

The Impact of Attending EFL Classes on the Iranian Female Learners' Attributional Complexity

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Abstract—The multi-layered reality of EFL classes is of great significance in its impact upon the learners' emotions and attitudes. In this study, it is suggested that teachers by taking a humanistic approach, along with making use of the unique features of their classes, could affect the learners' thought patterns and cause attitude and behavior change. In particular, the teacher is believed to possess the power to have an impact upon the learners' attributional complexity or the way they interpret the causes of others' social behaviors. Attributional complexity, a term coined by Fletcher (1986), is "a psychological construct that describes the degree to which an individual is interested in understanding the causes of others' behavior" (as cited in Fast, Reimer & Funder, 2008, p. 209). The current study aimed at unfolding the effect of attending foreign language learning classes on the Iranian female EFL learners' attributional complexity. To this end, 33 Iranian female EFL learners (beginners), and 33 Iranian female non-EFL learners completed Attributional Complexity Scale before and after the EFL courses. The results of the t-tests showed that attributional complexity of the EFL learners did not change significantly after the time interval. The obtained results were believed to be due to the EFL learners' relative lack of a required level of language proficiency in their first course of English, which enables them to involve in social interactions and benefit the language classes in a way that their thought patterns are affected. In addition, the period of language courses were believed to be too short for this change in EFL learners. Furthermore, it is believed that there is a great need to train teachers and try to actualize the potentialities of EFL classes, due to the endowments of the language teachers and the nature of their classes.

Index Terms—attribution, attributional complexity, EFL learners, EFL classes' potentialities, unique features of EFL classes

I. INTRODUCTION

To date the relationship between society and language has intrigued researchers in order to investigate the possible directions this relationship might take. Attempts have been made to gain a better view of the way language operates in society for individuals and the way it affects the society or is affected by it.

By knowing a language, one certainly is affected by the structure of it which arises from the society and the environment. From another perspective, while a person discovers the elements of a linguistic system, he/she tends to construct his/her own personal meanings. According to Piaget's cognitive constructivism, "emphasis is placed upon the importance of learners constructing their own representations of reality ... Vygotsky's social constructivism emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cooperative learning in constructing both cognitive and emotional images of reality" (As cited in Brown, 2007, p. 12).

In language learning classes, learners discover the linguistic elements personally and are also open to social interaction. The unique nature of EFL classes is considered as a great opportunity for teachers to help the learners reconstruct the concepts and norms in a desired way which makes the learners live happier and enhances the quality of their relationships. This opportunity includes the effect learning another language might have on thought patterns and brain, and also the social communicative nature of the interactions and the form of genuine relationships between the learners and the language teacher which may cause thought and behavior change. Accordingly, it is also believed that how one perceives the world might affect the way she/he uses the language and from another perspective the way she/he uses the language might affect the way she/he perceives the world and the society. This way of looking at this issue is similar to that of Sapir and Whorf's position. According to Carroll (2008), Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis emphasizes the idea that language shapes thought patterns. He also mentions that this hypothesis consists of two parts, linguistic determinism, which refers to a change in the way a person thinks caused by the language, and the linguistic relativity, which claims that cognitive processes that are determined are different for different languages, hence the speakers of

different languages are said to think in different ways. Therefore, as a foreign language learner, learning and internalizing a new linguistic system can extend the learners' worldview. Regarding this, it could be said that foreign/second language learners might think and behave differently from non-language learners. This is of great significance to say that the role of the language teacher is indeed so crucial in this change. The way she/he presents the language, its culture and social norms to students and the encouragement of an attitude of tolerance towards them, are on the shoulders of the language teacher. It is believed that the language teacher only by building rapport and developing a strong emotional relationship is able to influence the learners in order to cause attitude and behavior change.

Due to the potentialities of EFL classes, which lead the students and also the teachers to mutual understanding and admiration of different cultures, and also a reconstruction of social norms and perceptions, being in a foreign language learning class might have an effect upon the students' thought patterns and in particular on their attributional complexity or in other words on the way they interpret the causes of others' social behaviors.

The teacher in this sense is so potent that can lead the learners into a positive mood not only to embrace the new system of language and culture, but also to help them reflect upon their home cultures and life issues, and in some cases contemplate on their own social behavior and also upon the behaviors of the members of their social networks, and try to keep the balance in interpreting them and change towards positively reputed individuals in their attributional styles or towards the styles which help them recover their equilibrium.

