاميه

Term	T1	T2	T3
حاميه	A burning fire	(It is) a Fire Blazing fiercely	(it is)Raging Fire
	Literal translation	Addition , definition	Literal translation,addition

In the case of the term *حاميه*, T1 & T3 have used literal translation and T2 has applied a combination of addition and definition procedure.

TABLE.30  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM عرفات

Term	T1	T2	T3
عرفات	Arafat	(mount)Arafat	Arafat
	Borrowing	Addition, borrowing	Borrowing

As regards the term *عرفات*, T2 has used a combination of the procedures of borrowing and addition; other translators have resorted to the procedure of borrowing. This term is one of the examples that rooted to the Muslim religious and have not a special place in the other religious cultures.

TABLE.31  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM والعصر

Term	T1	T2	T3
والعصر	I swear by the time	By (the Token of) Time (through the ages)	By the declining day
	Literat translation	Literat translation, addition	Literat translation

As regarding the term *والعصر*, all three translators have adopted literal translation, in addition to, T2 use addition procedure. This term is one of specific cultural words, that needed more explanation and noting, which none of the translators use it.

TABLE.32  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE USED FOR THE TRANSLATION OF THE TERM همزة لمز

Term	T1	T2	T3
همزة لمز	slanderer, defamer	(kind of) scandal-monger and-backbiter	Slandering traducer
	Literat translation	Addition , literat translation	Literat translation

According to the table 4.32., all translators applied literal translation but, T2 use a combination of addition and literal procedure.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

Since the strategies to transfer culture-bound terms mentioned ,first two tables are presented to show the number of different strategies of translation according to Ivir's model, then the frequency of the strategies used by translators for rendering culture-specific items will be shown in charts, and finally After the indication of the frequency of the strategies employed by translators, the percentage of the overall employed strategies based on this formula ( $Pf = \frac{\sum F}{N} \times (100)$ ) are shown in three charts.

#### Analysis of Culture-Bound Elements

In the following parts the collected data will be analyzed after being classified on the basis of the before mentioned framework. It should be added that although the emphasis of this study is culture-bound elements, but in the following sections some of the culture-bound elements will be offered in their contexts, i.e. the entire verse or verses to help the reader have a clear understanding of culture-bound elements and their meaning in the origin context.

#### Analysis of "The holy Quran"

TABLE 1.  
FREQUENCY OF THE OCCURRENCE OF EACH PROCEDURE

procedure translator	Literat translation	definition	borrowing	Addition	omission	substation	Lexical creation
T1(shakir)	72	17	10	1	0	0	0
T2(pickthal)	61	19	9	11	0	0	0
T3(Yusuf Ali)	77	13	8	2	0	0	0
Total sum	210	49	27	14	0	0	0
percentage	70/5%	16/3%	9%	4/2%	0	0	0

As shown above, the procedures of literal translation, definition, borrowing and addition are the most –used procedures adopted by the above translators;

As the results showed literal translation procedure, is the most common strategy to render cultural elements. This is used 210 times between all translators.

Since most of the Arabic culture-bound elements do not exist in target culture, the translators preferred to replace them with some sort of paraphrase or literally translated terms, which does not necessarily involves a target culture-bound term in order to transfer the intended meaning.

The next most common strategy is "definition" which is used 49 times between all translators, and the third common strategy which consists of 27 instances is borrowing strategy. And the last but not least, the procedure of addition

located with 14 instances during this survey. Finally, according to the cumulative percentage: total sum of all this percentage is 100%.

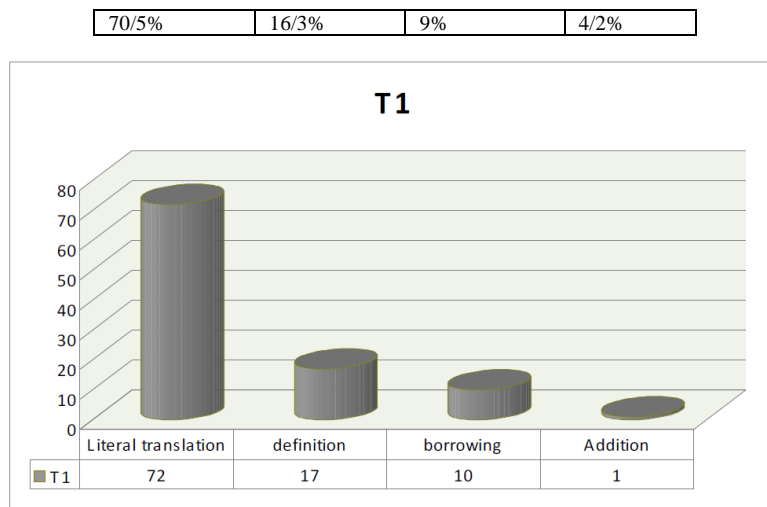


Chart 1. Frequency of the employed strategies in T1

This chart presented an analysis of the translation procedure adopted by Shakir. Literal translation is the preferred strategy. In compared with other translators, shakir is located in second places in applying literal translation.

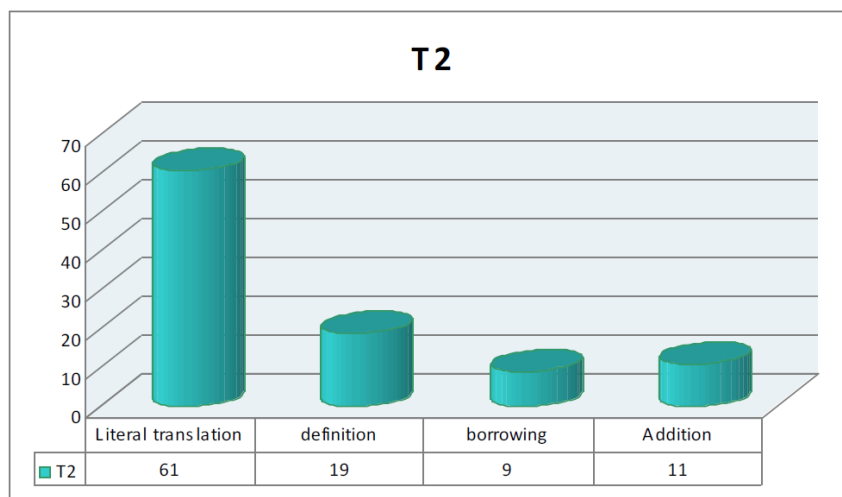


Chart 2. Frequency of the employed strategies in T2

This chart presented an analysis of the translation procedure adopted by Yusuf Ali. Literal translation is the preferred strategy. In compared with other translators, Yusuf Ali is located in third places in applying literal translation.

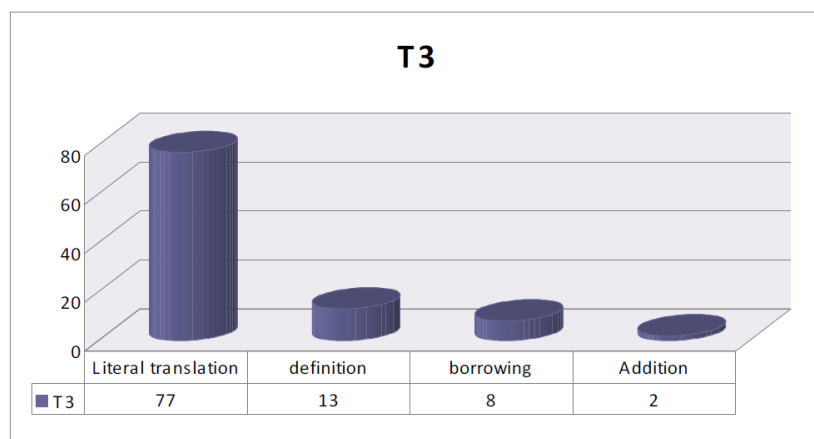


Chart 3. Frequency of the employed strategies in T3

This chart presented an analysis of the translation procedure adopted by Pickthall. Literal translation is the preferred strategy. In compared with other translators, Pickthall is located in the first places in applying literal translation.