As social human beings, we are faced with different social behaviors and events that need great care and interpretation. Generally, there are different explanations for behaviors and events, and we try to make attributions and integrate the attributions to form a final impression. We make use of attributional processes to explain causes of behaviors we see in others. "According to one common meaning, forming an attribution is giving an explanation (especially of behavior); according to another common meaning, forming an attribution is making a dispositional (trait) inference from behavior (Hamilton, 1998; Hilton, Smith, & Kin, 1995; Malle, 2004)" (as cited in Malle, 2003, p.1). Accordingly, several views regarding the attributional processes have emerged, and they generally fall into one of the two categories. "One view proposes that people are cognitive misers and rely on simple heuristics when attributing the causes of others' behavior (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974), while the other view holds that the attributional process is complex and that people generate and consider multiple causes (Ross & Fletcher, 1985). Moreover, there is empirical evidence to support both views (Fletcher, 1983; Read, 1983, respectively)" (as cited in Fast, Reimer, & Funder, 2008, p.3). Additionally, according to Fast, Reimer, and Funder (2008), attributional complexity is a psychological construct designed to describe individual differences in the motivation and preference for complex or simple attributions for behaviors of themselves or of others. According to them the behavior of individuals with higher attributional complexity are relatively open, positive, expressive, and socially skilled.

This study enlightens the impact of attending a foreign language learning class upon the Iranian female EFL learners' attributional complexity, which includes motivational components, complex versus simple explanations of the others' social behavior, metacognition, interaction with others, abstract versus causal explanations, external and past causes of others' behavior. It is important to say that the sub-components of the attributional complexity are not the focus of this study.

Limitations of the Study

The current study faced some limitations which should be regarded in future studies. First of all, this study was only conducted in certain language institutes in Mashad, and the participants were only females. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all foreign language learners. Additionally, the institutes were chosen among the ones who had a general tendency towards communicative methods which were based on humanistic approaches in order for the students to be open to attitude and behavior change in a positive manner, however, to what extent the teachers had real commitment to this approach was not checked by any means.

The next limitation is that the study is only based on quantitative data and therefore other studies could be done with other qualitative forms in order to be enriched and more generalizable. Furthermore, this study made use of the Persian back-translated version of Attributional Complexity Scale, which needs the process of validation in the Iranian community in future studies.

The last point to be mentioned is that there might be other factors contributing to a change in the EFL learners' level of attributional complexity which the study failed to control. It is believed that by great care and enthusiasm, those factors could be recognized and controlled in future studies.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is of importance to mention that attributional complexity is rooted in attribution theory. It could be said that the basic idea and theory of attribution gets back to Heider's theory of attribution (1958) which was expanded thereafter. According to Manusov and Spitzberg (2008), Heider reflected the logical and empirical backbone of attribution theories by making relatively global and general claims about what people do. They state that for Heider people act like naïve scientists as they attempt to make sense of their larger social worlds in a relatively systematic way, and they are active interpreters of the social events that happen in their lives. In this way, they use consistent and logical modes of sense-making in their interpretations. It is also believed that they do this to both understand and control the world around them.

In other words “Heider defined attribution as an effort to predict and control the world by assigning transient behavior to relatively unchanging dispositions” (As cited in Griffin, 2008, p. 141). Attributions are defined in various ways:

Researchers have argued that attributions vary from one another not only based on causal locus (which is said to be external or internal) but also on other dimensions. These include “stability,” or whether or not we see the cause of something as stable (“He’s late because he doesn’t care about other people”) or unstable (“He’s late because he wasn’t feeling well and it took him a while to get ready”); and “control,” or whether or not we think a person was able to alter the cause (“He’s late because he forgot to set his alarm again”) or unable to alter the cause (“He’s late because there was a traffic accident that delayed traffic”) (Manusov & spitzberg, 2008, P. 39).

In this case different people tend to choose different interpretations for others’ or even their own social behaviors or for the social events that occur in their lives. What is of great importance is that although there are different types of Attribution Theory, they all are concerned with how people process information to understand social events or behaviors. Talking about the nature and tendency in people for attributing different causes, it is believed that “to the degree that people learn about the direct and indirect consequences of their own and others’ attributions, they can attempt to manage them” (Kelley & Michela, 1980, p. 492). According to Lassiter, Munhall, Burger, Weiland, Handley, and Geers (2005), for Fletcher, Danilovics, Fernandez, Peterson, and Reeder (1986) people differ both in their motivation and incentives to explain social behavior and in the complexity of explanations they generally generate. For them, these differences are the result of people varying in terms of the complexity of attributional schemata they possess for organizing and interpreting social stimuli. Accordingly, this embodies the view that more complex individuals tend to have more complex interpretations of behaviors.

According to Fitness and Curtis (2005), for Davis and Kraus (1997) accurate judgment in the interpersonal domain was characterized by high cognitive complexity (indicating a tendency to think deeply about others’ behaviors), low levels of dogmatic or rigid thinking, and high field independence, indicating an ability to perceive discrete units of behavior that might be unnoticeable to others.