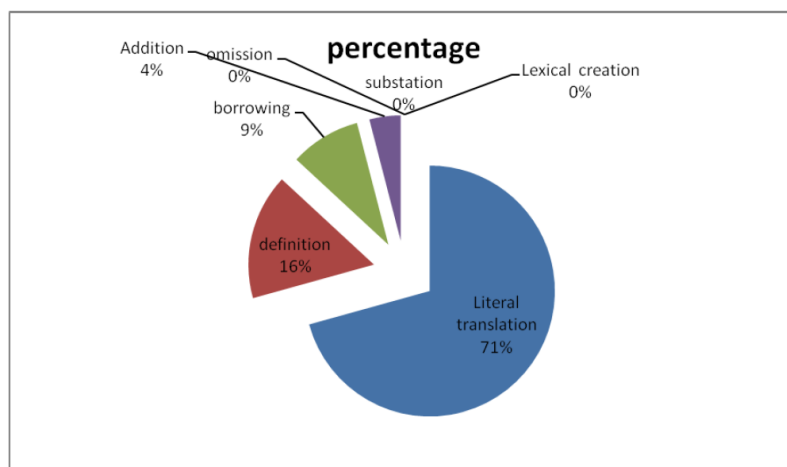


Chart 4. Percentage of the overall employed strategies in Holy Quran

Based on the researcher's analysis of the translation of the terms related to Ahkam in the Holy Quran, four out of seven of the above procedures were observed to be used by the chosen translators, which are evident in the above chart.

The other finding of study is some clearance of translators in selecting and equivalent finding as; in Yusuf Ali's translation, his choice of words – see tables in appendix – is peculiar of Quranic archaic lexicon and old-fashioned, in most of the cases give helpful explanation to the reader. Totally, he uses fully fledged criteria for transferring cultural element to the TT. On the other hand, Shakir and Pictal are much like each other in equivalent finding and especially in style and syntax. By attention to these examples it would be clear. Qur'an 4:158

(1)

YUSUF ALI: Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise;-

PICKTHAL: But Allah took him up unto Himself. Allah was ever Mighty, Wise.

SHAKIR: Nay! Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

(2)

TABLE 2.  
Similarities and Differences between Translators

Term	Shakir	Yusuf ali	Pickthal
الصلوات	Prayers	(habit of)prayers	Prayers
الزانية	Fornicatress	Woman guilty of adultery or fornication	Adultress
المساجد	Masjids	Place for the worship of Allah	Sanctuaries

By attention to the percentages of applying borrowing procedures among these three translators it can be obvious that Yusuf Ali applied more than the other translators in borrowing and less than using literal translation strategy.

As the results showed, in this study, the statistical presented in (table .1) revealed that the most frequently used procedure in the present study is literal translation. Therefore, it seems that the most appropriate procedure for translating culture- bound terms in the Holy Quran into English is the literal translation procedure opted most frequently by the selected professional translators.

As the final comment on the appropriateness of the procedures used for the translation of selected material, it is better to take a look on the statements made by Ivir (1987). He believes that no uniform treatments of unmatched elements of culture in translation is possible for all communicative situations, text-types, an individual text, or even a given cultural element repeated several times in the same text.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In the current research the focus has been on the translation of terms related to Islamic law (Ahkam) in the Arabic text of the Holy Quran into English and the translation procedures opted for by seven translators.

Analysis of the data presented in this study led to answering the two research questions presented in chapter one.

1. The analysis of the data shows that four out of seven strategies proposed by Ivir (1987) have been adopted by the selected translators in this study, namely, literal translation, definition, borrowing and addition. However, the remaining three procedures, i.e. omission, substation and lexical creation had no occurrence.

2. In this study, the statistical presented in table 4.31 revealed that the most frequently used procedure in the present study is literal translation. Therefore, it seems that the most appropriate procedure for translating culture- bound terms in the Holy Quran into English is the literal translation procedure opted most frequently by the selected professional translators.

Therefore, it seems that the selected translators regard literal translation as the best choice for the translation of the selected cultural elements of the Holy Quran.

As the final comment on the appropriateness of the procedures used for the translation of selected material, it is better to take a look on the statements made by Ivir (1987). He believes that no uniform treatments of unmatched elements of culture in translation is possible for all communicative situations, text-types, an individual text, or even a given cultural element repeated several times in the same text. As he puts it,

For translator there is a hierarchy of opinions or an order of preference with respect to the translation procedures. He knows that borrowing, lexical creation, literal translation and definition (in that order) will explicitly draw the receiver's attention to the specific source-culture content, while substitution and omission will mask it; addition makes explicit the information that was unexpressed yet implicit in the source text....(p.47).

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**Mojtaba Moradi** is a Ph.D student in TEFL from the IAU, Qeshm Branch, Iran.



**Hossain Mohammad Sadeghi** has an M.A. in English Language Translation, from the IAU, Bandar Abbas Branch, Iran.

# The Feasibility Study of Interpretive Theories in the College English Course—Exemplified with Qingdao University of Science and Technology

Yue Zhao

Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China

**Abstract**—The current College English Course has to face many difficulties, such as the low efficiency and the student's reluctance to learn, many universities have attempted to reform it, and some effects begin to show. The author is trying to analyze the feasibility to recommend the interpretive training methods into College English Class from the following three aspects: the need of college English reform, the learning desire of non-English major undergraduates and the demand of CET 4 and CET 6.

**Index Terms**—college English course, interpretive training methods, feasibility

## I. INTRODUCTION OF INTERPRETIVE THEORY

### A. *The General Introduction of Interpretive Theory*

The interpretive theory or the interpretive approach which came into being in the late 1960s in France is a school specialized in interpreting and non-literary translation. It was first put forward by Seleskovitch (1984), French translation theorist, who holds that translation, in every deep sense, is interpretation, which means the translator's interpretation on the original text based on the language symbols and his own cognitive complements. The translator's ultimate purpose is not the equivalence on the language unit, but on the meaning or effects of the source text, which poses great differences with the opinions of linguistic schools, such as that of George Mountin. This theory derives directly from the interpreting practice, presenting great influence on the translation study. Based on the research results of neurolinguistics, experimental psychology, Piaget's genetic psychology and linguistic, the study group had a through research on the real-time interpreting practice and combined non-literary translation study, thus formed the whole series of interpretive theory. Since the 1980s, the interpretive theory has achieved great on the field not only of interpreting but of the written texts, scientific translation and translation teaching.

#### 1. Levels of Translation

The common translation theory holds that translation should be conducted on the three levels, that is, lexical, syntactic and discourse levels. Whereas the interpretive theory argues that the first two are linguistic translation, and only the discourse translation is the real translation. A well-done translation should be the discourse interpretation, for the reason that a sentence is the basic unit of grammar while discourse is the basic element of the meaning. The real translation is the meaning interpretation but not the grammar or a single word or sentence. The equivalence between the source text and the target text is the overall equivalence on communicative meanings. And the readers or the listeners of the target language can get the same feeling with those of the source language. From this perspective the basic translation unit should be the communicative meaning but not words or sentences.