An expansion of attribution theory was that of Fletcher (1986) which was called Attributional complexity. According to Narayanan (2009), for Fletcher, Danilovics, Fernandez, Peterson, and Reeder (1986) attributional complexity is a psychological construct that describes the degree to which an individual is interested in understanding the causes of other’s behavior and considers many different possible causes. It is believed that those people who are higher in attributional complexity are theoretically like good social psychologists in that they are more likely to consider dispositional factors, situational factors, and factors operating from the past in their interpretations of social behaviors and events. In contrast, those lower in attributional complexity are theorized to be less likely to think about the causes of behavior or to consider multiple causes.

As Ask and Granhag (2003) mention Fletcher and his associates developed Attributional Complexity Scale to capture individual differences in the propensity to produce complex explanations to the behaviors of others.

In this study it is believed that due to certain potentialities of foreign language learning classes, and language learning itself, attributional complexity of the individuals might be affected. Accordingly, attributional complexity scale measures the complexity of the attributions people make of the social behavior of others or themselves and according to Lassiter, Munhall, Burger, Weiland, Handley, & Geers (2005) its subcomponents are motivation to explain behavior, preference for complex explanations, presence of causal metacognitions, awareness of the causal importance of social interaction, tendency to infer complex internal attributions, tendency to infer abstract, contemporary external attributions, and tendency to infer external causes operating from the past. They also mention that people whose responses indicate that they are high (low) across these various subscales are considered to be attributionally complex (simple). Based on these attributional subscales, any of the subparts might be affected by attending a foreign language class and learning a foreign language.

Although there is no unanimous agreement on language learning classroom as a real part of the society, we believe this view is so extreme and some influential factors might be underestimated. “Two links with other areas must be made. One concerns the individual in the classroom, the other the classroom as part of the society. The individual’s attitudes to the classroom form an important component in l2 learning. The students’ attitudes towards the learning situation, as measured by feelings about the classroom teacher and level of anxiety about classroom, contribute to the students’ motivation” (Cook, 2008, p. 163).

In this way not only based on Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, might language learning itself affect people’s thought and worldviews, but also the student-teacher and student-student relationships and interactions and the class potentialities may cause thought and behavior change. Pishghadam (2012) proposed a new type of syllabus for language teachers which, regarding the power the teacher and his/ her class possess to affect students’ lives, directed them to give priority to life issues rather than merely language in class. This is in line with Sanders and River (1996), whom in their paper got to the point that the effects of the teachers on student achievement are both additive and cumulative with little evidence of compensatory effects. Moreover, it is noteworthy that students of different ethnicities respond equivalently within the same quintile of teacher effectiveness.

It is of significance to consider the point that certain features are needed in order for attitude change. These features seem to be similar to those of language classes. According to Lindzey and Aronson (1969) different types of attitude-

change situations are mentioned which are 1. Suggestion situations 2. Conformity situations 3. Group discussion situations 4. Persuasive messages and 5. Intensive indoctrination. This is however important to say that these situations which seem similar to those of a second/foreign language class need great care and study in order to be fully understood and compared.

Additionally, the brain studies are evidence for the benefits learning another language might have for people. In the same way, Martenson, Lovden, Bodamme, Lindgren, Johansson, Nyberg and Eriksson (2012) discovered that the accelerated learning of foreign languages can lead to the growth of language-related regions of the brain.

This study sheds light on the effect of attending a foreign language class, regarding its unique properties and the language teacher's endowments, on attributional complexity of EFL learners.

In relation to attributional complexity and its basis, attribution theory, attempts have been made to define it theoretically and to work on its relationship with other constructs or the other way around. As an instance, Zuckerman (1979) worked on the question of whether causal attributions serve the need to protect and / or enhance self-esteem or not.

Concerning the research done on the relationship between attributional complexity and some other constructs, we could name the work of Fast, Heather, Reimer and Funder (2007) who found that the behavior of individuals with higher attributional complexity were relatively open, positive, expressive, and socially skilled. They said although attributional complexity was unrelated to academic achievement, those higher in attributional complexity tended to be described by peers as having social wisdom, thoughtfulness, empathy, and openness and their behaviors contribute to good social judgment. Also Townsend, Silva, Mueller, Curtin, and Tetrick, (2002) worked on Attributional Complexity as a link between training, job complexity, decision latitude, leader-member exchange, and performance.

Talking about the behaviors and attitudes of people regarding attributional complexity, Sun & Anderson (2012) stated that Attributional complexity refers to the capability of discriminating and integrating dimensions related to social judgment in order to understand social behavior. While previous leadership research has examined the role of leader attributions, it has neglected the role of attributional complexity. They theorize and find support for a relationship between higher attributional complexity and transformational leadership behaviors. In the same manner, Marsh & Weary (1989) mentioned that recent research suggests that mildly and moderately depressed individuals are more sensitive to social information than the non-depressed individuals and the relationship between the severity of depression and a measure relevant to this social sensitivity, attributional complexity, was examined in their paper. They came to the conclusion that an inverted-U-shaped relationship between depression and attributional complexity existed. Mildly depressed individuals had the highest attributional complexity scores; nondepressed and severely depressed individuals had the lowest scores and women also had higher attributional complexity scores.