#### 2. Objects of Translation

The essence of interpretive theory is the distinction between the linguistic meaning and the non-verbal sense. An interpreter is to interpret the non-verbal sense of the speaker but not the linguistic meaning of the language. That is to say, the nature of meaning is implicitness or the real intention of the speaker but not the linguistic meaning of the language symbols. Meaning or sense is composed of two parts. One is implicitness which refers to the interior sense of the speaker. The other is the explicitness which is the actual contents of the speaker. And translation and interpretation are communicative behavior substantially. So the purpose of translation or interpretation is to convey meanings or communicative senses.

Above all, the translation object is the conveyance of communicative meanings. A translator or an interpreter is to convey the information of the whole discourse, but not the discourse itself. Thus interpretation is not the memorization of the speaker's words of the source language, but the grasp of the communicative meaning and reconstruction of that with the target language.

#### 3. Communicative Meanings

The communicative meaning depends on the sufficient common knowledge among participants. An interpreter is to obtain communicative senses by recalling the cognitive baggage in his mind at a cluster of sounds. Five essential elements are linguistic knowledge, cognitive baggage, the cognitive context, the speaker and the audience. An interpreter should possess solid linguistic knowledge, in that case, his attention can be focused on the contents during

the listening but not the language itself. Cognitive baggage is extra-linguistic knowledge which refers to the knowledge about the actual world. Communicative meaning is the product of the combination of the linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge. Cognitive contexts are the direct and concrete knowledge derived from the source material. Cognitive baggage and cognitive context together form the cognitive complements, which is of great importance with the linguistic knowledge to get the communicative meaning. The speaker is an important part for the status, and an interpreter should translate on the speaker's shoes to avoid possible mistakes. Last, the audience's reaction is badly concerned by the speaker, so it should also be the attention of the interpreter to produce an efficient communicative meaning. In this process, the eloquence, the intonation, body language, and even facial expressions of the interpreter should be involved to achieve the speaker's expectation on the reaction of the audience.

#### 4. Stages of Translation

The interpretive theory claims that the process of interpretation falls into three stages. Phase one, interpretation of discourse, is a critical phase for it's the most important connection between the speaker and the audience. The oral form of the speaker's utterance will disappear immediately. Meanwhile it becomes the interpreter's understanding through the process of discourse interpretation. Phase two, de-verbalization. In this stage, the interpreter will ignore the linguistic symbols consciously and only commit the communicative meaning into memory. Phase three, reformulation of the target language. In this process, the interpreter reproduces the material in the target language completely. And the interpretation should be easy to understand.

In all, the interpretive theory assumes the concept that translation is not a liner procedure from one language to the other, but a triangle process containing "the understanding of the source language, de-verbalization and the expression of the target language". Different from other translation theories, the interpretive theory first presents the idea of "de-verbalization". And the goal of translator is supposed to convey the meaning and contents but not the form or the language itself.

#### B. *The Introduction and Development of Interpretive Theory in China*

The study of interpreting in western countries has lasted for more than fifty years, while that of China has been condensed into over a decade. Short as it is, Chinese scholar's commitments and contributions can not be ignored. And the interpretive theory has a profound and far-reaching influence on Chinese translation scholars. The introduction and development of interpretive theory in China mainly include three ways: translation of books on the interpretive theory, scholars' study at ESIT in France and combined further research on interpretive theory by Chinese scholars.

Sun Huishuang, honored by French government as the Chevalier of the Order of Arts, was the first person who introduced the interpretive theory by translating *Interpretive Skills* of Danica Seleskovitch to China in 1979. In 1990, *the Interpretive Theory and Teaching Practice* co-authored by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer was translated by Wang Jiarong and Shi Meizhen. In 1998, Liu Heping wrote a chapter in Xu Jun's book *Modern French Translation Theories* to introduce interpretive theory. She does not only wrote articles about the basic views, technical terms, translation process, translation assessment and the practical application of the interpretive theory to China, but also first put forward the Chinese translation edition of the interpretive theory into "Shiyi School".

Besides the translation of the original books on the interpretive theory, many Chinese scholars went to ESIT to learn directly from Seleskovitch to broaden their research. The representatives are Liu Heping, Bao Gang and Cai Xiaohong.

*Introducing Interpreting Studies* by Bao Gang is the first book specializing in the study of "de-verbalization" and translation stages from the perspective of psycholinguistics, psychology, information theory and neurolinguistics. He tries to explore the nature of the understanding of the source language, the process of thinking, the target language expression and oral features of interpretation. And he attempts to analyze the internal mechanism among these phenomena.

Professor Liu Heping promotes not only the introduction and publication of interpretive theories but also the study of utilization of this theory. Based on the framework of the theory, she combined with the specific translation teaching practice and widened the theoretical framework and application mood in. Specific didactics and guidelines are given in her masterpiece *Interpreting Skills---Approaches to Teaching Interpretation*. She has creatively put forward the following points: students should grasp at least two languages before starting the interpretive courses; interpretive teaching should focus of interpretive skills with no linguistic problems; professional training is preferred than majoring students.

Cai Xiaohong specializes in empirical research on the translation process and translation assessment in her doctorate dissertation. She proposes three theoretical modes on the way of thinking in consecutive translation with the perspective of interdisciplinary research. In the research, she monitors the mental representation (such as information, time variable, language and strategies) as the variable parameters to conclude the general psychological law of language behaviors in consecutive translation, the nature of interpretation and major causes which have great impact on the interpretation performance. Besides, on translation assessment, information unit was proposed on the basis of interpretive theory, Schema Theory of psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis theory. The unit was to be discussed and proved to be an objective, easy to use, and effective evaluation method.

Chinese scholars have made great contributions to the prevalence and refining of interpretive theory. Their study constitutes an important part of the interpretive theory. And in the last more than 30 years Chinese scholars have paid more emphasis on the empirical research, interdisciplinary study and translation stages and on some other points, but



the application of this theory in the College English Course is rarely found, so this essay is devoted to proving the feasibility of the application about the theory in the College English Course.

### C. *The Causes of the Introduction and Development of the Interpretive Theory*

The causes of the prevalence of the interpretive theory in China can be listed as follows. First, the teaching practice and theoretical research of interpreting has always been the focus for Chinese scholars, while the interpretive theory appears as a good theoretical guidance and an easy tool. Second, a team of returning students from ESIT in France, including Liu Heping, Bao Gang and Cai Xiaohong, have completed their own monographs about the interpretive theory, which rewrites the China's history of no monographs on interpretation. Third, a national interpretive seminar has been held for the ninth time every other year since 1996, which offers a valuable chance for Chinese researchers to learn and exchange, and effectively promotes the development of the interpretive theory in China. Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer, founders of the interpretive theory have attended the seminar several times, presenting their concern for the further development of the theory in China.

### D. *The Influence of Interpretive Theory*

All together five monographs on the interpretive theory has been published in China, which almost include all the relative aspects of the theory. The phenomenon to translate the western translation theory extensively is rarely found at home, showing the great importance of the theory. Actually the interpretive theory has positive influence on the interpreting and practical writing translation. It points out explicitly what to translate to an interpreter or a translator. A translator should make sure about the contents of the source material or the speaker to get the communicative meaning. This is quite different with Newmark's opinion that "my translation is meaningful in linguistics". (Newmark, 1988:155)

## II. THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

### A. *To Meet the Needs of College English Reform*

Ministry of Education in China officially issued College English Curriculum Requirements in September, 2007, which explicitly demonstrates that the ultimate goal of College English Course is to cultivate students' comprehensive capacity, listening and speaking in particular, making them efficient in communication in their future study, work and social contacts. Meanwhile students' independent learning ability and overall cultural awareness should be enhanced to cater to the needs of our opened society as well as international communication. Therefore, the former "exam-oriented" educational system must be impacted.