It is of great significance to mention that regarding the construct of attributional complexity and concepts and issues related to TEFL, there is a paucity of research done. There is no research done on the effect of EFL classes on the teachers or learners' attributional complexity.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed at investigating the effect of attending EFL classes on the learners' attributional complexity. The EFL learners were female adolescents and adults, who had just started learning English as a foreign language, and had little or no communicative knowledge of English. Their attributional complexity was measured by a questionnaire before and after the foreign language learning courses. The same is done before and after the specific time for non-EFL learners for further comparison.

A. *Setting and Participants*

The participants included 33 EFL learners (Mean=22.30, SD=6.21), and 33 non-EFL learners (Mean=25.92, SD=7.35), who aged 13 to 40. Only female learners took part in this study, and they had little communicative knowledge of English at the beginning of the course. They were considered as adult and adolescent learners chosen randomly from two institutes, namely Safir and Parax in Mashad. These two institutes generally follow a communicative-like approach and the teachers should have a good relationship with the learners. The EFL learners had not taken part in any other art-form classes or any other classes which might cause attitude and behavior change in the time of the study.

B. *Instrumentation*

The instruments that were utilized to carry out this study include Attributional Complexity Scale (ACS), and a background questionnaire designed by the researchers.

The background questionnaire was designed by the researchers to control factors that might have an effect upon the learners' attributional complexity. Therefore, the learners' learning experiences, recreational or social activities (such as attending art-form classes), psychiatric history, and family background were reported and controlled.

In order to measure the participants' attributional complexity, ACS was used. Fletcher and his associates (1986) developed Attributional Complexity Scale (ACS). This scale captures individual differences in the tendency to generate complex explanations to the behaviors of others. It includes 27 items, and each of the items is scored from -3 to +3

(from strongly disagree to strongly agree). There are 12 items in the test which should be reversed. According to Ask and Granhag (2003) the scale measures seven attributional constructs: 1.Level of interest or motivation, which means attributionally complex people possess higher levels of intrinsic motivation to explain and understand human behavior, 2.Preference for complex explanations, which means complex individuals generate behavioral explanations that contain a greater number of relevant causes, 3. Metacognitive awareness, that is, complex individuals tend to think about the cognitive processes underlying behavioral attribution, 4. Awareness of social influences, referring to the tendency of complex individuals to take the power of the social situation into account when forming causal attributions, 5.Abstract or complex internal attributions – the degree of complexity in explanations involving internal traits, dispositions and beliefs, 6.Contemporary external attributions, meaning that complex people acknowledge abstract, non-salient behavioral causes in a person’s environment, and 7.finally awareness of external causes operating from the past.

Ask and Granhag (2003) also mention that Fletcher, Danilovics, Fernandez, Peterson and Glenn (1986) provided evidence for the external validity of the scale. They confirmed that Attributionally complex students compared with attributionally simple students spontaneously produced more causes for personality dispositions and selected more complex causal attributions for simple behavioral events. According to Fitness and Curtis (2005) the reported internal reliability of the scale is .85 (Fletcher at al, 1986) and in their own study the Cronbach Alpha Coeficient was high (Cronbach Alpha= .89). Fast, Reimer and Funder (2007) found that The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients for each subscale ranged from .50 to .65, with a total scale reliability of .88, and they said this was slightly higher than the .85 found by Fletcher et al. (1986). The average inter-correlation of the seven subscales was .48, which was again slightly higher than the .40 found by Fletcher et al. (1986). The Persian back-translated version of this scale was used in this study.

C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The data collection procedure was done in Safir and Parax Language Institutes for the adults and adolescent EFL learners, in Mashhad. The permit for conducting the research at these two institutes was obtained from their educational supervisors. This study required great collaboration on the part of participants and the teachers. Therefore, the first step was to explain the whole procedure to the teachers. Then the teachers had to talk to the students and explain the general idea and the format of the questionnaire. The learners were told that the same test would be given in future as the post-test, so that they could not refrain from cooperation later on. The first criterion for selection of the volunteers to enter the study was the background questionnaire designed by the researchers. Only those students who had not attended any art-form or social classes and had not been on medication or hospitalization regarding depression were asked to cooperate in later stages, in order to control the factors that might have affected their attributional complexity. In the same way, the learners had almost the same psychiatric history. First of all, the learners were told to complete the background questionnaire, and were also informed that the tests were unanimous. The same test was taken 4-6 weeks later. The process of data collection took approximately 2 months.

After collecting the data and codifying the items of the questionnaire, they were fed into the computer. For the data analysis SPSS 19.0 statistical software was employed. First of all the descriptive statistics were calculated for the selected variables. Then t-test was employed to investigate any significant difference between Iranian female EFL learners and Iranian female non-EFL learners regarding their attributional complexity before and after the time interval. The participants were different due to the natural exposure of one group to a natural condition, in this case attending language classes, with similar backgrounds.

IV. ANALYSES OF THE RESULTS

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between Iranian female EFL learners and Iranian female non-EFL learners with respect to their attributional complexity after the time interval. To compare the control and the experimental groups with respect to their attributional complexity, first there is a need to check that both experimental and control groups are homogeneous to be assured that any improvement in the data is due to attending language classes. For this reason, independent-samples t-test was run to check the homogeneity of the two groups. The descriptive statistics given in Table 1 indicates that the mean of the experimental group is 132.30 and that of the control group is 129.46. To examine whether this difference is statistically significant, t-test table was checked.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: EXP. VS. CONTR. GROUPS BY AC (PRE-TEST)

Group Types	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	33	132.30	10.001	1.741
Control	32	129.46	14.535	2.569

As Table 2 indicates, the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant ($t=.91$, $df= 63$, $p>.05$). Therefore, the two groups are homogeneous with regard to attributional complexity before the time interval.

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST: FOR EQUALITY OF THE TWO GROUPS BY AC (PRE-TEST)

	Levene's test				T-test	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Mean Differences
Equal V. Assumed	3.831	.055	.918	63	.362	2.834
Equal V. Not Assumed			.913	54.807	.365	2.834

To examine the impact of the treatment on attributional complexity, the post-tests were examined. As descriptive statistics given in Table 3 indicates, the mean of the experimental group is 130.18 and that of the control group is 128.75.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: EXP. VS. CONTR. GROUPS BY AC (POST-TEST)

Group Types	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	32	130.187	11.518	2.036
Control	32	128.750	12.951	2.289

As Table 4 indicates, the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant ($t=.46$, $df= 6$, $p>.05$). In other words, the experimental and the control groups have the same level of attributional complexity after the time interval.

TABLE 4.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST: FOR EQUALITY OF THE TWO GROUPS BY AC (POST-TEST)

	Levene's test				T-test	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Mean Differences
Equal V. Assumed	.180	.073	.469	62	.641	1.437
Equal V. Not Assumed			.469	61.167	.641	1.437

However, to shed more light on the role of attending EFL classes in learners' attributional complexity, paired-samples t-test was run to see whether the treatment affects the attributional complexity of the experimental group. A paired-samples t-test was also run to compare the control group in the pre-test and post-test.

As can be seen in Table 5, the mean of attributional complexity in the pre-test is 132.84 and for the post-test is 130.18. To examine whether this difference is statistically significant, paired-samples t-test was run. The result of the analysis is given in Table 6.

TABLE 5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST. EXP. GROUP BY AC (PRE- VS. POST)

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	32	132.843	9.659	1.707
Post-test	32	130.187	11.518	2.036

According to Table 6, there is no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group with regard to their attributional complexity ($t=1.30$, $df=31$, $p>.05$).

TABLE 6.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST: EXP. GROUP BY AC (PRE- VS. POST-TEST)

	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence		T	Df	sig (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-Post	2.65	11.48	2.03	-1.485	6.798	1.308	31	.200

Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics for the control group. As can be seen in the Table, mean of the attributional complexity in the pre-test is 129.32 and for the post-test is 128.35. To examine whether this difference is statistically significant, paired-samples t-test was run. Result of the analysis is given in Table 8.

TABLE 7.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST. CONTR. GROUP BY AC (PRE- VS. POST-TEST)

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	31	129.322	14.752	2.649
Post-test	31	128.354	12.968	2.329

As Table 8, there is no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the control group with regard to their attributional complexity ($t=.65$, $df=30$, $p>.05$).

TABLE 8.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST: FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP BY ATTRIBUTIONAL COMPLEXITY (PRE- VS. POST-TEST)

	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence		T	df	sig (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-Post	.967	8.26	1.483	-2.062	3.997	.652	30	.519

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of attending foreign language classes on the Iranian female EFL learners' attributional complexity. In order to compare the control and the experimental groups with respect to their attributional complexity, there was a need to check that both experimental and control groups were homogeneous in the pre-test. For this reason, independent-samples t-test was run to check the homogeneity of the two groups. Results indicated that, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant ($t=.91$, $df= 63$, $p>.05$). Therefore, the two groups were homogeneous with regard to their attributional complexity before the treatment which was attending a foreign language learning class. The results of independent-samples t-tests indicated that the difference between the two groups after the time specified was not statistically significant ($t=.46$, $df= 6$, $p>.05$). This means that the experimental and the control groups had the same level of attributional complexity after the time interval.