*The Curriculum Requirements* also indicates that the university can work out their own curriculum according to the ultimate goal, ensuring students at different levels can improve their language capacity. So universities through out the country have probed into different methods to reform College English Course. As a result, Module Teaching Method, Hierarchical Teaching and Selective English Courses are proposed. The most distinguished one is "the Construction of College English Personalized Teaching Mode under the Network Environment" by Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics. That is, personalized teaching and evaluation system are given with the help of the internet platform.

Qingdao University of Science and Technology has also made its reform attempt. Four terms teaching mode has been shortened to three terms since 2010, which means students should attend CET 4 at the end of the third term. Then selected courses would be offered at the fourth term. In addition, speaking course is specially fixed every other week. These measures have achieved results to some degree with the purpose of broadening students' horizons, arousing interests and improving their speaking ability. Yet, during these 48 speaking hours, teachers always have great difficulty in finding appropriate topics to proceed. So students speaking ability can not be fully promoted. In this sense, the reform should be necessarily conducted not only in form but also in teaching contents.

The following is a questionnaire about satisfaction on College English Course. Participants are 400 freshmen and sophomores from the major of engineering, law, advertisement, business and management, and fashion designing. 366 questionnaires are valid.

TABLE 1  
CLASS SATISFACTION ON COLLEGE ENGLISH COURSE

terms	option	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%
1. overall opinion on College English Course		Like very much	24.9	Not bad	56.3	No idea	14.5	Dislike	4.3
2. the ultimate purpose		To cultivate the speaking and listening capacity	65.3	To pass CET 4 and CET 6	24.9	To accomplish teaching plan	7.1	No idea.	2.7
3. intensive reading class		Very interesting, I love to take it.	11.7	It's necessary to lay a profound language basis.	35.3	Not bad. But I'm a bit passive.	31.4	No idea.	21.6
4. speaking class		The atmosphere is lovely, and I'd like to attend it.	18	It's necessary to improve my speaking ability.	41.8	Not bad, but there is no enough chances to practice	26.2	I'm passive so I don't like it.	14
5. listening class		It's rich in contents, so I like it.	18.6	Some skills can be offered.	39.6	It's dull, and I'm tired.	19.1	I can't catch and don't like it.	22.7

From the above table, we can find, most students have got to a consensus about the ultimate purpose of College English Course. 65.3% of the questioned students hold the idea that the speaking and listening capacity should be improved in College English Class, and show an overall agreement to the current English class. However, they show a rather low reference the present intensive reading class, only 11.7% show great interest in attending it, while 31.4% of the students display reluctance to it. That proves intensive class are in urgent need to be reformed. Furthermore, a large portion of students have to attend the listening and speaking class out of its necessity but not passion. In this case, the best learning results can be hardly achieved.

Interpretive training methods should be introduced here because the characteristic of interpretive training happens to coincide with the teaching goal of College English Course in many aspects, especially in the following three points.

1. Skill training is the main part of interpretive courses, which contains various skills training procedures. Students can practice their language skills comprehensively through the practice such as 3-min lecture. The practice needs recording to monitor speakers' fluency, accuracy, logic and rhythm. Long time repeated practice can fully promote students' speaking performance.

2. Cross-cultural awareness is another main point cultivated on interpretive class. While The Curriculum Requirements has clearly indicated that College English Course is not only a basic course to introduce language but an important quality-oriented one to broaden students' knowledge and get acquaintance with world culture. On this point, the two share the same opinion.

3. If interpretive training methods are introduced into College English Course, teachers can only show the basic interpretive theories and skills briefly and do basic demonstration. There will not be enough time for students to practice at class, so more practical training should be conducted by students after class, which will be of great help to develop students' independent learning ability. And this is also one of the ultimate goals of College English Curriculum Requirements as we mentioned above.

#### B. To Satisfy the Needs of Non-major College Students' Study

Many non-English major college students have acquired great capacity to fulfill the interpretive training as the following aspects indicate:

1. From the individual initiative the majority of college students are not satisfied with the learning only from the textbooks and the cramming method of teaching in the traditional intensive reading class. They have a strong aspiration to facilitate their oral and listening ability. However, they can not find the specific instructions of skills, practice and methods. So here interpretive training can come on the stage.