A paired-samples t-test was also run to compare the pre and post-tests of each group before and after that period. The analyses revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group with regard to their attributional complexity. In other words, there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group with regard to their attributional complexity ($t=1.30$, $df=31$, $p>.05$).

The results showed that there was no significant difference between the pre and post-tests in the control group regarding attributional complexity ($t=.65$, $df=30$, $p>.05$). In other words attributional complexity of the non-language learners did not change after the time interval. In this study, it was assumed that due to learning a new linguistic system and a reconstruction of concepts and forms, and also because of certain properties of language classes, for instance the specific types of interactions, and interpersonal relationships, there might be a change in students' ability in interpreting social behaviors of others and themselves. According to Fast, Reimer and Funder (2007), some evidence suggests that the ones who are attributionally complex (who have high scores in AC) may have a positive reputation and behave in a socially skilled manner, however, this is not necessarily the case; other evidence suggests that they may be socially detached and awkward. Therefore, the learners who are attributionally complex do not necessarily have good or bad reputations, as this is the case for all the people. However, what is of great significance according to the same researches is that the behaviors of individuals with higher attributional complexity were relatively open, positive, expressive, and socially skilled. They said although attributional complexity was unrelated to academic achievement, those higher in attributional complexity tended to be described by peers as having social wisdom, thoughtfulness, empathy, and openness and their behaviors contribute to good social judgment.

The question of how the teacher might affect the attributional style of his/her learners is of great concern. In this study, we did not expect a directional change; rather we wanted to investigate it. In this regard, the teacher might be able to affect the attributional styles of the learners in a way that brings happiness and equilibrium to their lives. Learning the new linguistic system itself, which based on Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis affects the learners' worldview, general knowledge and information about different cultures, subcultures and social dyads will open a new horizon to the learners, and could act as a stimulus that consciously or subconsciously may cause thought and behavior change, especially if the students are motivated to do so. The role of language teacher is also so crucial in the process of the enhancement of this change. The potent language teacher, by developing a strong relationship, is able to go a little further from teaching only linguistic forms, and affect the learners' thought patterns and norms, and consequently cause attitude and behavior change. The type of persuasive communication, which is grounded upon the relationship of trust between the learners and the teacher, will make the learners open to a positive change.

In this study, attributional complexity of learners did not change after the course. Certain potentialities of language classes were introduced in this study, however, this doesn't mean these potentialities have been actualized and fulfilled. The results showed that there is a great need for further training of the teachers and the learners. Forming certain attitudes needs a chain of anticipations and reinforcements. Whatever attributional style a language teacher possesses, he/she may not affect that of his/her learners, unless the needed factors are available. As Mynatt and Doherty (2002) suggest people may develop a pessimistic explanatory style or an optimistic explanatory style. One important thing that the language teacher could do is to try to promote optimism in order to help the ones with pessimistic style to prevent depression.

According to Malim and Birch (1994) certain factors are needed for attitude change. The most relevant factor to present study is persuasive communication, which involves perception and attention, understanding, acceptance, memory and finally action. Language teachers, in class discussions might go a bit further and try to affect the attitudes of the learners in a systematic, pre-arranged way. In the process of this attitude change, persuasive communication is needed. The teacher might also make use of the influence of "social facilitation" and try to help the learners in social life issues. For them, social facilitation refers to the effect upon people due to the presence or participation of others, which facilitates their performance.

Another significant point is that as Hall and Hewings (2001) mention, a new language implies the use and refinement of perceptions, concepts and affects. In addition, they believe learning the conventions governing communication within a new social group involves the refinement and use of the social roles and the social identity expected by that group of members. The teachers, in this manner, could seize this opportunity of openness towards the new language and culture, to try to affect the people in order to help them develop better interpersonal relationships and a more flexible and deeper

understanding of social behaviors and events. In particular, she/he can help the learners construct a new identity in the newly developed social group- the EFL class- in a way that brings equilibrium in learners' lives, especially in their social relations.

VI. APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Foreign language institutes may consider these humanistic and social aspects while holding teacher training courses. Individuals who need to join a social group for the improvement of interpersonal relations, and the people who need to do a recreational activity, can attend these EFL classes, whose teachers are well-trained in the ways they can affect the learners' lives. Furthermore, those who feel they have developed a pessimistic style, or are not satisfied with their attributional style can join these classes.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is believed that "starting the questionnaire with a rather forbidding set of personal background questions (as in passport application form) is off-putting and may also ring privacy alarm bells in the students. Such questions are best left to the end of the questionnaire" (Mackey & Gass, 2011, p. 78). This was considered one of the reasons why the students felt a little uncomfortable with taking the test. Other reasons may include political, social, or cultural influences which make the learners save their self-image. Further research might be on these factors and how we could control them.

This study made use of the Persian back-translated version of attributional complexity scale. Further research could validate this scale for Iranian community for more accurate results. Furthermore, it is believed that due to the lack of linguistic ability of the learners, who had just started their English courses, a significant change in their attributional complexity did not occur.

Another reason might be the short period of language courses, and other research might follow the participants in a period of 4-5 months. Therefore, future research might be on the effect of EFL classes on the learners' attributional complexity for more advanced levels, over a longer period of time. Another important point to be mentioned is that duplications of the same study, and also of the study in which the teachers are all trained, are needed in order to gain more precise results.

APPENDIX A. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

ضمن تشکر از همکاری شما، شایان ذکر است مشخصات فردی شما تنها به جهت اهداف پژوهشی ما کاربرد داشته و بدون ذکر نام شما و کاملاً محرمانه است

لطفاً مختصراً پاسخ دهید:

میزان تحصیلات: _____ شهر، ناحیه (یا نام محله) ای که در آن زندگی می کنید: _____

جنسیت: مرد زن سن پدر: _____، سن مادر: _____ / چندمین فرزند خانواده: _____

آیا پدر و مادر در قید حیات اند؟ بله خیر اگر خیر چه وقت فوت کرده اند؟ _____

آیا ظرف سه سال اخیر به مرکز مشاوره رفته اید؟ (یا می روید) چند وقت پیش؟ _____

اگر روانشناس شما بیماری روانی خاصی را برای شما تشخیص داده است نام ببرید: _____

راه درمانی پیشنهادی روانشناسان چه بوده است؟ _____

اگر خودتان بیماری روانی خاصی را برای خود متصور هستید نام ببرید (مثلاً وسواس و غیره) _____

آیا سابقه ی بیماری روانی خاصی در خانواده ی شما وجود دارد؟ _____

آیا ظرف سه سال اخیر به یکی از کلاس های موسیقی، هنری یا ورزشی رفته اید؟ مختصراً با ذکر زمان توضیح دهید. _____

آیا کتاب زیاد می خوانید؟ بله خیر

فکر می کنید آمدن به کلاس زبان به چه جنبه ی روحی- روانی شما کمک کرده است یا می کند؟ _____

آیا می دانید همه ی مردم درصدی از افسردگی را دارند؟ خود را چقدر افسرده می دانید؟ _____

آیا فکر می کنید در بهبود افسردگی شما کلاس زبان نقش داشته است؟ _____

چقدر فکر می کنید حضور در کلاس زبان باعث از بین رفتن خجالت شما و اجتماعی تر شدنتان شده است؟ _____

آیا مشغولیتی که از یادگیری زبان در کلاس و خانه برایتان ایجاد شده است باعث بهتر شدن روحیه تان شده است؟ _____

انگیزه ی شما از یادگیری زبان انگلیسی چیست؟ _____

آیا ظرف سه سال اخیر به طور مداوم و جدی به کلاس زبان رفته اید؟ _____

آیا تا به حال برایتان اتفاق افتاده است که در کلاس زبانتان راجع به موضوعی بحث کنید و نگرشتان تغییر کند؟ _____

لطفاً نام ببرید به چه کلاس های دیگری می روید؟ _____

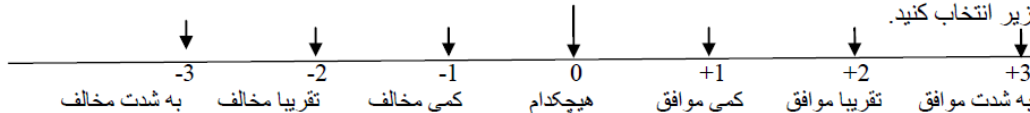
چند مورد بدترین و چند مورد از بهترین اتفاقات زندگی تان را ظرف سه سال اخیر نام ببرید: _____

با تشکر از شما دوست عزیز

APPENDIX B. PERSIAN BACK-TRANSLATED ATTRIBUTIONAL COMPLEXITY SCALE

- ← این پرسشنامه به این جهت طرح شده است تا راه های متفاوتی را که مردم در مورد خودشان و دیگران فکر می کنند بررسی کند.
- ← لازم نیست اسم خود را بر روی آن بنویسید.
- ← پاسخ صحیح یا غلطی مطرح نیست، بلکه ما به درک شخص شما از مسائل علاقه مندیم.
- ← لطفاً به هر جمله تا می توانید با صداقت و دقت پاسخ دهید، اما زمان زیادی را صرف هر کدام نکنید.