The next table is a questionnaire made by the same group of students on the students' attitude on interpretive training.

TABLE 2  
NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON INTERPRETIVE TRAINING

option	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%
terms								
1. Do you know about interpretive training	Yes, sure.	1.9	Not many.	39.6	Only heard, very little.	43.7	No, nothing.	14.8
2. Your idea on memory training	Like it very much.	12.0	Feel like trying.	72.6	No idea.	9.8	Burdensome, reject.	5.6
3. Your view on note-taking.	Like it very much.	20.5	Feel like trying.	59.8	No idea.	15	Burdensome, reject.	4.7
4. Your opinion on cultural difference.	Very interesting, eager to learn.	45.5	Sounds good. Can have a try	45.5	Feel indifferent.	6.6	No interest.	3.4
5. Your expected mode if given	Dual-degree program	14.2	Special training institute.	16.7	College English Course	46.7	Optional Course	22.4
6. Your viewpoint on self-centered learning	Willing to do that.	45.1	Can fulfill some practice.	31.7	A little is OK.	19.1	Burdensome. Reject.	4.6

From the above table, we can find the majority of students are interested in the contents of interpretive training even they don't know much about it. And 46.7% hopes that the training can be introduced in College English Course to really promote their listening and speaking ability. And about 45.1% of them are willing to practice after class independently, which all mean most students are eager to get more practical interpretive training in College English Class. One more prominent fact is that 90% of the participants show their great interest in cultural difference, and this can make a good point to bring in interpretive training.

2. Under the influence of quality-oriented education system many students learn English from their primary school. Therefore, the overall English capacity of students are rather high than ever before, especially their listening and speaking English.

3. Jean Herbert (2011), the renowned interpretive expert, once said, "A good interpreter should know everything of something and something of everything"(p.87). Professor Shukong Zhong (2006) also holds the idea that an interpreter should be an encyclopaedia. That is to say, a qualified interpreter should grasp not only the language itself but also different kinds of knowledge, especially the knowledge about his major. As a matter of fact, in the real translation practice the non-English major translator show more advantages than English major ones. Therefore, the mere master of language is far from enough and only the rich extra-linguistic knowledge can be the magic weapon for a competent interpreter.

4. More and more non-English major undergraduates have passed the examination on advanced interpretation and obtained certificate. So it's feasible to make interpretive training access to more college students.

### C. To Facilitate CET 4 and CET 6

Currently the proportion of listening test accounts for 35% in CET 4 and CET 6, and it lasts 35 minutes, which constitute great difficulty for the examinees. So does the oral test after the examination. Besides, on the basis of *College English Curriculum Requirements*, a new reform on CET 4 and CET 6 will be conducted. That is, all the questions except the reading material are to be answered according to Part 1, the video material, which consequently proposes a high demand of students' listening ability. So students' English learning can be more effective if the basic techniques of interpretive training, such as note-taking, memory training, de-verbalization and cross-cultural awareness are introduced.

## III. CONCLUSION

Based on the *College English Curriculum Requirements*, this essay illustrates the feasibility of interpretive training methods on the College English Course from the perspective of the current reform by Qingdao University of Science and Technology, the present learning situation of non-English major undergraduates, and a new round reform of CET 4 and CET 6. Combined with the characteristic of interpretive training, the new teaching mode on College English Course is sure to have a brilliant future.

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**Yue Zhao** was born in Harbin, China in 1976. She received her master degree in MTI from Qingdao University of Science and Technology, China in 2013.

She is currently a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China. Her research interests are cross-cultural communication, interpretive theory and teaching method studies in College English Course. Ms Zhao specializes on the research in these fields, and till now has headed three projects issued by different departments of the government in Shandong province.

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