☆ در مقابل هر جمله ، لطفاً یکی از اعداد مثبت یا منفی زیر را ، که نشان دهنده ی میزان موافقت شما با مساله است ، بر مبنای طیف زیر انتخاب کنید.



1. من معمولاً تلاشی برای تحلیل یا توضیح رفتار دیگران نمی کنم.
2. هنگامی که یک دلیل خاص برای رفتار فردی یافتم، معمولاً دیگر فراتر از آن و به دنبال دلایل دیگر نمی روم.
3. اینطور فکر می کنم که فهمیدن فرآیندهای فکری خودمان و تحلیل آنها، بسیار مهم است.
4. در مورد تاثیری که بر رفتار بقیه می گذارم بسیار فکرمی کنم .
5. من دریافته ام که روابط بین خصوصیات اخلاقی، عقاید و بینش های یک فرد ، معمولاً بسیار ساده و راحت است.
6. اگر بینم مردمی عجیب و یا غیر طبیعی رفتار می کنند، نظر من اینست که آنها، فی نفسه انسان هایی عجیب و غیر طبیعی اند و زحمت توضیح فراتر از آن را به خود نمی دهم.
7. من در مورد پیشینه ی خانوادگی و تاریخچه ی شخصی افرادی که به من نزدیک اند ،بسیار فکر کرده ام،تا شخصیت کنونی شان را بهتر بفهمم.
8. اگر بحثی راجع به دلایل رفتارکسی پیش بیاید ، زیاد علاقه مند به شرکت در آن نیستم.
9. من به این موضوع پی برده ام که علل رفتار دیگران معمولاً پیچیده است تا ساده.
10. علاقه مندم بفهمم در ذهن خودم چه می گذرد هنگامی که در مورد مردم قضاوت می کنم، یا عللی را به رفتارشان نسبت می دهم.
11. در مورد راه های متفاوتی که از طریق آن ها افراد بر هم تاثیر می گذارند، خیلی کم فکر می کنم.
12. من فکر می کنم برای اینکه بتوان رفتار و شخصیت فردی را به درستی فهمید، بایستی تناسب میان عقاید،بینش ها و خصوصیات اخلاقی اش را درک کرد.
13. هنگامی که سعی دارم رفتار بقیه را توضیح دهم،تنها بر روی خود آن فرد تمرکز می کنم و زیاد نگران کلیه ی عوامل موجود که ممکن است روی رفتار او تاثیر گذاشته باشند نیستم.
14. به این مسئله پی برده ام که علت اصلی رفتار یک فرد، به گذشته ی او مربوط است.
15. از تحلیل رفتار دیگران بسیار لذت می برم.
16. من فکر می کنم معمولاً توضیحات پیچیده درباره ی رفتار مردم ،بیشتر گیج کننده است تا اینکه بخواهد به ما کمک کند.
17. هنگامی که درگیر فرایند فهم و توضیح رفتار دیگران ام ،به اینکه در ذهنم چه می گذرد زیاد فکر نمی کنم.
18. در مورد تاثیری که دیگران بر رفتار من می گذارند بسیار کم فکر می کنم.
19. در مورد اینکه چگونه هر قسمت از شخصیت من بر دیگر قسمت ها اثر می گذارد زیاد فکر کرده ام (مثلاً عقایدام بر بینش هایم و بینش هایم بر خصوصیات اخلاقی ام).
20. در مورد تاثیری که جامعه بر دیگران می گذارد بسیار فکر می کنم.
21. هنگامی که رفتار فردی را تحلیل می کنم، معمولاً به این نتیجه می رسم که علل آن رفتار یک زنجیره را تشکیل می دهد که به زمانی در گذشته ی او باز می گردد، حتی گاهی به سال ها قبل.
22. در مورد رفتار انسان ها زیاد کنجکاو نیستم.
23. برای رفتار مردم ، توضیحات ساده را به تفاسیر پیچیده ترجیح می دهم.
24. وقتی که دلایلی که برای رفتار خودم دارم با آنهایی که دیگران در مورد می گویند فرق می کند، معمولاً باعث می شود تا در مورد فرآیندهای فکری ام که مرا به آن توضیحات رسانده است فکر کنم.
25. بر این باورم که اگر بخواهم فردی را درک کنم، بایستی افرادی که با او رابطه ی نزدیک دارند را بفهمم.
26. من معمولاً به ظاهر رفتار مردم توجه می کنم و نگران علل رفتار درونی شان نیستم (مثل بینش ها و عقایدشان).
27. در مورد تاثیری که جامعه بر من و شخصیتم می گذارد زیاد فکر می کنم.
28. در مورد پیشینه ی خانوادگی و تاریخچه ی شخصی ام بسیار فکر کرده ام تا شخصیت کنونی ام را بهتر بفهمم.

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22012 Jaam e Jam

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